



## Normalcy and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard

**Purpose:** Provide knowledge to partners in child welfare to ensure children maintain stability and positive outcomes will in out-of-home care.

**Goal:** To help foster care providers, child welfare workers, and other community partners understand the importance of providing opportunities for normal childhood experiences for children and youth in foster care.



Welcome to Normalcy and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard. The purpose of this training is to provide knowledge to partners in Child welfare to ensure children maintain stability and positive outcomes while placed in out-of-home care. The goal of this training is to help foster care providers, child welfare workers, and other community partners understand the importance of providing opportunities for normal childhood experiences for children and youth in foster care. In West Virginia, any child who comes into care under a chapter 49 abuse and neglect proceeding is entitled to participate in age-appropriate activities for the child's emotional well-being and development of valuable life-coping skills. The reasonable and prudent parent standard applies to foster/adoptive resource homes, group homes and residential treatment settings.



## Normalcy and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard

### WV Code Chapter 49

Child in care is entitled to:  
Participate in age-appropriate activities

Prudent Parenting Standard applies to:

- Foster/adoptive resources homes
- Group homes
- Residential treatment settings

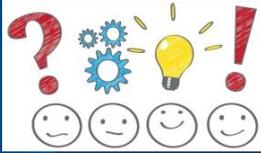
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# What is normalcy?



You may ask yourself “what is normalcy?”

# What is normalcy?



Normalcy can be defined as the ability to “easily participate in age-appropriate social, scholastic, and enrichment activities.”



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# What is normalcy?



The Bureau for Children and Families shall make efforts to:

Normalize the lives of children in their custody and to empower a caregiver to approve or disapprove a child's participation in activities based on the caregiver's own assessment using a reasonable and prudent parent standard.



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# What is normalcy?



The Juvenile Law Center (2015) writes that normalcy is “ensuring a child’s range of experiences while in foster care is typical of the range of experiences of any child of the same age.”



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Think about your own child’s experiences with school activities, their relationship with peers, and family activities. Take a few moments to write down some examples from your own children or children that you know.

Some examples you may have come up with could be having sleepovers with friends, going camping, playing baseball or football, being in the girl scouts or boy scouts, dating, getting a drivers license, the list can go on and on. We all understand how these childhood experiences are important for promoting the well-being of our own children so wouldn’t it be just as important, if not more, for children and youth in foster care?

It is important for children to practice the skills they will need as an adult while they are still in a protected environment. These experiences help them build relationships, develop skills, and prepare for adulthood.”

# What is normalcy?

Congregate/Institutional Care/Residential Facilities

**Normalcy provisions** apply to **all** children and youth in substitute care, including those in congregate or institutional care.



# What is normalcy?

Congregate/Institutional Care/Residential Facilities

All congregate settings, including the appointment of a “caregiver” as a contract condition.



# What is normalcy?

Congregate/Institutional Care/Residential Facilities

The law requires that a designated official be onsite at all times to exercise the reasonable and prudent parent standard.



# What is normalcy?

## Congregate/Institutional Care/Residential Facilities



This ensures that children in group homes or other residential facilities have access to someone who is trained in making decisions using this standard and can consent to the youth's participation in activities.

Federal law requires that these terms be included in contracts between the state or local child welfare agency and a congregate care provider.



# What is normalcy?



## Think About It?

Your own child's experiences with school activities, their relationship with peers, and family activities.



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# What is normalcy?

## Think About It?

### Some examples:

- Sleep overs with friends
- Camping
- Sports
- Scouts
- Dating
- Drivers license



Some examples you may have come up with could be having sleepovers with friends, going camping, playing baseball or football, being in the girl scouts or boy scouts, dating, getting a drivers license, the list can go on and on. We all understand how these childhood experiences are important for promoting the well-being of our own children so wouldn't it be just as important, if not more, for children and youth in foster care?

# What is normalcy?

## Important Why?

So children can practice important skills they will need as adults, while they are in a protected environment.

### Helps build:

- Builds relationships
- Develop skills and prepare for adulthood



It is important for children to practice the skills they will need as an adult while they are still in a protected environment. These experiences help them build relationships, develop skills, and prepare for adulthood.”

# Why is normalcy important?



Why is normalcy important? Let's take a look at some real life stories from youth in foster care who explain why normalcy is so important and what it meant to them. On the next slide to watch the video. When the video is finished please hit the escape key on your keyboard to return to the slide show.

# Normalcy and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard

Video – Click the vide below to view!

## Normalcy: Equal Treatment for Foster Youth

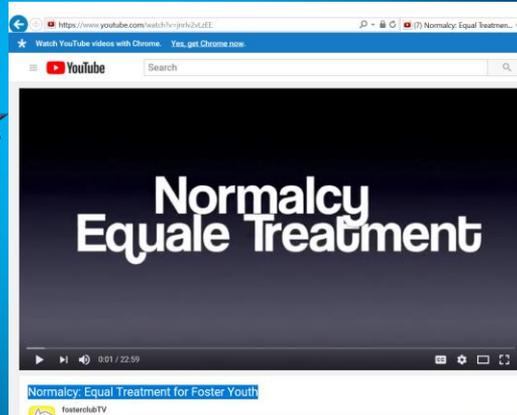
*Presented by: fosterclubtv*

Video run time: 22:59

★ Video Link: ★

A separate window should appear once you have click the link below.  
If video does not load – than you can copy and paste into your window brower.

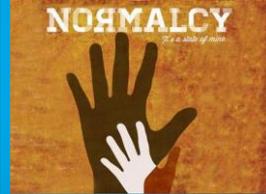
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsndv2vtzEE>



The purpose of this video is to give supplement to the training.

# Why is normalcy important?

When youth are not able to participate in activities that are needed for development, they are often unprepared for life as an adult. Many youth who age out of foster care experience unemployment or inadequate income, homelessness, and incarceration.



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# Why is normalcy important?



The development of the adolescent brain provides a “window of opportunity.” Just as relationships are the key to positive early childhood development, relationships continue to be necessary in adulthood.



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Each year, for thousands of young people in foster care, turning 18 means losing the supports—financial, educational, social, and otherwise—that they count on. Their peers in the general population get support from their families throughout emerging adulthood, becoming more independent as their brains develop through age 25. But when young people leave foster care without having a permanent family—when they age out—what should be a gradual transition often becomes an abrupt loss that puts them at risk of negative outcomes.

## Why is normalcy important?



Foster caregivers need to help teens navigate through this transitional time by providing them “normal” experiences and helping them think through life decisions (Henderson, 2011; Farruggia, 2006).



Foster caregivers need to help teens navigate through this transitional time by providing them “normal” experiences and helping them think through life decisions. This is what we do everyday for our own children; we have to make sure we are doing the same things children in our care.

## Why is normalcy important?

Youth in care need normalcy so that they can build their social capital. Social capital is the “value that is created by investing in relationships with others through processes of trust and reciprocity.



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# Why is normalcy important?



Allowing youth to test boundaries while in care can help them learn about natural consequences and the importance of making positive choices.



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If you have children or have been around children for any amount of time you know that children naturally experiment and push boundaries in their quest to mature and learn to be a part of society. Not everything they try will be right every time. Parents are part of their lives to correct them and teach them appropriate child behavior. It is, after all, better to learn young the realities and expectations of life than to learn later in a much higher risk situation.

This concludes the end of “Lesson 1”

Please, return to Blackboard Course  
and continue to “Lesson 2”



Please take a moment to complete Lesson two, where you will learn about what it means to be a reasonable and prudent parent.