



## Use of Physical Punishment and Other Discipline

The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (the Department) must be certain that approved foster carers meet all of the competencies specified in the *Children and Community Services Regulations 2006* (Regulation 4, Approval of carers).

This includes making sure that the foster carer, as well as providing a safe living environment, can care for a child in a way that promotes his or her wellbeing, promotes the child's family and interpersonal relationships, and protects the child from harm.

The Department is, and has to be, committed to placing a child in care in a home where the responsible adults or foster carers do not use discipline such as physical punishment, restraint, deprivation of basic needs or anything else that may be detrimental to the foster child.

This applies to foster carer applicants who use such discipline on their own children while promising not to treat a foster child this way.

### Management of a child's behaviour

Foster carer applicants must demonstrate that they are able to manage a child's behaviour without the use of inappropriate discipline, such as:

- saying mean things to upset the child;
- using put downs;
- locking up (inside) or locking out (outside) the child;
- leaving the child alone or isolated from others;
- smacking, shaking or pushing the child;
- restraining the child;
- not providing basic needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, bedding or sleep;
- washing a child's mouth with soap, chilli or similar to punish them for swearing;

- biting a child to show that it hurts when they bite another child; and
- threatening to use any of the above.

An applicant who uses this type of punishment or discipline as part of their regular parenting will be assessed as inappropriate to provide a placement for a child in care.

### Contact information

#### Department for Child Protection and Family Support

Telephone: (08) 9222 2555

Country free call: 1800 622 258

Web: [www.childprotection.wa.gov.au](http://www.childprotection.wa.gov.au)

#### Foster Care Association of WA

Telephone: (08) 9384 5577

Country free call 1800 641 911

Website: [www.fcawa.com.au](http://www.fcawa.com.au)