

TOPIC: Health Care and The Role of Foster Parents

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Micro Training Course Developed by

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOSTER PARENT TRAINING CREDIT:

**Read through this self-study.*

**Fill out the "CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING" Questionnaire*

**Return to ACRF for 1.0 hour of training credit.*

As a licensed foster family, it's important to make sure that the youth in your care are getting the proper medical care to help them grow up strong and healthy, as well as what is required by the regulations. Let's review some of the requirements.

When a child first comes into your home....

Make sure to ask for the Consent for Emergency and Routine Care form. This form allows you to make routine medical appointments (such as physicals, dental or eye appointments) as well as consent to emergency medical care. Important fact: This form does not give a foster parent the ability to consent to non-emergency major medical care or approve the use of prescription or psychotropic medications.

At the time of placement:

- ✓ Request from the social worker the name of child's current medical provider and date of their last physical exam.
- ✓ Ensure the medical provider accepts Medicaid. You can search for a Medicaid approved provider by visiting: <https://www.medicare.gov/forms-help-and-resources/find-doctors-hospitals-and-facilities/quality-care-finder.html>
- ✓ If possible, maintain the same medical provider to provide consistency in the child's medical care.
- ✓ If the youth is Alaska Native or American Indian, and does not have an established provider, seek out the appropriate Tribal Health Organization to establish medical care.

Once you know who provides the child's medical services, let's look at the first 30 days of placement.

- If this is the child's first time in placement, no matter what age they are, schedule a physical exam within the first 30 days in your home.
- If the child has changed placements, is over the age of 3 and has not seen a doctor in the past year, schedule a physical exam within the first 30 days in your home.
- If the child has changed placements, is under the age of 3 and has not seen a doctor in the past 3 months, schedule a physical exam within the first 30 days in your home.

What do the regulations say about ongoing medical care?

The Offices of Children's Services follows the Healthy Kids, also known as E.P.S.D.T. (Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment) Program, for ongoing medical care guidelines for youth in custody listed at the end of this training. The schedule outlines required medical, vision, and dental checkups for youth in care.

E.P.S.D.T. also provides guidelines for immunizations of foster youth. Foster Parents should ensure youth in care are receiving the proper immunizations. Request from your child's social worker a copy of the youth's immunization records so you can ensure they stay on schedule.

Medications:

For common illness or injury, a foster parent can use over-the-counter drugs at the dose, duration and method of administration specified on the manufacturer's label. Some examples are: non-aspirin fever reducers or pain relievers, naturopathic remedies, vitamin and mineral supplements, diaper ointments and powders, sun screen, insect repellent.

A Foster Parent must first obtain written permission for the use of prescription medication—and it is the social worker's responsibility to get permission from the parent. OCS can give written permission if OCS is the legal guardian of the child. A Foster Parent may give prescription medicine and special medical procedures only in the dosage, at the intervals and in the manner prescribed by a doctor or legally authorized health provider. If a child is taking prescription medicine, keep the medication in its original container. This container should have a label showing the date filled, the expiration date, instructions, and the physician's or health provider's name. Keep all medications out of the reach of children. All medication should be stored in a way that children can't get to them.

Drugs prescribed for mental illness or behavioral problems are called psychotropic drugs. Psychotropic drugs must have the informed consent of birth parents or OCS approval if parental rights have been terminated. If medication for behavioral or mental problems (such as drugs for depression) is prescribed, seek approval from the social worker before administering to a child.

Medical Record Documentation

Finally, let's discuss the importance of keeping medical record documentation. Foster Parents are required to maintain medical, dental, immunization, and treatment records for youth in their care and provide copies of these documents to the child's social worker upon request. There are times however, when medical providers do not provide paperwork to Foster Parents. In those events, parents should document any medical, dental, vision, or other type of treatment for which documentation was not provided by the medical or dental provider of service. We recommend keeping a 3-ring binder for each child to organize medical records and make notes of appointments when documentation is not provided.

You can find the E.P.S.D.T. schedule at https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/periodicity_schedule.pdf.