

“Foster care services should be based on premises that emphasize the safety and well-being of children.”

Realizing the harmful effects of environmental tobacco smoke and that children in foster care are at risk for physical problems, DFS recently developed Standards that prohibit smoking in residential settings (i.e., group homes and residential treatment centers): “The provider shall prohibit all use of tobacco by employees, volunteers and visitors in any building or vehicle used by children and in the presence of children.”

The next step in the process is to phase in (over a 1-2 year period) a ban on smoking in foster homes (to include homes of Child Placing Agencies and Therapeutic Foster Care homes). Following is a timeline of activities designed to carry out this goal:

DATE	ACTIVITY
May 14, 2004 1:00-3:00 pm	Introductory Session for Foster Home Coordinators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Janet Jares, Dept. of Health, Substance Abuse Division, will give a presentation and distribute packets of information. • Among other things, the packets will contain information regarding a “Take it Outside” campaign. • Foster Home Coordinators will be encouraged to begin keeping track of all oppositional statements.
May 14, 2004 – May 31, 2004	DFS program consultant (certification of private substitute care providers) will notify the program directors of all child placing agencies and therapeutic foster care programs of the upcoming cessation policy, and provide them with training packets. The policy will apply to all homes having DFS children in placement.
June 1, 2004- June 1, 2006	Utilizing a training module prepared by Janet Jares, the Foster Home Coordinators will train foster parents as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New foster parents will be trained during PRIDE • Existing foster parents will be trained during home visits
January 1, 2005	Correspondence from Rodger McD to all foster parents will be mailed. The letter will encourage foster parents to quit smoking to protect their own health as well as the health of the children in their care. Other items covered in the letter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFS & Dept of Health, Sub Abuse Div. will provide resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cessation services (i.e., Quitline & Quitnet), • Patches, • Medication (Zyban is approved by FDA for tobacco cessation).
June 1, 2005	Notification to foster parents of the new smoking policy, which will allow time between notice and enforcement of the policy.
January, 2006	Enforcement of new smoking policy

PROPOSED POLICY:

- 1) Foster parents shall use all reasonable care to protect foster children from exposure to second hand tobacco smoke.
- 2) Foster parents shall ensure a smoke-free environment in the primary living area of every home caring for children.
- 3) Foster parents shall ensure a smoke-free environment in all motor vehicles transporting children.