



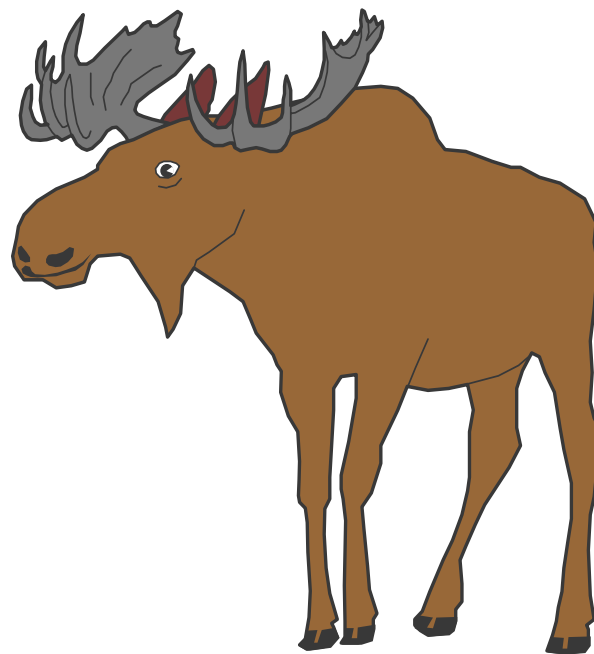
UNDERSTANDING THE REGULATIONS:

What Alaskan Foster Parents Need to Know

#2

Development of the Young Child in the Foster Home

1.0 Training Credit



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UNDERSTANDING THE REGULATIONS: *What Alaskan Foster Parents Need to Know*

Development of the Young Child in the Foster Home *7 AAC 50.420 and 7 AAC 50.430*

This series was compiled with help from the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services to help foster parents understand the foster care regulations. This series is a guide to the regulations but is not a substitute. In all differences between the information in this series and the regulations, the regulations are the final authority. Contact your licensing worker for a complete copy of the regulations.

FOSTER PARENT COMPETENCIES

This self-study module addresses part or all of the following Child Welfare League of America Competencies for Foster Caregivers:

905-1 *The foster caregiver knows the state's/province's licensing rules and the mandates and expectations of foster families to remain licensed.*

924-1 *The foster caregiver knows the stages and processes of emotional, physical, cognitive, social, and language development in infants and toddlers.*

924-2 *The foster caregiver can develop and implement activities that can stimulate an infant or toddler's development.*

924-3 *The foster caregiver knows how to develop relationships with and communicate with infants and toddlers.*

Many children who come into foster care have delays. Delays mean your child cannot do what a child of his age should be able to do. Delays can be physical or emotional or social. In addition, if foster parents do not actively promote a child's development, children could fall behind in the foster home. Foster care regulations state, "*a foster parent shall provide structure and daily activities designed to promote the individual, physical, social, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional development and good health habits of a child in care.*" Foster parents need to promote healthy development of all children in their care, but this is particularly critical for the young child in foster care.

FOSTERING THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN YOUR FOSTER HOME

Each day, have activities that mix quiet and active play, playing alone and with other children. Encourage playtime both indoors and outdoors. Be sure to include time for meals, snacks, sleep, and toileting according to the individual child.

In your home, give children regular time for:

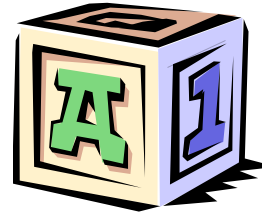


Self-expression and imaginative play such as: *crayons, paints, clay, dress up, singing, puppets, and make-believe*

Physical activity both indoor and outdoors (when weather and the child's health permit) such as: *providing pillows to jump on, taking children for walks, outdoor play equipment, tricycles*

Learning independence such as: *how to dress, brush teeth, feed self, and make choices*

Developing the mind and the ability to get along with others such as: *outings, talking, books, games to play with others, blocks, puzzles, card games, hide and seek*



Other requirements from the foster care regulations...

↪ Have a variety of materials, toys and equipment available that are appropriate to the child's age. Store them safely and have at least some of the toys and materials stored so children can reach them easily.

↪ Limit TV and video viewing to no more than 4 hours a day and choose programs wisely.

If you have a baby or a toddler in your home:

∞ Do not routinely leave a child awake in a crib for more than 15 minutes without adult contact. Talk to the baby, pick him up, rub his back or belly for a few minutes, play with the baby, change the toys in the crib, or put on some music.

∞ Baby walkers are not allowed in foster care because of the high accident rate associated with them. Research also suggests that walkers and other restraining devices may also cause delays in a child's development.

∞ Talk to the child often. Talking to children from infancy has proven to be very effective in furthering a child's mental and social development.

∞ Let the child play under adult supervision outside a playpen or restraining device every day.



What else can you do to help a child grow?

Following is a list of different ages and ways a foster parent can actively encourage a child's development. The list also offers suggestions of toys and materials helpful to the age group. Keep your activities fun, varied and interesting to the child. You won't go wrong! If you suspect a child is delayed in his development, contact your caseworker, public health nurse, Infant Learning Program, or community health aide for help.

For more information about the **UNDERSTANDING THE REGULATIONS: *What Alaskan Foster Parents Need to Know*** series, contact the Alaskan Center for Resource Families at 1-800-478-7307. In Fairbanks/North Pole, call 479-7307.

THE INFANT (Birth to 12 months)*



To Develop the Mind (*Mental Development*)

- Move the baby around to different locations in out of the house.
- Surround the baby with sound: music, talking, singing, noises of other children and voices.
- Provide objects for baby to see and touch: first 1 object, then 2 or 3. (Use different sizes, colors and textures.)
- Make mobiles by attaching a variety of safe objects to pieces of ribbon or elastic: change them often.
- Play peek-a-boo and hiding games. ("Where's Carrie's foot?")
- Around one year of age, repeat the names of objects. ("water" "spoon" "foot")
- Provide water to play in and water toys that float.



To Develop the Body (*Physical Development*)

- Have baby sit up in an infant seat as soon as she is able.
- Exercise baby by moving her arms and legs in imitation of adult exercises.
- Encourage baby to crawl and pull up on things when able.
- Lay baby on a clean blanket. Let her stretch, reach and develop her crawling muscles.
- Place an object just out of reach to encourage crawling in mid-year.
- Gently rub a child's arms and legs. Gentle massage is soothing to many babies.

* Adapted from **The Young Child In Foster Care: Developmental Issues** by Carol Brice, Alaska Center for Resource Families

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To Develop the Heart (*Social and Emotional Development*)

- Put baby in different social settings: small and large groups, inside and outside activities.
- Expose baby to people who look different: young, old, tall, short, men, women, dark skinned, light skinned, bearded, clean shaved, high voiced, low voiced, long-haired, short-haired.
- If a woman is primary caregiver, be sure baby spends time with a man--either foster father or an important man in the family's life. The reverse is true when the caregiver is a man.
- Always have someone hold the baby when giving a bottle so he connects the positive experience of being fed with people. Most people enjoy this; don't hesitate to ask!

IMPORTANT TOYS:

- * A plastic bucket with several objects that fit in it (safe household items like plastic measuring spoons)
- * A sturdy book with large, colorful pictures (you can make this)
- * A toy that makes noise when shaken: soft cuddly toys
- * Colorful crib pads, sheets, room decorations
- * Nonbreakable mirror or a shiny surface to look at
- * Plastic and rubber toys to gum, chew on and slobber over (*Clean these often!*)

THE TODDLER (1 to 3 years)*



To Develop the Mind (*Mental Development*)

- Encourage talking. ("What's this...?" "Try to say...")
- Help child identify and name body parts.
- Help child be aware of shapes (*circle, square, triangle, etc*) sizes (*big, small, long, short*) colors (*red, blue, yellow etc*) sounds (*loud, soft, high, low*) touch (*rough. smooth. hot. cold*).
- Have child carry out simple instructions ("Bring me your ABC book." or "Find your teddy bear.")
- Ask child to identify objects around him and those he sees in books.
- Have child identify an object by touch alone (hidden from sight).
- Have child imitate sounds, identify an unseen sound, and respond to whispered directions.
- Encourage recognition of a few alphabet letters (but not their sound).
- Have child help around the house: pick up leaves, bring in the paper, put away toys, dust, polish mirrors, put dirty clothes in the hamper, put something on the table.
- READ TO CHILDREN!**



To Develop the Body (*Physical Development*)

- Help child to eat by himself--including pouring, buttering, removing wrappers, etc.
- Have child stack blocks or boxes into towers.
- Have child try to put lids on and off or screw tops on and off.
- Have child begin stringing objects on a string.
- Help child trace around objects: his hand, cookie cutters, toys. blocks
- Help child put simple puzzles together.
- Let child try riding a tricycle or pulling a wagon.



To Develop the Heart (*Social and Emotional Development*)

- Encourage child to share, especially as he approaches age 3; before the children have a hard time sharing.
- Have child begin to take responsibility for cleaning up his own toys.
- Encourage child to provide care for a doll or stuffed animal.
- Provide time around animals or have a pet in the household.
- Show child how to comfort someone who is hurt or sad (“Let’s give Rita a hug,” or “Maybe sister would like to use your blanket.”)
- Encourage child to play by himself now and then.
- Discourage child from using physical violence to get what he wants. (Hitting, biting, grabbing toys).

IMPORTANT TOYS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| * Paper, crayons, play dough | * Basic building blocks |
| * Bean bags or plastic balls | * Books (try the library or friends) |
| * Things to thread on a string | * Locking blocks (like large Leggos) |
| * A few puzzles | * Large pillows to jump on |
| * Tricycle, wagon, pull toys | |

Adapted from **The Young Child In Foster Care: Developmental Issues** by Carol Brice, Alaska Center for Resource Families

THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD (Ages 3, 4, 5)*



To Develop the Mind (*Mental Development*)

- Encourage a child to talk. Instead of “*How was your day?*” which gets a one-word answer, ask “*What toys did you use today?*”
- Use different words for the same thing (*big, huge, tremendous*).
- Help child to identify colors (*orange, purple, black, brown*).
- Have child match items that are alike (start with identical items like two ravens and move to grouping ravens and geese with “birds”).
- Have child identify items that are different. (*Put four different cars and trucks and one pencil together--ask child which one doesn't belong*).
- Work on opposites. (*Have child pick out a big block and then a little one; a soft object and then a hard one*).
- Have child arrange things by size--biggest to smallest or the opposite way (*blocks, trucks, pencils of different lengths*).
- Start counting. Provide a simple understanding of numbers. (“*How many kittens are there?*” “*Give me two cookies.*” “*How many forks will we need?*”)
- Demonstrate and use direction words whenever you have a chance (*behind, in front of, over, under, below, forward, backward*).
- Provide books for your child and READ! A story before bedtime is a nice habit.
- Pay attention to what child is interested in at that moment to extend his knowledge. Example: Talk about the wind blowing
- Have child help cook simple things like cinnamon toast or dividing an orange.



To Develop the Body (*Physical Development*)

- Expose child to play equipment that encourages climbing, jumping, going up and down ladders, swinging and spinning.
- Helping child learn to do a somersault.
- Allow child to help with simple cooking that includes pouring, beating, mixing, and stirring.
- Encourage child to start undressing and then gradually dressing.
- Provide a board for your child to walk on while it's lying on the ground: encourage child to go backward, forward, sideways, halfway, hop on, hop off.
- Have child lie on floor and instruct him to move different body parts (*Move this leg, move both arms, move this arm and that leg, etc.*)
- Play “Simon Says” games.
- Start teaching child to catch, first with a soft beanbag and then moving on to a large ball

* Adapted from **The Young Child In Foster Care: Developmental Issues**

THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD (Ages 3, 4, 5)* CON'T



To Develop the Heart (*Social and Emotional Development*)

- Allow child to answer telephone, talk briefly, and call an adult to the phone.
- Help child increase her attention span (*listen to an entire book by himself, listen to a whole tape*).
- Begin encouraging the child to take turns, play fair, and be a good loser.
- Encourage your child to say “please”, “thank you”, “you’re welcome” and “excuse me”.
- Try to see that your child has a chance to relate positively with people from her own ethnic groups and with other people different than herself.
- Put the child’s artwork and creations up on a bulletin board, wall or refrigerator.
- Provide other children for the child to play with, in the neighborhood or church group or nursery school.

IMPORTANT TOYS:

- * Shelf to put books on
- * Pegboard
- * Record player and records
- * A first dictionary with pictures
- * A magnet
- * Leggos or other interlocking blocks
- * Clay or Play Dough
- * Puzzles
- * Large muscle play equipment (riding toys, climbing toys)
- * Dramatic play toys (box for stove or refrigerator, child sized tables and chairs)
- * Small scissors (safe children’s kind)
- * A magnifying glass
- * More books (Garage sales, library)
- * Little human figures to acting things out
- * Stuffed animals or dolls to care for
- * Art supplies (crayons, paper, paints etc.)
- * Things to measure with such as cans, cups, water, beans etc.

* Adapted from **The Young Child In Foster Care: Developmental Issues**

THE SCHOOL AGE CHILD (6 to 12 years)*



To Develop the Mind (*Mental Development*)

- Provide a workspace for child to do school work.
- Appreciate the child's ideas and help them bring them to fruition. *But resist the temptation to do the project on their behalf!*
- Encourage child to dig deeply into a subject of interest. Let him teach you about it.
- Take a trip together to a museum or the library to discover information about something.
- Help the child start a collection-- *feathers, shells, rocks, stamps* --a means for child to find a self cure for those boring days away from school.
- Encourage child to plan a simple meal or special dessert by looking through recipe books. Have him make the list of ingredients for shopping list. As skills increase, allow him to prepare things alone.
- Reading aloud with a child help increase vocabulary. As a child's reading ability increase, encourage him to read a part in the storybook.
- Simple card games can increase number recognition and math concepts (*Go Fish, Rummy, Old Maid, Solitaire, etc.*)
- Provide a chance for him to celebrate and learn about his culture and about cultures different than his.



To Develop the Body (*Physical Development*)

- Provide child with opportunities to play organized sports. (*Soccer, T-ball, hockey, basketball, etc.*)
- If individual sports are available and affordable, get a child involved in karate, roller/ice skating, cross-country skiing, swimming, basketball, gymnastics, etc. Fishing, tracking, camping and outdoor skills also build self-confidence.
- Fine motor skills needed for writing can be enhanced through coloring, painting, sketching, working with crafts.
- Bicycle riding provides physical challenge as well as reductions of boredom by increasing the sense of adventure. If possible, have a bicycle available for each child.
- Play active games as a family such as softball or Frisbee, or do outdoor activities such as fishing, working with dogs, hiking, fishing, or camping together.

* Adapted from **The Young Child In Foster Care: Developmental Issues**

THE SCHOOL AGE CHILD (6 to 12 years)* CON'T



To Develop the Heart *(Social and Emotional Development)*

- Allow the child to try a new skill. Curb your cautionary “Be careful! Let me do it!” and say “Hey, give it a try.”
- When a child tries something new and is unsuccessful, praise him for trying.
- Expose the child to other culture, ethnic groups, and religious affiliations so he/she can learn the richness and diversity of the world in which she lives.
- Children, like adults, need time alone. Help child find a balance of active and quiet activities.
- Encourage the child to take part in household chores and responsibilities.
- Praise all school efforts. Attend programs. Maintain regular contact with the child’s teacher.
- Put the child’s artwork or school papers up on a bulletin board or refrigerator to help develop a positive self-image.
- Provide opportunities to the child to play with other children outside of school.

IMPORTANT TOYS:

- * Shelf for books
- * Art equipment--crayons, paints, paper, scissors, ruler
- * Human figures to act things out with
- * Dictionary for school work
- * More books (from library, garage sales, trading with friends)
- * Record player or cassette player with records or tapes
- * Small interconnecting blocks (Construx, Leggos, Flexiblocks)
- * Jigsaw Puzzles
- * Board game (Monopoly, Sorry, Chess, Checkers, Mastermind, etc.)
- * Deck of cards
- * Bike or other equipment for large muscle development

* Adapted from **The Young Child In Foster Care: Developmental Issues**