Foster Parent Responsibilities and Consents

Foster Parents' Educational Responsibilities (Education Procedures 314.30)
Foster parents are partners with caseworkers in making educational decisions for the child(ren) in their care and should communicate regularly with caseworkers concerning educational concerns and achievements. Foster parents should expect the caseworker to assist them in carrying out their educational responsibilities. Educational progress should be discussed at every required monthly caseworker meeting and a plan to resolve educational issues should be developed as needed.

In accordance with the Foster Parent Law (20 ILCS 505/7.2) foster parents have a responsibility to advocate on behalf of child(ren) and youth in their care. With regard to educational services, responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- assisting with homework as needed;
- attending parent/teacher conferences;
- picking up report cards;
- encouraging participation in extra-curricular activities;
- locating and enrolling the child in an early childhood education program, when age-appropriate;
- collaborating with the caseworker during any transitions between schools; and
- attending Truancy Adjudication Hearings as scheduled, in conjunction with the assigned caseworker.

Foster Parents' Educational Responsibilities for Students in Special Education
Foster Parents have the right and responsibility to advocate for children in their care who are eligible for special education. Federal and state law give foster parents the legal right to represent children under the age of 18 years for the identification, evaluation and provision of special education services. The major responsibilities of a foster parent in supporting students in special education include:

- Understanding the child and his/her educational/developmental needs, including the child’s strengths, interests and abilities;
- Informing caseworkers of educational/developmental needs, interventions, disciplinary incidents, progress reports, etc. in a timely manner;
• Requesting evaluations;

• Attending/participating in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) for early intervention;

• Negotiating for appropriate special education or early intervention services on behalf of the child, including reasonable accommodations, if necessary to benefit the child’s education or developmental services;

• Monitoring disciplinary actions;

• Requesting complaint investigations, mediation, and/or impartial due process hearings at the advice of an education advisor;

• Participating in due process hearings related to the child's special education or Early Intervention (EI) needs; and

• Informing caseworkers when legal advice, related to the child's special education or Early Intervention (EI) needs is necessary.

Caregiver may provide consent for the following educational activities

Consents for general school related activities
  - Field trips within Illinois
  - Routine social events (picnics, school parties, etc.)
  - School enrollment
  - Attendance at sporting and cultural events
  - Extra-curricular activities (other than athletic participation)

Special education consents:
  - Case study evaluations
  - IEP or IFSP
  - Three year re-evaluations of special education services
  - Release of educational records
  - Educational placements
  - Due process hearing and mediation

DCFS Guardian consent is needed for:
  - Athletic participation
  - Media coverage/events
  - Slide show productions
  - Photographs
  - Voice reproductions
  - Research projects
  - Liability releases
  - Medical examinations or care
  - Physical restraints. (For DCFS policy on the use of physical restraint, refer to Part 384, Behavior Treatment in Residential Child Care Facilities.)