

# 2021

Saskatchewan Foster Families Association  
**3rd Edition Handbook**  
A GUIDE FOR CAREGIVERS



EMPOWERING RESILIENT FAMILIES FOR THE BETTERMENT OF SOCIETY



## Contents

- **Introduction**
- **Saskatchewan Foster Families Association**
  - 4 Appeals/Conflict Resolution
  - 5 Property Damage Claims
- **Foster Care**
  - 6 Purpose of the Foster Care Program
  - 6 A Foster Parent's Role
  - 7 The Child and Family Services Act
  - 7 Matching a Foster Child to a Foster Family
  - 8 How Many Children Can be Placed in My Home?
  - 8 Foster Parent Training
  - 9 Safeguarding
  - 11 What Happens if My Home is Under Investigation?
  - 11 When to Report
- **When a Child is Placed in Your Home**
  - 12 What to Expect?
  - 12 Confidentiality
  - 13 Belongings
  - 13 Birth Families
  - 13 Record Keeping
  - 14 Case Planning
  - 14 How Can I Help My Foster Child Adjust?
  - 14 Life Books
  - 16 Financial Support
  - 16 Culture
  - 16 Travel
  - 16 Discipline
  - 18 Respite
  - 19 When a Child Leaves Your Home
- **Health and Safety**
  - 20 Health and Safety information
  - 23 Infant and Child Safety
  - 25 Other Things to Be Aware Of
  - 26 Universal Precautions
- **Support for Foster Parents**
  - 27 Where Can I Go for Support?
  - 27 Saskatchewan Child and Youth Advocates Office
  - 28 FASD Network
  - 28 Saskatchewan Youth in Care and Custody Network

## Introduction

The Saskatchewan Foster Parent Handbook (3rd Edition) is a resource for new and experienced foster parents. It includes information on everyday issues as well as answers to frequently asked questions about foster care.

This handbook will provide an overview of foster care, explanations of policy, responsibilities of the foster family, advice, and other important information on areas that foster parents may encounter. It is our goal to illustrate how the efforts and contributions of foster parents, Ministry of Social Services staff, and others involved in foster care result in a professional, team approach in which best meets the needs of the children in care.

This handbook is not intended to be a policy statement, but rather an additional resource to the information that has already been provided through training and policy. If you require additional information, please refer to the Children Services Manual (CSM), your foster child's caseworker, or the SFFA.



# Saskatchewan Foster Families Association

The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association, Inc. (SFFA) is a non-profit, community-based organization created to support foster parents in their role as caregivers. Every foster family that has been approved by the Ministry of Social Services within the province of Saskatchewan is considered a member of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association.

The SFFA is a registered charitable organization comprised primarily of foster parents. The provincial association receives core funding from the Ministry of Social Services (MSS), however it operates independently as a Community Based Organization (CBO).

## Vision Statement

Empowering resilient families for the betterment of society.

## Mission Statement

Saskatchewan Foster Families exists to support and encourage foster parents through education and advocacy, helping create healthy homes, positive environments, and brighter futures for children and youth in care across the province.

## Our Purpose

- To educate and support foster parents in their work;
- To develop a better understanding in the community of the role of foster parents; and
- To advocate and guide foster parents through the process.

## SFFA Services & Resources

The SFFA is comprised of a team of individuals whose goal is to support, advocate, and educate families.

Together, this team listens to the needs of families, advocates on their behalf and provides support when needed. Education, advocacy and a place to turn to for advice helps you provide the support and healthy home that foster children need. Our association offers training for foster parents to help develop a deeper understanding of the children they are caring for, how to manage stress and how to build effective relationships.

## Membership

Members of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA) are each provided with a membership card. This includes a membership number to register for conferences and training directly on our website.

**In addition, the SFFA offers the following resources:**

- Advocacy, support and education.
- Start-up and ongoing support of local committees.
- 'The Advisor': A quarterly newsletter which provides updates on SFFA program development, reports from the provincial association, updates on the Ministry of Social Services policies, and other information of interest to foster parents.
- Resource centre: The SFFA office maintains a library of many books and videos on various issues relevant to foster care. These resources can be borrowed by contacting the SFFA office.
- Website with updated events and information [www.saskfosterfamilies.ca](http://www.saskfosterfamilies.ca).
- Workshops, conferences, and training.

## Leadership Committees

At the SFFA, we have leadership committees across the province that exist to help foster parents connect with each other in their communities. No one knows what a foster parent goes through like other foster parents and it's important to find support, mentorship, to create relationships with other foster parents. We believe the best way to network is through fun and social events in which all members of your family can participate. As a member, you will receive emails about these events as they happen in your area.

## In-Home Support

If you, as a foster parent encounter special circumstances, such as many children placed in your home or children with high-level needs, the In-Home Support program is here to help you.

If the Ministry of Social Services assesses that you need some extra help, the SFFA can provide an In-Home Support Worker to help you with things like the day-to-day supervision of children, preparing meals, house cleaning, or laundry.

In Home Support Workers are never to take the place of the foster family, but are here to help foster parents focus on their primary responsibility – the children in their home – when there are difficult situations.

## Appeals and Conflict Resolution

When foster parents disagree with a decision made by a caseworker, they will notify the caseworker, who will arrange a meeting with the foster parents to discuss their concerns within five business days. Following the meeting, if the foster parents believe the matter has not been resolved, they may notify the caseworker, who advises their supervisor. The supervisor will contact the foster parents to discuss the matter and will arrange a meeting with all parties to come to a mutually satisfactory resolution. This meeting will take place within five days of the supervisor's contact with the foster parents, or as soon as possible.

If there is not a satisfactory resolution, the foster parents may request to meet with the Director, Service Delivery or designate. The Director, Service Delivery or designate arranges a meeting with the foster parents and may include the caseworker and supervisor if appropriate. The foster parents may invite the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association Advocate. The meeting will be held within fifteen business days upon receiving the request, or as soon as possible.

Following the meeting, the Director, Service Delivery or designate should meet with their worker and supervisor, arrive at a decision, and advise the foster parents in writing of the decision within five business days, or as soon as possible.

In those situations, involving decisions to close the foster home, if the matter is not concluded to the satisfaction of the foster parents at the service centre level through the Conflict Resolution process, the foster parents may contact the Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association to invoke the appeal process.

Following notification of an appeal, the Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association immediately informs the appropriate Director, Service Delivery and the Director, Service Delivery, Central Office to advise of the appeal. The Director, Service Delivery, Central Office arranges a meeting with an independent adjudicator, who is appointed and contracted by the Ministry of Social Services to hear the appeal. The adjudicator conducts their review into the concerns by gathering information from all sources, including the foster parents, Ministry of Social Services employees, and SFFA employees. When the review is concluded, the adjudicator records the information they have gathered, completes a report, and submits it to the Executive Director, Service Delivery. The Executive Director, Service Delivery, reviews the information and makes a final decision, based on the recommendation of the adjudicator.

## When Should I Call for Support?

Being a foster parent is not easy, but it is rewarding. It is important to know that you have support when you are struggling. If you have questions about policy, case planning or need support with investigations or quality of care, know that you are not alone. There are many different people who can support you and answer any questions that you may have, such as the SFFA advocate.



## Property Damage Claims

### **What happens if a child has damaged our home?**

Approved foster homes are expected to carry sufficient insurance to cover the value of their property. Deductibles for such insurance must fall within a normal range. You must take reasonable measures to assure that your property is protected from damage and that the children in your care are instructed in the proper care of property and provided with appropriate supervision.

While the primary source of compensation must be through insurance, the Ministry of Social Services does not wish foster parents to experience undue hardship due to damages by children placed in their care.

As fully approved foster homes, members of the SFFA are eligible for coverage under the insurance “rider” that the SFFA purchases, which applies when a claim is not valid or collectible under the foster family’s personal insurance due to the criminal or willful acts of the foster child. This “rider” does not cover damages to vehicles. Personal insurance on property and possessions must also be carried by the foster family.

If the damage is not covered by personal home insurance or the SFFA liability insurance rider, foster parents may seek compensation from the Ministry of Social Services. The foster parent(s) should notify the SFFA of any damage or loss caused by a foster child or children in their care. The SFFA will arrange for an Independent Damage Assessor to carry out an assessment of the loss or damage. An assessment will be completed to determine the origin, details of damage, and the cost associated with the loss.

Following the completion of the assessment, the Damage Assessor will provide the Ministry of Social Services with a detailed report, outlining the damage amount the foster parent is seeking for the Ministry of Social Services’s consideration and possible reimbursement.

# Foster Care

## Purpose of the Foster Care Program

Foster care is an essential family and child welfare service for children, youth, and their families who must live apart for a limited or long period of time. It is an alternative out-of-home support service for children and youth in care who are unable to remain with their families because their biological parents are unable to adequately care for them. The goal of foster care is to provide opportunities for the healing, growth, development, and support of the children so that they may be reunited with their biological family. The responsibility of the foster family is to provide foster children with safe, healthy, and nurturing relationships and environments.

## A Foster Parent's Role

When children/youth come into care, they need a place to call home – no matter how short or long that time is. It is a crucial time in a child's life where they need to feel safe, secure, and loved amid challenging circumstances. Foster parents have a tremendous part to play in these situations, helping kids thrive – no matter their background – and treating them like family. Foster parents are part of a team working with the child, the child's caseworker, the family, significant others, and other professionals.

### Foster parents:

- Share their homes and families with children in their care;
- Help children reunite with their natural families;
- Help children move on to another permanent home when necessary;
- Help young adults move on to independent living;
- Share the parental role for a foster child along with the Ministry of Social Services and the natural parents; and
- Participate in the foster child's case plans through planning and working as a team along with the natural parents, Ministry of Social Services caseworkers and other professionals.

### The responsibilities of Foster parents include, but are not limited to:

- Providing the day to day care and supports of the child.
- Providing the basic and special needs of the child.
- Maintaining the child's connection to their family by including them in the day to day care of the child wherever possible.
- Supporting the case plan for the child.
- Ensuring that the child receives regular medical and dental care in their home community wherever possible.
- Ensuring that the child is placed in an appropriate educational program.
- Ensuring that the child participates in at least one quality of life activity to encourage social and recreational self-development.
- Ensuring that any child rearing practices, or discipline used respects the dignity of the child and does not cause physical pain to the child. Caregivers must inform the child/youth of the expected standards of behaviour and the consequences, within the Ministry of Social Services's discipline policy, if not meeting those expectations.
- Notifying the caseworker of vacation plans at least two weeks in advance (this does not apply to weekend outings, or overnight visits to the home of friends).
- Informing the Ministry of Social Services of any changes in the caregivers' household that may have an impact on the child, such as people moving in or out.
- Appearing at child protection hearings concerning children in their home as required.

## The Child & Family Services Act

Children come into care under the authority of the Child and Family Services Act either through voluntary agreement between the Ministry of Social Services and the biological parents, or by an order of the Court. Support services are then provided to the child's family so the child can eventually return home. During this time, the Ministry of Social Services provides a home or other residential placement that will best meet the needs of each child. Most children in the care of the Ministry of Social Services are placed in foster homes. Wherever possible, placements with extended family or within the child's cultural community are sought in order to maintain family and cultural connections. Most children remain in care for brief periods of time before returning to their immediate family, extended family, or cultural community. Over 80% of children leave care within one year of entering.

Many of these children leave care within the first six months. Wards under permanent or long-term care orders represent about 40% of the total number of children in care. Only a small number of children become permanent or long-term wards during a year and an equally small number of permanent or long-term wards leave care.

Visit <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/11522> for more detailed information.

## Matching a Foster Child to a Foster Family

When a child is being placed in a foster home, all efforts are made to match the needs of the foster child with the training and preferences of the foster family. Foster homes are classified based on the level of training, skills and experience of the foster family, which assists in the matching process. There are three types of care:

### Emergency

Provides immediate care to children on short notice at any time of day or night, often with little information. Children may be in poor health or physical condition and may require care for up to two weeks.

### Short Term

Provides care and prepares children for transition to their families, to extended family, or to another permanent home.

### Long Term

Provides care to children who are unable to return to their natural families. In some cases, this may be until the children can move to independent living.



## How Many Children can be Placed in My Home?

The number of children placed in the home must be based on the assessed capacity of the foster home and the needs of the children. The maximum number of children that can be placed in a foster home at any given time is four, except under the following conditions:

- The placement of sibling groups;
- Placement of children in a home in which they have lived previously;
- Short term emergency placements; and
- Provision of short-term respite.

No more than two of the above circumstances are allowed at any time as the basis to exceed four children. When exceeding the number of four children, age must be considered as a factor. If four preschool aged children are in the home, no more than two may be under 24 months of age or if no other preschool children are in the home, three children under 30 months of age may be placed.

***Exceptions will only be made with Regional Director approval or designate approval, which will require review and renewal every two weeks.***

## Foster Parent Training

All foster parents must participate in a standard training program (PRIDE). PRIDE (Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education) is a competency-based model of practice implemented by the Ministry of Social Services for the development and support of foster parents. It was designed with the assistance of foster and adoptive parents in order to strengthen the quality of care to children. Through PRIDE, foster parents learn the importance of promoting a child's positive sense of identity, history, culture and values to help develop self-esteem.

**PRIDE is based on the following five competencies:**

1. Protecting and nurturing children.
2. Meeting children's developmental needs and addressing developmental delays.
3. Supporting relationships between children and their families.
4. Connecting children to safe and nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime.
5. Working as a member of a professional team.





### **Foster Parent Training Standards**

Training needed prior to approval:

- PRIDE Pre-Service sessions 1-9 (27 hours) (see Practice Guidelines for complete list of PRIDE Pre-Service training sessions);
- Saskatchewan Aboriginal Cultural Component (3 hours);

Training to be completed in the 1st year:

- PRIDE Core In-Service modules 1 & 2 (mandatory training – 21 hours);
- Standard First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR Level B) recognized by Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety (17 hours) with recertification every 3 years (9 hours);
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) training (3 hours)
- Trauma Competent Caregiver component (6 hours); and
- PRIDE Core In-Service modules 3-12 as determined by the foster family and their resource worker, based on the PRIDE Family Development Plan (see Practice Guidelines for complete list of PRIDE Core In-Service modules).

Additional training, including Advanced and Specialized modules, will be provided based on the PRIDE Family Development Plan agreed upon by the Ministry of Social Services and the foster family which is then approved by the Ministry of Social Services.

### **Safeguarding**

Foster care is a high-risk profession that is demanding and stressful. Foster parents are in a unique relationship with the child compared to the child's birth family or guardians. While performing the day to day responsibilities of a parent, the foster family is not legally defined as a parent of a child in care. Foster parents are in a contractual relationship with the Ministry of Social Services to provide quality service for a child in need of protection who is placed in their care. The Ministry of Social Services is required to provide foster parents with adequate support to provide this service. Due to the nature of foster care, foster parents may be at greater risk of an allegation compared to other families. Elevated stress and limited coping capacity can occasionally lead to an environment where a foster family's parenting ability is impaired, leading to an abusive or neglectful reaction.

### **How can I effectively safeguard my family?**

While there is no absolute way to protect your family against allegations of abuse, there are ways that foster parents can protect themselves in case of an allegation.

#### **The most effective way is to document:**

- Keep a daily log of events that occur in your house.
- Date every entry in your log or journal.
- List the activities of the day. Include the time and who was involved.
- Be sure to record both positive and negative situations that your children may have encountered each day.
- Also include any people who visit on any given day. Document who visited, when, why, and how long they stayed.
- If an incident occurred, state only what happened. You can use direct quotes but make sure you are accurate with whom you are quoting.
- Identify every reliable witness and piece of corroborating evidence.
- If possible, take pictures.
- State just the facts. Leave your opinion out. You may however write down your thoughts in another section.
- Document any cancellations of meetings, appointments, absences, or changes in plans.
- Document any changes in a child's health or behaviour – confirmed or suspected.
- Document any modifications to medication or medical and dental appointments.
- List any damages or changes to the child's physical environment (prescribed or not) which could affect their safety, behaviour, or quality of life.
- Report any bruises, scratches, wounds, sores, bumps, infections, headaches, etc. which have occurred through accidental injury, self-injury or any difficult to explain circumstances. From an outsider's view, injuries could be perceived as being sustained through negligence or abuse.
- Record any telephone calls with professionals or extended family or friends regarding the incident of the child's behaviour at the time of contact and the advice given verbatim.
- Document statements regarding actions to rectify a possible emergency or safety hazard, such as first aid treatment given or possible actions taken to protect the child from this hazard, such as boarding up a broken window, etc.

#### **Other ways to help safeguard your family include:**

- Participate in Core Training available on working with children and youth that have been abused physically or sexually.
- Make time to read books or pamphlets that will increase your awareness of abuse. Obtain a copy of the Ministry of Social Services procedures for handling allegations of abuse.
- Have 'house rules' for everyone about privacy, night wear, etc. This is particularly important when dealing with foster children who are sexually aware or who have been sexually abused.
- Open communication with your caseworker is extremely important. Inform your caseworker of any significant events or changing dynamics in the home. Insist that the caseworker sign the log whenever they review it.
- It is strongly recommended that you have an appropriate and authorized adult present with your children and foster children. Make sure you know what constitutes an authorized adult through the Ministry of Social Services regulation.
- Build and maintain a support system. You may experience additional pressures due to the children you have in your care, disrupted family dynamics, or from difficulties that arise from dealing with the caseworker or the Ministry of Social Services. Attending local foster meetings, connecting with your local peer support members, or counseling provided by the Ministry of Social Services can help give you the support you need. Keeping confidentiality in mind, it is very important that you have someone to turn to in a time of crisis.

## What Happens if My Home is Under Investigation?

Allegations of abuse and neglect of children in care must be responded to immediately in order to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in the home.

You will be notified, in person, that there has been a complaint filed and that an investigation is proceeding. Whenever possible, this in person meeting will consist of both your resource worker, and the PRAT investigator. Throughout the investigation process, the investigating team will ensure that all information about the concern is brought together and that the process of the investigation is done in a timely manner. The investigation may include interviewing the child(ren) in the home, the foster parents, workers who have placed children in the home, the foster home resource worker, and any collateral agencies that have knowledge of the family. The investigation will be conducted in a manner that respects and maintains the working relationship between the foster family and the Ministry of Social Services. Foster parents will be able to contribute their point of view in full and will be encouraged to provide all information that they feel is necessary. During the investigation, if you would like to request the assistance and support of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA), it is in your rights to do so. If you choose to be supported throughout the investigation process by the SFFA, your resource worker will provide you with a consent form to sign.

If you should come under investigation, it is important to note that both the Ministry of Social Services and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association do not cover legal fees in the case of an allegation. Your resource worker and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association can direct you to publicly funded services, if available.

## When to Report

Report immediately to the social worker all serious occurrences including but not limited to:

- The death of a child/children in care;
- Serious illness, injury, or hospitalization of a child in care;
- Minor injuries or illnesses (such as sprains, fever, bumps/bruises, abrasions, first degree burns that require minimal medical attention including stitches, bandaging, splinting etc.) serious threats or statements
- All allegations and accusations of abuse or mistreatment of a child in care whether the abuse occurred while the child was in care;
- Absence of the child from the caregiver's home without permission; child absent from care
- Apprehension by the police and/or charge under the Young Offenders Act;
- Alcohol or drugs used by a child in care; possession of illegal or dangerous contraband
- The failure of a child in care to attend school, the lack of an appropriate school program or the suspension of the child from school;
- Events that may affect the care or well-being of a child in care; and
- Health situations which require intrusive medical intervention, i.e. surgery, medication, etc





## When a Child is Placed in Your Home

### What to Expect

Before a child is placed in your home, you are given information about the child which will help you to decide whether to accept the placement. Foster parents are entitled to all known background information that is relevant to the care of the child. When a child is placed in your home, you should receive information such as:

- Identifying information (name, birth date, Saskatchewan Health Card Number, etc.);
- Information about why the child is in care;
- Health needs (allergies, health conditions, medications, etc.);
- Information about school;
- Any possible problems or expected behaviours of the child; and
- Information about who may visit the child, including the frequency, time, and place.

Depending on the circumstances, sometimes little information is available at the time of placement. This can often be the case with emergency placements. As soon as information becomes available, it will be shared with you. You have the right to say no to a placement if you feel that your family is unable to meet the needs of the child.

It is important to involve all members of the family in the decision-making process. Evaluating your family's strengths will help to determine what you could offer the child and/or what supports may be required. Be sure to discuss any concerns, especially if there are special issues involved such as disabilities, cultural differences, or previous concerns.

### Confidentiality

Remember, as foster parents, you must respect the rights and dignity of each child in care. Foster parents must avoid discussing identifiable information concerning a child. Information may be shared with other professionals involved in the care of the child (e.g. teachers, doctors), however, you should limit that information to only what is needed in order to provide services. Responsible sharing of information with close relatives or other foster parents who are in contact with the child is sometimes necessary and should be done in a considerate manner that will not harm the child or their birth family.

Temporary caregivers should only be given enough information to meet the needs of the child. You must refrain from discussing any details regarding the child's family situation, background or the reason for the child's placement. If you are in doubt as to whether you should share certain information, it is a good idea to discuss the matter with your caseworker.

## Belongings

When a child is placed in your home, they may bring clothing, toys, or other possessions with them. Although these items may not seem very valuable, these belongings may be precious to that child and should be treated respectfully. These possessions may be what they treasure most of all, especially because they are being separated from their families and placed in a strange environment away from what is familiar to them. Children in care should have appropriate luggage and a place to store their belongings.

## Birth Families

As a foster family, one of your responsibilities is to support and encourage contact between the child and the child's birth family. Although it may be difficult to show acceptance towards the child's family, especially if the child has suffered maltreatment, this is integral to the emotional needs of the child and for planning for the child's reunification with their family.

The birth family includes the child's parents or guardians at the time they came into foster care. It also includes siblings along with other extended family members who may be significant to the child. By remaining positive, non-judgemental and showing support, the child will not feel like he or she must choose between two families and that he or she has permission to love and care about both. Working with birth families and keeping them informed of their child's activities and progress helps them to feel part of their child's life and assists in the reunification plan.

## Record Keeping

Record keeping is essential because your family will be spending more time with the foster child than any other party. These entries and observations are integral to future planning and for the child's memories.

### How should I record information?

- A journal of precise notes in point form is acceptable.
- Be sure to write down the dates and times.
- Use a separate journal or notebook for each child and ensure that it remains confidential.
- Describe any incidents as accurately and thoroughly as possible.

### What should I record?

- Visits with the natural family;
- School progress or school related issues;
- All health appointments, immunizations, medications, health care issues or injuries;
- Unusual behaviours or change in behaviour of the child;
- Achievements or successes of the child;
- Changes in the child's circumstance;
- Cultural activities that the child may have participated in; and
- Any incidents that you feel may be important.

### Why should I keep these records?

- A diary of these events can help you to remember later.
- They may assist with decision making and future planning.
- They can be used to supply information in court or during case planning.
- Recording the child's behaviour (both negative and positive) can identify a behaviour pattern.
- There will be a written record of events in the case of something that may be later disputed.
- A recording of incidents can help you to obtain additional help or supports if necessary.
- Having detailed records can reduce your family's risk of having a complaint or allegation made against you, especially if a complaint is made a long time after the event.

Keeping valuable mementos such photos, awards, health information, immunization records, awards, report cards and school projects ensures that people, places and memories that are important to the child are not forgotten.

## Case Planning

Case planning is crucial when a child comes into care. Continual assessment is necessary when evaluating the current and future needs of the child. Case plans are developed through case conferences, interviews with the child, family, caregivers or others who provide services to the child. Case plans can include vital information about a child's past, their family, the child's development and what skills or resources may be necessary to care for the child. Case plans also aid in selecting the appropriate caregiver(s) for the child.

The case plan includes goals and tasks that must be accomplished in order to:

- Reduce identified risks to child safety;
- Build family strengths and supports;
- Resolve problems identified through family assessment; and
- Meet the child's developmental needs including maintaining family attachments.

**Family Contact Plan:** When it is safe, children should have as much contact as possible with their biological birth parents, siblings, extended family, friends or elders as possible. Regular phone contacts or the exchange of letters is an alternative if contact is not possible or infrequent.

**Shared Parenting Plan:** Shared parenting involves the child's family, the caseworker and the care providers that are willingly including each other when planning for the needs of the child in care. Birth parents will be invited to participate, where appropriate, in the day-to-day care of their child even though the child is in foster care.

**Family Reunification Plan:** Family reunification outlines the tasks that are required to be completed for the child to safely return home. These tasks must be completed in order to reduce or eliminate the child protection concerns and create a safe and secure environment for the child.

Case plans help to ensure the child's unique cultural, social, physical, emotional, and identity needs are being met while in foster care. Case planning requires teamwork between the caseworker, family, and the care providers. Foster parents are a critical part of this team approach. Obtaining and sharing information during case conferences helps to determine what is in the best interests of the child.

## How Can I Help my Foster Child Adjust?

Remember that both you and your foster child will need time to adjust. Don't expect everything to go smoothly right away. Foster children may have intense feelings about what has happened to them. They have left their families and familiar surroundings and are uncertain of the future. Each child will express their feelings in a unique, individualized way. Children removed from their homes feel the shock of separation and will go through aspects of the grieving process. A child expressing these feelings is not an indicator that you are not doing a good job.

Children who have been abused may also interpret routines, comments, traditions, or communication in different ways than you would expect. Many loving acts which would be considered innocent and normal in a secure home, such as a hug, tickling, or light-hearted teasing, may be scary and emotionally difficult for a child who has been abused. Be aware of the child's background and attention must be paid to any signs of the child being frightened or uncomfortable. By having a routine in your home, keeping your emotions consistent and following through on what you say you will do, your home will reflect a certain amount of predictability and calm which will help the child to adjust.

## Life Books

Children who live with their birth families are given the opportunity to grow up surrounded by the history of events in their lives. Children who come into care are often denied this opportunity. Changes in placements can mean living with different families in different neighbourhoods. Long periods of time spent in care can mean that the past may be confusing or forgotten. Children have a right to know who they are and where they have come from. Life Books can help children understand and accept their past and help to make sense of what is happening to them. Life Books may also provide an opportunity for the child to discuss their feelings about the recorded information.

The Life Book is intended to provide a permanent history for a child by recording as many significant events in the child's life as possible. This can be done by collecting pictures, historical data, memorabilia, stories, and the special events in a child's life. Creating a Life Book gives you the opportunity to show foster children why they should be proud of themselves. This visual history is a wonderful way for the child to remember their time with you.

**Suggestions for Creating a Life Book:**

The Life Book can be a folder, binder, photo album, or assembled package which includes:

- Photographs of birth parents, siblings, grandparents, extended family and any details or information that is available;
- Photographs of foster families and any names, details, or information about them;
- Photographs of the child's school or any previous schools;
- Photographs of activities, holidays, birthdays, or other significant events;
- Souvenirs from trips, events, or concerts;
- Report Cards;
- Certificates of achievement;
- Letters from family and friends;
- School projects; and
- Any information that is important to the child.

A Life Book must be started for every child who remains in foster care for more than six months. It becomes part of the child's belongings and must accompany the child when he or she moves from the foster home. The child has the right to decide whether to share the Life Book with anyone. While foster parents may complete this task, they should not be expected to do the Life Book without some assistance, training, and supervision of the caseworker. The actual cost of the book (album or scrapbook) and cost of pictures and supplies for the Life Book may be paid as a purchase order through Family Youth Assistance Program (FYAP).



## Financial Support

Foster Parents receive a monthly payment to cover the costs associated with raising a child. The payment allows foster parents to provide for physical needs including food, shelter, clothing, personal items, transportation, and recreation. Additional funds may be available for expenses such as sports, music lessons, cultural activities, and other special needs. These funds are based on the developmental needs of each child and are assessed within individual case plans.

Children in foster care are entitled to receive supplementary medical services, which provide for most health needs, including prescription medication, eye care, and dental services.

## Cultural Connection

Culture is part of a child's identity and heritage. Preserving the culture of all children in care is crucial for their development and identity. While efforts are made to consider culture when deciding placement of a child, often the child and the foster family may have differences in culture and religion. It is essential that you respect the religion or culture of any child in your home. At no time should the child be required to adopt the foster parent's religious beliefs or rituals.

Children must be given the opportunity to value, preserve and participate in the life of their cultural community, and to respect the cultural communities of others. Culturally relevant information about Indigenous Peoples' of Saskatchewan has been added to the PRIDE pre-service. This is a mandatory three-hour training session for all foster parents in Saskatchewan. As the diversity of cultures continues to grow in our province, being respectful and inclusive of everyone (regardless of culture, background, race, language, ability, or ethnic origin) becomes increasingly more important.

## Travel

The Ministry of Social Services may pay travel costs above the Basic Maintenance rates for a child in care. These will include but are not limited to reasons such as if the purpose of the visit is to access medical care, facilitate visits with the child's family or significant others, attend events that are beneficial to the child or where travel is required in the event of an emergency such as the serious illness or death of a family member or significant others. The means of transportation should be the most economical or reasonable given the circumstances. Travel costs can be claimed using the Child and Family services expense form.

For out of province travel, permission from the child's parents must be given if the child is in voluntary care. Parents of children who are temporary or long-term wards should also be consulted whenever possible. A letter of permission and medical consent must be signed by the Regional Director through the Ministry of Social Services for the child to travel out of the province.

For international travel, a passport must be obtained for any child traveling outside of Canada. The application for the passport should be completed by the foster parent in consultation with the child's caseworker.

In addition, the Ministry of Social Services may pay travel costs above the Basic Maintenance rates to enable a child to take a special holiday with their foster family.

## Discipline

The children placed in your home come from a variety of backgrounds. Discipline may have been severe or inconsistent. As a result, foster parents must be nurturing and have a range of child rearing skills to help build the child's self-esteem and develop self-control and independence. Discipline is the purposeful direction for a child to develop self-control, self-respect, and to learn more appropriate behavior. The caregiver must focus on appropriate discipline concerning the discouragement of undesirable behaviour and the encouragement of desirable behaviour.

**All discipline should:**

- Establish a positive, respectful, and nurturing environment in the foster home.
- Present a mature and responsible role model to the children to demonstrate caring and sensitive values.
- Reflect a willingness to set reasonable limits and rules.
- Develop a wholesome environment in which children can feel safe, secure, appreciated, and respected.
- Be appropriate to the developmental level of the child.
- Be motivated by a desire to assist the child.
- Be communicated in a way the child can understand.
- Be consistent with the child's cultural heritage, as the child understands it.
- Include encouragement and positive reinforcement.
- Include an increase in privileges and responsibilities, e.g., "Please finish your homework before you watch television."
- Include acknowledgement, recognition, and praise.
- Clearly establish rules and limits that are fair and applied consistently.
- Solicit, where appropriate, the child's involvement in determining disciplinary actions such as consequences or boundaries.
- Limit future activities that are connected to the undesirable behaviour.
- Provide counselling and teaching regarding anger management or addictive/compulsive behaviour.

**Appropriate Discipline**

Foster parents can discourage inappropriate behaviour either by intervention or prevention. Caregivers can promote appropriate conduct by providing an environment in which children can internalize positive life skills and goals.

**Intervention Goals:**

- Focus on negative behaviour;
- Immediate discipline;
- Focus on correcting a problem;
- Repairing damage done by inappropriate behaviour;
- Responsive to inappropriate behaviour;
- Imposing appropriate behaviour; and
- External in nature.

**Prevention Goals:**

- Focus on negative behaviour;
- Long-term discipline;
- Focus on averting a problem;
- Protecting from damage of inappropriate behaviour;
- Proactive to avoid inappropriate behaviour;
- Focus on interaction to prevent inappropriate behaviour; and
- Internal in nature.



## Inappropriate Discipline

It is the foster parents' responsibility to act as an advocate for the child to make sure that no one in or out of the foster home uses inappropriate discipline on the children in their care. All disciplinary actions that do not respect the rights of the child or that diminish growth, development or enhancement of the child's self-respect are prohibited.

**In addition, the following discipline methods are strictly prohibited:**

- Corporal punishment, which is defined as: the inflicting of physical pain or the cause of physical harm within the disciplinary process, such as biting, punching, hitting, slapping, strapping, shaking, choking, kicking, spanking, hair or ear pulling and any other technique where the goal is to produce physical discomfort.
- Restricting or depriving a child of their basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, bedding, sleep, or washroom facilities.
- Using force or threats of force to intimidate.
- Demeaning remarks or derogatory name calling intended to hurt or degrade.
- Extensive and prolonged withholding of emotional response after the undesirable behaviour has stopped.
- Racial put-downs of any kind.
- Modelling of undesirable behaviour to teach the child a lesson.
- Deliberate destruction of a child's property.
- Forcing a child to take an uncomfortable or degrading position such as kneeling or standing in the corner.
- Locking an unattended child in any space for any reason.
- Using mechanical restraints such as handcuffs, ropes, chains, etc.
- Making a child eat undesirable substances such as soap, Tabasco sauce, etc.
- Administering drugs or medication intended to subdue reactive behaviour without the authorization of a physician.
- Withholding/refusing or threatening to withhold/refuse family contacts or home visits.
- Threatening to remove the child from the home as a means of discipline.

## Respite

Respite is a planned block of time to provide the foster family with temporary relief from the day to day responsibilities of foster care. Respite is meant to provide an extended break in order to reduce potential for "burnout." Families are encouraged to take respite but are not obligated. Unused respite days are lost and are not carried over to the following year. All foster parents at the intern and practitioner levels are eligible for ten days of respite per year. It is recommended that the ten days be taken all at once (as the objective is to provide a break for foster parents), but this is not mandatory.

Foster parents must plan their respite days with their caseworker in advance. The plan must address the needs of the foster family and the needs of the individual children in the home. Foster parents are responsible for making their own respite arrangements in conjunction with their caseworker, who must approve the respite provider. Other foster parents may also be respite providers.





## When a Child Leaves your Home

A child may leave a foster home for a variety of reasons. The move may be initiated by the child, the foster family, the natural family, or the caseworker. The child's goals may have been achieved, or a child may be moved so that siblings can be placed together. A change in foster family circumstances may also affect placements in the home. If a placement becomes too difficult, notifying the caseworker as soon as possible can prevent the placement from breaking down. If additional support has been put in place but isn't helping, a foster family can request that a child be moved. Sometimes it is the children themselves who ask to be moved. A child may run away from the home and refuse to return. An adoption or the age of the child may also be a factor. The Ministry of Social Services or the court may also move a child from the home. Although it is most beneficial to have everyone involved and prepared for the process, sometimes there may be little advanced notice given.

Cooperate with everyone involved in order to make the move as easy as possible for the child. No matter what the reason is for leaving, supporting the child, reassuring him/her and encouraging the child to leave with a positive attitude eases the transition.

As a foster parent, you may experience intense feelings ranging from relief to profound loss. Fostering is not permanent. Children moving on from your home can mean success. Developing relationships and strong feelings with children in your care is a natural aspect of fostering. Learning when to let go is an important part of being a foster parent. After a loss or time of transition, you may need to take some time to adjust.

# Health and Safety

## Health and Safety Information

### Smoking

Protecting children from harm also means ensuring that they are not exposed to second-hand smoke. Exposure to second-hand smoke is detrimental to the health and development of children. Tobacco smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals. Many are known to be harmful substances, such as tar, nicotine, carbon monoxide, benzene, formaldehyde and hydrogen cyanide. Many of these chemicals have been known to cause cancer.

Infants and children are particularly vulnerable to tobacco smoke due to the growth and development of their lungs and respiratory tracts. Children have a higher metabolism and breathe faster and therefore absorb higher amounts of smoke than adults.

Research shows that tobacco smoke can trigger issues in children such as colds, asthma, bronchitis, ear infections, allergies, pneumonia and breathing distress. There is strong evidence that infants exposed to second-hand smoke are at a greater risk of dying from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Every child placed in a foster home is to be provided with a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment. Children in foster homes are not to be exposed to second-hand smoke.

- Smoking is not permitted in a foster home where a child is placed.
- Smoking is not permitted in vehicles used to transport children.

In order to further ensure that vulnerable children are not exposed to residual tobacco or cannabis smoke or e-cigarette vapour, it is recommended that all infants and children under the age of two, all medically fragile children, and all children with allergies and/or asthma be placed in foster homes where all caregivers who reside in the home do not smoke at any time. This is not intended to restrict the spiritual use of tobacco, sage, or sweetgrass.

For those foster parents who would like to stop smoking, the Ministry of Social Services will cover costs associated with attendance of smoking cessation programs.

### Fire Safety

In the event of a fire in the home, even a warning of a few seconds can make all the difference. Having a fire evacuation plan ensures that your family is prepared if a fire should ever occur. Ensure that everyone in the home understands the exit plan. Fire drills should occur at least every year or when a new foster child is placed in your home.

Foster parents are encouraged to have suitable fire extinguishers in the home. All furnaces and the chimney are to be inspected annually. All fireplaces and wood stoves should be inspected and well maintained.

#### In addition:

- Smoke alarms should be installed on each floor of the home and be tested every 3 months. Batteries should be replaced at regular intervals.
- Carbon monoxide detectors should be installed on every level of the home. Carbon monoxide exposure kills, especially when occupants are sleeping.
- Child resistant lighters are NOT childproof.
- Do not let children play in cooking areas or hold them while cooking.
- Most burns happen at times of stress or high activity in your home, such as during meal preparation.
- Turn pan handles in when cooking on the stove.
- High heat can cause oil to burst into flames. Heat it slowly and never leave it on high.

**In case of a fire:**

- Crawl low under the smoke.
- Stop, drop and roll if your clothes are on fire.
- Find a safe way to evacuate from the house or building.
- Phone 9-1-1 from a neighbour's house.
- Never return inside the home.

**Storage of Hazardous Chemicals**

- Store hazardous chemicals out of reach of children.
- Always replace the cap securely before you set the container down; all it takes is a second for an accident to occur.
- Teach children to recognize hazard symbols and teach them the dangers associated with chemicals.
- Always keep products stored in their original containers with the labels.
- Never allow children to touch or use household chemicals.
- Have handy the telephone numbers for your doctor, ambulance, and fire department as well as the poison control centre.
- In case of an accident, call 9-1-1; your doctor or your local poison control centre. You should be ready to read information from the product's label. Be sure to follow any first aid treatment that is advised.

**Medications**

- All prescription and non-prescription drugs should be stored away from children's reach. All drugs should be stored in a locked facility.
- A child should have supervised access to a drug only if the caseworker and foster parents agree that the child is capable. The child should be trained how to self-administer a drug by the appropriate professional.
- All medication and/or vitamins should remain in an original container if being taken to school.





### **Water Safety**

During the summer months, pools and lakes are a source of recreational fun. What is often viewed as a fun activity to pass the time can be harmful if precautions are not in place. Research has shown that drowning is the leading cause of injury death in children, especially those ages one to four. Young children can drown in as little as an inch or two of water, and it can happen quickly and silently.

#### **The following precautions should be taken when children are around water:**

- There should be safety equipment available at all times including life buoys, personal flotation devices or life jackets, and a reaching tool such as a shepherd's hook.
- Life jackets are like seat belts, they only work if you wear them; and wear them properly.
- At no time, should a child be left unattended around open bodies of water, pools, hot tubs, spas, whirlpools, or in the bathtub.
- Always swim with a buddy.
- Be aware if weather conditions, currents, water temperature and depth.
- Never swim when lightning is imminent.
- Do not underestimate the power of a current.
- Avoid swimming at night.
- Enforce family swimming rules such as no running, no diving ect.
- Follow all safety signs and posted instructions.

If you are a pool or hot tub owner please visit <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/products/11522> for the Children's Services Manual on policy surrounding pool safety.

## Infant and Child Safety

### Purchasing a Crib

Health Canada has issued a statement that cribs made before September 1986 are dangerous. This also includes cribs that do not have a label. They do not meet current standards. It is illegal to sell, import, or advertise these cribs. Therefore, when purchasing a crib look for a label that shows when the crib was made and that it has a solid frame.

#### *Safety tips:*

- Tighten screws regularly.
- Make sure the mattress is tight against all four sides of the crib.
- Replace the mattress if it is not firm or if it is worn out.
- Place mattress at lowest level as soon as the baby can sit up.
- The rails should always be up and locked in position when the baby is in the crib.
- Bumper pads should never be used.
- Bassinets or cradles should have a wide and sturdy base.

### Bunk Beds

Bunk beds can be a popular choice for families, especially when there are multiple children sharing a room. However, bunk beds can be dangerous to children and they should be taught how to use them safely. The top bunk is not safe for children under six years of age.

#### *Safety tips:*

- Make sure that the top bunk has guardrails on all four sides.
- Make sure the mattress fits snug and tight against all sides of the bed.
- Make sure the ladder is attached safely to the frame.
- Look for a label that says it meets American standards. Health Canada recommends American safety standards labeled as ASTM International F1427 standard.

### Playpens

It is important to follow all warnings and instructions provided with your playpen. A baby should not be left unsupervised for any length of time in a playpen.

#### *Safety tips:*

- Be sure that the latches or pivoting hinges on the top rails are always closed or completely rotated in place (failure to lock playpen in place could result in playpen collapsing on child).
- Some older playpens have protruding bolts that can catch on a child's clothing. As well, many have top rails that are covered in vinyl. If the vinyl has begun to tear, the vinyl and the foam inside become choking hazards. Older playpens can also have large mesh, which can be large enough to hook on a child's clothing. Playpen mesh should be a small mosquito type size.
- Never tie a soother or any other cord on a baby's clothing. Pacifier cords can become caught on the playpen, resulting in strangulation.
- Never add an extra mattress to the playpen.
- Do not allow large toys in the playpen. They can be used to climb out of the playpen, resulting in possible falls or injuries.
- If a child can climb out of the playpen, it should no longer be used.

## **Stroller and Carriage Safety**

**When purchasing a stroller, look for:**

- A sturdy stroller model and follow the manufacturer's guidelines for appropriate child height and weight limits.
- A label and instructions.
- A safety belt or lap harness that is solidly attached to the frame.
- Brakes and locking mechanisms on folding models that are in working order.
- Wheels that are securely attached.

**Using a stroller or carriage safely:**

- Always supervise your child when they are in the stroller or carriage.
- Always use the safety harness and lap belts, and make sure your child is seated properly.
- Use the brakes when stopped or when helping your child into and out of the stroller or carriage.
- Make sure your child's hands and feet are out of the way when adjusting the stroller/carriage.
- Regularly check for signs of damage and that the wheels are securely attached.
- Do not use pillows or blankets as padding; they can cause suffocation.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for putting additional items or accessories in or on the stroller.
- Never use a stroller on an escalator.

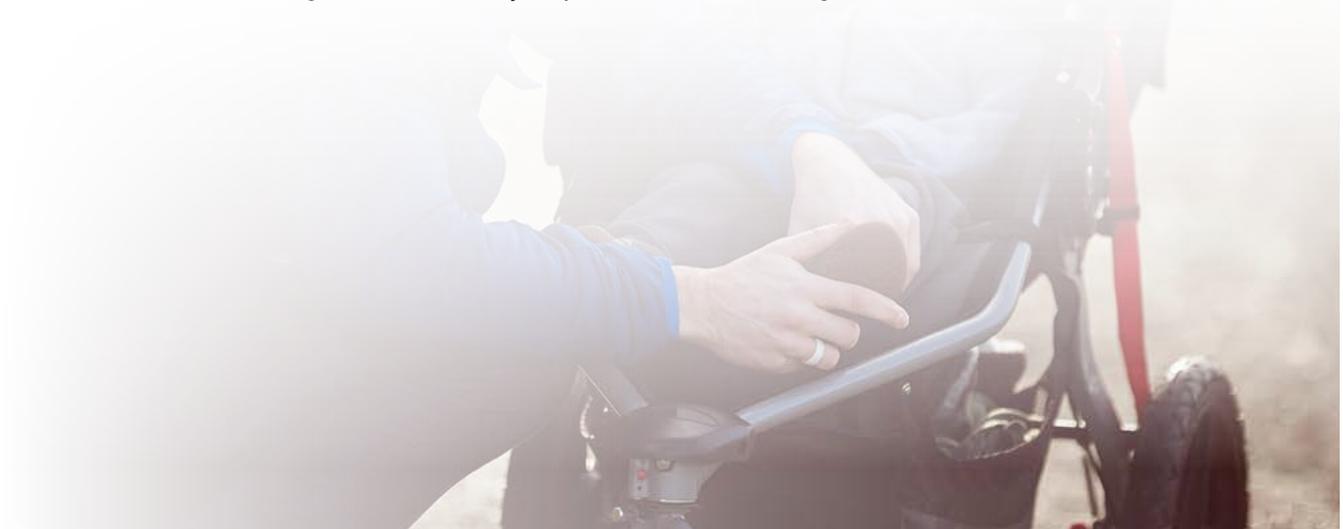
## **High Chairs**

A safe highchair has a wide base to reduce the risk of tipping. Do not allow older children to climb onto the chair. Keep the chair a safe distance from walls, windows, blind cords, mirrors, appliances, and other furniture. The newer models that have a plastic crotch post are safer than the older chairs equipped with only a lap strap. Always use the strap and make sure that the tray is locked into place securely.

## **Car Seat Safety**

In Canada, all children under the age of six or who are less than 65 lbs in weight must be secured in an approved and correctly installed childcare safety seat by law. All infant, child, and booster seats sold in Canada must meet the safety regulations of Transport Canada. These regulations require safe materials, a national safety mark on the seat and an instructions booklet. All regulations are designed to help protect children in a sudden stop or collision.

The safest place for kids aged 12 and under is the back seat. It is widely recommended by the Canadian Automobile Association and the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control that children under the age of 12 never sit in the front seat of a vehicle which has an airbag. The force of an airbag that has been deployed can injure or kill a child. The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control states that the safest seat in the vehicle for young children is the middle of the back seat. This puts children away from the air bags and as far away as possible from the dangers of a front-end collision.



#### *Rear Facing Infant Car Seats:*

- Zero to 30 lbs (0-9 kg).
- Use only while the top rim of the seat encloses the baby's head.

#### *Front Facing Infant Car Seats:*

- 20-65 lbs (9 kg- 30 kg).

#### *Booster Seats:*

- Over 40 lbs (18 kg+).
- The booster seat helps to position the seatbelt in the right place over your child's body.
- You must use the seatbelt to hold the booster seat and child in place.

In addition, a car seat must be replaced if it has been in an accident. Car seats should never be purchased second hand in case it has been in a collision.

For more information, call: Transport Canada 1-800-333-0371 (Toll free)

## **Other Things to be Aware of When Purchasing Baby or Children's Items**

### **Toys**

- Do not buy or use second-hand toys that are in poor shape, have sharp edges, or are broken. Watch for loose pieces.
- Select only age appropriate toys (a child under the age of three should not play with a toy with small parts) and read all accompanying instructions.
- Keep plush and soft toys away from fireplaces, stoves, and other sources of heat.
- Balloons should only be used under supervision. Broken or deflated balloons are a choking hazard and should be disposed of immediately.
- For toys that require batteries, ensure that the batteries are properly installed and not accessible to the child.

### **Pacifiers**

Pacifiers should not have a ribbon on them, or string attached due to the risk of strangulation. The shield should have ventilation holes and be large enough that it cannot fit into the baby's mouth. Dispose immediately if the nipple of a pacifier has holes or tears as it could break off into the baby's mouth and cause choking.

### **Baby Gates**

In Canada, baby gates with large diamond shaped or 'V' openings are not allowed to be sold. A child's head can get caught in these openings and strangulation can result. Collapsible gates must be sturdy, reinforced, and small enough to prevent the child's head from being caught. At the bottom of the stairs, use a spring-loaded gate. At the top of the stairs, use one that fastens to the wall.

### **Changing Tables**

The table should have safety straps to prevent the baby from falling. The table should have shelves or drawers that are easily accessible, so the baby is not left unattended when reaching for diapers, wipes, or other items. A baby begins to roll over around four months of age; make sure that the table is equipped with safety straps to prevent your baby from falling.

### **Bicycle Mounted Child Seat or Bicycle Towed Child Trailer**

Have the child use a helmet and instruct them to keep their hands and feet inside the seat or trailer and always use the seatbelt.

### **Back Carriers**

The leg openings should be small enough that the child will not slip out, but large enough that it will not chafe the child's legs. The carrier should have padding which covers the portion of the metal frame that is near the child's face.

### **Stationary Activity Centre**

Make sure the activity centre is strong enough to hold the baby's weight. Never leave the baby alone in it. Keep the centre away from stairs, doors, windows, lamps, coffee tables, wood stoves, fireplaces, or other sources of heat. Remember that young children can reach out and grab things that are not safe and possibly pull them down onto their heads.

### **Sports Equipment**

Hockey helmets and face protectors sold in Canada must meet safety standards set by C.S.A. International; a C.S.A. sticker must be on the product purchased. Do not purchase equipment that is older than five years old or if it has been subjected to intensive use over two consecutive seasons. Bicycle and roller blade helmets are designed to protect the head against a single impact. They should never be purchased second hand.

## **Universal Precautions**

**Practicing universal precautions can reduce the risk of disease, these include:**

- Frequent hand washing for at least 20 seconds with soap and water
- Laundering clothing and other linens soiled with blood or other bodily fluids with the hottest water the fabric will allow. Soiled articles can be rinsed in cold water before washing in the hottest water allowed if necessary.
- The use of protective gloves when handling or cleaning up blood and/or other bodily fluids. Household rubber gloves can be used, but they need to be cleaned with a bleach solution and rinsed repeatedly with water before using again.
- Using waterproof coverings on any open cuts or sores.
- Cleaning spills of blood or other bodily fluids with detergent and water. Disinfect all surfaces with a solution of bleach (1-part household bleach to 10-parts water). Be careful, as some surfaces may be damaged by exposure to bleach solution.
- Disposal of contaminated waste by securing waste in a sealed double plastic bag before discarding with routine garbage. If there are any sharp objects that may be contaminated, they should be put in a puncture proof plastic or metal container that can seal firmly.



# Support for Foster Parents

## *Where can I go for support?*

### **Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth**

The Advocate for Children and Youth is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. The Advocate leads a team of professionals to advocate for the rights, interests and well-being of children and youth in Saskatchewan.

The Advocate's mandate is defined by The Advocate for Children and Youth Act. They do:

- Advocacy on behalf of children and youth receiving services from a provincial Ministry of Social Services, direct or delegated agency, or publicly funded health entity.
- Investigations into any matter concerning, or services provided to, children and youth by a provincial Ministry of Social Services, direct or delegated agency, or publicly funded health entity.
- Public education to raise awareness of the rights, interests and well-being of children and youth.
- Research and advise on any matter relating to the rights, interests and well-being of children and youth.

These functions are all interconnected and support the overarching goal to create systemic change for the benefit of the young people in Saskatchewan.

Anyone can call the Advocate for Children and Youth office if they have a concern about a child, youth, or group of children or youth receiving services from a provincial Ministry of Social Services, agency, and/or publicly funded health entity. Children and youth are encouraged to call on their own behalf.

The Advocate for Children and Youth staff will listen to the concern, ask questions to clarify the situation, and review the steps already taken to resolve the issue. They may offer information or referrals to other agencies or ministries to help you to advocate for yourself and/or for the child or youth. They will work directly with those involved, including the children and youth, to negotiate a resolution to the matters.

If children or youth are unable to provide direction, the Advocate for Children and Youth staff will work to ensure that they receive the services and quality of care they are entitled to by legislation and policy.

All contacts are confidential. For more information please contact:

#### **Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth**

500 – 350 3rd Avenue North

Saskatoon, SK S7K 6G7

Telephone: (306) 933-6700

Toll Free: (800) 322-7221

Fax: (306) 933-8406

Email: [contact@saskadvocate.ca](mailto:contact@saskadvocate.ca)

Website: [saskadvocate.ca](http://saskadvocate.ca)

Social Media: [@saskadvocate](https://www.instagram.com/saskadvocate)

## FASD Network

The FASD Network is a community-based, provincial organization with offices in Saskatoon and Regina. The organization continues to work towards the mission laid out by its founders, “to enhance the lives of individuals and families living with FASD.” Through support, training, and events, the Network provides services to individuals and families living with FASD and provides education across the province.

The Network’s Support Program provides individualized support and one-on-one assistance to individuals and families impacted by FASD. Services include case management, FASD education, strategies, referrals, advocacy, access to peer support, and more.

**FASD Network Head Office**  
510 Cynthia St  
Saskatoon SK S7L 7K7  
Email: [info@fasdnetwork.ca](mailto:info@fasdnetwork.ca)  
Telephone: (866) 673-3276

**FASD Network Regina Office**  
1860 Lorne Street  
Regina, SK S4P 2L7  
Email: [support@fasdnetwork.ca](mailto:support@fasdnetwork.ca)  
Telephone: (306) 780-9464

## Saskatchewan Youth in Care and Custody Network

The SYICCN is a non-profit organization that advocates and supports youth aged 14-24 in or from foster care/young offender systems. The SYICCN’s purpose is to ensure that young people involved in government care can have a voice in their lives and their communities in order to make improvements to the services they receive. The SYICCN is mandated to help set up local ‘networks’ throughout Saskatchewan and develop strategies that empowers youth in and from the system.

For more information on SYICCN or local youth networks in Saskatchewan, please contact:

**Saskatchewan Youth in Care and Custody Network Inc.**  
Cornwall Professional Building  
510-2125 11th Ave.  
Regina, SK S4P 3X3  
Tel: (306) 522-1533  
Fax: (306) 522-1507  
Toll Free Youth Line: (888) 528-8061  
Email: [info@syiccn.ca](mailto:info@syiccn.ca)  
Website: [www.syiccn.ca](http://www.syiccn.ca)





**Saskatchewan Foster Families Association, Inc.**

**231 Robin Crescent  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7L 6M8**

**Phone: (306) 975-1580**

**Toll Free: 1-888-276-2880**

**Fax: (306) 975-1581**

**Email: [sffa@sasktel.net](mailto:sffa@sasktel.net)**

**Website: [www.saskfosterfamilies.ca](http://www.saskfosterfamilies.ca)**