

Aspiranet Resource Family Program

~Monthly Regulation Training~

October 2022

Home & Child Safety

All resource parents are required to comply with state laws and regulations as well as agency standards for health and safety. The circumstances for which children are removed from their families frequently involve unsafe situations and lack of supervision, and therefore it's particularly important that a child placed in foster care is provided with a safe, healthy environment with appropriate supervision and structure.

In addition, it helps to remember the overall purpose and benefits of maintaining state and agency requirements including:

- Maintaining the health, safety and well being of *all* family members
- Reducing risk for your family
- Reducing potential for incidents/complaints

HOME SAFETY STANDARDS

Storage Requirements

The following items are required to be **locked** at all times:

- 1) **Poisons:** Including but not limited to: anti freeze, insecticides, drain cleaners, gasoline, kerosene, paint, paint thinner, rodent poison, weed killers, oven cleaners, lye, fertilizers, rubbing alcohol, pool chemicals.
- 2) **Firearms & other dangerous weapons:** firearms and ammunition must be locked separately.
- 3) **All Medication** includes prescription and any over-the-counter medication, including vitamins. Refrigerated medication must be locked in container within the refrigerator.

Required to be "Inaccessible to Children"

The following items are required to be "inaccessible to children". "Inaccessible" for very young children may include 'out of reach' (i.e. high cabinet storage). For older children "inaccessible" requires locked storage.

1) **Disinfectants & Cleaning Supplies**

Cleansers, ammonia, window cleaners, disinfecting cleaners, furniture polish, floor cleaners, etc. (can be used by youth for developing independent living skills/chore completion)

2) **Kitchen Knives** (can be used by youth for developing meal preparation skills)

NOTE: The Aspiranet Social Worker and resource parent must together assess the specific children placed in the home to determine the appropriate level of storage to meet the requirement of "inaccessible". When in doubt, items should be locked.

Areas in Home with Potential Safety Hazards

Please pay extra attention to areas outlined below, as it's very common to store items in these areas that can be potentially dangerous.

- **Kitchen:** Make sure to regularly check your cabinets & under kitchen sinks for any items that should be locked or inaccessible. Check to make sure there are no pesticides/toxics etc. stored in food cabinets/pantry, near food, or preparation areas.
- Store knives where inaccessible, and if needed, other sharps including scissors, etc., particularly if a child in your care has history of self-harm/cutting.
- **Bathrooms:** Regularly double check bathroom medicine cabinets for medications and under sinks for cleaning supplies, etc.

- Laundry: Check that your laundry room/area has detergents, bleach, etc. safely stored and inaccessible to young children
- Garage and/or sheds: Check your garage; thoroughly look around and open cabinets for possible hazardous items, as well as storage sheds in your yard. In addition, if you happen to store alcoholic beverages in the garage, be mindful if youth and teens may be able to readily access the alcohol. Consider storing in locked cabinet, particularly if youth have a history of alcohol use.
- Yard: Check your entire yard by walking around. Make sure the yard and play areas are free of potential hazards (piles of wood, tools, yard equipment, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.). There should be no yard or gardening equipment/supplies available or accessible in area where children play/family recreates. Yard/gardening equipment should be safely stored in garage or in a garden shed.
- Bodies of Water – Pool/Hot Tubs:
 - Any home caring for children under 10 years of age or those with physical, mental or developmental disabilities must have required fencing or approved cover to make pool inaccessible.
 - Hot tub/Jacuzzi must have locking cover, if not enclosed by pool fencing.
 - Pool fencing is at least 5 ft. high with gate that swings away from pool, with self-closing, self-latching gate
 - Above ground pools must be at least 5 feet high, in order to serve as own “fencing/barrier” when the ladder is removed.

Fire Safety

- Regularly test your smoke detector(s) and carbon monoxide detector(s) to ensure they operate properly.
- Have a 2A10BC fire extinguisher located on every level of home that is properly tagged or shows to be fully charged.
- Store any flammables in approved, proper containers in a locked, ventilated area; away from appliances. Gasoline should be in a proper gas container in a well ventilated, locked area.
- Make sure that fireplaces and wood stoves are inaccessible (with screen or similar barrier).
- With the holidays coming, be mindful of candles & matches in your home.

CHILD SAFETY LAWS, REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Child Safety Seat/Seatbelt Laws

As of January 1, 2022:

- Children **under 2 years of age** must ride in a rear-facing car seat unless the child weighs 40 or more pounds **OR** is 40 or more inches tall. The child should be secured in the back seat of the vehicle.
- By law, children who have outgrown a rear-facing safety seat, a forward-facing child seat is required. A forward-facing child seat with a harness is safest.
- Once children have outgrown the weight or height limit of their forward-facing harness seat the child is ready for a booster seat.
- Children must use a *belt-positioning booster seat* until they are *at least 4’9” tall and between 8-12 years old*.
- Passengers who are 16 years of age and over are subject to California's Mandatory Seat Belt law.

NOTE: California law requires all children 8 years of age or younger ride in the rear seat of a vehicle (with limited exceptions), however, it is strongly recommended by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that all children ride in the *back seat of a vehicle until 13 years of age*.

0-36 Month Requirements

- Infants must have crib or bassinet appropriate to child’s age/size.
- Crib mattress is firm and tight fitting (2 fingers cannot between mattress and side of crib)

- Crib or bassinet is placed away from potential hazards such as windows and window blind cords, pictures, dressers and shelves that could potentially fall
- Crib/bassinet sheet is clean, snug fitting and there are no blankets, pillows, stuffed toys, or other soft items are in the crib/bassinet that could pose a hazard to the infant's breathing (SIDS prevention).
- Infants are placed on their backs to sleep (SIDS prevention).
- Crib must meet federal crib requirements - crib must have been purchased *new after June 28, 2011*.
- All electrical outlets are covered
- Door or safety gate is in place if home has stairs to prevent falls
- Baby walker is *not* used; only stationary activity center

Helmet Safety Laws

In California, any child under the age of 18 is required by law to be wearing a helmet when riding:

- bicycle
- scooter
- skateboard
- or using roller skates

In addition, if an adult has a child passenger on their bike, who is under the age of 5, the child must by law wear a helmet. Purchase a well-fitting bicycle helmet for each child in your care and enforce that they wear it consistently. If in doubt about the fit, go to a reputable bicycle store where assistance with fitting the helmet can be provided.

Please also consider additional safety equipment such as elbow and knee protection. Report any injuries to Aspiranet immediately.

Supervision

Supervision is a key way to monitor safety and prevent incidents and accidents. While it is not possible to supervise children as all times, providing as much supervision and structure as possible, including use of other appropriate adults to help with supervision, is an important aspect of being a resource parent.

- Community Care Licensing Standard 88487.13 states that Resource Parents “shall provide care and supervision that meets the needs of a child or non-minor dependent and ensures health, safety, and wellbeing”.
- Every Resource Family needs to have an emergency supervision plan that addresses who will care for your foster children in your absence.
- Resource Parents need to be aware of where your foster children are and what they are doing at all times. Get to know their friends and friend's parents. Request phone numbers and addresses of friends. Provide transportation to/from outings so you know where they are and can set a plan for pick up.
- Every Resource Parent should have specific directions for a child to follow if they arrive home and adult supervision is not present.
- Foster children, when participating in potentially dangerous activities, must have adult supervision (e.g., swimming, snow or water skiing, etc.).
- Resource Parents should be particularly prudent with supervision of a newly placed child or youth. Always maintain close supervision both in your home and in the community while you're getting to know your child. Observe your foster child in different situations to learn the level of supervision needed.
- Within your home, encourage play/hanging out in common space within the home, rather than children playing in bedrooms, where supervision is more difficult. Reinforce appropriate boundaries such as knocking before entering bedrooms and bathrooms, appropriate clothing around the home, and monitoring of bathroom areas during bath/shower time.

Please reach out to your Aspiranet Social Worker for consultation should you have questions or concerns related to any requirements regarding home or child safety.

Please sign and return this page to your Aspiranet Social Worker for training credit.

My signature below indicates that I have completed the October 2022 "Home & Child Safety" training.

Signature Resource Parent #1

Date

Print Name Resource Parent #1

Signature Resource Parent #2

Date

Print Name Resource Parent #2

Aspiranet Authorized Signature

Date

Training credit: ____ minutes