****

**RESOURCE FAMILY HANDBOOK**

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this manual is to provide basic guidelines of the Krista Foster Homes program for Krista Resource Families. Although we have attempted to make this manual inclusive, it is impossible to anticipate every situation that may arise in your experience as a Resource Family. Your Krista staff is available to answer questions and provide assistance when it is necessary. Please study the policies and procedures set forth in this manual, as you will be responsible for the contents.

**HISTORY AND MISSION**

Krista Foster Homes is a board run, non-profit, Christian agency and has been licensed by the state of California since June of 1992. The name “Krista” was chosen as it is a derivative of the biblical Greek name for Christ which reflects the spiritual foundation of the agency. Krista was founded in order to provide a home and family to those who could not live with their original or birth families because of abuse or neglect.

Our mission here at Krista is to find and equip safe, loving families who demonstrate God’s love and acceptance to those in their care. Homes in which hurting, wounded children and young adults; who cannot live with their original or birth families because of abuse, trauma or neglect, can begin to heal, understand, and accept their God given worth, and destiny. Our ultimate goal is for these children or youth to establish permanent life-long family relationships with either their natural families or permanent Resource Families/adoptive families; a developed relationship with God, emotional and spiritual healing, and the ability to function with success in their community.

**PROGRAM GOALS AND SERVICE PROVISION**

Krista Foster Homes is committed to excellence by certifying families with the skills, values, and motivation to provide quality care to children when an out-of-home placement becomes necessary. Krista foster families help meet the comprehensive needs of children in foster care through committed, nurturing, family home settings. Our ultimate goal is for these children or youth to establish permanent life-long family relationships either with their natural families or permanent foster/adoptive families. Our Social Work staff provides training and support to the foster families, social services to the children, and services to the natural families of the children when appropriate.

Krista Foster Homes is therapeutic in nature. Treatment provision is a cooperative effort among administrators, social workers, foster parents, placing workers, the child and when possible his/her natural family. Krista’s staff is committed to training and providing ongoing consultation and services to foster families. They also work to ensure that the children’s needs are met and that they have as normal a childhood as possible. Krista Foster Homes creates a supportive, therapeutic milieu providing social, educational, and recreational activities for our foster families on a regular basis. Krista Resource Families also have access to the agency library and peer support.

**WAYS CHILDREN CAN BE PLACED IN FOSTER CARE**

**Children’s Protective Services:**

The child is in danger through no fault of his/her own, he/she has been abandoned, neglected, physically or sexually abused by his/her parents or guardian (Welfare and Institutions code 300).

**Juvenile Probation:**

1. The child is incorrigible, refuses to obey his/her parents, is habitually truant, or violates curfew laws (Welfare and Institutions code 601).

1. The child has violated a law of the state, the United States, or an ordinance of any city or county (Welfare and Institutions code 602).

**Voluntary:**

Under limited conditions, parents may voluntarily place their children in foster care. Parents wanting to place their children must work with Social Services. Social Services places the child for a specific period of time and the parent agrees to work on a reunification plan. Voluntary placement makes use of county funding and is generally done in cases of extreme need. Parents can and likely will be charged a portion of the foster care payment.

**Private:**

In some circumstances, a parent may want to place a child in foster care without the involvement of Social Services. If the natural parents request foster placement, they must work directly with Krista Foster Homes to place the child. The standard placement procedures are followed except a placing worker is not involved. The natural parents assume all financial responsibility for the placement.

**County Adoptions:**

County Adoptions places children in foster care when out-of-home placement is again warranted for a child who has been adopted.

**INTAKE AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURE**

The intake process includes an initial evaluation and needs and services appraisal of the child if available, selection of an appropriate Resource Family, placement of the child in the Resource Family, and implementation of the initial treatment plan.

**Initial Evaluation:**

The staff of Krista Foster Homes gathers information over the phone, and if available pertinent documents such as court reports, school records, medical history, as well as reports from prior placements. The Krista social worker will interview the child’s placement worker and when possible interview the child as well. When appropriate, the child’s natural parent(s) and/or prior care provider will also be interviewed.

**Selection of Foster Family:**

A child is accepted if a foster family is available to successfully meet the child’s needs and displays compatibility in terms of familystructure and dynamics,individual personality dynamics, and the ability to respect the child’s race, religion and social class. Krista Foster Homes’ social workers place a child in a foster family when good judgment, prayer, and practice indicate well to excellent prognosis for a successful placement. However, we sometimes place children on an emergency or short term basis with the hope that the placement will be successful.

**Placement:**

If the selected Resource Family indicates strong interest in the child based on the information available, a visit is arranged when feasible. Following the visit, a decision is made by all parties regarding the placement of the child in that home. The Krista social worker visits the Resource Family and child at least once during the first week of placement to help facilitate the transition into the new home. The initial needs and services appraisal, is completed within the first 30 days of placement. When needed or feasible, a CHDP and Dental visit is set up as well.

**4. Placement Changes:**

A foster child can be removed from the Resource Family home by the placing worker, Krista social work staff, or the Resource Family (in cooperation with Krista staff) if the child is having serious behavioral problems and/or cannot adjust to the Resource Family. To ensure that another suitable placement can be found for the child, at least a seven-day notice is required when the foster parent requests the removal of a child from their home. The Krista social worker will meet with the child and Resource Family to assess whether the problems can be resolved and to aid in this process. When a child poses a threat to him/herself or others, or if there has been an abuse or alleged abuse in the Resource Family home, the child will be removed from the home immediately.

Planned discharges are contingent upon evaluation of all aspects of the placement of the child in the Resource Family home, including but not limited to, overall behavior of child, progress of natural parents in the reunification plan, and the long-term treatment plan. All planned discharges are a coordinated effort involving (when possible) the child, Resource Family, Krista social worker, Krista administrator, placing worker, and the child’s natural family.

**II. FOSTER PARENTS/ RESOURCE FAMILIES**

**FOSTER PARENT AND RESOURCE FAMILY MISSION**

At Krista Foster Homes we believe that becoming a Resource Family is a lifestyle ministry to children, teens, nonminor dependents, and natural parents. Our goal for each child in our care is for them to experience and know the love of God and the healing He can bring to their lives. We believe this is accomplished best through giving foster children the physical, emotional, and spiritual care that only a loving family can provide. Therefore, Resource Families are expected to participate in the gathering of believers to strengthen their faith and spiritual development, as well as include their foster children in church activities. We encourage our families to pray for and to pray with children in their care, as well as birth parents, and to demonstrate a lifestyle of personal relationship with God as well. Furthermore, as a lifestyle ministry, we ask that our Resource Families uphold the values and traditions of the Christian faith in their home. Regarding our single parent families, we ask that if a resource parent is dating, to do so utilizing Christian dating principles.

**BASIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESOURCE FAMILIES**

* Provide children with the nurture, care, clothing, transportation, medical treatment, and training suited to his/her needs.
* Develop an understanding of the responsibilities, objectives and requirements of the agency in regard to the care of foster children and work with the agency in planning for those in your home.
* Maintain adequate supply of food at all times. At least three days of fresh produce and enough meal staples to supply three full meals and two snacks per day for three days. All food groups must be present.
* Make memory or life books with or for the children in your care.
* Encourage the maintenance of the natural parent-child relationship.
* Not use corporal punishment; punishment before the group; deprivation of meals, monetary allowances, visits from parents, home visits, or Krista organized events; threat of removal; or any type of degrading or humiliating punishment, but instead use alternative constructive methods of discipline.
* Respect and keep information regarding each child and his/her family confidential.
* Transport or make arrangements for transportation to and from school, encourage extracurricular activities, help with homework and make arrangements for tutoring when necessary.
* Participate in I.E.P. meetings (independent educational planning with school), meetings with the child’s placement worker, I.L.S. (Independent Living Skills), intake meetings, Krista agency case planning, and provide written reviews of this child at the request of Krista Foster Homes.
* Immediately notify agency of significant changes in your foster child’s health, behavior, or location.
* Schedule and take children in your care to all medical and dental appointments. CHDP’s (physical exams), over the counter meds form, and Dental Exams are to be completed during the first thirty days of placement, unless one had already been done within the year at a previous placement. CHDP’s are required annually and dental visits twice a year. If the child has never had an eye exam, an initial exam is recommended.
* Submit copies of any pertinent information you receive to Krista, such as school reports, medical and dental reports, court reports, and psychological or psychiatric reports when you receive them from an outside source.
* Maintain each child’s home file on a weekly basis. Under no circumstance may a child see their or anyone else’s home file.
* Turn in monthly paperwork for each child by the 10th of the following month.
* Give this agency notice of at least 7 days of intent to discharge a child from your home, unless it is agreed upon with the agency that less notice is necessary.
* Conform to Community Care Licensing (CCL) and RFA recertification requirements.
* Provide county placement workers, state Community Care Licensing analysts, and child advocates, (CASAs, Court Appointed Special Advocates), and Independent Living Skills Case Managers access to your home and foster children. (This typically occurs with notice but can also occur without notice.)
* Notify the agency immediately if an application is made on behalf of a child in your care for any kind of income. Examples of income include, but are not limited to: Child support payments, Veterans Benefits, Railroad Retirement, Social Security, RSHDI, and Supplemental, Security Income/State Supplemental Program (SSI/SSP).
* Contact Krista immediately if your foster child receives or may receive any kind of payment resulting from a litigation or settlement.
* Abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages in the presence of your or any foster child and make sure all alcohol is locked and inaccessible to any foster child.
* Although you are not required, we at Krista Foster Homes encourage you to pray for the well-being of the foster child and their birth parents or legal guardians.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING CARE AND SUPERVISION**

A Resource family shall provide care and supervision that meets the needs of a child and ensures health, safety, and well-being; in accordance with the needs and services plan of a child, the placement agreement, and transitional independent living plan, if applicable.

A Resource Family may arrange for other care and supervision of a child as follows:

* **An occasional short-term babysitter:**

 If a Resource Family anticipates being absent from the home for less than 24 hours, on an occasional basis, the Resource Family is permitted to arrange for an occasional short-term babysitter to provide care and supervision to a child. The Resource Family shall apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard, in determining and selecting an appropriate babysitter for occasional short-term use, including determining whether it is appropriate for a child or nonminor dependent to act as an occasional short-term babysitter. However, a child shall

 not be required to babysit.

 An occasional short-term babysitter may be under 18 years of age, but shall have the maturity, experience, and ability necessary to provide adequate care and supervision to a child.

 When a child is in the care of an occasional short-term babysitter, a Resource Family shall ensure that the babysitter knows how to contact the Resource Family in case of an emergency.

* **An alternative caregiver:** If a Resource Family anticipates being absent from the home for longer than 24 hours, on an occasional basis, the Resource Family is permitted to arrange for an alternative caregiver to provide care and supervision to a child unless prohibited by the child’s social worker or probation officer, court order, or the foster family agency.

A Resource Family shall apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard in determining and selecting an appropriate alternative caregiver.

An alternative caregiver shall meet the following requirements:

1. Be 18 or older.
2. Have a criminal record clearance or exemption.
3. Have the willingness and ability to and shall comply with applicable laws and Article 6.
4. Have the willingness and ability to provide care and supervision to a child, taking into consideration the age, maturity, behavioral tendencies, mental and physical health, medications, abilities and limitations, developmental level of, and court orders for a child.

 The care and supervision during a Resource Family’s absence shall occur in the Resource Family’s home or an alternative caregiver’s home.

1. If an alternative caregiver will provide care and supervision in his or her home, a Resource Family shall apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to determine that the alternative caregiver’s home is safe and appropriate for the child and the child’s personal rights will be respected.

 Prior to a Resource Family’s absence, the Resource Family shall provide verbal or written notification to the social worker or probation officer for a child as follows:

1. The dates the Resource Family plans to be absent from the home.
2. The name, telephone number, and address, if applicable, of the alternative caregiver.
3. An emergency telephone number where the Resource Family can be contacted during his or her absence.

 A Resource Family shall obtain prior approval from the social worker or probation officer for a child, for any absence that exceeds 72 hours.

 Before entrusting a child to an alternative caregiver, a Resource Family shall provide the alternative caregiver with the following:

1. Information about the emotional, behavioral, medical, or physical conditions of a child, if any.
2. Any medication for which an alternative caregiver must assist a child with self-administration consistent with instructions from the child’s physician.
3. The name and telephone number of the social worker or probation officer for a child and the Resource Family’s emergency contact information.

* **Respite Care:** A Resource Family may use respite care approved by a county child welfare agency or probation department. A respite caregiver shall be an approved relative or NREFM, a licensed foster family home, a certified family home, or a Resource Family.
* **Leaving a Child Alone:** If a Resource Family anticipates being absent from the home on an occasional basis, the Resource Family may leave a child over age 10 in the home without adult supervision, but shall not leave a child unsupervised overnight. As a Resource Family, when determining the appropriateness of leaving a child over age 10 in the home without adult supervision, the Resource Family shall apply reasonable and prudent parent standard.

Before leaving a child alone, a Resource Family shall ensure that the child knows the following:

1. Where emergency numbers are posted.
2. Emergency procedures.
3. Where and how to contact the Resource Family.
* **Licensed and license-exempt child care.**
1. Licensed Child Day Care Facility: A Resource Family may arrange for a child to be cared for by a licensed child day care facility or a licensed family day care home. (pg. 186)
2. Relative: A Resource Family may arrange for a child to be cared for by a relative if contact with that relative is approved by the child’s social worker or probation officer.
3. Public recreation programs.
4. Extended day care programs operated by public or private schools.
5. Any child day care program that offers temporary child care services to parents
6. Any program that provides activities for children of an instructional nature in a classroom-like setting (pg. 187)
* A Resource Family may permit a child to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural and social activities. (see pg. 191)
* **Other:**
1. **Parked Vehicle:** A Resource Family who chooses to leave a child in a parked vehicle shall do the following:
	* + - 1. Comply with the requirements of Vehicle Code section 15620.
				2. Apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to determine whether it is appropriate to leave the child in a parked vehicle.
2. A Resource Family is responsible for ensuring care and supervision of the children of a minor parent placed in the home.
	1. A Resource Family shall provide direct care and supervision of the children of a minor parent during the hours that the minor parent is unavailable or unable to provide care and supervision.
	2. Unless restricted by a child’s needs and services plan or court order, a Resource Family shall permit and facilitate connections between a child and his or her relatives and nonrelative extended family members and other caring and committed adults.
* In permitting and facilitating the connections, a Resource Family is not required to take any action that would impair the health and safety of a child.

**RESOURCE FAMILY TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT**

Resource Family trainings are offered at least twelve times during the year through this agency. Topics are pertinent to CCL and RFA requirements and issues encountered in the foster care setting. Our trainings include but are not limited to: the role of the resource family, prudent parenting, positive discipline and the importance of self-esteem, effects of child abuse and neglect on child development, child abuse, the rights of a foster child, cultural needs of children, accessing health and educational resources, health issues in foster care, managing assaultive behavior, age appropriate child development, and permanency options for children in foster care. Training methods include agency and guest speakers, DVD’s, lectures and discussion groups, as well as online trainings. Trainings will be conducted by qualified professionals and representatives of their specific field of expertise.

New Resource Families are required to have at least twelve hours of initial training and 24 hours per year thereafter. In addition to the Krista trainings, up to twelve hours may be accumulated by attending relevant seminars in the community or online. These community or online trainings need to be approved by a Krista social worker and verifying documentation of participation needs to be submitted to the Krista office in order to receive credit for these hours. Furthermore, a Resource Family attending college may be credited for up to six hours of Resource Family training time if participating in a class with content related to the population of children we serve. Such courses may include sociology, psychology, social problems, child development, etc. Documentation including a class syllabus and copy of a report card indicating course completion will be required for our office files. First Aid and CPR class participation hours count only toward the initial training hours prior to certification. However, Resource Families are required to keep current in CPR & First Aid even though they will no longer be receiving training hours for them. Furthermore, water safety training is required if supervising foster children in water when a lifeguard is not present.

**RESOURCE FAMILY HOME FILE**

A Resource Family shall maintain copies of current certificates verifying completion of age-appropriate cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid training.

In addition, copies of current RFA certification and other continuing education certificates and records should be maintained in a home file. The home file is also a good place to keep any notes the Resource Family may keep in regards to their interaction and provision of services as Resource parents to foster children.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

Krista provides ongoing support to Resource Families. A social worker will be assigned to each family and will maintain frequent contact with the parents. The social worker will meet with the parent(s) at least twice a month at a scheduled day and time. The social worker will make phone contact the week that he/she is not at the home, and be available if the family requires his/her assistance.

**CODE OF ETHICS**

Here at Krista we hold to the value that caring for children is near and dear to God’s heart. As a Resource Family with Krista we ask that you agree to these Code of Ethics and incorporate them into your value system as well.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR RESOURCE FAMILIES

Values:

1. I will regard the welfare of the child as the primary obligation.
2. I will provide a safe and nurturing environment conducive to the development of each foster child in care.
3. I will respect the confidentiality of the child in care and the child’s family, only sharing such information with other professions if it is felt that such information would benefit the child, their family or if sharing is requested by law.
4. I will refrain from unprofessional comments about the foster child or their family.
5. I will respect the rights of children in my care.
6. I will respect the worth of all individuals regardless of ability, religion, sex or natural ancestry and I will strive to support the cultural and religious heritage of children in care.
7. I will recognize and accept each child’s uniqueness and individuality.

**ACCEPTABLE CONDUCT**

Should a Resource Family fail to abide by the Code of Ethics as set forth, disciplinary action may be taken which can result in the removal of children from the home.

**RESOURCE FAMILY’S RIGHTS:**

* To be treated with dignity and respect.
* To receive adequate training and ongoing support.
* To refuse placement of a child whose needs they feel they cannot meet.
* To be reimbursed for the cost of caring for a foster child.
* To obtain a clear understanding of their role as foster parents and the

roles of the agency and the natural parent.

* To continue in their own family patterns, routines, and values, so long as these do not infringe on their foster child’s rights.
* To have knowledge of those things concerning the foster child that will

have direct bearing on daily living patterns, as well as any potential dangers from child or family.

* To obtain all biographical and medical information on a child prior to or at the time of placement.
* To have visitations between child and family be reasonable and fair.
* To have knowledge of the appropriate appeal process in the case of disagreement with the department.
* To be involved with the placement worker in the ongoing planning for the foster child, especially in areas that will affect the foster home.
* To support from the agency social worker, in an effort to do an effective job in caring for the child.
* To refuse placement of a child in the foster home or request the removal of the child from the foster home.
* To obtain timely financial reimbursement.
* To have your schedule considered when plans are made for visitation with a child's parents and siblings.
* To receive notice of department plans or court proceedings affecting a child's placement.
* To have priority consideration when a foster child becomes available for adoption.
* To be provided a fair and timely investigation of foster home complaints

when charged with abuse or neglect.

**WHEN A CHILD ENTERS YOUR HOME**

When a child enters your home, they will react in their own unique way. From the beginning, the Resource Family should work on developing an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the background and individuality of each child. It’s important that the Resource Family be flexible and patient in allowing each child to find their place in the home.

It’s also important to remember that when a new child moves into the home, changes will occur. Everyone will have a little less of each other’s time and a little less private time. Because relationships are important, it is important that everyone be aware of and prepared to accept the changes that will occur within the family.

A few things you need to do when a child enters your home:

* Welcome, introduce to family members and give a tour of your home, showing where he/she will be sleeping and where to store possessions.
* Explain your house/family rules and behavioral expectations, including chores.
* Explain your family’s schedule of bedtime, wake-up, etc.
* Provide hygiene items as necessary.
* Show the youth the emergency and disaster plan, explaining exits on the floor plan and relocation site in case of a disaster, such as a fire.
* Review the child’s rights with the youth.
* Inform the child of our inventory process, then inventory (list) all possessions coming into your home. If time does not allow, inventory just the necessary items for that day until a later time allows you to finish.
* You may want to observe for or check the child for head lice, especially when coming directly from their biological family.

**WITHIN THE 1ST WEEK OF PLACEMENT:**

* Finish the inventory of possessions.
* Enroll child in school.
* Make appointment for CHDP, dental, and eye exams as necessary.
* Describe adjustment and observed needs and behavior to Krista Staff.
* Shop for clothing if child is in serious need of clothing.
* Introduce child to community, such as your extended family members, neighbors, family, friends, church friends, children/youth pastor, etc.

**WITHIN THE 1ST MONTH OF PLACEMENT:**

* Arrange for medical, dental, and eye exams.
* Provide allowance on a weekly basis including signing of allowance receipt form.
* Provide haircut if necessary, wanted, or allowed.
* Shop for clothing with the child by the end of the month.

**MONTHLY PAPERWORK**

Monthly paperwork for each child in your home is due no later than the 10th of the following month. This paperwork includes Monthly Allowance Report, Clothing Purchased Monthly, and Medical, Dental and Therapy Appointments. If your child is on any type of medication or has had a doctor appointment, then this paperwork would be due as well; a signed Health Provider Contact Form for each doctor appointment, a Medication Log, and a Centrally Stored Medication and Destruction Record.

**RELATIONSHIP WITH BIRTH PARENTS**

One of the most difficult aspects of foster parenting is understanding the problems of the natural parents and the reasons leading to the removal of their children from their home. Most parents who abuse or neglect their children are hurting people who have a poor self-image, are isolated and were abused or neglected as children themselves. They often lack the basic knowledge about adequately caring for a child, have extreme stress in their lives with few or no support systems. Typically, they struggle with emotional problems interfering with caring for a child, are immature and desperately want to be loved themselves, and lack the knowledge of the love of God in their lives. Many of these parents have some chemical addiction that greatly interferes with their abilities to parent appropriately. However, despite these problems, many of these natural parents do utilize the help offered and overcome incredible difficulties in order to be reunified with their children. Trying to understand the parent without condemning is extremely important. Praying for the natural parents is even more important. Remember, the natural parents are God’s first choice and He forgives and heals. This is our number one goal for these children.

It may be helpful for foster parents to keep a couple of things in mind in working with foster children when their birth parents may be involved. First, children most often have a commitment to their birth parents regardless of the neglect or abuse that may have occurred in the home. The experiences that children share with their birth parents and siblings will always be a part of their life. As children get older, they may or may not show an interest in maintaining contact with their birth parents and other relatives even if parental rights have not been terminated. For older foster children, it is important to assist the youth in developing long term connections with relatives that have been a part of their life. As these youths become adults, they may look towards relatives for comfort, support and holidays. Secondly, the neglect and abuse children experience are often a product of generational neglect and abuse. Parents may have been exposed to no other parenting styles. Many times, those parents are committed to providing a nurturing home for their children to return to and you as a Resource Family are a support to both the children and their birth parents to model and teach loving and caring strategies of parenting. Your true measure of success may be that for the next generation, it will be the first generation without abuse and neglect thanks to your caring and teaching.

**RIGHTS OF BIRTH PARENTS:**

* The right to be included in plans and team decision making meetings for the child’s placement.
* The right to be heard at hearings.
* The right to have their children maintain his/her own family name.
* The right to be informed of their child’s illness, runaway and other unusual incidents.
* The right to make some major medical decisions.
* The right to make educational decisions.
* The right to assistance and receive support from the social worker in using appropriate resources to affect reunification.
* The right to visit and enjoy their child, to embrace and love him or her, and to nurture and improve their relationship with their child. To be involved in as many aspects of the child’s life as feasible.
* The right to learn from their past mistakes, bring about change in their behavior and to have their child returned home when the necessary changes required by the Court or Agency have been made.

**WORKING WITH THE BIRTH PARENT(S)**
[www.fosterjustice.com](http://www.fosterjustice.com)

It is in the best interests of the child that you work with the birth parents and cooperate with visitations, for many reasons:

1. The child may be returned to the birth parents even if you believe their fitness is marginal. Parental rights are so strong, the child may be returned even if the department and the court agree with you. If the child is going to be returned to the birth parents, you want the birth parents to be the best they can be.
2. If the birth parents realize you are trying to help them, you may develop a positive relationship that will allow you continued contact even after the child has been returned. This allows you to help them parent the child that may well have emotional and behavioral issues. It also helps the child deal with the transition, and helps you be sure that the child really is okay.
3. If the case moves towards termination of parental rights (TPR), and you have an established positive relationship with the birth parents, it is more likely they will agree to an open adoption. This is often preferable to TPR because it establishes permanency for the child sooner, often a year sooner.
4. Cooperating with visitations makes you the good guy. Failure to fully cooperate demonstrates to the court that you do not act in the child’s best interests.
5. Lots of visitation can help maintain the parental bond that was hurt by removal. It can also reveal deficiencies. Scheduling lots of visitation can make the parent succeed or fail *early*, so that permanency can be established sooner.
6. If you and the department are bending over backwards to help the birth parent succeed in visitations, and the birth parent still cannot get out of bed or stay sober, it makes the case for TPR all that stronger. If, however, you have not cooperated with visitations, it gives the birth parent another excuse.

**REIMBURSEMENT**

Krista Foster Homes reimburses Resource Families for the care they provide to foster children in their home. A minimum amount of the reimbursement is established by the State Rate Setting Board and varies according to the age of the foster child.

Reimbursements are made per month per foster child. One month means the first day of the calendar month to the last day of that month. When a child is placed in a home during the month, the amount of the reimbursement is pro-rated daily through the end of that month. Reimbursement for care of foster children is determined by each night a child spends in the foster home. The foster families receive reimbursement checks between the 18th and 20th of each month for the previous month’s care of a child.

Please keep a record of the days a child is in your home and let us know if perchance we miscalculate your reimbursement pay. If a child runs away from your home you may be asked to be prepared to take them back. The county calls this "keeping the bed open" and will ***sometimes continue to pay us*** for this child's care if he/she returns during a reasonable time frame. Each county's policy differs. We may be paid for one or two days or up to two weeks waiting to see if a child returns. We pay you at the normal reimbursement rate for the days for which the county pays us, even though the child is not actually in your home. However, if you decide to terminate caring for this child in your home, we discontinue reimbursement payment to you from the day the child leaves.

**RESPITE PAY**

Regarding respite or temporary care reimbursement, we are paying you to care for a foster child that does not normally live with you. This rate will be as follows:

0-8 $31.00 per 24 hrs.

9-14 $33.00 per 24 hrs.

 15-19 $35.00 per 24 hrs.

If a child is placed in your home while his/her Resource Family is using their respite days, or if a child “blows” out of his/her current placement, we reimburse you at the respite rate for up to 3 days. If this child remains in your home for more than 3 days, the reimbursement converts to the rate normally given for the age of the child. If you are temporarily housing a child that has “blown” out of their current placement and decide one day you would like to have this child live in your home on a permanent or placement basis, notify us to discuss if this child is an appropriate placement for your home. If agreed, and after consulting with the county placement worker, we make the placement of the child with you he/she will no longer have a respite status. The respite rate ends on that day or after the 3rd day, whichever one is sooner, and the reimbursement for care changes to the rate normally given for the age of this child.

Krista Foster Homes has a system set up for Resource Families to earn paid respite days. If you have one or two foster youth living in your home, you earn one paid respite day every **other** month. If you have three or more living in your home, you will earn one respite day per month. Respite can be used for any needed care, not just overnight. However, it tends to be more beneficial to use for overnights. A family friend or relative that has been fingerprint cleared with Krista, and has current CPR and First Aid training can provide respite in your home as well as any certified Krista Respite Worker or Resource Family. A Resource Family can only save up to twelve days. If you have used your respite days or have not yet earned any respite days and need respite care for your foster child/children you will not be reimbursed for those days your foster youth is in respite care. If possible, please contact the Krista office at least one week prior to using your respite days, regardless of whether or not we need to make the necessary arrangements for your foster child’s respite care. Forms for Respite care are available from the office and must be signed and turned in before the end of the month in which respite has been done, in order for the respite worker to receive their reimbursement on time.

**FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Food:**

Resource Families are required to have an adequate supply of food at all times which includes perishables. At least three days of fresh produce and enough meal staples to supply three full meals and two snacks per day for three days. Meals are to include a healthy diet from the basic food groups. The social worker is responsible for monitoring the food supply when visiting the home and through communication with the child. Children who attend school are eligible for free meal.

A Resource Family shall provide or ensure nutritious meals, snacks, and beverages. In addition, they shall meet any special dietary needs, as documented in the needs and services plan for a child, or as recommended by the physician of a child. The quantity and quality of food available to household members shall be equally available to a foster child.

A Resource Family shall invite a foster child or nonminor dependent to participate in all household meals. They shall ensure that a foster child is provided with age-appropriate food, snacks, and beverages and at least three meals per day.

A Resource Family shall ensure that an infant, who is unable to hold a bottle, is held during bottle-feeding. Under no circumstance should a bottle be propped up for an infant. However, if a bottle is given to an infant who is able to hold his or her own bottle it must be unbreakable.

Although a Resource Family may encourage a child, as age or developmentally appropriate, to learn meal preparation, they shall not require a child to prepare meals.

**Clothing:**

Foster parents must spend at least $60.00 a month per child on clothing needs. The monthly clothing allotment begins the day the child is placed in your home. Therefore, after a child is in the home for a month, a foster parent will spend $60.00 for clothing. The clothing purchased must be documented and receipts kept to turn into the office on a monthly basis by the 10th of the month. If a child enters foster care in need of basic clothing items, Krista may provide additional funds to meet the need depending on the length of time the child is expected to remain in Krista. The foster parents are then responsible for maintaining the child's wardrobe.

Foster parents are encouraged to purchase the foster child's clothing on a monthly basis. Exceptions may be granted by the Krista social worker in the event the foster parent plans to save for two months for a large ticket item such as a pair of shoes, prom dress, or a winter jacket. In such instances the $60.00 saved is to be put in an envelope with the child’s name to be used at a later date.

**Haircuts:**

A Resource Family is responsible to provide haircuts to their foster children at least monthly, if one is wanted. If the foster child wants more frequent haircuts, he/she can pay for it with their money. **However**, when a child is not a dependent of the court (the child is in active reunification with his/her natural parent) the **natural parent must give permission for the haircut and determine how it can be cut.**

**Personal/Toiletry Items:**

A Resource Family is responsible for providing the basic hygiene needs for their foster children, such as, but not limited to a toothbrush, hairbrush/comb, razors, feminine supplies, shampoo, basic make-up (foundation, blush, mascara) etc. If the foster children wish to use their favorite brand name supplies, they can pay the difference for the item(s). Each child is given a towel to use that is not shared with others. Some foster parents provide towels with different colors to each family member. Beds used by foster children are required to have a mattress pad, which needs to be laundered weekly and laundered when a child leaves the house.

**Entertainment:**

A Resource Family is responsible for providing entertainment costs. If a child is accompanying the Resource Family on an activity, the child's cost should be paid by the Resource Family. If a child is not participating in a family activity (such as going to a movie with a friend) he/she can pay for the activity with their allowance, if it is determined to be the best practice for that child. It is ok to pay for your foster child’s activities even if you are not there, just like you would your own children! Krista recommends that the Resource Family plan and pay for at least one family activity per month. Krista encourages Resource Families to actively spend time with their foster children in a variety of settings; such as, outdoor activities, indoor games, movies, sports activities, community events, and church activities.

**Allowance:**

Allowance is to be provided by the Resource Family from their monthly reimbursement. Allowance is given weekly at the end of the child's first week in your home. A predetermined day, normally Friday or Saturday, works best. If a child comes in mid-week you should prorate their first allowance. The following minimum weekly allowance schedule is required by Krista Foster Homes:

 Ages 0-4............. $3.00

 Ages 5-8............. $6.00

 Ages 9-11... ....... $8.00

 Ages 12-14......... $10.00

 Ages 15-19…….. $15.00

Additional money can be earned by behavior contracts and chores in excess of the child's regular chores. Allowance can be deducted for property destruction, to pay a Resource Family for transportation costs if the youth is “kicked off” the school bus, or if the youth has regular transportation needs for employment. **However**, allowance deductions or payment to a Resource Family for any reason must **first** be approved by a Krista Social Worker. Weekly Allowance is a right of the foster child and may **not** be withheld due to incompletion of chores or as a discipline measure, unless approved by the child’s Krista Social Worker and stated in their Needs and Services Plan.

**Management of Children’s Finances:**

If a child receives over fifty dollars in gifts or income, the Resource Family should monitor, oversee and help the child make good decisions regarding the spending of the money. (Forms are available in the office to help with this!) Employment is allowed when a youth’s health, safety, and education are uncompromised. When a foster child is working, he/she is encouraged to save 50% of their earnings in their own savings account or when necessary a joint savings account with a Krista Administrator. **A Resource Family is not permitted to open bank accounts with foster children**. **Under no circumstances** **are Resource Families allowed to borrow money from their foster child.**

If a child wants you to “hold” their allowance to save up for something, you must:

1. Give it to them and have them sign for it.
2. They hand it back to you and you place it in an envelope with the child’s name on it.
3. Record on appropriate form the savings amount & have both you and the child initial it. (Forms available upon request at the office.)
4. Place the envelope in a lock box until the child requests it. Then, return the amount requested to them and again record on the appropriate form. Have both you and the child initial that they received it.

**SAFEGUARDING POSSESSIONS**

1. When a child is placed in your home or just spending one night in respite, an inventory must be taken of all the child’s belongings. Each item of clothing needs to be counted and recorded. Any non-clothing item needs to be recorded; the more valuable items need more description including the size, color and quantity. If a child has a particularly valuable item; such as, a nice jacket, a collectable, or money over $20.00, the Resource Family needs to record and lock up the item(s)**.**
2. When a child brings inappropriate items into the Resource Family home such as a weapon, video or music obtaining explicate lyrics or viewing, the item(s) need to be either bagged or boxed with the child’s name on it, along with a list of the contents. *YOU**MUST NOT DESTROY SUCH ITEMS.* If you are uncomfortable storing these items in your home, you may bring them to the Krista office for storage.
3. When a child leaves your home, all of his/her belongings need to be inventoried again. These items should already be listed on either the initial inventory sheet, added to the inventory at a later date or on the clothing purchase list. Belongings need to be added to the possessions list as the child gets them. For example; a child receives a watch for a birthday gift, the watch with some description needs to be listed on the child’s inventory list. The final inventory goes into the child’s file and is to be returned to the Krista office. If a child is in your home for a short respite stay, an inventory is to be made of the child’s belongings coming into the house and exiting the home. This is a safeguard for the foster parents, those living in the home, and the visiting foster child. Please remember…any clothes, presents, toys, etc. purchased for the child by you are THEIR property and should accompany them when they leave. (A copy of the child’s Medical card or private insurance card needs to accompany the child as well.)
4. When a child has outgrown, or for whatever other reason, decides to sell, give away, or throw away a possession or an item of clothing, the item needs to be listed on the inventory sheet at the bottom.
5. If a child comes into your home with cash over $50.00 or is given a gift of $50.00 or more notify your Krista social worker. You will be responsible to help monitor the spending or savings of such funds. Again, the only person currently working for Krista who is bonded is Bob Phillips. He is the only person allowed by licensing to open or close a child’s checking or savings account. *(****RESOURCE FAMILIES ARE NOT TO OPEN BANK ACCOUNTS WITH OR FOR FOSTER CHILDREN).*** Following the above procedures will protect you from unnecessary liability problems.

**TRAVEL**

Krista encourages Resource Families to include foster children in vacations and travel as a part of their family. The Resource Family must notify a Krista social worker as soon as possible when they plan to go out of the state or country and wish to take their foster children with them. (This includes all overnights outside the Resource Family home, as we would need to be able to reach our families in the event of an emergency). Permission for out-of-state travel must be requested at least one month in advance as a court order is required; in some cases, the natural parents must also consent. The Krista social worker will coordinate with the placing worker to obtain the necessary consent and court order. The court orders are needed to enable the Resource Family to seek medical help for a foster child when traveling out of state and permission for border crossing when traveling out of the country.

Please contact the Krista office at least one month prior to out-of-state travel providing us with the dates of travel, where you will be staying overnight, mode of transportation, and a contact name with address and phone number. Sometimes standing consent can be obtained for regular travel to an out-of-state location.

**TRANSPORTATION**

The primary responsibility of transporting foster children is the duty of the Resource Family. This includes transportation to and from school, a job site, church functions, court appointments, family visits, I.L.S. trainings, personal development activities, Krista meetings and activities, medical/dental appointments, counseling appointments, and visits with the child's placing worker. It is also the responsibility of the Resource Family to provide transportation for extracurricular, enrichment, cultural and social activities, provided the transportation to these activities is reasonable. When determining if the transportation to an activity for a child is reasonable, a Resource Family may consider the location, frequency, cost for transportation, and time necessary to provide transportation. If a transportation problem arises, the Resource Family is to contact the Krista office for assistance. If transporting a youth for employment presents a hardship, contact the youth’s Krista agency social worker to discuss charging the youth gas money for this ongoing transportation need. The other exception is when a youth loses bus privileges, due to behavioral problems. Never charge a child for transportation without prior approval from a Krista Social Worker.

Krista Foster Homes requires each Resource Family home to have an automobile available at all times to meet the transportation needs of children in their care. The automobile must be in safe working order and be equipped with seat belts and car seats for young children. Current laws regarding age and/or weight for car seats are to be followed at all times. Foster children are required to wear seat belts when the vehicle is in motion. Driver’s licenses and auto insurance must be current in our office files.

Transportation of foster children is done ***exclusively*** by:

1. Krista Resource Families and/or approved baby-sitters or child care workers.
2. Krista employees.
3. Placement workers.
4. City or school bus drivers.
5. Coaches, church youth leaders or mentors and Krista interns (without legal clearance) **with another child present.**
6. The parents of foster children’s friends with the friend present **and** with the Resource Family meeting and prior approval of family. (A current driver’s license and insurance must be shown to the Resource Family prior to transportation.)

A Resource Family shall ensure that all individuals who transport a child use motor vehicles that are in safe operating condition. Resource Families shall not allow a child to be transported by an individual the Resource Family knows or reasonably should know does not have a valid California or other state driver’s license. You also must ensure that a child is properly restrained in an appropriate child passenger restraint system based on the child’s age, weight, and size while being transported in a motor vehicle.

A Resource Family shall not smoke, or permit any individual to smoke a pipe, cigar, or cigarette containing tobacco or any other plant in a motor vehicle that is regularly used for providing transportation to a child.

\*All drivers must meet all of the current California driving laws.

\*When transportation is provided by someone other than Resource Family on a regular basis, with **prior approval** by Krista social work staff, a copy of the driver’s license and car insurance must be obtained and turned into the Krista Office to be kept on file prior to transportation.

### TELEPHONE

A Resource Family shall have cellular telephone, Internet telephone, or landline telephone service accessible to a child in the home at all times.

A Resource Family is not required to purchase a cellular telephone for a child or pay for a child’s personal cellular telephone service fees.

**HOME & YARD**

**Home**

1. The home shall be clean, safe, sanitary and in good repair at all times.
2. The home shall maintain a comfortable temperature at all times.
3. There must be lighting as necessary in all rooms and other areas of the home and grounds to ensure comfort and safety.
4. Safety from fireplaces, open-faced heaters and wood stoves must be ensured.
5. At least one toilet, sink, and tub or shower shall be maintained in a safe, clean and operating condition.
6. Faucets to be used by a child or nonminor dependent for personal care and grooming shall deliver hot water at a safe temperature.
7. All outdoor and indoor passageways, stairways, open porches and other areas shall be kept free of obstruction.
8. If age and developmentally appropriate, individual privacy shall be provided to a child or nonminor dependent in all toilet, bath and shower areas.
9. A Resource Family must not smoke or permit any other person to smoke inside the home. In addition, when a child is present, smoking is not permitted on the outdoor grounds of the home.
10. Working carbon monoxide and smoke detectors must be installed in the bedroom hallways and be audible in each bedroom.

**Bedrooms**

1. When determining whether children may share a bedroom, a Resource Family and Krista Foster Homes shall document that the bedroom sharing arrangement ensures the health and safety of each child and that the children are compatible.
2. A minor may share a bedroom with his or her child.
3. No more than four children shall share a bedroom unless a documented alternative plan is approved.
4. Children of the opposite sex shall not share a bedroom unless each child is under eight years of age.
5. Each child shall have their own bed on frame. The mattress shall be clean and comfortable with clean linens, blankets, and pillows, as needed; all in good repair.
6. Linens shall be changed at least once per week, or more often when needed, to ensure that clean linen is in use by children at all times.
7. Bunk beds shall have railing on the upper tier on BOTH sides to prevent falling.
8. Children under the age of six, or who are unable to climb up and down unassisted, may not use the top bunk.
9. Each bedroom must have at least one operable window or door that ensures a safe, direct, emergency exit to the outside.
10. Each bedroom shall have portable or permanent closets and drawer space to accommodate a child’s clothing and personal belongings.
11. A room that is commonly used for other purposes may not be used as a bedroom.

**Infants (under 2 years old)**

1. No more than two infants, including your own, in your home without additional help.
2. Only infants may share a bedroom with a Resource Family, and then no more than two infants shall share the room.
3. A sturdy and safe bassinet or crib must be provided for each infant. No drop side or stack cribs permitted.
4. An infant who can climb out of a crib must be provided with an age appropriate bed.

**OUTDOOR ACTIVITY SPACE**

1. A yard or outdoor activity space shall be free from hazards that endanger the health and safety of a child.
2. All homes that accept children under 10 years of age, that have an in-ground or above-ground pool, fixed-in-place wading pool, hot tub, spa, fish pond, etc. shall ensure the inaccessibility of these bodies of water.
3. An in-ground pool, wading pool, hot tub, spa, fishpond, etc. must have a fence of at least 60 inches, which doesn’t obstruct its view, with a self-closing or self-latching device of which a child up to the age of five cannot climb. Or be equipped with a manually or power-operated safety pool cover.
4. An above-ground pool shall be made inaccessible, when not in use, by removing or making the ladder inaccessible. If the pool is less than 69 inches high, then a fence of at least 60 inches must encompass the above ground pool.
5. All windows that open out to the pool areas must be secured so that they cannot open more than 4 inches and if they are a bedroom must have exit alarms.

**STORAGE REQUIREMENTS**

**Medicines, Disinfectants, and Cleaning Solutions**

1. All medicines, disinfectants and cleaning solutions must be stored where they are inaccessible to a child.
2. All medications, including those requiring refrigeration, must be kept safe and inaccessible to children.

**Poisons, Firearms, and other dangerous items or Weapons**

1. A Resource Family shall disclose to Krista ALL poisons, firearms, and other dangerous items. When new items are acquired, they must be disclosed to Krista as soon as possible and stored as directed below.
2. Firearms and other dangerous weapons must always be locked.
3. In lieu of locked storage of firearms, a Resource Family may use trigger locks or remove the firing pin.
4. Ammunition and firing pins must be stored and locked separately from firearms.

Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard regarding Storage of various other items that may pose a hazard.

1. A Resource Family shall apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard in determining if it is age or developmentally appropriate for a child to have access to and use the following items: Access to these items should also be discussed with agency social worker and included in the child’s Needs and Service Plan prior to implementation.
2. Household kitchen knives and appliances for use in meal preparation.
3. Medications necessary for self-administration by the child.
4. Disinfectants and cleaning solutions for use in performing household chores.
5. In allowing a child to access and use the items above, a Resource Family shall ensure that the safety of a child and others in the home is maintained.

Waste

1. A Resource Family shall store and dispose of waste in a manner that will not permit the transmission of communicable disease or odors, create a nuisance, or provide a breeding place or food source for insects or rodents.

MAINTAINING FOSTER CHILREN FILES

A Resource Family shall maintain separate, complete, and current files in the home for a child. All records for a child shall be available to Krista Foster Homes or CCL to inspect, audit, and copy upon demand, during business hours.

A child’s file shall include the following:

* 1. The name of the child, birth date, and date of placement with the Resource Family.
	2. A summary of the child’s health and education information and records, including mental health information or records.
	3. The Resource Family shall be responsible for maintaining information and records provided by physicians and educators including, but not limited to, the child’s immunization records and any official grade or progress reports.
	4. Written authorization for the Resource Family to obtain medical and dental care in an emergency if authorization by the placement agency cannot be obtained.
	5. The Needs and Services Plan for the child.
	6. An itemized inventory list of the child’s cash resources, personal property, and valuables.
	7. A copy of the personal rights accorded to a child.
	8. Written instructions by the physician of a child regarding the provision of family health care.
	9. Documentation of the date, time, and dose of any prescription medications and injections given to a child and the results of any glucose testing or monitoring for a child.

Resource Families shall maintain all information and records regarding a child in a confidential manner and not disclose any confidential information, except as otherwise authorized by law. To ensure confidentiality, Krista Foster Homes requires that all files be kept in a locked and secured place within the home.

All records for a child shall be available to Krista Foster Homes or CCL to inspect, copy upon audit, and demand during business hours. Records may be removed if necessary for copying.

If a child is removed or discharged from the home, the Resource Family shall return the child’s file to Krista Foster Homes within one week.

**LIABILITY**

It is not the intent of this manual to provide legal advice. Also, please keep in mind that anyone can sue anybody for anything. It is important to consult your homeowner’s policy to see what it might cover in relation to children placed in your home by the court. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with an attorney. Please also consult with Legal Advocates for Permanent Parenting (LAPP) <http://www.lapponline.org>.

The Attorney General addressed the liability of Resource Families for the willful misconduct of a foster child in his or her care. The Attorney General concludes that “California Civil Code Section 1714.1 does not impute liability to a foster parent or to any public entity for the willful misconduct of a minor who has been placed in a foster home by a juvenile court.” (See also 59 Ops. Atty. Gen.142 (3576) and Opinion Number CV75-131 on March 5, 1976).

A Resource Family may, however, be found liable for damages due to lack of supervision or negligence. In any case, when a Resource Family may feel that there is a potential for a suit, it is important to document, document, document. This is for your safety. This is especially important when a child in your care is injured. A parent of a child may file suit or the child may file suit years after placement. In a court of law, your documentation may be perceived differently than your recollection.

**INSURANCE**

Krista Foster Homes provides access to mandatory Foster Parent Liability Insurance. The fee for this insurance is $15 a month every month a child is in your home and is deducted from that months foster care reimbursement. A copy of this coverage is maintained at the Krista Office and is available upon request.

**III. FOSTER CHILDREN**

**TREATMENT PROVISION**

Krista Foster Homes is a treatment-based agency. We help arrange counseling services for our foster children. Treatment provision is a cooperative effort between administrators, social workers, therapists, Resource Family, and the child as well as coordination with the child's natural family and placing worker. Since we believe most treatment occurs in the Resource Family home, Krista Social Workers and Administrators provide continual support and guidance to the Resource Family.

Formal treatment includes psychotherapy services to many of our foster children on a weekly or bi-monthly basis. Therapy is provided by a variety of service providers. Krista’s staff is responsible to inform Resource Families of the therapist's name and phone number. Many times, the Resource Family is involved early on in the process of getting therapy started for their foster children and Krista FFA helps facilitate if necessary.

The Resource Family is responsible for scheduling appointments and transporting the child to the therapist's office. They are also responsible for the foster child's attendance. If a problem or concern arises (such as the foster child refusing to go), the Resource Family is required to contact the therapist and Krista social worker as soon as possible, within 24 hours of the scheduled appointment if possible. If there is illness in the family or car problems arise, preventing transporting the child, the Resource Family shall notify the Krista office as soon as possible. Most of our staff will be willing to provide transportation on an emergency basis. If your foster child is ill, notify the therapist as soon as possible and reschedule the appointment.

Also, if a foster child's therapist is seeing the child at school on a specific day of the week and he/she is home ill, suspended, or has that day off from school, the Resource Family shall notify the child’s therapist.

The Resource Family is encouraged to be involved in the foster child's therapy, at the request of the therapist. It is critical for the Resource Family to notify those involved on a child’s team of any concerns, behavioral changes, or any significant events in the life of a child. Sometimes the child's natural family is involved in the child's therapy, particularly when there is a reunification plan. The Resource Family needs to be supportive of and cooperative with this aspect of treatment as well. The therapist is responsible for informing the foster child and Resource Family of the parameters of confidentiality. Therapists are also required by law to keep in confidence certain information disclosed by adolescents in therapy.

**NEEDS AND SERVICES PLANS/ASSESSMENT**

**Needs and service plans identify the following**:

* reason for placement
* visitation with natural family members
* planned length of placement
* treatment goals addressing emotional and social needs
* educational needs
* other types of services needed such as independent living or anger management
* medical needs
* training, such as personal care and hygiene
* ability to manage his/her own money, which may include the maximum amount of money the child will be allowed to have in his/her possession at one time

The Needs and Services Plan specifies the treatment goals for the foster child, the person or persons responsible for meeting those goals, the plan and time period needed for goal attainment, and how progress will be measured. Krista Foster Homes will provide the Resource Family and the child's authorized representative (placement worker) with a copy of the child's needs and services plan. A needs and services plan will be completed within 30 calendar days from the date of placement and is updated every six months. The Resource Family is required to read and follow these plans.

**PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports are written by Krista social workers twice per year or at the request of the placing worker. Our social workers gather information on the foster child's progress from the Resource Family’s written reports, teachers, administrators, and therapists. The written progress reports include: a child's background, adjustment, relationships, education, physical health, emotional health, treatment progress, family issues, and recommendations. These reports are reviewed by an administrator, then submitted to placing workers. Copies are placed in the foster child's file at the office and in their home file.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Foster children in your care have a right to confidentiality. When not being used, home files should be locked up. Special care should also be used when transporting a child’s file to and from the Krista office or doctor’s appointment, to ensure confidentiality. When introducing a foster child to friends & acquaintances, first check with the child to understand how they might wish to be introduced. Also, be careful when you are posting on Facebook and other social media sites that a foster child’s name or face is not posted.

**SCHOOL/EDUCATION**

Most of the children placed in a Resource Family home attend public school. A Resource Family is responsible for enrolling a child in school, arranging transportation, encouraging the child's academic and behavioral success, supervising a suspended or ill child, attending school conferences such as I.E.P.’s, obtaining report cards and progress reports and giving copies to the Krista office for the child's file.

If homeschooling is needed and the Resource Family can provide the necessary supervision, the foster parent, Krista social worker, and child's placement worker coordinates the child's academic program with the public or private schools’ homeschooling teacher. Home study requires additional responsibility by the foster family to ensure the work is completed and the child attends the required home study appointments.

A foster child may be functioning below grade level and require additional

assistance. Those children unable to functionin a normal classroom setting are evaluated by a Student Study Team and an individualized educational plan (I.E.P.) may be developed. This child may even qualify for a specialized class setting such as a Special Day class or a non-public school for the Emotionally Disturbed.

**MEDICAL / HEALTH**

Family health care shall be provided by a Resource Family to a child in accordance with the written instructions from the health professional for the child. All foster children are eligible for Medi-Cal; which includes medical, dental, and mental health care services. A Resource Family shall maintain first aid supplies appropriate to the needs of a child.

Krista Foster Homes will provide the Resource Family with a copy of each child's current medical assessment. If a current medical assessment could not be obtained, the Resource Family shall ensure that a current medical assessment is completed within 30 days of placement of the child.

* If the medical assessment cannot be completed within 30 days, a medical appointment date shall be obtained by Krista Foster Homes within 30 days of placement of the child.

Each foster child should have yearly CHDP and Dental exams. Forms for the yearly CHDP are kept in the office and are given upon request. The Krista office staff tries to stay up on when these exams are due, but ultimately the responsibility falls to the Resource Family to have these exams completed on time.

Every time a child or youth visits the doctor or emergency room the Krista office needs documentation of that visit. The Resource Family shall ask the health professional to provide adequate and practical written instructions. This could be in the form of a “Health Provider Contact Form” from the Krista office, which the doctor can fill out, or paperwork from the doctor’s office which must include a date, diagnosis, and the doctor’s signature.

In the event that a child comes with, or needs, any medication please let your Krista Social Worker know as soon as possible. Please do not give any medication to any child without first reviewing and getting an okay from the placing county social worker at placement.

When a child has a health condition that requires medication, including injections, a Resource Family shall comply with the following:

1. Assist a child with self-administration of the medication as directed on the label or in writing by the physician of the child.
2. If the physician of a child gives permission, the child may self-administer medications, including injections.

All information should be updated and recorded on the “Centrally Stored Medication and Destruction Record” and turned in monthly with the “Medication Log.” This is important and is one of the things CCL could check when doing a scheduled or unscheduled home inspection.

All medication is to be stored in the original container with the original unaltered label and locked up, remaining locked until it’s time for the child to receive their meds. When giving meds, please be sure you check and double check to make sure you are giving the right med to the right child and the right dosage at the right time. Ensure that instructions are followed as outlined by the appropriate health professional. Please document the date, time, and dose of any prescription given to a child on the med log at the time the child receives the med NOT later from memory. If school staff are authorized to administer medication, the Resource Family is encouraged to request documentation that the medication was given. A Resource Family shall maintain documentation of all prescription medications given to a child in each child’s home file.

A Resource Family or designated substitute caregiver may provide emergency medical assistance to a child or nonminor dependent and give injections to a child or nonminor dependent for severe diabetic hypoglycemia and anaphylactic shock. You may also give prescribed injections, including insulin, to a child as prescribed by the physician of the child. However, prior to administering any medical assistance or injections a Resource Family and designated substitute caregiver shall:

1. Obtain training from a health professional within his or her scope of practice.
2. Ensure that the date, time and dose of all injections given to a child including injections self-administered by a child, are documented by the person giving the injection or assisting with the self-administration of the injection.
3. Ensure the date, time, and results of glucose testing and monitoring for a child or nonminor dependent are documented by the person assisting with the testing.

Unless prohibited by court order, a child may self-administer medication or injections if the physician of a child gives permission. A Resource Family shall ensure that a child knows how to do all of the following:

* 1. Self-administer their medication and injections.
	2. Document when they self-administer their medication and injections.
	3. Properly store the medication so that it is not accessible to other children or nonminor dependents.

A Resource Family shall maintain documentation of all injections given and the results of all glucose testing and monitoring in the home file for each child.

In the event that a medication is stopped or changed and there is medication left over, these meds should be brought to the office along with the “Centrally Stored Medication and Destruction Record” and disposed of there.

Under no circumstances shall a child be required to take psychotropic medication without a court order. Psychotropic medication shall only be given to a child if the Juvenile Court has approved a medication request by a physician.

For children 12 years of age or older, a Resource Family shall allow access and assist a child or nonminor dependent in accessing age-appropriate, medically accurate information about reproductive health care, the prevention of unplanned pregnancy, and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

* 1. A Resource Family shall direct a child or nonminor dependent to reliable sources of information.
	2. A Resource Family shall not require a child or nonminor dependent to practice abstinence.

**RELIGIOUS PRACTICES**

A foster child is free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice and to have visits from the spiritual advisor of his/her choice. Children's records contain information including but not limited to religious preference and the name and address of clergy or religious advisors, if any.

The selection of a Resource Family is based upon the child's needs and how well the Resource Family can meet them. This includes the ability of the Resource Family to accept and respect individuals of any race, creed, color, *religion,* sexual orientation*,*or nationality. The Resource Family has the right to practice the religion of his/her choice, but the practice must not be forced on the foster child, nor interfere with the provision of care to the foster child. The religious beliefs and practices of the Resource Family should be discussed with the child prior to placement, in order to maximize the potential for compatibility.

The religious practices of the Resource Family, including but not limited to, dietary restrictions, prohibition of birthday and holiday celebrations, and prohibition of the use of makeup, may not be imposed on the foster child. As well, religious practices that advocate the prohibition of medical care, use of corporal punishment, and other practices that pose a threat to the child's health and safety ***are prohibited.***

**SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The Resource Family is encouraged to promote and support their child's involvement in youth groups, sports, and other social and recreational activities. Krista plans regular activities for our Resource Families such as lake days and trips to water slides and amusement parks. We expect all families to participate.

**FAMILY VISITATION RULES AND POLICY**

Home and family visits are typically initiated and coordinated by the placing/county social worker, in cooperation with the Krista social worker, foster child, Resource Family, and natural parents. The county social worker and Krista Social Worker work with those involved to determine the appropriate length, frequency, and location of the visits, and what degree of supervision is required. Feedback about the foster child's behavior during and/or following each visit is documented by the Resource Family on the "family contact form” in the child's file at the foster home and should be turned into the office monthly. Visits may take place at Krista or the Family Visitation Center. If a foster child visits family at the Family Visitation Center in Redding, please become familiar with and abide by their rules of visitation.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES**

1. **Dating:**

Foster children are allowed limited dating. Krista social workers along with the Resource Family should be involved with the decision; consideration is made regarding the age, level of maturity, and appropriateness of each relationship. Placing workers reserve the right to restrict or disallow dating if they deem it necessary.

1. **Homework:**

A child's homework should be monitored by the Resource Family. The child is encouraged to complete all assignments and may receive consequences (such as a loss of privileges) if failing to do so. However, rewarding positive behavior is a first choice. The Resource Family is encouraged to help their child with homework when needed and/or asked by the child or child's teachers.

1. **Chores:**

Cleaning and chores should be determined by the Resource Family. Each child is responsible to keep his/her bedroom clean (the Resource Family is ultimately responsible for this however) as well as to perform daily chores (not to exceed 20 minutes per weekday and one hour on a weekend day). Additional chores may be added on a paid basis. A chore chart should be posted with adequate explanation for each chore listed.

1. **Entertainment Equipment:**

Entertainment equipment should be as available to foster youth as it is to other household members. Children may be restricted from some items based on their age, maturity, and respect for property. Foster children may own and possess entertainment equipment.

1. **Dress Codes:**

Dress codes should be established to protect the children in your care. Gang related apparel such as bandanas, sagging pants and particular colors in clothing are discouraged. We encourage our youth, especially females, to dress modestly to prevent their exploitation and enhance their self-image.

1. **Laundry:**

Providing for the laundering of a child's clothing and bedding is the responsibility of the Resource Family. However, foster children depending on their age and maturity, may be given the responsibility to launder their own clothing, towels, and bedding at least once a week. They are not responsible for the clothing of others.

1. **Prohibited Behaviors:**

Some general prohibited behaviors include but are not limited to the following: using/abusing substances, tobacco use, sexual acting out, truancy, running away, assaultive behavior, property destruction, and any illegal behavior.

1. **Visiting Friends:**

The Resource Family may first want to invite the child's friend to visit in the Resource Family home to evaluate the appropriateness of the relationship. Furthermore, the Resource Family should meet the friend’s parent(s), obtain their phone number and address, visit the home to assess for suitability, and inform them of their supervision requirements. These guidelines should generally be followed prior to allowing the foster child to visit in the home of their friend. In the case of overnight visits, the Resource Family may want to have an overnight visit first occur in the Resource Family home. If the relationship appears to be a healthy one for the foster child and your foster child is invited to the friend’s home for an overnight visit, the Resource Family may first want to check with the Krista Social Work staff for approval of a first visit before allowing the child to spend the night.

1. **Phones and other communication devices:**

A home phone must be accessible to a foster child at all times. Reasonable restrictions may apply based on age and behavior. However, **no restrictions shall be applied to telephone calls, mail, and electronic communication with a foster child’s relatives, unless prohibited by a court order, or with social workers, authorized representatives, attorneys, foster youth advocates and supporters, CASA, probation officers, the Community Care Licensing Division, or the State Foster Care Ombudsperson.** In the event that a foster child purchases his/her own cell phone, the Resource Family is Not allowed to remove or take away his/her cell phone. However, the caregiver or licensee may apply reasonable restrictions to this activity.

**CHILDREN'S PERSONAL RIGHTS**

During the intake procedure, the child's social worker shall go over the Personal Rights (LIC 613B) of a foster child with the child. The child signs on the bottom portion of the form and the top portion is given to them. If the child is unable to read or their cognitive functioning is limited, the social worker will explain their rights at their level of understanding. The social worker and Resource Family should sign the child’s personal rights also, showing not only that rights have been explained to the child but that they also understand the rights of the foster child. A copy of the LIC 613B form is posted in each resource family home. Each resource parent is responsible to abide by these rights. If a child wishes to make a complaint, the phone number and address is listed on the children’s rights posted in each certified home. Each child/youth will have access to a phone in the Resource Family home or Krista office. The child or youth will be encouraged to speak first to their Krista Social Worker or to a Krista Administrator who provides case management before contacting Community Care Licensing as the issue could be resolved within the agency. However, if the child/youth wishes to contact Community Care Licensing directly, free access is allowed.

**PERSONAL RIGHTS**

**Child Care Facilities**

Child Care Facilities. Each child receiving services from a child care facility shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following:

* To live in a safe, healthy, and comfortable home and to be treated with respect.
* To be free from physical, sexual, emotional or other abuse, or corporal punishment.
* To receive adequate and healthy food and adequate clothing.
* To wear their own clothes.
* To possess and use personal possessions, including toilet articles.
* To receive medical, dental, vision, and mental health services.
* To be free of the administration of medication or chemical substances, unless authorized by a physician.
* To contact family members (unless prohibited by court order) and social workers, attorneys, foster youth advocates and supporters, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and probation officers.
* To visit and contact brothers and sisters, unless prohibited by court order.
* To contact Community Care Licensing Division of the State Department of Social Services of the State Foster Care Ombudsperson regarding violations of rights, to speak to representatives of these offices confidentially and to be free from threats or punishment for making complaints.
* To be informed by the caregiver of the provisions of the law regarding complaints.
* To make and receive confidential telephone calls and send and receive unopened mail (unless prohibited by court order).
* To attend religious services and activities of their choice.
* To maintain emancipation bank account and manage personal income, consistent with their age and developmental level, unless prohibited by the case plan.
* To not be locked in any room, building, or facility premises, unless placed in a community treatment facility.
* To not be placed in any restraining device, unless placed in a postural support and if approved in advance by the licensing agency or placement agency.
* To attend school and participate in extracurricular, cultural, and personal enrichment activities, consistent with their age and developmental level.
* To work and develop job skills at an age appropriate level that is consistent with state law.
* To have social contacts with people outside of the foster care system, such as teachers, church members, mentors, and friends.
* To attend Independent Living Program classes and activities if they are 16 or older.
* To attend court hearings and speak to the judge.
* To have storage space for private use.
* To review their own case plan if they are 12 years of age and to receive information regarding out-of-home placement and case plan, including being told of changes to plan.
* To be free from unreasonable searches of personal belongings.
* To have all their juvenile court records be confidential (consistent with existing law).

Reference: California Code of Regulations – Foster Family Homes Regulations, Section 89372 – Community Care Licensing, 520 Cohasset Road, Suite #6, Chico, CA 95926, (530) 895-5033

In addition to the above a Resource Family shall ensure that each child is accorded the following personal rights:

 (1) To be informed of and exercise their personal rights without harassment or punishment.

 (2) To be free from corporal or unusual punishment; infliction of pain; humiliation; intimidation; ridicule; coercion; threat; physical, sexual, emotional, mental, or other abuse; or other actions of a punitive nature including interference with the daily living functions of eating, sleeping, or toileting, or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication, or aids to physical functioning.

 (3) To make and receive confidential telephone calls and send and receive unopened mail and electronic communication, unless prohibited by court order.

 (A) Unless prohibited by court order or the placement agency for the child, a child may acquire, possess, and use his or her own cellular telephone.

 (4) To have access to letter writing material.

 (5) To be accorded dignity in his or her personal relationships with other persons in the home.

 (6) To be free from unreasonable searches of person.

 (7) Not to be restrained or placed in any restraining device.

 (8) To obtain, possess and use contraception including, but not limited to, birth control medication, emergency contraception, long-acting reversible contraceptives, condoms, and barrier methods.

 (9) To be free to accept or decline a Resource Family’s request to babysit the Resource Family’s children, including adopted, biological, foster, and guardianship children.

 (10) To be provided with and allowed to acquire, possess, and use adequate personal items, which includes his or her own:

 (A) Clothes, provided the clothes are age-appropriate, and do not violate school standards when worn during school activities.

 (B) Toiletries and personal hygiene products, including enclosed razors used for shaving, as age or developmentally appropriate.

 (C) Belongings, including items that were a gift to the child.

 (11) Provided the rights of others are not infringed upon, to have visitors that include:

 (A) Relatives, unless prohibited by court order.

 (B) The authorized representative for the child.

 (C) Other visitors, unless prohibited by court order or by the authorized representative for the child.

 (12) To be informed, and to have his/her authorized representative informed, by the Resource Family of the provisions of law regarding complaints, the address and telephone number of the Department, and about the confidentiality of complaints.

 (13) To be accorded the independence appropriate to the age, maturity, and capability of the child consistent with the child’s needs and services plan or the transitional independent living plan (TILP), if applicable.

 (14) To have private or personal information, including, but not limited to, any medical condition or treatment, psychiatric diagnosis or treatment, history of abuse, educational records, and information relating to the biological family of the child, maintained in confidence.

(A) A Resource Family shall disclose information about the child to a foster family agency, the Juvenile Court, and the child’s biological family, social worker, placement worker, probation officer, tribe, physician, psychiatrist, CASA, attorney, and authorized representative, unless the disclosure is prohibited by court order.

(B) As needed to ensure appropriate care, supervision, or education of the child, a Resource Family shall disclose information to respite care providers, occasional short-term babysitters, alternative caregivers, school officials, and other persons, unless such disclosure is prohibited by court order.

 (15) To receive medical, dental, vision, and mental health services.

(A) Medical services may include, but are not limited to, services related to the prevention or treatment of pregnancy, sexual assault, or rape; and at 12 years of age or older, the prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.

 1.A child may consent personally to the services described in subsection (A), without the knowledge or consent of a parent, guardian, social worker, probation officer, judge, or authorized representative.

 2.A child may obtain these services confidentially, unless prohibited by law.

\*A Resource Family may, however, take the following actions for the protection of a child, a nonminor dependent, or others in the home:

(A) Establishing house rules, that may include rules regarding visitation, that shall apply to all visitors; curfew; dating; completing homework; laundry and cleaning bedrooms and other areas; and use of entertainment equipment.

(B) Locking exterior doors and windows as long as a child can enter or exit the home.

**lV. PRUDENT PARENTING**

**REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENTING STANDARD (RPPS)**

The RPPS is the standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the foster child’s health, safety, and best interests. This standard supports the empowerment of a Resource Family to exercise common sense and good judgment to assess circumstances and events in which a foster child may participate. The standard also enables participation by a foster child in age-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities in order to improve the normalcy of life in foster care.

A Resource Family shall be responsible for applying the reasonable and prudent parent standard in providing care and supervision to a child. However, applying the reasonable and prudent parent standard shall not result in denying the rights of a child or contradict court orders or the needs and services plan for the child.

In applying the reasonable and prudent parent standard, a Resource Family shall consider the following:

* 1. The age, maturity, and developmental level of a child.
	2. The nature and inherent risks of harm of the activity.
	3. The best interests of a child based on information known by the Resource Family.
	4. The behavioral history of a child and the child’s ability to safely participate in the activity.
	5. The importance of encouraging a child’s emotional and developmental growth.
1. Emotional and developmental growth may include, but not be limited to, the following:
2. The child’s level of understanding about healthy relationships.
3. The child’s level of understanding about sexuality and body development.
4. Feelings about spirituality.
5. Other stages of maturity experienced during adolescence.
	1. The importance of providing a child with a sense of normalcy in the most family-like living experience possible.

A Resource Family shall consider information provided or known about a child when determining the best interests of a child. This information includes the history, behavioral tendencies, mental and physical health, medications, abilities and limitations, sexual orientation, gender identity, developmental level of, and court orders for the child. A Resource Family may contact the child’s social worker, physician, counselor, or educator to obtain this information.

**SUPERVISION AT HOME**

Foster children need to be supervised in the Resource Family home at all times in accordance with the needs and services plan of a child, the placement agreement, and transitional independent living plan, if applicable. However, occasional absences when **RPPS** would allow the foster child to be home alone for a short time are permitted but never unsupervised overnight. The RPPS guidelines for determining the appropriateness of leaving a foster child alone without adult supervision is as follows:

1. The age, maturity, and developmental level of the foster child;
2. The nature and inherent risk of harm; and
3. The best interest of the foster child based on the information known by the caregiver.

If the foster child is left alone, the Resource Family should ensure the following:

1. The foster child knows where the emergency numbers are posted;
2. The foster child knows emergency procedures; and
3. The foster child knows where and how to contact the Resource Family.

A foster child of at least 16 years of age may be left home alone on a regular basis, for two hours a day or up to six hours within a 72-hour period, upon approval of the youths’ social worker and documented in his/hers Need and Services Plan. **Home alone must appear in the youth’s Needs and Services Plan prior to being left home alone on a regular basis!**

**ACTIVITIES AND UNSUPERVIZED TIME IN THE COMMUNITY**

Krista youth are encouraged to participate in activities outside their Resource Family home. A Resource Family may decide whether a foster child can or cannot participate in any “age appropriate activity” such as school sports, California Youth Connection, church youth group, school dances, sleep overs, babysitting, socializing with friends, etc. Such activities often times prove to be positive socialization experiences.

When a foster child asks permission to spend unsupervised time outside the Resource Family home the Resource Family should use RPPS. They should gather adequate information about the activity and ask themselves the following questions:

* Does this activity seem reasonable?
* Is this activity age-appropriate (maturity appropriate) for this child?
* Are there foreseeable hazards?
* Is there anything based upon the foster child’s case history, (such as truancy or running away) to suggest that this activity would not be appropriate for the foster child?
* Does this decision maintain the foster child’s health, safety and best interests?
* Does this activity assist in normalizing life in foster care?

Always, if unsure, contact your Krista agency Social Worker to decide together the level of freedom this child /youth can have. Krista staff may consult with the youth’s placing worker as well. When these guidelines are established and the youth has proven successful with these alone time opportunities, the Resource Family may grant permission for future activities without first consulting Krista Social Work staff.

**PRIVILEGES FOSTER YOUTH MAY ENJOY**

* Cell phone
* Watching T.V.
* Watching videos
* Playing video games
* Movies with friends
* Computer time
* Fishing (Use RPPS to determine whether a ‘water safety certified’ person needs to be present)
* Swimming (Use RPPS to determine whether a ‘water safety certified’ person needs to be present)
* Listening to the stereo
* Being able to go places alone (mall, etc.)
* Skating Rink
* Phone calls – outgoing and incoming
* Bike riding
* Rollerblading
* Skateboard Park
* Staying overnight with friends
* Having friends stay overnight
* Visiting at a friend’s house
* Having friends over to visit at your house
* Being able to go off school campus
* Dances
* School activities such as sporting events and clubs
* Gym time
* Staying up late
* Going for walks alone
* Community events such as the Rodeo, County Fair and concerts
* Volunteering at appropriate events
* Attending local Powwows

**SHORT-TERM BABYSITTING**

A Resource Family using prudent parenting standards may choose a babysitter of their choice to care for their foster children occasionally for less than 24 hours which may include overnight. A short- term babysitter does NOT have to be over 18, does NOT have to have CPR/First Aid and does NOT have to be fingerprinted. However, if any or all of these are possible we highly recommend it. The babysitter must have the maturity, experience, and ability necessary to provide adequate care and supervision to a foster child/children.

Both teenage foster children and biological children can be short term babysitters. However**,** this does not include overnight and a Resource Family must apply reasonable and prudent parenting standards when arranging for a foster child or biological child to short term babysit and may wish to consult with the foster child’s social worker and document the application of RPPS. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE SHALL A FOSTER CHILD BE REQUIRED TO BABYSIT! This includes real, implied, or perceived.** Teenage foster children babysitting other children in their home must be paid minimum wage per hour for one child plus $1.00 for every child added.

Making careful and sensible parental decisions regarding the use of an occasional, short-term babysitter that maintains the child’s health, safety, and best interest can be difficult. A Resource Family should think about these additional considerations:

* The child’s age, maturity, mental and physical health, developmental level, behavioral propensities and aptitude of the child, and the ability of the babysitter to give the necessary, appropriate care and supervision.
* Weigh the foreseeable risks in leaving the child with a babysitter.
* If unsure about the appropriateness of leaving the child with a babysitter, discuss your concerns with the child’s social worker.

A Resource Family must make an effort to give the babysitter the following information before leaving the child with a babysitter for short-term care:

* Information about the child’s emotional, behavioral, medical, or physical conditions, if any, necessary to provide care for the child during the time the foster child is being supervised by the babysitter.
* Any medication that should be administered to the foster child during the time the foster child is being supervised by the babysitter.
* Emergency contact information that is valid during the time the foster child is being supervised by the babysitter.
* A review of emergency procedures.

\*Babysitting forms for this purpose are available at the Krista office.

**RESPITE**

Respite care is temporary respite of parental duties, paid for by Krista, so that a parent is able to fulfill other responsibilities necessary to improve or maintain the parenting function. Respite care cannot exceed 72 hours per session. These services are not provided for the purpose of routine, ongoing child day care or for getaways longer than 3 days.

Respite care must be provided by a Krista approved or Krista certified respite caregiver. Care and supervision of the foster child/children may take place either in the approved or respite caregiver’s home or in the Resource Family’s home.

An approved or certified respite caregiver who provides care and supervision of the foster child/children ***must***:

* be at least 18 years old
* have current first aid and C.P.R. certification
* have received criminal history and child abuse index clearance through the Krista Office.
* possess a valid driver’s license, available vehicle, and vehicle insurance
* be given copies of the child’s medical consent and medical card
* have the emergency number to reach a Krista social worker as needed

The Resource Family is required to give the respite worker the following information before leaving the child in their care whether respite is being done at the Resource Family’s home or the respite workers home.

* Information about the child’s emotional, behavioral, medical, or physical conditions, if any, necessary to provide care for the child during the time the foster child is being supervised by the respite worker.
* Any medication that should be administered to the foster child during the time the foster child is being supervised by the respite worker.
* Emergency contact information that is valid during the time the foster child is being supervised by the respite worker.
* If respite is done in the Resource Family’s home, a Resource Family shall review the emergency procedures with the respite worker.

\* Respite forms for this purpose are available at the Krista office.

If a child is being supervised in the home of a respite person, the house must be a Krista certified home.

**ALTERNATIVE CAREGIVER**

If a Resource Family anticipates being absent from the home for longer than 72 hours, on an occasional basis, the Resource Family may arrange for an alternative caregiver to provide care and supervision to a foster child in the Resource Family’s home. The Resource Family must also contact the Krista Social Worker PRIOR to their absence, in order for mandated prior approval from the foster child’s county worker or probation officer can be obtained.

An alternative caregiver must meet the following requirements:

1. Is 18 years of age or older.
2. Must have a criminal record clearance and a Child Abuse Central Index clearance.
3. Must be CPR and First Aid Certified and if there is a pool at residence Water Safety certified.
4. Possess a valid driver’s license, available vehicle, and vehicle insurance.
5. Be physically & mentally able to provide care and supervision.

The alternative caregiver must be given the following information before the Resource Family leaves the home:

1. Information about the emotional, behavioral, medical or physical conditions of a child, if any.
2. Any medication that should be administered to a child during the time the child is being supervised by the alternative caregiver, consistent with physician’s instructions, when available.
3. Be given copies of the child’s medical consent and medical card.
4. The name and telephone number of the Krista Social worker, county social worker and the Resource Family’s emergency contact information.
5. A Resource Family shall review the emergency procedures with the alternative caregiver.

## NON- EMERGENCY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A Resource Family shall make the following reports to Krista Foster Homes by telephone, e-mail, or fax within 24 hours or by the next business day following the event.

1. If a Resource Family becomes licensed to operate a family day care home.
2. All changes in the composition of a Resource Family household, including, but not limited to, the following:
3. Any additional individuals residing or regularly present in the Resource Family’s home, including if the Resource Family becomes a guardian or conservator for any child or other person.
4. Any adult moving in or out of the home.
5. Except for a nonminor dependent, anyone who resides or is regularly present in the home who reaches his or her 18th birthday.
6. A change in marital status.
7. Any changes to the Resource Family’s mailing address. The notification shall occur by telephone, e-mail, or fax within ten business days following the change.
8. A Resource Family shall notify Krista Foster Homes by telephone, e-mail, or fax within 30 days prior to moving home locations or as soon as the information is available.

**V. DISCIPLINE POLICY**

**DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The purpose of discipline is to train your child to get along first as a member of a family and then with the community. Another purpose is to train the child to become a responsible and mature adult. Discipline is an essential part of child rearing and needs to be viewed as a learning experience so the child will develop acceptable patterns of conduct. It is important for the Resource Family to keep in mind that foster children typically come from homes lacking consistent standards of behavior. A foster child’s behavior needs extra understanding. Developing appropriate behavior takes time. It is important to accept the foster child as he/she is at the moment, even if you do not approve of his/her current behavior. Suggestions for determining an effective means of discipline for children will be covered in training and in consultation with agency social workers.

**DISCIPLINE HINTS:**

When a child is first placed in your home explain the rules and responsibilities for the household. Clearly communicate your expectations concerning the child’s behavior.

1. Establish clear limits and guidelines expected of the child and let the child know he/she will be responsible for the consequences of his/her choices.
2. Help the child understand the purpose of disciplinary action and be sure to consider the child’s age, maturity, background and previous experiences.
3. Talk and listen to the child and encourage them to do likewise so that you each understand how the other thinks and feels.
4. Remember that ultimately you can only control your behavior, not the child’s. Your control is over the consequences of the behavior, not the behavior itself.
5. Repetitiveness is important!
6. Get down to child’s level when talking or correcting them.

**DISCIPLINE REGULATION:**

The following disciplinary methods are ***not*** permitted by state regulation or by Krista Foster Homes:

1. Corporal punishment.
2. Punishment in the presence of others.
3. Withholding of meals.
4. Preventing daily living functions such as meals, toileting, or sleep.
5. Threat of removal from your home.
6. Any degrading or humiliating punishment.
7. Withholding family contact and visits (unless given prior approval by the child’s placing worker and Krista case manager).

The following disciplinary methods are ***not*** permitted by Krista.

1. Withholding allowance for chores not completed (Unless a written contract has been written and signed by child, Krista social worker and county worker).
2. Not allowing foster child to go to church or church activities. (Church activities are not considered privileges that can be used as consequences for misbehavior).

The decision about the child’s consequences will typically be made by the Resource Family with the assistance of the agency social worker when needed. If the child commits a major infraction (such as running away, theft, assault or truancy), contact your Krista social worker immediately. Consult with your social worker when the consequence of an infraction results in the loss of all privileges.

**VI. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Every certified Resource Family home must place emergency telephone numbers in a prominent location.

In the event that the Resource Family uses an occasional short-term babysitter or an alternative caregiver, these persons must know where the emergency telephone numbers are located. They must also know where the first aid kit and fire extinguishers are as well. It is also appropriate to review the emergency procedures with them.

When a new child is placed in your home, and every six months thereafter, fire drills and other emergency procedures for the home must be discussed and practiced with the child/children as age and developmentally appropriate. Forms are available in the office for the required fire drills.

**REPORTING:**

All major incidents or emergencies are to be reported immediately to a Krista social worker or administrator. If calling after office hours you should attempt to reach the Krista Administrator by cell phone; Bob Phillips, 515-4442. If he does not answer leave a message. If his voice mail directs you to another number please call it! You should also attempt to reach your child’s Krista Social Worker.

Please report the events below by telephone, email or fax as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours of event. Reports must consist of:

* + 1. The name, age, sex, and date of admission of the child or nonminor dependent.
		2. Date and nature of the incident.
		3. Whether a Suspected Child Abuse Report was required and filed.
		4. Attending physician's name, findings, and treatment, if any.
		5. Current status of the incident.
		6. If the report was made by telephone or did not include all of the information specified above, then a Resource Family shall submit a written report containing the information to Krista Foster Homes within seven days following the event.

# **EVENTS TO REPORT:**

1. Death, serious bodily injury, or risk of death or serious bodily injury to a child, nonminor dependent, or other individual residing in the home.
2. Any suspected child abuse or neglect, or any suspected physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of a child or a nonminor dependent.
3. Any injury to or illness of a child or a nonminor dependent that requires emergency medical or mental health treatment or hospitalization.
4. Any incident that involves a child or a nonminor dependent and threatens the physical or emotional health or safety of the child, nonminor dependent, or any individual in the home.
5. Report suicide threats or attempts regardless of injury or treatment.
6. Any unusual absence of a child or, for a nonminor dependent, any prolonged absence that is unplanned or failure of the nonminor dependent to return to the home that lasts more than 72 hours.
7. Report temporary absences if a personal history or the needs and services plan indicate that a child or nonminor dependent may be in jeopardy when absent beyond the approved time.
8. Removal of a child or a nonminor dependent from the home under emergency circumstances, which may include:
	1. Removal by a law enforcement officer when a child or nonminor dependent is arrested.
	2. Removal for emergency medical or mental health care.
9. Relocation by the authorized representative for a child or nonminor dependent.
10. Communicable disease outbreak as reported to a Resource Family by a health professional or by the local health authority.
11. Poisonings, which shall also be reported immediately to the local fire authority.
12. If a Resource Family is located in an area that does not have organized fire services, the Resource Family shall make a report to the State Fire Marshal within 24 hours after the poisoning occurs.
13. Catastrophes.
14. Fires or explosions that occur in or on the premises of the home.
15. If a Resource Family becomes licensed to operate a family day care home.
16. A significant change in the physical or mental health of a child, nonminor dependent or any other residents in the home, including the Resource Family.

**RUNAWAY/MISSING FOSTER CHILDREN:**

When the Resource Family determines that a foster child has run away or is missing, (usually after a one hour absence) it is imperative to immediately file a missing person report with local law enforcement and contact a Krista social worker. This is for the safety of the child that runs away and to limit the responsibility/liability of the Resource Family. The Krista social worker will inform the administrator and placement worker and complete an incident report for the placement agency and Community Care Licensing.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:**

Regarding medical emergencies which temporarily incapacitate the Resource Family, substitute care plans will be implemented. When this incapacitation is long term, the foster child will be placed in another Krista home with the placement worker's approval. When foster children are in need of emergency medical care, the Resource Family will take the child to the hospital or call 911, if necessary. All Resource Families have signed **Medical Consent for Treatment** forms authorized by the natural parents or placement agency. The consent to treat form, medical card or insurance card must be taken with the child to the hospital. The Resource Family is to contact a Krista Administrator as soon as possible. The Administrator will contact the placement worker and Community Care Licensing.

**DISASTER:**

An Emergency Care and Disaster Plan will be posted in the Resource Family home and on file in the Krista office. An emergency plan is reviewed with each foster child when placed in the Resource Family home and includes assignments for person count, first-aid procedures, telephone and emergency numbers, and transportation. All residents in the Resource Family home need to understand where to exit in an emergency and where the temporary relocation sites will be. The Resource Family will be responsible for shutting off utilities if necessary. Disaster drills need to be conducted with all foster children and youth and family members upon placement and every six months. These drills are required every six months and need to be documented on the forms provided by the agency.

**LEGAL CONFLICTS:**

Legal problems can take many forms, such as shoplifting or truancy, etc. The Resource Family need to allow the child to experience the consequences of his/her actions. If the foster child has legal conflicts with the police or school, contact a Krista social worker.

**CHILD ABUSE REPORTING**

www.youthlaw.org

According to California law as a Resource Family you are a mandated reporter. This means you are required to report child abuse and neglect.

**When must I report abuse?**

“A mandated reporter shall make a report  . . . whenever the mandated reporter, in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, has knowledge of or observes a child whom the mandated reporter knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect.”

**What if I am not sure that abuse has occurred?**

Confirmation of abuse is not required. Reporters must report whenever they have “reasonable suspicion” that abuse has occurred. “Reasonable suspicion” means “that it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain a suspicion, based upon facts that could cause a reasonable person in a like position, drawing, when appropriate, on his or her training and experience, to suspect child abuse or neglect.”

**What constitutes abuse or neglect?**

The Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) defines “child abuse or neglect” to include:

* physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means upon a child by another person;
* sexual abuse
* neglect
* the willful harming or injuring of a child or the endangering of the person or health of a child and
* unlawful corporal punishment or injury

In addition, mandated reporters may, but are not required to, report “serious emotional damage.

**VII. COOPERATION AND COMPLIANCE**

As a Resource Family, you are expected to not make or disseminate any false or misleading statements in regard to Resource Family Approval or operation of the home. This includes, but is not limited to, information regarding a Resource Family, family members, adults living in the home, persons who currently provide or may provide care or supervision to a child or nonminor dependent, or any of the services provided to a child or nonminor dependent.

As a Resource Family, you are expected to comply and maintain compliance with all applicable laws and policies written in this handbook.

As a Resource Family, you are expected to cooperate with Krista Foster Homes, CCL, and/or service providers in completing the requirements, qualifications, or training required by Krista Foster Homes.

**VIII. COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCES**

CCL COMPLAINTS:

Community Care Licensing investigates all complaints about Resource Families and any violation of a child's rights. A state investigator will interview the child and person(s) involved in the complaint, and may inspect the Resource Family home. In the case of serious violations, further investigations may be conducted by law enforcement. A written report of the complaint and findings is kept in the Resource Family home file at the Krista office.

The state will determine whether the complaint is substantiated, inconclusive, or unfounded. Copies of all substantiated complaints are provided to the child's placement worker and the Board of Directors of Changed Lives Inc., the board overseeing the functioning of Krista Foster Homes. Action is taken to ensure that the affected Resource Family home complies with the applicable state regulations. A file is maintained in the Krista office of all complaints received.

**OPEN DOOR POLICY:**

Here at Krista Foster Homes we have an open-door policy and take Resource Family concerns and problems seriously. Krista values each Resource Family and strives to provide a positive fostering experience. Resource Families are encouraged to bring any fostering concerns or problems they might have or know about to their Krista social worker or administrator.

**COUNTY GRIEVANCES:**

If a Resource Family has an issue with a county worker, M.H. provider, behavioral specialist, etc.….Please use your best KYLO style behavior in the moment. Then, as soon as possible, talk to your Krista social worker to inform them of your concern or grievance. Please never directly oppose a county worker! Let your Krista social worker be the liaison in order to develop a plan to address the issue/concern. Please work closely with your Krista social worker throughout the process. Please don’t try to work thinks out on your own without their input.

Remember, we work for and with our county workers. They allow us to minister to children because we do an excellent job and are easy to work with. When Jesus is in the center of what we’re doing, others will always be pleased with us.

**KRISTA GRIEVANCES:**

It is Krista’s policy to provide an atmosphere that is safe and free from discrimination, sexual harassment, and all threatening and intimidating conduct. Therefore, Krista will not tolerate acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, and violence or threats of violence in any form from a Resource Family to other Resource Families, Krista employees, CCL, county workers or any other people who they may encounter related to the work of fostering in the home, at agency-related functions, or outside the home if it is related to fostering and affects Krista Foster Homes. Violations of this policy will not be tolerated and may be grounds for decertification.

Krista Foster Homes also does not tolerate acts of discrimination, sexual harassment, violence or threats of violence of any form from any employee or volunteer towards any Resource Family.

It will be a violation of this policy for any employee or volunteer to engage in any conduct, verbal or physical, which intimidates, harasses, endangers, or creates the perception of intent to harm persons or property; unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature which is made either explicitly or implicitly, a term of a home being certified or uncertified, kids removed, or any similar threat.

Examples of sexual harassment include: unwelcome or unsolicited sexual advances; displaying sexually suggestive material; unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; suggestive comments; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; sexually oriented jokes; crude or vulgar language or gestures; graphic or verbal commentaries about an individual’s body; display or distribution of obscene materials; physical contact such as patting, pinching or brushing against someone’s body; or physical assault of a sexual nature.

Krista policy does not prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not extremely serious. The conduct must be sufficiently frequent or severe to create a hostile environment.

The Resource Family is encouraged to inform the harasser directly that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. The Resource Family should also report harassment to a Krista social worker or administrator at an early stage to prevent its escalation.

Anyone with questions or complaints about workplace behaviors which fall under this policy may discuss them with a Krista social worker or administrator. Krista will promptly and thoroughly investigate any reported occurrences or threats of violence. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, possibly up to and including immediate termination of employees if deemed appropriate. Where such actions involve non-employees, Krista will take action appropriate for the circumstances. Where appropriate and/or necessary, Krista will also take whatever legal actions are available and necessary to stop the conduct and protect Krista Resource Families.

**COMPLAINT REPORTING**

1. In the event a Resource Family feels that he/she has been threatened, harassed or discriminated against, they should bring the matter to the immediate attention of a Krista social worker or administrator in writing. No formal action will be taken against any person under this policy unless a social worker or administrator has received a written and signed complaint containing sufficient details to determine if the policy may have been violated.
2. The Krista administrator or social worker will notify the person(s) charged of a complaint and promptly investigate all allegations of threat, discrimination and harassment to determine whether there is a reasonable basis for believing that the alleged violation of this policy occurred.
3. If warranted, during the investigation the administrator or social worker will interview the complainant, the respondent, and any

 witnesses to determine whether the alleged conduct occurred. An investigation and its results will be treated as confidential to the extent feasible.

1. If it is determined that harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy has occurred, the administrator or board president will recommend appropriate disciplinary action. The appropriate action will depend on the following factors:
2. the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the conduct;
3. prior complaints made by the complainant;
4. prior complaints made against the respondent; and
5. the quality of the evidence (e.g., first-hand knowledge, credible corroboration).
6. If the investigation is inconclusive or if it is determined that there has been no violation of policy but potentially problematic conduct may have occurred, the administrator or board president may recommend appropriate preventative action.
7. Within 15 business days of the complaint being filed, the administrator (or board president if complaint is against the administrator) conducting the investigation will conclude the investigation.
8. Within five business days after the investigation is concluded, the administrator or board president will meet with the complainant and the respondent separately, notify them of the findings of the investigation both verbally and in writing, and inform them of the action being recommended.
9. The complainant and the respondent may submit statements to the administrator or board president challenging the factual basis of the findings. Any such statement must be submitted no later than five working days after the meeting in which the findings of the investigation are discussed.
10. Within 10 days from the date the administrator or board president meets with the complainant and respondent; the board president or the administrator will review the investigative report and any statements submitted by the complainant or respondent, review the results of the investigation and decide what action, if any, will be taken. The administrator or board president will report the company’s decision to the complainant, the respondent and the appropriate social worker in which the complainant and the respondent work. The final decision will be in writing and will include findings of fact and a statement for or against disciplinary action. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the respondent will be informed of the nature of the discipline and how it will be executed.

 \*No foster parent will be retaliated against for making a complaint in good faith regarding a violation of these policies, or for participating in good faith in an investigation pursuant to these policies.