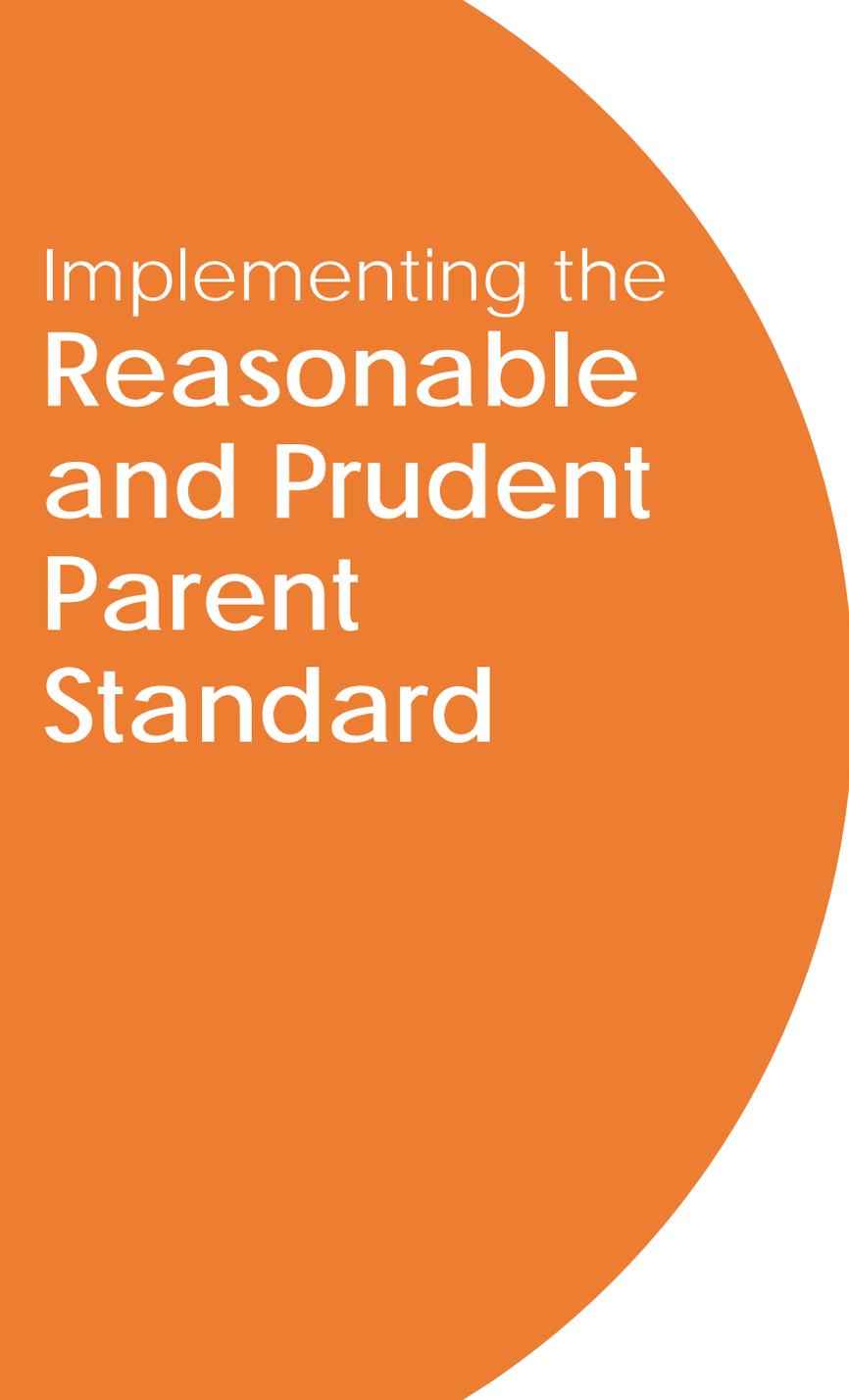


Enriched Activities

at



JASPER MOUNTAIN

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Implementing the
**Reasonable
and Prudent
Parent
Standard**

Recent Federal and State Laws have emphasized the needs of children in substitute care to have opportunities while growing up that other children not in substitute care have access to.

This legislation has developed standards blending two priorities, enriched activities and activity safety, using the term “Prudent Parent Standard.”

This standard emphasizes **three** primary components in providing enriched activities for children in Jasper Mountain care:

1. **Health** – all components of health should be enhanced
2. **Safety** – all activities must be consistent with the physical and emotional safety of the child
3. **Child's Best Interests** – what will best prepare a child for a positive and successful future

Normal Experiences for a Special Needs Population

- Although some children are away from their families for short periods, such as some of the children at the SAFE Center, others may be in care for years and may miss many normal opportunities other children have.
- While encouraging activities that can enhance a child's confidence as well as enjoyment, there must also be a priority on what is safe for our population and the community as well as what individual children can use as positive experiences.

At Jasper Mountain we have a unique challenge to provide normalized experiences for children who are far from the norm regarding safety and responsible behavior.

One of the best ways to balance activities with appropriateness to the child is enhanced opportunities within the treatment environment.

Admittedly these activities may not always include peers from the community or what many families offer to their children, but...

It is also true that many children in their own homes do not have many of the enriched activities of our children in treatment, such as:

- equestrian program
- gardening
- creative expression
- daily therapeutic recreation
- adult mentors
- support and relationship building with dozens of adults and much more.

To balance access to activities and opportunities for enjoyment and personal growth with assurances of safety and appropriateness for the specific child, the Federal and State laws outline the considerations to be made including:

- age
- maturity level
- developmental level
- inherent risks

Jasper Mountain must add an additional consideration —

the **treatment needs** of the individual child.

Jasper Mountain is not a place where children find themselves because they need a home, like many children in foster care.

Only children with significant developmental and psychological challenges are referred and admitted to our programs.

Therefore the reason the child is in our care is to receive some of the most intensive treatment of any environment in our system of care.

When activities are considered for our population, **safety** must to a priority and not just the physical safety of the child and others involved in the activity, but also emotional safety.

Not all children at Jasper Mountain are prepared to engage with community peers in an activity that the child can handle and grow from.

Enriched Activities Guidelines

The following are guidelines within Jasper Mountain programs to promote access to enriched activities for the children in our care:

- Priority on the needs of the individual child – What one child may grow from may not be appropriate for a child with different treatment needs.
- The treatment environment must take precedence over normalized opportunities unless otherwise indicated for a specific child – While in treatment, the priority must remain on why the child is in an intensive environment.
- Program Managers have the responsibility to ensure the treatment environment has many built-in enriched activities for all children as well as meeting the needs of individual children.

- Program Managers are also responsible to ensure safety for all children with the enhanced activities including therapeutic recreation.
- The Care Teams for individual children will determine what specific needs may be in the area of enriched activities.
- Cultural issues must be integrated into enriched opportunities both within the program and in the community.

Types of Enriched Activities

One of the advantages of a holistic treatment environment is the opportunity to design the setting for what children can best enjoy and learn from.

Throughout the history of Jasper Mountain, we have continually received feedback that our programs create a healthy, holistic environment that children enjoy more than any other treatment setting.

These special learning and recreational opportunities include:

- an active academic experience designed for how these children best learn
- sports and therapeutic recreation
- cultural activities, creative expression, equestrian center on campus
- community field trips
- hiking, year around swimming
- community festivals and performances and
- multiple events hosted by universities in our area

We pledge to continue
this aspect of our
treatment environment
based upon our belief
that **children heal and
grow best when they
are active and
enjoying themselves.**

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Activities in Treatment Foster Care

Within our Treatment Foster Care Program, the issue of access to community opportunities is more pronounced. We want to encourage more normalized participation in family, school and community activities when it is indicated for the child's health, safety and best interests.

Unnecessary barriers to opportunities must be removed with the help of our treatment foster care staff. One resource for foster parent training to encourage access to enriched activities while in care is this State promoted training video: found at:

[Oregon Foster Youth Connection Prudent Parent Training Video](#)

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Site Specific Responsible Standard Implementation

At both Jasper Mountain Center and SAFE Center, the person assigned to oversee and apply the prudent parent standard is the senior manager assigned to that site.

Beneath the senior manager, training and direction has been provided to the agency's Trainers and Lead Treatment Team staff to implement the standard.

Questions?

When any question or concern arises, Trainers and Lead Staff are required to check with the Program Director, who is available on-call at all times by cell phone.

Managers from the other site back each other up should there be a time that one or the other are not available. A final on-call backup resource is Beau Garner, Executive Director.

Jasper Mountain is committed to go above and beyond the Federal and State expectations for enriching opportunities for children in our programs. Our program philosophy to heal and promote the child's development in mind, body and spirit demands enriched opportunities.

The healing of trauma is only the first step to a child's lifelong success. Our treatment must go beyond healing to provide the experiences our children will need in their future to be successful in their goals and find happiness in their lives.