

TFCO-A

Treatment Foster Care Oregon for Adolescents

Foster Parent Manual

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Overview of the TFCO Program

There are five main objectives of the TFCO program. For every youth in the program the aim is to:

- Provide youth with close supervision.
- Provide youth with fair and consistent limits and consequences.
- Provide a supportive relationship with at least one mentoring adult.
- Minimize association with peers who may be a bad influence.
- Increase youth's relationships and work skills.

There are some features of the TFCO program that set it apart from most other foster care programs. They are:

- TFCO places one youth (occasionally, two) with a family at a time.
- TFCO uses a team approach to treatment, with the foster parents as part of the team along with program staff.
- Foster parents in the TFCO program implement an individualized, structured program for each youth under the guidance of a Team Leader.
- Foster parents receive an enhanced level of support from program staff. Crisis intervention is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Foster parents meet regularly with other foster parents and the Team Leader to support and learn from each other.

Background and Development of the TFCO Program

This program is the result of years of research about how youth end up in trouble. Scientists spent a lot of time assessing, observing, and comparing families with youth who were having problems to families with youth who were not having problems. These observations showed some patterns that were very different in the families. Of course, each family is unique and these patterns don't show up in all families. But some consistent trends in these patterns are important:

Stage 1. Some youth learn early on that by whining, yelling, ignoring, and refusing, they can get their parents to back off and their parents give up on making them mind. When this is repeated over and over again, youth don't learn to cooperate and mind. For other youth, emotional problems in the family dominate the parent-child interaction. These problems can be from the youth, the parent, or both. Negative interactions that are repeated set youth up for failure.

Stage 2. The youth goes to school and interacts with others in the same negative and coercive way. Other youth and adults start to avoid him. Because the youth is unpleasant to be around, the parent avoids him more and more, and the youth is left to do as he pleases without learning necessary skills.

Stage 3. The youth starts to hang out with other youth who are like him—usually not very socially skilled and not well supervised. He may join with youth who may be getting into trouble and soon find himself in trouble.

Stage 4. Now, upon becoming independent from his family, the young adult hasn't learned the skills needed to enter the adult world of things like employment and relationships. He is at a loss as to how be successful in those areas.

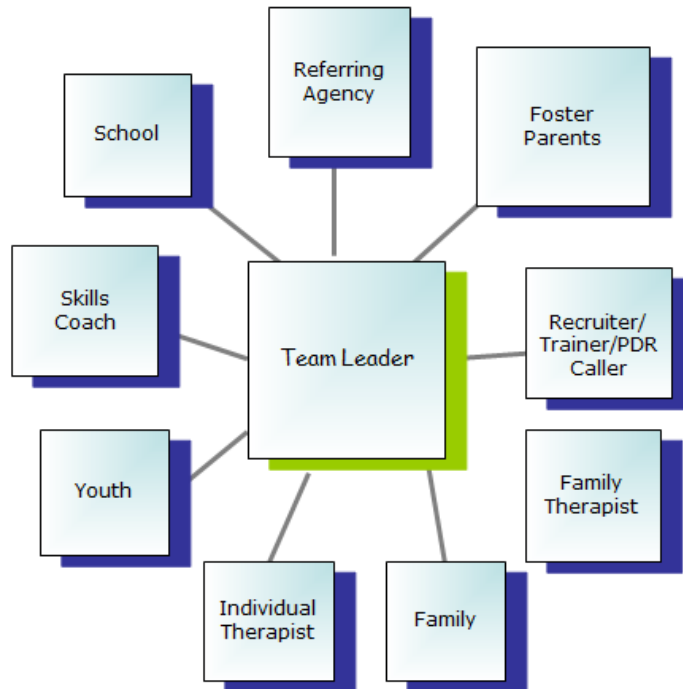
After scientists understood what was happening, they studied various programs to see how to intervene and keep things from going so badly. They found that the most effective programs taught parents to supervise their youth closely, use clear and consistent discipline, engage in a warm and supportive relationship with them, and teach them relationship and work skills.

Those are the same things TFCO focuses on, plus one more. TFCO stresses the importance of limiting contact with other youth with behavior problems. At a time when peers heavily influence each other, youth with behavioral and emotional problems are especially susceptible to negative influences. So, it is not a good idea to have them hanging out unsupervised with youth who are likely to teach them new negative skills or reinforce the ones they have. That is why TFCO doesn't place youth in groups—it is too easy for them to learn new negative skills from each other.

The TFCO model has been tested in several studies of youth in TFCO and in group care homes. The results of these studies consistently showed that TFCO youth:

- had less than half the arrests of those in group care one year after being in the program;
- ran away or were expelled from TFCO homes less than youth in group care homes;
- had fewer mental health problems than those in group care; and
- spent fewer days locked up in psychiatric hospitals or juvenile jails than those in group care in the two years after being in the program.

TFCO Program Staff



Team Leader

Team Leaders are at the head of the treatment team and work with all members of the team. They coordinate, supervise, and individualize the youth's treatment plan, and they oversee the activities of the other members of the team. They serve as the central "clearing house" for communication between all members of the treatment team.

Foster Parents

Foster parents are essential members of the treatment team. Their primary role is to implement the youth's program and encourage and support the youth. They are the eyes and ears of the program and maintain close communication with the Team Leader.

Therapists

Depending in the situation, the youth may have a therapist and the youth's family may have a therapist. The role of the youth therapist is to support the youth's adjustment. The therapist acts as the youth's advocate and support person. The family therapist works with the youth's family to help them prepare for their youth's return home. The Team Leader works closely with both therapists.

Skills Coaches

Skills coaches help the youth get involved in appropriate activities in the community. They use these opportunities to teach and practice prosocial and problem solving skills with the youth.

PDR Caller/Recruiter/Trainer

The Recruiter/Trainer/PDR Caller is responsible for screening and recruiting TFCO homes and providing their initial orientation and training. Once the home has a youth in placement, this team member conducts daily calls to the home to gather data on youth behavior as well as foster parent stress.

Referring Agency

Depending on the situation, the referring agency may be the juvenile court, parole or probation, the local youth protection agency, or mental health, etc. The Team Leader is responsible for interactions with the agency and for compliance with the agency's conditions.

Agreements

Using the Program

TFCO Strategies for Foster Parents

- House Rules
- Noticing Behavior
- Encouragement
- Point and Level System

TFCO uses a set of strategies that will help you manage your youth's behavioral and emotional problems. Managing their problem behavior will help keep youth safe and give them opportunities to develop more appropriate behaviors and skills. Your Team Leader will help you learn to use each of these tools skillfully and will show you how powerful they can be when used together.

House Rules

House rules are a set of basic rules that everyone in a household is expected to follow. House rules help establish a safe environment and provide structure that makes people feel secure. Having a specified set of rules enables you to be clear with the youth about your expectations.

Guidelines for Making House Rules

- Be clear and specific.
- Keep the list short (a list of 5 rules is recommended), and include the most important things.
- Review the rules with the whole family.
- Post them where everyone can see them.

Things to Include

There are some areas that are important to consider when you are making your house rules because you don't know if the youth has learned what is and isn't appropriate in a household.

1. Privacy

To ensure a level of privacy that is comfortable for everyone, you can include rules like:

- Bathrooms and bedrooms are private – knock before entering.
- Other family member's bedrooms are off limits.
- Wear bathrobes outside of your bedroom.

2. Food

The youth won't have the same habits about eating and snacking as you do. Think about what is acceptable in your house and include rules like:

- Ask before snacking.
- Certain snacks (designate which ones) are available without permission.
- You can have snacks whenever you want (be clear about what is a "snack").

3. Household Routines

What are some basic routines that are important for your household to run smoothly? Maybe things like:

- Laundry must be put in the hamper every day.
- Shower every day.

4. No Roughhousing

To prevent unsafe situations you can include rules like:

- No hurtful physical contact (hitting, kicking, etc.)
- No rough play (wrestling, play-fighting, etc.)

As you get to know the youth better you may have to adjust your house rules. You may have to add a rule or two, so be sure to leave room for that and start off with a fairly short list.



House Rules

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Noticing Behavior

Noticing how often and under what circumstances both problem and positive behaviors occur is the first step toward using encouragement consistently and toward dealing with problem behavior. All of the strategies discussed here are an important part of the program. You can't support or manage behavior effectively if you don't see it. These noticing strategies will train you to see the important behaviors.

Pinpointing and Noticing Problem Behavior: The Four-step Approach

1. Knowing when a behavior is a problem.

- Does it interfere with living in your family?
- Does it interfere with the youth's ability to learn something new?
- Does it interfere with the youth's performance in an area where he or she is already competent?

2. Describe the behavior.

- When you are noticing a behavior, step back and watch. What do you see? What exactly is happening? When does it occur (time of day, with whom, where, etc.)?

3. Examine the circumstances around the behavior.

- Where does the problem behavior occur?
- When does it occur?
- With whom does it occur?
- What triggered it? What happened before the problem behavior?

4. How can we discourage the behavior?

- What can this youth do instead?
- How can you encourage this behavior?
- What limits can you set on the problem behavior?

We will talk about noticing positive behavior in the next section.

The Parent Daily Report (PDR)

A very important tool used in the TFCO program is the Parent Daily Report, or PDR. You will be called every weekday and asked if the youth did any of the things on list of behaviors. You are not asked how many times each behavior occurs, only whether it occurred during the past 24 hours, "yes" or "no." The information is then made available to your Team Leader. Some of the most important ways information from the PDR is useful are:

- It makes it easier to catch problems early when they are still small. When you are asked every day about all of these behaviors, you notice the minor ones earlier. It is always easier to deal with small problems rather than big ones.
- The information from the PDR helps the treatment team see the progress the youth is making and identify problems that need attention. It helps the team tailor the treatment plan to the youth's needs.
- The PDR helps detect patterns or cycles of behavior problems. For example, maybe the youth argues before dinner. That would show up in the PDR, and your youth's treatment team could plan accordingly.

PDR Data Collected

Behaviors 12 – 18yrs. Interview

Animal cruelty	Mean talk
Arguing	Nervous/Jittery
<u>Backtalking</u>	Not minding
Bedwetting	Pant wetting
Competitiveness	Pouting
Complaining	Runaway
Daydreaming	School problems
Defiance	Sexual behavior
Depression/Sadness	Short att. Span
Destructiveness	Skipping meals
Drug & alcohol use	Sleep problems
Encopresis	Sluggishness
Fearfulness	Staying out
Fighting	Stealing
Interrupting	Swearing
Irresponsibility	Teasing
Irritability	Truancy
Jealousy	Worried
Lying	

Other Data Fields

Daily Grade
Points Earned
Points Lost
Medication Admin.
Prosocial Target <u>Bx</u>
Points earned in PTB
Interviewer
Respondent
Notes: (by date)

FOCUS Resources Edit 123caller@yahoo.com Logout Contact us							
Client Name: G, Lady		Client ID: G001			Age: 14		
		Placement ID:			Questionnaire: 12 to 18		
Behavior	Sun 09-Nov-2014	Mon 10-Nov-2014	Tue 11-Nov-2014	Wed 12-Nov-2014	Thu 13-Nov-2014	Fri 14-Nov-2014	Sat 15-Nov-2014
1. Animal Cruelty							
2. Arguing	2						
3. Backtalking							
4. Bedwetting							
5. Competitiveness							
6. Complaining	2						
7. Daydreaming							
8. Defiance	1						
9. Depression/Sadness							
10. Destructiveness							
11. Drug & alcohol use							
12. Encopresis							
13. Fearfulness							
14. Fighting							
15. Interrupting							
16. Irresponsibility							
17. Irritability	1						
18. Jealousy							
19. Lying							
20. Mean Talk							
21. Nervous/Jittery							
22. Not Minding	1						
23. Pant Wetting							
24. Pouting							
25. ...							

PDR Practice: Scott

Scott is 14 and has been in your home for one week. He is pleasant and has been doing a nice job adjusting to your family. Scott likes to please and has been working hard to do what you have asked him in a timely manner and seems willing to volunteer without being prompted.

This morning Scott got up 10 minutes late, dressed, made his bed, and showered. He came to breakfast cheerfully but seemed a bit scattered. After Scott left for school you noticed that he forgot to grab a school card and the bathroom was messy. His towel and washcloth were left out and he didn't pick up his night clothes. Scott called from school and asked for help because he forgot to take his school card. He had already made a school card on his own for that day and you reassured him that you would talk to the school and give your OK for them to use his home-made card. Scott has seven classes at school. Scott came home from school, put his things away and reported that he was tired. His school card was signed, indicating he attended all his classes with no problems. He did his homework and helped you with dinner. He was a little grumpy before dinner with the other children, but turned things around quickly and went to bed on time.

Noticing Cooperative Behavior

Just as it is good to notice problem behavior to get a better sense of exactly what and how big the problems are, it is also very important to notice cooperative behavior. It keeps you from falling into the rut of thinking the youth only behaves in negative ways. It provides you with an opportunity to encourage and support the youth, which is one of the main objectives of this program.

Why is noticing cooperation important?

Peers, teachers, and other adults in the community generally are more accepting of youth who know how to cooperate. Youth who are cooperative and accepted by others tend to...

- Feel better about themselves
- Have confidence to try new things
- Be better prepared to meet new demands

What exactly is cooperation?

Cooperation is a skill and you can teach it. Generally, it is the same thing as minding. You can think about most problem behavior as not minding, and most cooperative behavior as minding.

How long should it take for the youth to mind?

If you ask the youth to put the dishes in the dishwasher, how long should it take to cooperate or mind? If the youth acknowledges and starts to respond to your request—the first time—within 10 to 15 seconds, that would be minding. If you had to ask more than once or it took longer, that would be not minding.

How do you ask the youth to do something?

Most of the time we don't even think about how we ask our youth to do something, but there are a few things we can do to increase the chance that our youth will cooperate.

- Get their attention. Make eye contact and/or call their name before asking them to do something. If you aren't sure you have their attention, you won't really know if they heard you.
- Keep your voice calm.
- Be specific and clear.
- Limit the number of directions you give. They may forget some if you list too many things to do all at once.
- Follow through. Pay attention to whether or not the youth responds and act accordingly by either acknowledging a job well done or giving a consequence for not minding.

- When possible, don't ask them to do something when they are deeply engaged in something. It isn't always an option to wait, but when it really doesn't matter, let them finish what they are doing.
- Tell them what **TO** do (rather than what not to do).

Instead of this. . .

Why can't you pick up after yourself?

Do you have to throw that there?

Do you call that bed made?

Pick up that room.

Use your manners.

Can't you see what a mess your room is?

Try this. . .

Please pick up your jacket.

Put your book in your room.

You forgot to pull up the sheet.

Put your tapes in the tape box.

Don't talk with food in your mouth.

Put your clothes away, please.

How often should you expect the youth to mind?

"Normal" youth, who haven't had the kind of experiences youth in foster care have, mind about 70% of the time. That should give you an idea of what to expect and strive for with these youth. Expecting the youth to cooperate all of the time just isn't reasonable and will make everyone frustrated.

Encouragement

Encouragement is a very powerful way to build up the youth's skills and confidence and to teach cooperation. It's easy to get so caught up in dealing with problems that we forget one of the most important parts of being a foster parent — supporting the youth and encouraging positive behavior. In fact, we recommend that you aim for a ratio of *at least* 5 to 1 of positive comments to corrective comments to your youth. More than that is even better! A ratio of 8 to 1 is a good goal to strive for. There are several ways you can build that level of support into your daily routine.

1. **See it!** You can't reinforce positive behavior if you don't see it. We get in such a habit of watching for problems that we can completely overlook the things youth are doing right. Your job is to "catch them being good."
2. **Notice it! Reinforce it!** Let youth know you see them behaving appropriately. Reinforcing their positive behavior will increase the chance that they will behave that way again.
3. **Model it!** Demonstrate the way you want the youth to behave by behaving that way yourself. Be conscious of your own behavior to see if you are acting as a role model.
4. **Be interested!** Try to find some common interests with the youth. Look for things you might have in common or things you can do together and enjoy. Learn what the youth likes and doesn't like. See if you can determine what the youth's strengths are. Your interest tells the youth that she is important. The idea here is to build new positive interests and skills, so avoid talking about the youth's problems or negative behaviors.

Catch 'Em Being Good

- Be specific about what the youth did right. Rather than just saying "Good job," say, "You put away all of the dishes, good job!"
- Praise each small step that contributes to achieving a larger goal.
- Find some part of the task that the youth did right and comment on that: "Hey, you started your homework on time, good for you."

Tips for Giving Praise

- Don't require perfection before you praise.
- Use a positive facial expression and tone of voice.
- Praise soon after the positive behavior.
- When/Then: When the youth takes a step in the right direction, then he receives praise.

- Base praise on the youth's behavior.
- Avoid sarcasm or negative comments on the end of praise statements.

Notice the Little Things

You don't have to wait until the youth does something big, you can give praise when the youth...

- Said "please" or "thank you" or "excuse me"
- Was on time for school
- Was kind to your pets
- Smiled
- Volunteered to help
- Made a kind statement
- Covered mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Finished homework or chore

Reinforcing Appropriate Behavior

As a strategy, reinforcing appropriate behavior has many advantages:

- It strengthens the bond between adult and youth.
- It increases the probability that the reinforced behavior will reoccur.
- It decreases (but does not eliminate) the probability that negative behavior will occur.
- It gives adults a tool for controlling how they focus their own attention, which can have positive effects on the overall emotional tone of the relationship.

Recent studies have found that the amount of reinforcement parents use affects behavioral, affective, and social outcomes over and above what could be accounted for by discipline methods. That means that you can make more progress by using *reinforcement + discipline* than you can with discipline alone.

Incentives

Activities

- Choose a special TV program
- First in the bathroom in morning for... (specified amount of time)
- Choose from a bag of small, wrapped items
- Have a friend over
- Make a craft project (work on it for 15 minutes a night with one parent; woodworking, weaving, etc.)
- Help cook or bake
- Rent a video
- Play videogame
- Get a book or magazine
- Go swimming, go to wave pool
- Earn articles of clothing for self
- Go ice or roller skating

Parent Time

- Play a 15-minute game with foster parent
- Take a walk with foster parent
- Be taken out to a movie
- Go out with foster parent for ice cream
- Bake (brownies) or cook (part of a meal) with foster parents
- Shop with foster parents
- Help cook or bake

Food

- Dried fruit as a snack
- Make popcorn in the evening
- Choose dinner one night
- Take a special lunch to school
- Homemade cookies, cake, pie, etc.
- Go out for pizza with family
- Gum
- Choose dessert for evening meal
- Bake (brownies) or cook (part of a meal) with foster parents

Point and Level System

The Point and Level System is a daily behavior management program. The program specifies the daily activities and behaviors expected and assigns a number of points the youth can earn for satisfactory performance. The points are a concrete way for parents to teach appropriate skills, reinforce desired behaviors or attitudes, and provide consequences for problem behavior.

Benefits of the point and level system are:

- You and the youth are working with the same expectations and understandings.
- It builds in regular opportunities for you to support and encourage the youth.
- Consequences are built into the program.
- You can let the program do the work—you don't have to constantly decide what to do about behavior problems.
- It takes the power struggle out of situations.
- It deals with things as they occur instead of letting them build up.
- The system can be individualized to fit specific needs and situations.
- Team Leaders are always available to help.

In the point and level system, the tangible rewards and consequences are distributed through a system of points earned and lost. Throughout the day, the youth can earn points for cooperating and participating in everyday tasks and lose points for breaking rules, including small things such as not listening to an adult or having a surly attitude. The points earned are used to "buy" privileges.

There are three levels to the system. It usually takes 4 to 6 months for youth to move through the three levels. The levels are designed so that youth have less supervision and more privileges as they move through the levels.

Level 1

Youth spend three weeks on Level 1. During Level 1, the youth settles into your home and you begin to build a relationship. To help the youth focus on you and your home, home visits are not allowed until after Level 1. This level is designed to provide the youth with very close supervision and immediate reinforcement. On Level 1...

- The youth earns points for routine daily activities such as getting out of bed on time, getting ready for school on time, etc.
- Points earned one day are traded for privileges the following day.
- The privileges that can be bought with earned points are very basic and simple (a later bedtime, watching TV, radio in room, etc.).
- The youth is supervised AT ALL TIMES.
- It is not difficult for the youth to earn 100 points a day.
- Youth must accumulate a total of 2,100 points to move from Level 1 to Level 2.

The next pages show examples of Level 1 school days and non-school days behavior expectations, point cards, and privileges, and the school card.

Level 1 Description			
Behavior	Description	Time	Points
Up on Time	Out of Bed	6:30 am	10
Ready in the Morning	Shower, teeth brushed, hair combed, wear clean clothes, eat breakfast		10
Morning Clean Up	Bed made, dirty clothes put away, room neat, bath towel & wash rag put away, dishes in the sink		10
Go To School	Be on time & attend classes without tardiness		5
Carry School Card	Carry school card to class & have each teacher sign it		1/class*
Behavior in Class	Pay attention to tasks in class, cooperate with the teacher, and hand homework in on time		2/class*
School Card Bonus	All signatures, no overdue homework, no tardies & good behavior		10
Read & Study	50 min. of reading/writing each day (not including letter writing)		20
Chore	To be explained each day		10
Attitude & Maturity	Being helpful, taking criticism well, being pleasant, not pushing limits, not being moody, accepting "No"		15 am 15 pm
Volunteering	Volunteering to do extra tasks (Parents will decide on pts)		2 - 10
Extra Chore	Optional (must be approved by parent)		5 - 10
Bed on Time (last night)	If you CAN buy Basics If you CAN'T buy Basics	9:30 pm 8:30 pm	10

Level 1 Privileges		
Privilege	Description	Point Cost
Basics	Music in your room, 9:30 bedtime	50
Later Bedtime	10:00pm, 11:00pm on non-school days and holidays with permission	50
TV	Can watch TV after homework & chore are completed	25
Other	Foster parents will choose if applicable	50

School Day Level 1				
Points	Things To Do To Earn Points	Bonus	Taken	Total
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN THE MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEAN UP			
5	GO TO SCHOOL			
1/class*	CARRY SCHOOL CARD			
2/class*	BEHAVIOR IN CLASS			
10	SCHOOL CARD BONUS			
20	READ & STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 am	ATTITUDE & MATURITY			
15 pm	ATTITUDE & MATURITY			
2 - 10	VOLUNTEERING			
5 - 10	EXTRA CHORE			
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
DAILY TOTAL				

Comments:

Non-School Day Level 1				
Name:		Date:		
		S M T W T H F S		
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-10	EXTRA CHORE			

DAILY TOTAL _____

COMMENTS:

Name:		SCHOOL CARD				Date:
Class	Today's Assignment	Assignment Turned In	Overdue Homework	Tardy	Behavior Good/Poor	Initial
1.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor	
2.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor	
3.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor	
4.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor	
5.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor	
6.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor	
7.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor	
8.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor	

*** Please identify overdue homework assignments on the back of this form.**

Level 1 Points & Privileges		
Name:		Date:
		S M T W T H F S
Privilege	Point Cost	Points Used
BASICS	50	
LATER BEDTIME	50	
TV	25	
OTHER	50	
Total points earned today		
Total cost of privileges for tomorrow		-
Leftover points		

Level 2

On Level 2, the youth's program will be individualized according to what has been learned about him during Level 1. Your Team Leader will help you identify specific behaviors to focus on, and you will have a better idea of the kinds of privileges that motivate the youth. It is during this level that the youth will change the most. Youth at this level are allowed to earn activity time. During this time, the amount and quality of the privileges are increased as the youth's behavior and skills improve, giving the youth a chance to become increasingly responsible and confident. Youth typically stay on this level for 12 to 16 weeks. On Level 2...

- Points earned in one week are used to buy privileges for the next week.
- On the average, youth earn 700 to 900 points per week.
- Youth learn to delay gratification, plan ahead, and work toward a goal.
- The amount and quality of privileges are increased (more TV time, allowance, and individualized rewards are now options).
- Youth can buy free time with friends (according to specific guidelines).
- Youth can move to Level 3 by buying bonds (costing 50 points). They are allowed to purchase one bond a week and it takes 12 bonds to move to Level 3.
- Youth can be demoted to Level 1 for low point days (earning less than 100). On Level 1 days, the youth is demoted to Level 1 privileges and has to earn at least 100 points to be reinstated to Level 2. Points earned during a Level 1 day do not count toward the week's total.
- The foster parent banks extra points and uses them toward things the youth may want.

Level drop. Youth on Levels 2 and 3 can be dropped to Level 1 for the *following* day when their points drop below 100 points on Level 2 or 120 on Level 3 for any given day. On the Level 1 day...

- The youth is allowed only Level 1 basics.
- The youth has to earn at least 100 points to be reinstated to Level 2 or 120 points to be reinstated to Level 3 the following day.
- The points earned during Level 1 *do not* count toward the week's total for buying privileges that next week.

Below is an example of how a demotion would work for a youth on Level 2.

On Wednesday Leroy got up on time, left his breakfast dishes on the table, argued about wearing a belt, and went to school. Later, he didn't bring home his school card, was quiet during dinner, completed his chore, and went to bed on time. He earned only 65 points on Wednesday and was put on Level 1 on Thursday.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	<i>Total</i>
Points earned	100	100	100	65	100	100	100	565
Level	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	

For his behavior on Wednesday, Leroy was on Level 1 on Thursday. Because Thursday's points were earned while he was on Level 1, these cannot be added into the total he uses to buy Level 2 privileges.

Therefore, the total points earned for the week = 565.

Level Information

	Level 1	Level 2
Number of points to be earned (minimum)	100	100
Level of supervision	1:1 adult supervision	Some unsupervised time if approved in advance
Allowance	No	Yes
Points count toward buying privileges	Yes, points are used to buy privileges for the next day.	Yes, points add up and are used to buy one week's worth of privileges.
Points used to buy privileges	Yes	Yes

The next pages will show examples of Level 2 school days and non-school days behavior expectations, point cards, and privileges.

Level 2			
Name:			
BEHAVIOR	DESCRIPTION	TIME	POINTS
UP ON TIME	Out of bed		10
READY IN MORNING	Showered, teeth brushed, hair combed, dressed in clean clothes, and ate breakfast		10
MORNING CLEAN-UP	Bed made, dirty clothes put away, room neat, bath towel and wash cloth put away, and dishes in sink		10
GO TO SCHOOL	Attend school each day (All classes)		5
CARRY SCHOOL CARD	Carry school card to each class and get signature from each teacher		1/class*
BEHAVIOR IN CLASS	Positive behavior in class		2/class*
SCHOOL CARD BONUS	Signatures on card, homework turned in, on time & good behavior for each class		10
READ AND STUDY	50 minutes reading/writing each day (not including letter writing)		20
CHORE	To be explained each day		10
ATTITUDE/MATURITY	Being helpful, taking feedback maturely, being pleasant, accepting no without pushing limits, etc.		15 A.M. 15 P.M.
VOLUNTEERING	Volunteering to do extra tasks (Foster Parent will decide on points)		2 – 10
EXTRA CHORE	Optional (Must be approved by Foster Parents)		5 – 50
BED ON TIME	IF you CAN buy BASICS IF you CAN'T buy BASICS	9:30 pm 8:30 pm	10

Level 2 Privileges		
Name:		
PRIVILEGE	DESCRIPTION	POINT COST
BASICS	Use of telephone for 15 minutes daily, radio in your room. 9:30 P.M. bedtime	350
TV	TV after homework and/or chore are completed	100
LATER BEDTIME	10:00 P.M. bedtime 11:00 P.M. bedtime on non-school days and holidays with permission	100
ACTIVITY TIME	With <u>prior planning, permission and approval</u> , you may plan to go skating, swimming, to a movie, school activity, etc. If you are late or not where you are supposed to be, you will lose 1 point per minute.	½ point per minute
EXTRA PHONE TIME	One 20-minute call (not long distance).	25
BONDS	You can buy one bond per week. You need 12 bonds to move to Level III.	50 points
ALLOWANCE	\$10.00 per week. All purchases must have receipts and you must show your money to your foster parents. Money spent at school in pop / candy machines must have Team Lead approval.	200
OTHER	Foster parents will choose if applicable	50

<h2 style="margin: 0;">School Day Level 2</h2>				
Name:		Date:		
		S M T W T H F S		
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
5	GO TO SCHOOL			
1/Class	CARRY SCHOOL CARD			
2/Class	BEHAVIOR IN CLASS			
10	SCHOOL CARD BONUS			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-50	EXTRA CHORE			

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS:

Non-School Day Level 2				
Name:		Date:		
		S M T W T H F S		
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-50	EXTRA CHORE			

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS:

Level 2 Points & Privileges		
Name:		Week of:
Date	On L2 Points total	
Total points on Level 2		
Point Cost	Privilege	Points Used
350	Basics	
100	TV	
100	Later Bedtime	
½ pt per min	Activity Time	
25	Extra Phone Time	
50	Bond	
50	Other	
200	Allowance	
Total L2 points		
Total cost of privileges		-
Leftover points		
Total bonds		

Level 3

Level 3 can be considered a maintenance phase. The youth no longer has to buy privileges. As long as the youth earns a minimum number of points, the privileges are earned automatically. The youth is allowed more activity time, an increased allowance, and a higher quality of privileges in this level. On Level 3...

- The youth must earn 120 points a day to remain on Level 3.
- The youth is required to maintain a budget book that tracks income and expenses.
- Basic privileges no longer have to be earned.
- Activities must be approved in advance.
- More serious violations can result in demotion to Level 1.
- Youth no longer use points to buy privileges; therefore, foster parents no longer bank extra unused points.

Level Information

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Number of points to be earned (minimum)	100	100	120
Level of supervision	1:1 adult supervision	Some unsupervised time if approved in advance	Some unsupervised time if approved in advance
Allowance	No	Yes	Yes
Points count toward buying privileges	Yes, points are used to buy privileges for the next day.	Yes, points add up and are used to buy one week's worth of privileges.	No, on level 3 you automatically have the privileges.

Level 3			
Name:			
BEHAVIOR	DESCRIPTION	TIME	POINTS
UP ON TIME	Out of bed		10
READY IN MORNING	Showered, teeth brushed, hair combed, dressed in clean clothes, and ate breakfast		10
MORNING CLEAN-UP	Bed made, dirty clothes put away, room neat, bath towel and wash cloth put away, and dishes in sink		10
GO TO SCHOOL	Attend school each day (All classes)		5
CARRY SCHOOL CARD	Carry school card to each class and get signature from each teacher		1/class*
BEHAVIOR IN CLASS	Positive behavior in class		2/class*
SCHOOL CARD BONUS	Signatures on card, homework turned in, on time & good behavior for each class		10
READ AND STUDY	50 minutes reading/writing each day (not including letter writing)		20
CHORE	To be explained each day		10
ATTITUDE/MATURITY	Being helpful, taking feedback maturely, being pleasant, accepting no without pushing limits, etc.		15 A.M. 15 P.M.
VOLUNTEERING	Volunteering to do extra tasks (Foster Parent will decide on points)		2 – 10
EXTRA CHORE	Optional (Must be approved by Foster Parents)		5 – 50
BED ON TIME	IF you CAN buy BASICS IF you CAN'T buy BASICS	9:30 pm 8:30 pm	10
Allowance	\$15.00 per week when on level all week. \$7.50 if on Level 1 once in the week and no allowance if on Level 1 more than once in the week. All purchases must have receipts and you must show your money to your foster parents. Money spent at school in pop / candy machines must have Team Lead approval		

*All privileges are earned for the following day when 120 points are earned in a day.

School Day Level 3				
Name:		Date:		
		S M T W T H F S		
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
5	GO TO SCHOOL			
1/Class	CARRY SCHOOL CARD			
2/Class	BEHAVIOR IN CLASS			
10	SCHOOL CARD BONUS			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-50	EXTRA CHORE			

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS:

Non-School Day Level 3

Name:

Date:

S M T W T H F S

POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-50	EXTRA CHORE			

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS:

Level 3 Privileges

Name:

PRIVILEGE	DESCRIPTION
BASICS	Use of telephone for 15 minutes daily, radio in your room. 9:30 P.M. bedtime
TV	TV after homework and/or chore are completed
LATER BEDTIME	10:00 P.M. bedtime 11:00 P.M. bedtime on non-school days and holidays with permission
ACTIVITY TIME	With <u>prior planning, permission and approval</u> , you may plan to go skating, swimming, to a movie, school activity, etc. If you are late or not where you are supposed to be, you will lose 1 point per minute.
EXTRA PHONE TIME	One 20-minute call (not long distance)
ALLOWANCE	\$15.00 per week when on level all week. \$7.50 if on Level 1 once in the week and no allowance if on Level 1 more than once in the week. All purchases must have receipts and you must show your money to your foster parents. Money spent at school in pop / candy machines must have Team Lead approval.

Level 3 Points & Privileges

Name:

Today's Date:

Day of Week	Date	Total Points	Level
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
This week's allowance earned			\$

Using a Point System Economy

For the point system to work, it must be balanced and realistic. It should be set up so that youth feel successful even when they don't earn all of the possible points. If used correctly, it can be motivating. It can help youth get used to receiving both positive and negative feedback on their behavior.

Assigning Point Values

Your Team Leader will help you learn to assign point values in a way that maximizes the effect. Generally, full point values are awarded for doing an adequate (but not exceptional) job, and partial points are given for doing only part of a job. You are encouraged to award bonus points if you observe youth acting in an especially positive way, handling a difficult situation well, or going above and beyond the call of duty when completing a task. Typically, youth can earn up to 150 points each day, including options to work for additional points. Youth should be able to lose 10 to 20 points a day without having privileges seriously curtailed.

Example 1: Scott

Scott is 14 and has been in your home for one week. He is pleasant and has been doing a nice job adjusting to your family. Scott likes to please and has been working hard to do what you have asked him in a timely manner and seems willing to volunteer without being prompted.

This morning Scott got up 10 minutes late, dressed, made his bed, and showered. He came to breakfast cheerfully but seemed a bit scattered. After Scott left for school you noticed that he forgot to grab a school card and the bathroom was messy. His towel and washcloth were left out and he didn't pick up his night clothes. Scott called from school and asked for help because he forgot to take his school card. He had already made a school card on his own for that day and you reassured him that you would talk to the school and give your OK for them to use his home-made card. Scott has seven classes at school. Scott came home from school, put his things away and reported that he was tired. His school card was signed, indicating he attended all his classes with no problems. He did his homework and helped you with dinner. He was a little grumpy before dinner with the other children, but turned things around quickly and went to bed on time.

School Day Level 1				
Points	Things To Do To Earn Points	Bonus	Taken	Total
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN THE MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEAN UP			
5	GO TO SCHOOL			
1/class*	CARRY SCHOOL CARD			
2/class*	BEHAVIOR IN CLASS			
10	SCHOOL CARD BONUS			
20	READ & STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 am	ATTITUDE & MATURITY			
15 pm	ATTITUDE & MATURITY			
2 - 10	VOLUNTEERING			
5 - 10	EXTRA CHORE			
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
DAILY TOTAL				

Comments:

DAILY TOTAL _____

Example 2: Sue

Sue is 15 and today she was up on time. She was ready on time, but she did not eat breakfast. Her bed was made, her clothes were put away, but she left her towel on the floor in the bathroom. She attended all seven of her classes and got teacher signatures for all of her classes. She was tardy for one class and in another class her teacher said she fell asleep and slept through most of the class. After school, you asked her to vacuum, which she did with no problems. There were no attitude problems; she conversed with the family at dinner in a pleasant manner. She worked on homework for about 1.5 hours after dinner and then offered to read stories to your 6 year old. She went to bed on time.

School Day Level 1				
Points	Things To Do To Earn Points	Bonus	Taken	Total
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN THE MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEAN UP			
5	GO TO SCHOOL			
1/class*	CARRY SCHOOL CARD			
2/class*	BEHAVIOR IN CLASS			
10	SCHOOL CARD BONUS			
20	READ & STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 am	ATTITUDE & MATURITY			
15 pm	ATTITUDE & MATURITY			
2 - 10	VOLUNTEERING			
5 - 10	EXTRA CHORE			
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
DAILY TOTAL				

Comments:

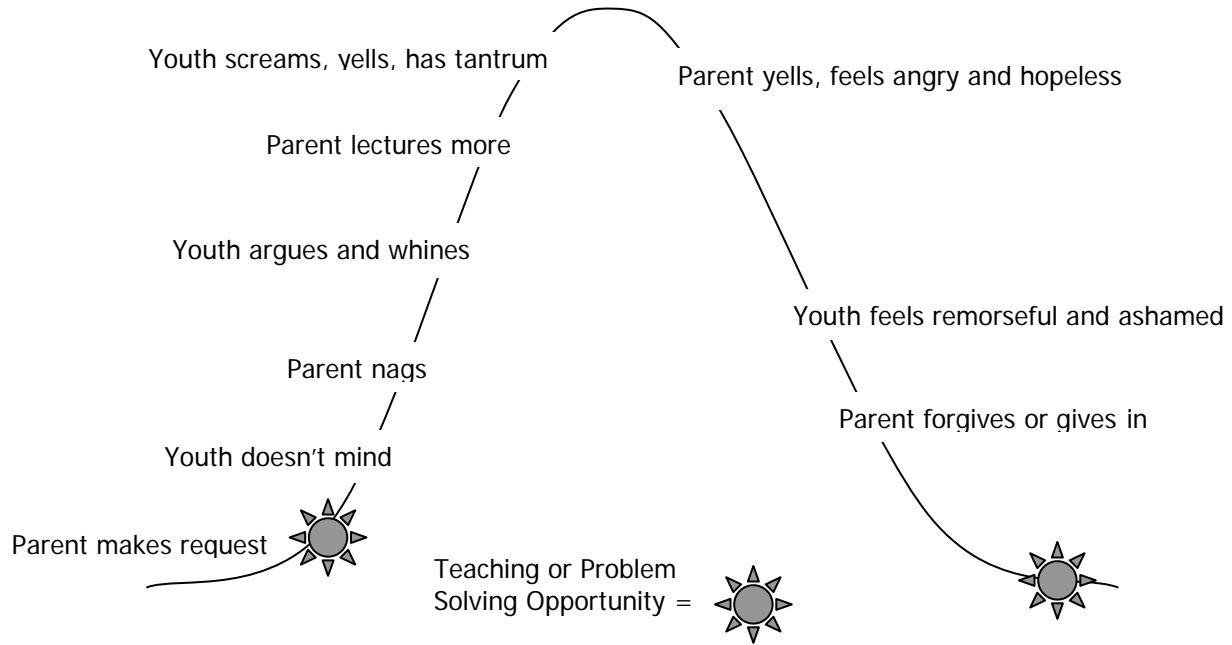
Giving and Taking Points

Your Team Leader will help you learn how to use this system in a way that is both firm and fair. This isn't something that just happens overnight. It takes practice and skill to reach a good balance between firm and fair. When giving points, the youth should feel successful. Once you get in the habit of noticing the appropriate things the youth is doing, and if you stick to the program, giving points is pretty straightforward.

It can be harder to learn to take points away in an effective manner. You want to take away points in a neutral or compassionate manner so that your youth's feelings of failure or discouragement don't get in the way of future progress.

It is important to remain in control of your own emotional reactions and respond to the youth in a systematic manner. If you are feeling irritable, you may be tempted to lecture or yell about a recurring problem rather than matter-of-factly take away points. You should refrain from lecturing or arguing with the youth about problem behavior and losing points.

Studies show a pattern of behavior in highly emotional situations that looks like the figure below. Probably everyone in this room has experienced this pattern of behavior at one time or another.



Problems as Teaching Opportunities

When youth misbehave, the parent has an opportunity to use that misbehavior to teach a better way to behave. At first it can be a challenge to see problems as opportunities, but over time it gets easier. Learning to see problems as opportunities helps you stay motivated to deal with problems.

If you are focused on problems as opportunities, you will want to do everything you can to make the most out of that opportunity. Studies show that very little learning takes place during periods of high emotion. Consequently, it is not a good idea to try to discuss and reason through a problem when the situation has escalated to the behaviors on the rise, the peak, and the fall of this curve. The high emotional level gets in the way.

If you want to use misbehavior as an opportunity to teach a better behavior, it makes sense to focus your efforts on times that are not so emotional. As you can see on the curve, there are two times in a conflict that are good teaching opportunities. Before a problem escalates into an angry conflict or power struggle and after an intense situation has returned to normal are effective times to strive for change. The point and level system will help you make the most out of these opportunities and avoid becoming involved in an angry conflict. Your Team Leader will coach you on how to simply take the points away for misbehavior and disengage in further discussion.

Getting Started and Staying on Top of It

You'll need to be ready to use the point and level system as soon as your youth comes home with you. To make sure that everyone understands how the system works, a

meeting will be arranged with your Team Leader, the youth, and you before you take the youth home. At this meeting, your Team Leader will go over in detail how the system works. You and the youth will have an opportunity to ask questions, so that by the time you leave the meeting you all have the same understanding about how the system works. As with anything new, once you go home and start using the system you will come up with questions. You or the youth can call your Team Leader at any time to get help with this.

Each evening, one or both parents spend a little time with the youth reviewing the day. The focus during this time should be on the positive aspects of the youth's day, and on strategies that will help the youth avoid losing points the next day. It helps to frame this conversation like a sandwich. Start off by noting something positive that happened that day, sandwich in what the youth lost points for, and top it off with more positive comments about either the day or plans for the next day.

Tips for Day One

Take things slowly

- Keep new information to a minimum
 - House rules
 - Point system (start off by giving lots of points)
 - Be specific
 - Be clear
 - Discuss privacy and safety
- Plan the first day so that the youth spends a lot of quiet time with you, hearing about the house rules, family space, and your expectations. *Don't expect that he or she will learn everything that day.*

Get to know each other

- Ask about the youth's likes and dislikes.
- Fix lunch or dinner together.
- Have fun foods planned and try to avoid formal settings — just relax.
- Have the sheets and blankets ready and help the youth make the bed while you talk.
- Don't panic if you do most of the talking, just keep things specific and simple.

Give the youth a chance to get settled

- Prepare the room so the youth has time to put things away and set up the room the way he would like.
- Have a box of decorations available the youth can choose from (posters, knickknacks, etc.).







Beyond the Basics with the Point and Level System

There will be times, when the youth will need incentives or consequences in addition to those already built into the point and level system. These will only be used under the direction of your Team Leader.

There may be times when the youth makes a big step toward an important behavior change. Your Team Leader may decide that it will be beneficial for the youth to receive a special reward for this big step. It is the Team Leader's job to know when that is an appropriate thing to do. You may be asked for ideas about what kinds of things would be a special incentive to the youth, but you don't have to worry about when, what, or how to use these special incentives.

Likewise, there may be times when the youth's misbehavior warrants an additional consequence outside of those built into the point and level system. Again, it would be the Team Leader's decision about when, what, or how to use additional consequences. In this situation, your Team Leader may give the youth an additional work chore. Maybe you will be asked for ideas about chores to give the youth or you might be asked to report on her progress with the chore, but your involvement will be limited and guided by your Team Leader.

When to Call

-  **When you have a question**
-  **When you are concerned**
-  **When what you are trying doesn't seem to be working**
-  **Call before things heat up**
-  **Let us know when your household is changing (guests, family emergencies, one family member going out of town, etc.)**
-  **Call before you change what you are doing with the youth in your care!**

Remember:

You are part of a treatment team, you are never alone.

Putting it All Together – Making it Work

You can think of this phase as getting all the right tools together to tackle a big job. You are well on your way to having a full box of tools to use to be a great foster parent. You came here today with some things already in your toolbox.

- Interest
- Life experiences
- Compassion
- Curiosity

Now, you have added tools like:

- House Rules
- Noticing Behavior
- Encouragement and Reinforcement
- Point and Level System

Foster parents tell us that you'll also want to throw in:

- Patience
- A sense of humor
- A willingness to meet a challenge
- An ability to learn new things about yourself
- Acceptance
- A sense of adventure

Don't forget that your Team Leader is always there to help you know which tool to use to get the best results.

WORKING WITH FAMILIES

- ★ The TFCO program values the potential of the family for providing guidance and support for their youth's positive adjustment.
- ★ We believe in family relationships. Our primary goal is reunification. When that is not possible, we focus on supporting and building positive relationships.
- ★ The TFCO model respects the youth's relationship with his/her family and aims to support and promote it.
- ★ We attempt to avoid any road blocks to communication with the youth's family members. Staff are available at all times for questions, consultation, and support.
- ★ We are committed to maximizing the positive potential of the family relationships.
- ★ We believe that families are able to change problem areas and are committed to helping them accomplish positive goals.
- ★ We recognize that parents are in a difficult circumstance when their youth is moved from home.
- ★ Whenever feasible, we aim to reunite youth in a timely fashion with their families after they complete the program.
- ★ Once the youth has returned home after finishing the program, we are dedicated to providing services and support to help the youth succeed at home and in their community.