

BABYSITTING AND RESPITE CHILDCARE POLICY

PURPOSE: To define the guidelines and procedures for assessing and approving babysitters and respite childcare providers.

POLICY: Respite and Babysitting Child Care Services are planned alternative care services that have the purpose of providing relief to the child's primary caregiver. New Horizons considers it essential that the foster/adoptive parent(s) are afforded ample time away from the children on a regular basis to assure that the foster/adoptive parent(s) are physically and psychologically equipped to parent children with basic and therapeutic levels of need. This policy is intended to provide procedures and qualifications necessary for others to provide respite and babysitting childcare.

PROCEDURES: New Horizons Foster Homes are provided \$20.00 a month per child to reimburse others to provide respite care. Individual homes may save their respite up to one year. This is renewed annually in an effort to encourage families to utilize their respite care on a regular basis. Adoptive parents are not provided with funds to reimburse others for respite care unless they cared for the adoptive child formally as a foster child and had not used their respite care resources during the year. Payment rates and arrangements are made between the foster/adoptive parents and will inform New Horizons whenever respite care is being provided, even when New Horizons funding is not utilized.

- I. Criteria for respite childcare providers:
 - A. Qualifications: Persons providing respite services must be 18 years old or older.
 - B. Experience: If caring for children receiving treatment services, provider must have 40 hours of prior childcare experience. If caring for children receiving childcare services, no prior childcare experience is required.
 - C. Training: Provider must have training in Infant, Child, & Adult CPR/First Aid, DFPS Trauma-Informed Care, Confidentiality, Reporting Abuse and Neglect, Respite Basics Online Training, and DFPS Online Psychotropic Medications. If caring for children 2 years old and under, SIDS/Shaken Baby/Brain Development training must be completed. If caring for children receiving treatment services, 16 hours of Peaceful Intervention must be completed.
 - D. References: Provider must make three (3) reference contacts that will be checked prior to them being allowed to provide babysitting and respite services.
 - E. Background Checks: New Horizons has the authority to conduct any or all of the following background screens on household members age 14 or older: Criminal background checks, child abuse neglect checks, and FBI Fingerprinting.
 - F. TB Testing: Proof of negative TB test for all household members.

G. Confidentiality: Agreement to follow the New Horizons Discipline and Confidentiality Policies.

II. Criteria for babysitters:

- A. Qualifications: Persons providing babysitting and respite services must be 18 years old or older or 16 years old with 40 hours of childcare experience (and cannot babysit for children receiving treatment services). Babysitters who are 16-18 can provide care for a maximum of 8 consecutive hours. Babysitters who are 18 can provide care for a maximum of 12 consecutive hours.
- B. Experience: If caring for children receiving treatment services, provider must be at least 18 years of age and have 40 hours of prior childcare experience. Babysitters who are 16 years old must have 40 hours of prior childcare experience and are not eligible to babysit for children receiving treatment services.
- C. Training: Babysitter must have training in infant, child, & adult CPR/First Aid, Confidentiality, and Reporting Abuse and Neglect. If caring for children 2 years old and under, SIDS/Shaken Baby/Brain Development training must be completed.
- D. Background Checks: New Horizons has the authority to conduct any or all of the following background screens on household members age 14 or older: Criminal background checks, child abuse neglect checks, and FBI Fingerprinting.
- E. TB Testing: Proof of negative TB test for all household members.
- F. Confidentiality: Agreement to follow the New Horizons Discipline and Confidentiality Policies.

III. Respite length of stay:

- A. A child may be in respite care for up to 14 consecutive days or 40 days each year.
 - a) A respite child care placement that is made because a child's foster home is under investigation for abuse or neglect does not count toward nor is it limited by the timeframes. However, these placements are limited to a maximum of 60 days.
 - b) If a child needs respite childcare services for more than 14 consecutive days or more than 60 days for an abuse or neglect investigation, this is considered a new placement and will not be respite childcare.

IV. Regulations of number of children

- A. If provider is caring for children receiving treatment services, a ratio of 1 adult to every 4 children must be maintained. If provider is caring for children receiving childcare services, a ratio of 1 adult to every 6 children must be maintained.

- V. Process - Foster parents are required to do the following each time the desire to utilize babysitting or respite services:
 - A. Contact their child placement staff, and
 - B. Request form will be completed and approved if appropriate.

- VI. Information Provided to Respite Service Provider - To ensure continuity of care, the following information is to be shared with the respite childcare services provider before placing the child in the home.
 - A. Specific needs of a child, including:
 - 1. All psychiatric and medical treatment currently being provided;
 - 2. Medication regimen and medication instructions;
 - 3. Authorization for medical treatment; and
 - 4. Any other needs of a child that should be addressed by the respite child-care services provider.
 - B. Non routine events taking place in the life of the child.
 - C. Emergency contact information, including the:
 - 1. Child's physician(s),
 - 2. Child's parent; and
 - 3. Agency's telephone number.
 - D. The child's history that may affect the provider's ability to provide care for the child including:
 - 1. Background of abuse and/or neglect;
 - 2. History physical aggression or sexual behavior problems;
 - 3. History of fire setting;
 - 4. History of harm to animals;
 - 5. History of suicidal ideations and attempts; and
 - 6. History of runaway behaviors.

- VI. Respite/Intermittent Alternative Care – Between 72 hours and 14 days.
 - A. Must not be used if detrimental to the youth;
 - B. Requires written approval from DFPS Caseworker;
 - C. Must follow requirements and guidelines of the Minimum Standards;
 - D. Must meet minimum qualifications as outlined for Respite Care Providers;
 - E. Appropriateness of Respite/Intermittent Alternative Care will be documented and placed in the youth's record; and

- F. To ensure continuity of care the following information must be provided to the Respite Care Provider:
1. Specific needs of the youth;
 2. Medical care currently provided;
 3. Psychiatric care currently provided;
 4. Medication regimen and instructions;
 5. Psychological care currently provided;
 6. Sleeping instructions;
 7. Discipline information;
 8. Relevant appointments such as sibling visits; and other pertinent information that benefit the youth and provider.