

Social Media

Purpose:

The Kansas Department for Children and Families Foster Care Licensing and Background Checks Division is committed to ensuring the safety and confidentiality of Kansas youth that have been removed from their parent or guardian.

Background:

Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act which was passed by Congress in September 2014 establishes a reasonable and prudent parenting standard for decision making. This standard empowers foster care providers to make careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of foster care youth while encouraging emotional and developmental growth. It is the responsibility of this department in collaboration with Child Placing Agencies and their workers to ensure foster parents have the knowledge and skills to make reasonable and prudent parenting decisions.

Definitions/Commonly Used Terms:

- Social Media: Various online tools that enable people to communicate easily through the use of the internet with the intent to share information and resources through audio, video, and images.
- Commonly used social media tools: Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, and Instagram.

Guidance:

Use of Social Media

To be more in line with the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards, the Department for Children and Families Foster Care Licensing and Background Checks Division understands the importance of creating normalcy. The use of Social Media in the home has become common place. Measures need to be put in place to ensure the health, safety, and confidentiality of youth in care are met. Foster parents may post family pictures on Social Media once the following conditions are met:

Confidentiality

While the Department for Children and Families Foster Care Licensing and Background Checks Division recognizes the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard, it is important that confidentiality is maintained. Confidentiality is a vital part of ensuring the health and safety of youth in foster care. Before a foster parent post anything concerning a foster youth on social media, measures should be taken to ensure confidentiality.

Before Posting on Social Media

- Foster Care Case Management Agency has determined there are no safety issues related to the youth's image being posted on Social Media.
- Foster parents will speak to the youth and ensure they are comfortable with them posting about them on Social Media.
- The youth is not identified as a foster youth and will be identified by first name only.

- Case specific information, including reason the youth is in care, visitation, parents progress, and status of the families case will not be discussed.