

C: 23 CHILDREN/YOUTH/PARENT CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

POLICY:

Family Services Perth-Huron recognizes the child's and parents' right to be heard and provides the children/youth and their families an opportunity to express feedback or concerns to improve the structure and quality of the program.

PROCEDURE:

1. Children/youth are encouraged to voice their concerns regarding the care they are receiving, and possible improvements in the program. Children/youth or parents/guardians may at any time speak privately with any Respite Worker or Respite Coordinator regarding their concerns. The Respite Worker or Respite Coordinator will support the child/youth or parent/guardian to find a solution.
2. Parents/guardians are given an evaluation form following the child's discharge and are encouraged to return it with their complaints, suggestions or compliments. Parents are also encouraged to telephone the Respite Care Coordinator at any time with their concerns.
3. The Parents' Advisory Committee (to be developed) is composed of staff, a Rotary member, relevant related agencies and parents that meet regularly to provide a forum for discussion of the concerns of children/youth, families, and respite care.
4. If children/youth or parents/guardians wish to make a verbal complaint, the Respite Worker or Respite Coordinator will document the complaint using the Rotary Respite House Complaint Report. If the children/youth or parents/guardians prefer to submit their complaint in writing, the Client Complaint Form will be completed and attached to the completed Rotary Respite House Complaint Report and placed in the client file. The normal line of complaint is: 1) the child's Respite Worker 2) the Team Leader 3) the Respite Care Coordinator 4) the Family Support Supervisor 5) the Executive Director and 6) the Board of Directors.
5. Within 24 hours of receiving a verbal or written complaint, the Respite Coordinator or their designate will determine the following:
 - a. Whether immediate actions can be taken to respond to the complaint.
 - b. What, if any, supports the child/youth or the parents/guardians may require in order to participate in the complaints review process.

6. When making a verbal or written complaint, the child/youth or parent/guardian will have the option to speak to a Respite Worker or Respite Coordinator who is not directly involved in the complaint.
7. During the complaint review process, the Respite Coordinator will provide an update to children/youth or parents/guardians who have made a verbal or written complaint if requested by the children/youth or parents/guardians and/or no later than 15 days after the complaint was received, and subsequently at intervals of no more than 15 days.
8. The Respite Coordinator will make reasonable efforts to ensure that any child/youth or parent/guardian who is informed of the results of the complaints review understands those results.
9. Bi-annually, children/youth and/or parents/guardians will review the written complaint procedure in language suitable to the understanding of children/youth and parents/guardians.
10. If it is determined during the complaints review that there has been a violation of the rights of a child/youth, the Respite Coordinator or their designate, in collaboration with the Family Support Supervisor and/or Executive Director, will determine whether there are any measures that could be implemented to prevent the same violation from recurring and implement any such measures.
11. If while at the Rotary Respite House a child indicates physical or sexual abuse or neglect has taken place, it is the responsibility of the Respite Worker to contact the Children's Aid Society immediately. It is not the responsibility of the Respite Worker to offer proof, as the C.A.S. has the legal responsibility to verify the reported information and take appropriate action. (See **C:13 Suspected Child Abuse**)
12. If a report of neglect or abuse by a Respite Worker of the Rotary Respite House is made to C.A.S., that Respite Worker shall be suspended until the matter has been resolved. (See **Policy C:14 Suspected Child Abuse by Respite Workers**)
13. If the matter is considered to be of a serious nature, the Serious Occurrence Reporting Policy and Procedures applies. (See Policy **C: 21 Serious Occurrence Reporting**)