pennsylvania
STATEWIDE ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY NETWORK

Respite Guidelines

Please consider the federal definition of respite as found in the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 629a(a)(1)(D)) when service planning: **Respite care of children to provide temporary relief for parents and other caregivers.**

Respite is:

- temporary supervision of the child/youth by an approved caregiver
- to allow the adults **a scheduled break from parenting responsibilities and the opportunity for rest and renewal** and;
- used to **strengthen parental relationships**.

Activities that **can** be approved

Respite can be provided for the child/youth in a variety of ways including:

- The child is temporarily supervised by an approved caregiver:
  - Through a respite provider coming into your home provided through the agency,
  - Outside of the home by a caregiver provided through the agency, or
  - Inside or outside of the family home by a family member or other person identified by the family.
- Drop-in centers (Agencies offer a scheduled program that children or youth may attend to offer their families scheduled time away.)
- Day camps for child/youth including cultural camps
- Family Camps – attended by all members of the family Structured with activities for whole family as well as breakouts for parents, child/youth
- Special events for children/youth, such as events for child/youth on the autism spectrum or with sensory disorders, or other special needs
- Child/Youth mentoring programs

Activities that **can't** be approved

- Durable goods of any type, such as trampolines or sports or music equipment
- Family vacations – extended vacations with or without children/youth
- Amusement and/or water parks
- Generic ticketed items including but not limited to the following: entertainment events, such as live character shows, concerts; museums including children and science museums; zoos; tourist attractions; national parks; fairs; local recreational events (i.e. apple festival)
- Memberships including YMCA, gym, pools
- Sports teams (public or private)
- Parent Only Mentoring or Coaching Programs
- Any type of lesson (i.e. music, karate, dance, ballet)
- Therapy and/or Neurofeedback
- Day Care
- Tuition reimbursement for school
- Food
- Tutoring and educational services
- Cash or Gift Cards

All approved respite services must meet the goals of the family and be supported by the Family Support Plan and included specified in the Respite Plan.

Respite is **limited to a maximum of** 48 hours a month.

All types of approved respite services are not necessarily appropriate for each family. Once the family's goals are met, any remaining respite services should be withdrawn. Respite funds are not limitless for each family. Meeting the family's goals is the most important criteria when assessing the provision of respite services, not the expenditure of all possible funds. Ideally the use of respite services for a time-limited basis should assist and encourage families to develop a personal support network who can provide periodic informal respite if needed in the future.

Please contact your SWAN Post-permanency technical assistant if you have any questions.