

The Texas Foster Family Association

F.O.C.U.S.

March 2015

Daycare Update:

Do you need help in understanding the CPS policy of terminating daycare when a child is moved from Basic to Moderate level of care? https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/handbooks/CPS/Files/CPS_pg_8235_3.asp

Are you trying to figure this out? Will this policy encourage anyone to foster, especially siblings, and the more challenging needs of some children in care? The increase in the daily rate is nowhere close to covering the cost of day care.

Well, this might help: This is the current policy: only children at basic level are eligible for daycare paid for by DFPS. Some history: for numerous years the daycare funds ran out months before the end of the fiscal year - sometimes as early as March and often by May. When that happened there were no funds for the rest of the fiscal year which is the end of August for all children who were in day care. DFPS, in lieu of getting enough appropriate funds from the legislature had to make some decisions on how to continue funding for eligible children for the entire fiscal year. So, it was determined to limit the daycare to children with basic needs. There was also discussion that young children with a higher LOC (level of care) would probably do better with one-on-one parenting instead of being in group care since consistency is so important to the children. This indeed creates havoc for families when their child has their LOC increased. No easy answer. I hope this helps better understand the current policy. If this policy affects this daycare need for you, I would suggest that now is a great time to talk to your two Texas Legislators and tell them what is happening and let them know that for many families this could eventually lead to these children being moved - something they know is a determinant to the children. Tell them it is time to adequately fund daycare so children can remain in their placement when their LOC may need to increase.

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- See the latest children who were added or updated in the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE). DFPS's Texas Adoption Resource Exchange is at www.adoptchildren.org.
- This program made updates to their policy handbook that take effect immediately. See summaries and learn more in the revision memos for these publications. [CPS Handbook](#)
- [Congress works on Children's Issues](#)
- Normalcy Bill: *THANK YOU* so much to those who were able to come and testifying in support of the Normalcy bill. We hope you all felt like you got to tell your story and were heard. It was especially important that the foster youth were able to share about their experiences, so we are glad they got to speak before the committee had cut off public testimony. Additionally, not sure if you heard, but the story was picked up by the news media! Here is the link: <http://www.kvue.com/story/news/local/2015/03/25/foster-care-texas-normalcy-bill/70455160/>. We are grateful to Senator Schwertner and Representative Dukes for their leadership around this important issue. We are expecting the Normalcy bill to be up in the House next soon, but we have not gotten official confirmation of that yet.
- Are you interested in keeping up with how bills progress through the legislature? Here is a link to a [Bill Tracker](#). Be sure to check it regularly because of updates.

Webinars of Interest

- DFPS Commissioner John Specia and other staff will be presenting on ongoing changes at CPS at noon on Tuesday, March 10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register for the webinar.

News Clips of Interest

- Fox News -Austin: [Colton's Law](#) filed
- Kaiser Health News: [More Than One In Four Foster Kids Miss Required Checkups](#)
- [Keep Child Welfare Reform a State Priority](#)

For You From Dr. John DeGarmo

Sadly, many marriages suffer during the foster process. When you are putting much of your energies and time into your foster child, you may be so drained and exhausted that you soon neglect your spouse. Further complicating this, some foster children are skilled at pitting one parent against the other, bringing some heated and very unproductive arguments to your home. Without a doubt, there are many obstacles that can challenge a healthy marriage when becoming a foster parent. To be sure, being a foster parent will change your life, in so many ways. Therefore, it will be absolutely necessary that you take steps to protect your marriage from any of the slings and arrows that might threaten your foster parenting, and your marriage. Please find my foster care blog for April by clicking [HERE](#). As always, please feel free to use it as your own, share it with others, place it on your website and newsletter, etc. Here are some articles of interest: *Foster Care Youth Trapped in the School to Prison Pipeline. Click [HERE](#). *Foster children face enough problems during their early life without being discarded at age 18. Click [HERE](#). *Finally, here is my video from last week-Foster Care 101: Knowing When You Need to Take a Break. Click [HERE](#).

- Get you copy of this new Foster Parenting 101 eBook. In this new eBook, [Marriage and Foster Parenting](#), Click [HERE](#) for more information.

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