



After School & Summer Program Parent Handbook of Operational Policies and Procedures

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Camp Fire First Texas Parent Handbook

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the After School/Summer programs of Camp Fire First Texas! We are really pleased to have your child participating in our program.

Camp Fire understands the value of quality, affordable programs for youth. We are dedicated to providing every child with a nurturing, safe environment where learning and fun are creatively merged. A community's most valuable asset is OUR CHILDREN...and taking good care of them is always our number one priority.

That being said, Camp Fire staff are carefully screened, well trained and closely supervised by our on-site program director as well as other council staff. Since 1914, our programs have been recognized community-wide for having very high standards. Depending on the location, our programs are regulated by either state child/after school care licensing, the health department or the Fort Worth After School system. You will be pleased that you and your family have chosen to join Camp Fire First Texas.

Again, welcome! We look forward to working with you to ensure a successful experience for you and your child. Please do not hesitate to offer any suggestions or concerns. We can be reached at 817.831.2111.

Sincerely,

Cathy Halliday
Vice President of Youth Development

Ann Sheets
President & CEO

Camp Fire First Texas is dedicated to providing the highest quality after school and summer care for your family. Described below are the basic policies used to manage the program in which your child is enrolled. Please read the following agreement and let us know of any questions you may have. Your signature at the end of this document will signify that you understand and accept these policies as written.

In the event there are any changes to these policies and procedures, parents will be given at least a two-week written notice.

Purpose

Camp Fire First Texas' purpose is to provide opportunities for children and youth, and those who care for them, to realize their potential and become caring, self-directed individuals, responsible to themselves and others, and to improve those conditions in society that affect children, youth, and their families.

Vision

Camp Fire First Texas is the premier leader and agency of choice for child and youth development in North Texas.

Because of Camp Fire, children and youth are:

- Ready to learn when they start school;
- Caring, confident, and developing leadership skills;
- Respectful of the outdoor environment; and
- Actively involved with their families and other adults

Core Values

We believe:

- In an approach to youth development that builds personal assets
- That children and youth achieve and learn as individuals and that interests are not determined by gender
- That the best youth development occurs in small groups where children, youth, and families are actively involved
- In coeducational programming
- That youth development is best accomplished with well-trained caregivers, leaders, and mentors
- In inclusiveness, welcoming children, youth, and adults regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic status, ability and other aspects of diversity
- In respect for the environment and the value of outdoor experiences
- That high quality early care and education is important for children's development from birth
- The importance of advocacy on behalf of children, youth, and families

Camp Fire Promise

Young people want to shape the world.
Camp Fire provides the opportunity to
find their spark, lift their voice,
and discover who they are.
In Camp Fire, it begins *now*.

Light the fire within

Enrollment Procedures

All registration forms must be completely filled out and turned in **before** a child can enter Camp Fire First Texas After School or Summer Programs. *No child will be allowed to attend without completed forms.* Parents must keep staff informed of any changes on the enrollment forms. A predetermined supply fee per child is due upon registration of the child for each school year and start of each camp program such as Summer Camp etc. Drop-in care will also incur the supply fee as outlined in this handbook. This fee is non-refundable.

Non-Discrimination Clause

Camp Fire First Texas, a non-profit organization, does not discriminate in employment, enrollment, or nutrition programs on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability or handicap, age, or any other status protected by the local, state or federal laws.

Hours of Operation

Camp Fire First Texas After School Programs are operated from the time that children are dismissed from school until 6:00 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. depending on the program, every day that school is in full session. When school is dismissed early for holidays or other events, the program hours will be adjusted to accommodate the early dismissal time. Before school care may be offered at select locations.

Parent Responsibilities

- Escort the child to and from the program.
- Sign child in (for all-day or before and after care services) and out of the program each day (for all day and after school only services).
- Check the parent board and parent file daily for communication regarding policies, holiday registration and other important information.
- Notify the program if the child will be absent. Messages may be left on the program phone.
- We also ask that parents pick up your child/ren on time, follow rules regarding payment, keep records up to date (phone, address), read all materials sent home or posted at school program, communicate with staff regarding your child, and share concerns with the Site Director.
- Pick up a sick or injured child from the program within an hour after being notified.
- Adhere to all school and district policies; Camp Fire First Texas adheres to the policies of your local school and district.

Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers are always welcome at the programs as long as they have had proper background checks performed by Camp Fire. Volunteer duties may include:

- Assisting in program activities (holiday parties)
- Sharing your cultural heritage
- Other volunteer duties on case-by-case basis

All volunteers are required to complete a criminal background check.

Parents may also assist by making donations of materials to the program (list of suggested items is available).

Camp Fire First Texas After School/Summer programs are open door facilities. Parents are always welcome to come and visit any time. A copy of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standards and the most recent Licensing Inspection reports are available for review at the program.

Signing In and Out

Parents or another authorized responsible adult must always come in and sign the attendance sheet when bringing children to the program and when picking them up. Children are not allowed to sign themselves in or out of the program.

Procedures for Release of Children

Parents must list the names of responsible adults who are allowed to pick up their child/ren from the program on the program admission form. **ONLY LISTED INDIVIDUALS** will be allowed to pick up the child/ren. Staff is instructed to review a photo ID of individuals (this includes parents) picking up children until they are familiar with them and individuals must submit to a digital photo that will remain in a child's file. Staff is not allowed to release the child to anyone who fails to provide ID when asked to do so. You must provide a signed court document (when appropriate) when a non-custodial parent is not allowed to pick up the child/ren from the program. In order to avoid confusion, please submit request for additional individuals by sending a written and signed letter that will be kept in the child's folder. Verbal permission to add someone to the list *will not* be accepted. In the event of an emergency, contact the site director for procedure.

Absence Policy

Parents *must* call the on-site program by 1:00 p.m. each day to report their child's absence from the after school program. Attendance is taken within five minutes of the children's arrival and a missing child causes concern. If a child does not come to the program as intended after school, the parents will be notified immediately.

Withdrawal

A minimum of two (2) weeks written notification must be given for withdrawal from Camp Fire First Texas After School or Summer Program. This allows the opening to be filled as soon as possible without loss of fees. By keeping enrollment capacity, fees are kept to a minimum for all participants. If you do not provide withdrawal notice, you could incur an additional cost. Any child not attending for two consecutive weeks without parent contact will automatically be dropped from enrollment. For the child to be re-enrolled an opening must be available and the parents may have to pay the registration fee.

Snacks/Lunch

A nutritious snack is served after school to all children.

During full-day or summer programs, children are required to bring a lunch. Please do not send sodas, candy or gum. State Licensing requires parents to provide the daily nutritional needs for their child if it is not provided for them.

Nutrition Program Practices

- Liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees F are kept out of children's reach
- All staff are educated on food allergies and they take precautions to ensure children are protected
- On days that providers serve meals, prepared food that is brought into the program, to be shared among children is commercially prepared or prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health officials
- Healthy snacks (as listed by Texas Department of Agriculture) are available for school-aged children as children arrive.
- On days that providers serve meals, milk, fresh fruit and vegetables are available for children who bring lunches from home.

Programming

Camp Fire programming allows youth to explore their personal interests, learn to make healthy choices, develop social skills, and have fun. Program content:

1. Is age-appropriate
2. Has intentional outcomes
3. Includes activities that provide progression or sequential learning

Through staff and child interaction, daily rituals/expectations, and curriculum, participants are exposed to Camp Fire First Texas' three social impact areas of Work (to be a good citizen), Health, and Love (and respect of the outdoors and our environment) and individual impact area of Thriving. The effect of these collective activities will help create caring, confident leaders who are actively involved with their families and other adults. Individuals will also have a better understanding of their inner passions, skills and attributes (or "sparks") to stimulate personal growth and discover their full potential.

Program staff prepare the after-school environment for youth to learn through active exploration and interaction with adults, other children and materials. Learning activities and materials are concrete and relevant to the lives of school-age children. Staff will increase the difficulty and complexity of an activity as children develop increased understanding of the activity. The daily schedule allows segments of time for indoor and outdoor self-selected activities and smaller segments of time for group activities, snacks, homework assistance, and routines. Program staff provide a balance of rest and active movement for children throughout the program day.

The environment is arranged in interest centers consisting of Science, Technology Engineering, Art, and Math in addition to outdoor education and social/emotional learning activities. During indoor center time, children select activities that interest them. Program staff observe the children and interact with them to support, extend and clarify learning. In addition, guest speakers and field trips are built into the curriculum as appropriate. Outdoor activities are coordinated as weather permits.

Program staff often plan the day and week around a topic or issue. Outdoor experiences and service learning opportunities are provided for children of all ages. Concepts related to the topic are presented through activities in the interest centers. Emphasis is not placed on children acquiring facts or information about the topic; rather, the intent is to help children use the basic processes necessary for learning. These processes include observation, asking questions, perceiving common relationships among objects, problem solving, and understanding cause and effect. Children now, and in the future, will use these processes as they learn about their world.

Quality

Camp Fire uses a nationally recognized tool program assessment called the Program Quality Assessment designed for youth programs by the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (www.cypq.org). Your child's program will receive visits from these well-vetted Camp Fire staff who may also offer professional development and coaching out in the field to support staff in quality program implementation.

Code of Conduct

Children are expected to adhere to all school and district policies. Camp Fire First Texas will adhere to the policies of the school and district as well. The Code of Conduct is to ensure that each child's behavior is consistent with school rules.

Guidance & Discipline Practice Policy

Our goal for children is to help each child develop the internal control needed to manage himself / herself. Therefore, we use the following positive guidance techniques:

- Modeling appropriate behaviors
- Setting clear and reasonable limits that protect the child's safety and welfare, the rights of others and the environment
- Acknowledging appropriate behavior
- Encouraging verbalization and problem solving by providing positive suggestions, choices and/or redirection

When a discipline problem occurs and persists, the following actions may be taken:

- The Site Director will complete an Incident Report Form and discuss with the parent and the child
- Parents will be called for a conference.
- Parents may be requested to pick up their child for the day
- A behavior agreement may be completed outlining the unacceptable behavior and consequences
- The child may be suspended or released from the program at the discretion of the Vice President of Youth Development

If a child is suspended from school, he/she may not attend Camp Fire First Texas After School/Summer Programs during the suspension period.

Corporal Punishment

Camp Fire First Texas has a strict policy against corporal punishment: *“Under no circumstances will corporal punishment be allowed within programs operated by Camp Fire First Texas.”* And, *“The Site Director of any Camp Fire program shall not use, nor permit any person to use corporal or other cruel, harsh or unusual punishment, or any humiliating or frightening method to control the actions of any child or group of children. No child of any age shall be shaken, hit or spanked.”*

Grievance Procedure

Camp Fire recognizes that disputes may arise regarding the After School and Summer Programs. If you have a complaint, please follow these steps until the problem is resolved:

1. Verbal discussion with Site Director
2. Verbal or written grievance to Director, After School Programs
3. Verbal or written grievance to Vice President of Youth Development
4. Verbal or written grievance to Chief Program Officer
5. Verbal or written grievance to President/CEO of Camp Fire First Texas
6. Written grievance to Camp Fire First Texas Board of Directors.

Outdoor Play

Health experts agree that cool or damp weather is rarely harmful to children and going outdoors for fresh air is essential. If the temperature dips to 40 degrees or below during the fall and winter months, the children will likely be kept indoors. We do take into consideration the “wind chill factor” and will encourage your child/ren to button coats and wear hats/gloves if they are provided. Often times we bundle up and take a brief walk outdoors and then return to indoor activities. During the summer months when the temperatures are high, we take precaution on ozone alert days. If an ozone alert is announced, outdoor activities will not be permitted.

Camp Fire First Texas often operates a program at a public school that is regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Child Care Licensing. Our program is regularly inspected and is required to meet the standards required by TDFPS, Child Care Licensing. However, when located in a public school the playground equipment may not meet the minimum safety requirements for active play equipment as stated in the Minimum Standards for School-Age and Before or After-School Programs. The safety of your child is our number one priority and we have plans in place to protect all the children in our care, including daily playground inspection and training staff to ensure proper supervision.

Field Trips

Field trips are considered an important part of our program during breaks and holidays. Camp Fire First Texas will ensure the safety of all children on field trips or excursions off-site. Anytime children are taken from the facility where care is provided, Camp Fire will adhere to the licensing standards for compliance.

Minimum Standards 746.3001:

Notification of the field trip will be posted 48-hours in advance of a field trip indicating:

- Name of location
- Scheduled time to leave and return

Minimum Standards 746.3003:

Child/Caregiver ratios will be in compliance to minimum standards. Your written permission for your child to participate in such activities is part of this agreement. As a safety precaution, no child will be released during a field trip away from the on-site care program.

Transportation

Camp Fire First Texas may provide transportation for your child at select schools/programs during the school year. Camp Fire will provide transportation services when needed for field trips or other off-site activities during summer or other school break programs using Camp Fire vehicles or school buses from a local school district.

Swimming

During the summer, swimming may be offered at times during field trips. The following safety precautions will be followed at the pool:

- A minimum of two life-saving devices must be available
- Drain grates must be in place, in good repair and must not be able to be removed without using tools
- Pool chemicals and pumps must be inaccessible to any child
- Employees must be able to clearly see all parts of the swimming area
- The bottom of the pool must be visible at all times
- An adult must be present who is able to immediately turn off the pump and filtering system when any child is in the pool, and
- All indoor/outdoor areas must be free of furniture and equipment that any child could use to scale a fence or barrier or release a lock.

Personal Belongings

Children participate in active play and should dress accordingly. All items (clothing, school supplies, etc.) should be marked with the child's first and last name. Camp Fire First Texas is not responsible for personal belongings or clothing that becomes lost or damaged. Toys/ electronics (phones, iPads, tablets, computers, gaming systems, etc.) or other materials are **NOT ALLOWED** from home unless it is a donation to the program.

Minimum Standards

The Minimum Standards required by Texas Licensing may be found at the Parent table.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services require that Camp Fire First Texas staff report suspected cases of child abuse. This includes the reporting of parents whose abilities appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol. The child abuse hotline is **1.800.252.5400** or the local Licensing office may be reached at 817-321-8604. Department of Family and Protective Services website: www.dfps.state.tx.us

Emergency Preparedness Plan

In the event of an emergency, the first responsibility of staff is to move the children to a designated safe area or shelter known to all employees, caregivers, and volunteers. Children will be re-located by walking or by bus through the school district. Children in attendance will be accounted for at the designated safe area: The site

director will take the attendance sheets accounting for each child in attendance at the program, and each program specialist will take the child-count notebook listing the current specific children in their supervision on the evacuation. Attendance will be taken three times 1) when exiting the building 2) once when they are off the school property or on the bus and 3) once having arrived at the evacuation location using the sign in/out sheets as the primary and the child-count notebooks as the secondary current child/count document. The site director or designated person in charge will take the children's binder which includes parent emergency contact number for each child, authorization for emergency care for each child and the sign in/out sheets for child tracking information for children in care.

Communication Plan

Local authorities: 911

Camp Fire emergency phone number: 817.831.2111

Parents: See children's notebook with family emergency numbers

School principal is notified.

TDFPS: Local Licensing Office/Child Care Licensing, 1501 Circle Drive, Suite 310, Fort Worth, TX 76119, 817.321.8604

Closings and Holidays

Inclement Weather Closing

Camp Fire After School programs follow the school district's inclement weather policy. In the event that inclement weather occurs, listen to local radio and television stations for delays or closings. If schools are closed due to inclement weather or other circumstances, Camp Fire will also be closed. Parents may be called to pick up their child early if inclement weather occurs during the program's hours of operation. If the school closes early, the Camp Fire program will also be closed. As these closings are beyond our control, there will be no refunds or adjustments.

Early Dismissal

When school is dismissed early for holidays or other events, the program hours will be adjusted and an additional fee is added for Extended Care. Details will be provided on the parent board or by email notices.

Holidays

Camp Fire After School programs will be closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

If Christmas, Christmas Eve, New Year's Day, New Year's Eve or Independence Day falls on a Saturday, we will be closed on the previous Friday. If any of these holidays falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on the

following Monday. Please note that if holiday care is provided at a school, this schedule is subject to change based on the school schedule.

Camp Fire First Texas After School programs will not be in operation one (1) day during the Fall each year due to a Staff Development day. This date varies year-to-year therefore a written notice will be distributed to all families at least two weeks in advance of the date.

School Breaks & In-Service Days

Programming may be offered during school staff development days (in-service days) and school breaks (i.e. Winter Break & Spring Break) with approval from the district (where applicable). Camp Fire First Texas reserves the right to offer care during these times based on the needs of the families we serve. A minimum number of children is required to offer programming. Parents will be given the opportunity to sign up in advance to determine program viability.

Financial Terms and Conditions

Camp Fire First Texas fee structure will be announced at the start of each school year and summer. **Fees are evaluated yearly and parents will be given at least a two-week written notice of any changes.** If you have signed up for care and decide not to attend, you must still pay for the week and/or day(s) registered.

Camp Fire First Texas After School and Summer Programs operate on a weekly fee basis. Fees are based on enrollment status - full-time, part-time or drop-in. Full-time status is given to those children who attend the program Monday – Friday. Part-time status is given to those children who attend the program three days or less each week. Drop-in status occurs on an as needed basis if space and staff is available.

Parents who have child/ren enrolled in the program on a full-time or part-time basis will pay the same amount each week regardless of the number of days their child attends. No refunds or credits are given for days missed. If you schedule for drop-in care and do not use care that is scheduled for your child/ren, fees will be applicable with no refunds or credits for not attending.

Enrollment Status Options

Full Time =
Monday–Friday

Part Time =
3 Days or Less

Drop In

Payment Policies and Procedures

- All weekly fees (full-time and part-time) are due on Monday or the first day of attendance for that week before the close of business (6:00 p.m.).
- Drop-In fees are due the same day of care or you may choose to pay for your days in advance.
- All *late payments* will be assessed a \$10 late fee. No exceptions.
- A \$30 insufficient funds return fee will be charged for each insufficient funds return.

Payment Options

Camp Fire First Texas will accept the following types of payment:

- Our method of payment is through the convenience of the Tuition Express program which has payments deducted from your checking account or from your credit or debit card. It is a safe and convenient option for parents.
- **NO CASH** will be collected on-site.
- Late fees, unpaid balances, and insufficient funds fees will be automatically deducted.

Late Pick-Up

Children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. depending on program closing time. After a grace period of 5 minutes, a required late fee of \$1.00 per minute for additional minutes thereafter will be charged if you are late. The fee will be withdrawn from account with notification. **Failure to pay late fees may result in termination of enrollment.**

If a child is still at the program thirty (30) minutes after closing, and our staff has not been contacted by a parent/guardian, we may call Child Protective Services to take custody of the child until the parent is located.

Financial Assistance

We do not want our program to present a hardship or barrier to anyone in need of our services. Families that are eligible for assistance from CCMS (Child Care Management Services) will be considered for financial assistance based on income eligibility and on family size. Please contact the local CCMS provider for further information.

Suspension of Services for Nonpayment

Tuition fees are due at the beginning of each week. If an account becomes delinquent, Camp Fire First Texas Council will determine when the suspension of services is necessary and will contact the parent/guardian on or before the day services are interrupted; the site director operating the program will also be notified. **Any past due amounts will be pursued up to and including small claims court including the cost of filing fees.**

Child Care Discounts

ISD Discount

Camp Fire First Texas provides a 10% school district discount to employees of most schools that partner with us to provide child care programs. Guidelines for these discounts are:

- Parents must show proof of ISD employment at the time of enrollment
- Pay full supply fee at time of enrollment
- Discounts apply to regular weekly rates
- **Part-time and daily drop-in programs do not qualify**

The ISD discount will not be in effect until all necessary paperwork is received at the main office. The parent/guardian is responsible for the full fee until approved.

Sibling Discount

Camp Fire offers a sibling discount. A family with multiple siblings will pay the full price of tuition for the first child. A 10% discount is offered to the second and third children.

Some families may be eligible for various types of discounts. Only one type of discount can be applied to an account.

Health

Camp Fire First Texas is not licensed to provide care for children who are ill; therefore, we will not accept a child who has a fever of 100 degrees or more. If your child exhibits diarrhea, vomiting or fever within the last 24 hours, or exhibits an undiagnosed rash, abnormal breathing, drainage from eyes, or a thick green discharge from the nose, we ask that you keep your child at home. If your child begins to exhibit any of these symptoms while attending the program, you will be called to arrange pick up immediately. For the safety of the other children, please pick up your child within one hour of our phone call.

Please contact the program immediately if your child has a communicable disease. When a communicable disease is reported, a note will be posted to inform other parents of possible exposure. If a child has head lice, the hair must be properly treated and all nits removed before the child can return to the program.

Your child's immunizations must be up to date at all times unless noted by a physician. The elementary school keeps your child's records on file; therefore, all updates need to be addressed with the school administrators. For summer programs you must submit a copy of a current shot record to the Site Director.

Medication

All medications to be administered by Camp Fire staff will need to be in its original container. All prescription medications must have its RX label indicating the child's name, the medication, the dosage, and the physician's name and number. No medications will be administered unless an **Authorization for Dispensing Medication Form** is completed and signed by the parent. Camp Fire staff will NOT administer over-the-counter medication.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

It is important to protect your child against extended sun exposure without protection as well as protect them from insects. We ask that families send their child to school each day with an initial application of both sunscreen and insect repellent for our morning outside time. We will apply a second time before the children go outside in the afternoon. Families will need to supply all sunscreen and insect repellent for their child. Please note that the center has several children enrolled who have asthma therefore we do not allow aerosol spray cans. We will require an annually updated sunscreen and insect repellent waiver for each child enrolled in the center.

Medical Emergency

In case of a medical emergency, Camp Fire staff will call 911 and contact the parent. First Aid treatment and CPR will be administered if needed. If the child is transported to the hospital, staff will take the child's emergency medical release form and accompany the child to the hospital. Staff will stay at the hospital until the parent/guardian arrives.

Illness Chart

ILLNESS

Chicken Pox

Conjunctivitis

Croup

Diarrhea-Gastro Enteritis

Rubella

Hepatitis A

Impetigo

Fever

Influenza

Measles

Head Lice

Roseola

Scabies

Strep Throat

Poison Ivy

Pneumonia or Epiglottitis

Bacterial (Spinal) Meningitis

Mumps

RETURN REQUIREMENTS

6 days after appearance of 1st lesion

24 hrs after start of treatment

After illness has subsided

24 hrs after last loose stool or 1 normal bowel

8 days after onset of rash

At least 7 days after onset of jaundice

24 hrs after treatment has started

24 hrs after temperature is normal

24 hrs after temperature is normal

6 days after onset of rash

24 hrs after treatment is completed and all nits removed

After illness has subsided

After eggs and mites are destroyed

24 hrs after start of antibiotic therapy

After lesions cease to ooze

Written note from physician

When Health Department gives OK

10 days after onset of symptoms

IN ALL CASES, FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL CHILDREN AND STAFF, CAMP FIRE FIRST TEXAS RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SEND A CHILD HOME WITH SUSPICIOUS OR PROLONGED SYMPTOMS.

Staff

Camp Fire First Texas staff receive professional development in core areas of youth development, STEM, character development and Thriveology that exceeds state requirements for training. Camp Fire First Texas assumes no responsibility for staff's conduct or behavior outside of After School/Summer programs. Staff members are not allowed to provide private child care after-hours due to liability reasons. Staff meet local health department and school district requirements for vaccine-preventable diseases.

Refusal of Service

Camp Fire First Texas reserves the right to refuse service for the following reasons:

- Failure to adhere to the school policies, procedures and rules (parent or child).
- Failure to pick up your child by closing time.
- Failure to sign your child in and/or out on the sign-in/out sheets.
- Parent or child's behavior is disruptive to program, including the use of physical or verbal abuse toward staff or children.
- Failure to pay fees as scheduled.
- The Director of After School Programs or Vice President of Youth Development believes that continued services are not in the best interest of the child and/or organization.

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