

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL UPDATE

Children's Residential Licensing Program Mission:

To protect and improve the lives of all children who reside in a community care facility through the administration of a transparent licensing system that is collaborative, fair, and supportive of families.

A Note from Kevin Gaines, Deputy Director

Welcome to our Winter Children's Residential Program (CRP) Quarterly Update. This winter may be an active one as families try to make up for lost time, yet COVID-19 and its variants are still an issue that must be considered.

It is flu season, please remember that many symptoms for COVID-19 and the seasonal flu are extremely similar. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) offers advice on the similarities and differences between the two diseases. In addition, remember that while receiving a flu or COVID-19 vaccine may not necessarily preclude a person from getting or transmitting the diseases, it greatly reduces the risk of infection, hospitalization, and death. It is highly recommended that all individuals who can receive a flu and COVID-19 vaccine do so.

If a child in your care is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine, it is highly recommended that the child receive it for their safety as well as to further the effort to develop [community immunity](#) and mitigate the threat of the virus.

In wrapping up other 2021 activities, the CRP has released two new regulation packages: Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program Interim Licensing Standards (STRTP ILS) version 4 and a non-substantive package for Transitional Housing Placement Programs (THPP). Amendments in version 4 of STRTP ILS predominantly serve to implement Part IV of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). The amendments include nursing requirements, clarification on the qualified individual, and aftercare. The THPP package copied and relocated applicable regulations from Chapter 1 to Chapter 7 so all THPP regulations can be found in an easy-to-reference, standalone chapter. In addition to the primary chapter, there are now two subchapters: Subchapter One provides regulations for THPPs that serve only minors, and Subchapter Two provides regulations for THPPs that serve nonminor dependents.

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Note: All content in the Update is current at the time of release but subject to change based on the fluidity of information related to COVID-19 and its variants.

[System of Care for Children and Youth](#)

Is support needed for a youth that is expressing distressed or challenging behaviors that may impact stability? Does the Child and Family Team (CFT) want to stabilize and preserve placement for the youth in a family based setting or Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP)? The System of Care Branch is offering case consultations with Dr. Haleigh Scott, a specialist in trauma-informed treatments and interventions for providers working with youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

Multi-disciplinary team can receive:

- Recommendations on therapy models, services and supports for youth with co-occurring trauma or mental health challenges and I/DD
- Individual and team coaching to strengthen direct therapeutic trauma-informed services to the youth and family
- Strengthened care/transition plans via troubleshooting barriers to care
- Strengthened communication and collaboration within the system of care to better meet the needs of the youth and family

Requirements for Referral:

- Youth is in foster care or at risk of entering foster care
- Has a developmental disability, including intellectual disability or autism, with mild to moderate trauma, mental health challenges and/or expression of distressed behaviors
- Has current mental health, behavioral, developmental, and educational assessments complete and available for review

Referral spots may be limited. As soon as a CFT need is identified, help is available for counties, providers, and other system partners. Please contact CCR@dss.ca.gov.

[Putting the "Freeze" on Fire](#)

According to the [U.S. Fire Administration](#), heating is the second leading cause of home fires, second only to cooking. A five-year study by the [National Fire Protection Association](#) ranked heating at 14% of the leading causes and cooking at 49%. With the colder winter weather, care providers are reminded to make sure heating equipment is operated safely and properly maintained. The [Office of the State Fire Marshal \(OSFM\)](#) can serve as a valuable resource for fire safety information. The OSFM posts [bulletins](#) with critical information and tips.

Foster Mattress Program

Mattress Firm has played an important role in supporting foster children in California communities. To continue that support they are now offering non-profit pricing on qualified mattresses and bed frames to every family that provide foster care in California. The following persons qualify for the special pricing that is currently available:

- Foster children; while in care and after aging out
- Families with foster children in their care
- Foster/siblings living with foster children

To request a mattress program order form or ask questions about the program, simply, contact your local Children's Residential Program [Regional Office](#) or Mattress Firm representative Johanna Seiber at Johanna.Seiber@MFRM.com.

To learn more about Mattress Firm's mission to support foster children you can visit the [Mattress Firm Foster Kids](#) website.

Addressing Bias as a Way to Reduce Inequity

The [Children's Bureau](#), a branch under the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' [Administration for Children & Families](#), provides a listing of informational resources to help address bias in the child welfare system. These include videos, self-assessments, and strategies. Addressing bias can help reduce or eliminate inequity in the child welfare system, from prevention of abuse and neglect to adoption.

Some of the resource topics include:

- [Family Assessment Tool: How to Overcome Bias](#)
- [Family Assessment: Understanding Bias](#)
- [Identifying and Mitigating Implicit Bias: Guidance and Strategies for Institutional Transformation](#)
- [Implicit Racial Bias 101: Exploring Implicit Bias in Child Protection](#)

The resources above can spark conversations on bias and inequity. Although these resources are intended for a broad audience, they may be good resources for providers to promote change with staff, children, and youth.

COVID-19 Conscious Winter Activities

The winter months are here, and it is important to choose activities that are safe to participate in during the coronavirus pandemic. If engaging in outdoor and public activities, stay safe by [practicing everyday preventive actions](#).

According to the [CDC](#), COVID-19 and its variants spreads more easily indoors than outdoors. Studies show that people are more likely to be exposed to COVID-19 when they are closer than six (6) feet apart from others for more extended periods.

A person is **more likely to be exposed** to COVID-19 while:

- Attending crowded, poorly ventilated indoor events
- Having close contact with infected people at home

A person is **less likely to be exposed** to COVID-19 while:

- Attending outdoor activities
- Staying at least six (6) feet apart
- Limiting the amount of time spent with people who don't live in their household
- Wearing a mask

Youth Runaway Prevention Resources

According to the [National Clearinghouse on Homeless Youth & Families](#), about 4.2 million youth and young adults a year experience homelessness in this country. That amounts to the entire population of the state of Oregon. Youth who runaway each year number [between 1.6 and 2.8 million](#), according to the National Runaway Safeline. The risks to health and safety of youth who run away remain a serious concern; and a subject of ongoing efforts to find effective solutions.

We encourage care providers to stay updated on available resources to help build on the runaway prevention tools already in place. The [National Runaway Safeline](#) provides support and resources to providers and youth. [Studies](#) like the ones supported by the [National Runaway Switchboard](#) point to the youths' desire to exercise more freedom and maintain connections with significant people in their lives as common reasons for choosing to run away from their placements.

The same studies indicate that youth who don't perceive their placements as barriers to exercising autonomy or meeting their emotional connections have less incentive or need to run away. As a best practice, care providers may wish to revisit their policies regarding curfews and visitations with friends and family. These can serve as a good starting point for adding reasonable flexibilities, which can go a long way in helping prevent runaways.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of sections recommended for review, taken from Title 22 Regulations and Interim Licensing Standards relating to this subject:

Foster Family Homes

[Title 22, Section 89377 – Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard](#)

[Title 22, Section 89405\(a\)\(1\)\(E\) – Training Requirements](#)

Group Homes

[Title 22, Section 84067 – Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard](#)

[Title 22, Section 84322.2 – Runaway Plan](#)

Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs

[ILS, Section 87067 – Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard](#)

[ILS, Section 87095.24 – Runaway Plan](#)

Resource Family Homes

[ILS, Section 88372\(b\)\(2\) – Annual and Other Training](#)

[ILS, Section 88487.12 – Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard](#)

Conducting Self-Assessments to Assist with Compliance

The new year can be a good opportunity to conduct a facility self-assessment to maintain compliance. The Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) has compiled the following series of self-assessment guides and tools to assist a licensee with staying in compliance.

- [Technical Support Program Self-Assessment Tools](#)
- [Key Indicator Tool \(KIT\)](#)
- [Compliance and Regulatory Enforcement \(CARE\) Tools](#)

A licensee can conduct a comprehensive assessment or focus on a targeted area such as medication management with these tools. By conducting periodic self-assessments, a licensee can find areas needing attention and identify patterns of deficiencies that are usually detected over time. These tools do not contain a complete list of licensing regulations, so licensees must be familiar with all applicable licensing regulations and statutes. These self-assessment guides can also serve as training tools to review basic licensing requirements with staff regularly.

Olympic Opportunities

The 2022 Winter Olympics is scheduled to begin on Friday, February 4, and end on Sunday, February 20, in Beijing, China. Watching the Olympic Games is a fun activity to do together. The Olympic Games can also be inspiring and exciting, and provide plenty of opportunities to engage youth in deeper conversations such as [character strengths](#) like empathy and perseverance. The Common Sense Media website dealing with “Parenting, Media, and Everything In Between” includes the article [What Kids Will Remember Forever from Watching the Olympics With You](#).

While watching the Olympic Games this winter, seize the moment by asking open-ended questions and see where the conversation goes.

- **Talk about inspiration.** Point out the kind of practice, dedication, and sacrifice it takes to become an Olympic athlete.
 - **Ask:** *What are you willing to work hard for?*
- **Prep for controversy.** Olympic Games can sometimes include some controversy.
 - **Ask:** *If you were in charge, how would you handle the controversy?*
- **Explore backstories.** Many Olympians have inspiring stories about overcoming obstacles to reach their goals.
 - **Ask:** *What would your backstory be?*
- **Discuss teamwork.** Watching team sports can be a great chance to point out how everyone's contribution is key to a team's success.
 - **Ask:** *What makes a good teammate?*
- **Comment on competition.** Winning feels great, but point out the other athletes, too.
 - **Ask:** *What's the difference between good and poor sportsmanship?*

- **Go global.** The Olympic Games offer the perfect opportunity to learn more about other countries including identifying country flags and watching different cultural traditions play out.
 - **Ask:** *What did you learn about another country or culture that you didn't know before?*
- **Point out advertising.** With older youth, talk about the relationship between athletes and corporations and why they depend on each other.
 - **Ask:** *How many advertisements can you spot during an event, and what are they selling?*

Are you interested in becoming part of the Community Care Licensing team?
Apply at [CalCareers](#)



Information on applying for a State job can be found on the [Cal Career website](#).

IMPORTANT INFO AND PHONE NUMBERS	
Centralized Complaint Information Bureau (CCIB)	1-844-538-8766
Foster Care Rates	916-651-9152
Care Provider Management Bureau (CPMB)	1-888-422-5669
Foster Care Ombudsman	1-877-846-1602
CCL Public Inquiry and Response	916-651-8848
Technical Support Program	916-654-1541

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