

Decisions need to be made about your child while he or she is in the care of others.

In 2015, Pennsylvania lawmakers came up with Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards to guide you and your child's foster parent(s) or group home residential staff toward decisions that are in the best interest of your child.

The Standards list which decisions are up to you. They also list which decisions others can make without your permission, as long as they follow court orders and do not go against your CYF Family Plan.

You will find both lists in this brochure. Attending your court hearings, team meetings and staying in contact with your caseworker and attorney can help you stay notified about decisions that might be made by your child's temporary caregivers.

If you have strong concerns about an upcoming decision related to your child, please contact your CYF caseworker, his or her supervisor, your attorney or the DAL as soon as possible.

Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards are included in Pennsylvania Act 75 of 2015; Public law 440 "Activities and Experiences for Children in Out-of-Home Placements Act" (December 10, 2015)

Helpful numbers

Your CYF caseworker

Your caseworker's supervisor

Your attorney

DHS Operator

412-350-5701

for information about who is involved with your CYF case

DAL

1-800-862-6783

for information, concerns or complaints about DHS services

Parent Advocate

412-391-4467

for information about legal representation in your court-active CYF case if you live in a low-income household

In your child's best interest



Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards



Decisions that are up to you

As the parent, according to Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards, you get to decide about your child's:

- religious training
- general or special education needs* (Your signature is needed to start the Gifted/ Individual Educational Plan (G/IEP) process.)
- hospitalizations*
- non-routine medical and surgical treatment*
- non-routine mental health and drug and alcohol services**
- enlistment in the military
- image or personal information being given to and used by the media
- application for a permit or license related to employment, driving or hunting.
- marriage
- getting tattoos or piercings
- appearance changing significantly

* *The court may appoint an alternative educational or medical decision-maker if you are unable or unwilling to participate in these decisions. This person keeps the decision-making role until the court rules otherwise.*

** *Youth 14 years and older have the right to keep their MH treatment private. Youth of any age have the right to keep their D&A treatment private.*

A full listing of all your rights and responsibilities is included in A Parent's Handbook. If you do not have A Parent's Handbook, please call the DAL at 1-800-862-6783 to have one mailed to you.



How other decisions are made

Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards allow and encourage your child's temporary caregivers to make other decisions that give your child opportunities for growth and fun. When these decision need to be made, the caregiver considers:

- Your concerns and ideas
- Your child's wishes
- Your child's age, maturity and developmental level
- Your child's safety and well-being
- Your child's need to feel part of his or her temporary family
- Your child's emotional and developmental growth
- Your family's cultural or religious practices or beliefs
- Your child's sexual orientation and gender identity
- Your child's need for skills for adulthood

Your ideas and concerns will be part of the decision process. Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards, however, allow decisions to be made about eligible activities without your permission.

Decisions that are up to others

Decisions about the items below can be made by your child's temporary caregiver without your permission.

- Personal grooming such as maintaining healthy hair, skin and teeth and hair length
- Personal fashion choices such as clothing, jewelry and makeup
- Recreation such as community and family events, out-of-county or out-of-state travel, camping and hiking, sporting and water activities with appropriate protective equipment, and hunting after age 12 with proper license
- Social and extracurricular activities such as those related to employment, summer camps, field trips, school, youth organizations, sports, communities, friends (including overnight) and dating
- Any waiver of liability (e.g., for school travel or camp or sports participation)
- Communication with friends and family by phone and social media
- Use of social media and the internet
- Use of a car, ATV, snow mobile, personal watercraft (Jet-Ski) or boat after the legal age and requirements of licenses or safety certificates are obtained