

# Child Care Policy

No portion of the mission of Family Promise is to provide childcare through the program itself. (Affiliate may develop such a program but it is not part of the core sheltering program.) Instead, it is important for parents to work out child care issues on their own; thereby having childcare in place as needed to become employed and to work on other goals necessary for achieving independent living.

Family Promise understands, however, that there are times within the day-to-day program of Family Promise that it becomes necessary or convenient to leave a child (or children) for a brief period of time to the care of someone else while the parent is occupied. Such situations include job interviews, counseling, appointments inappropriate to take children, and other personal business situations. This policy provides alternatives for doing so.

The following childcare policy is currently in effect:

1. At no time will staff or volunteers be left in charge or responsible for children of guest families. It may be that volunteers desire to play with and be involved in activities with the children, but the parent(s) of these children must be on the same premises.
2. Children will not be left alone at night during sleeping hours while the parent(s) is (are) working. Some considerations may be allowed as long as a responsible parent from another family has agreed to provide child supervision during that time. These situations are also permitted only at the discretion and approval of the Family Promise staff. They are discouraged, however, due to the preparation for a future move into the family's own home. Some circumstances may be allowed, especially if it is temporary such as during a training period at the place of employment.
3. Prior to a parent becoming employed, childcare must be secured. Custodial care of children is required before the parent begins work activity. No child will be left at the Day Center or church under the supervision of staff, other family members or volunteers for any length of time.
4. This policy considers an exception for staff and volunteers to watch a child (or children) when such person takes a parent and their child(ren) to an appointment and the parent is required to be seen alone. The volunteer or staff person may supervise the child(ren) in the waiting room or public area where other people are present.

5. There are often situations in which it is convenient or necessary for a parent to leave their child(ren) in order to accomplish a certain task. In such a situation the parent must obtain approval from another guest family parent to agree to watch their child. If Family Promise staff disagrees with such an arrangement between the parents of the two families, the staff has the right to intervene and alter such a decision. In any event, a child can only be left to the supervision of another guest family adult for up to 2 hours maximum. Any longer length of time is an infraction of this policy. The supervising adult must know where the parent of the child(ren) will be and how they can get in touch with them in case of an emergency.