



Host Homes Standards

Adapted from the Indiana Department of Child Services Host Homes Family Standards (2010), the Illinois Standards for Host home Homes (2007), and the Health and Human Services Home Study Requirements (2010)

IYSA Host Homes Project

Through a federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Basic Center grant, Indiana Youth Services Association provides a host homes program in six rural counties in Indiana by subcontracting with Youth Services Bureau of Huntington County in Huntington, IN and Youth Connections in Franklin, IN. IYSA hopes to expand host home services to Indiana youth through the expansion of the Safe Place program hosted by accredited Youth Service Bureaus across the state.

Host homes provide an emergency residential service to youth who are runaway, homeless or who do not otherwise have a safe place to stay for the night. Host home providers are trained volunteers who have opened their homes to provide safety and shelter to youth in need. Case management and access and referral to other required services are provided by the YSB or partner agencies providing the host home program. Generally, host home placements are short-term and intensive family case management and interventions are provided to return the young person safely home or otherwise secure safe and stable long-term housing for the youth.

In an effort to standardized host home care in Indiana and ensure the safety and highest quality of care to young people, IYSA has developed this guide for any accredited YSB host homes program. Following the national standard of adopting Host home care requirements as host home requirements, this document has been developed to include requirements from the state of Indiana Host home Home requirements, standards listed in the Health and Human Services Home Study Requirements for Prospective Host home Providers and the state of Illinois Licensing Standards for Host home Homes. Additional standards for incorporating evidence-based practices have been included.

IYSA Program Philosophy

Youth Service Bureaus implement prevention and intervention programs proven by experience, evaluation, and research to be successful and cost effective. They apply their knowledge, talent, and energy to developing programs which will continue to improve the ways we, as caring communities, guide and direct our children.

To these ends all Youth Service Bureaus and our statewide association are committed to:

1. Preventing juvenile delinquency by ensuring that every community in Indiana has effective and adequate programs and systems in these areas
2. Improving the quality and capacity of programs for delinquency prevention, program development, effective and appropriate information and education resources
3. Strengthening effective advocacy by educating community leaders, policy-makers, educators, juvenile justice professionals, and caring communities on the issues, benefits, dangers, and best practices.
4. Increasing investment of individuals and organizations in the people and programs that tie delinquency prevention, effective action and strong advocacy together for stronger, safer, better communities.

All YSB staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to the quality of service provision and standards listed in this document. IYSA is committed to providing the support and training necessary to maintain the highest quality of service to the youth of Indiana.

IYSA Host Home Provider Basic Requirements:

- Must be at least 21 years of age
- Passing a criminal history and background check that includes a fingerprint-based national history, state and local criminal history check, sex offender registry check and child abuse and neglect check for all members living in the home over the age of 18 following the renewal timeline for checks set by the YSB Fund state statutes.
- Demonstrating financial stability
- Own or renting your own home that meets physical safety standards (e.g., fire extinguishers, adequate bedroom space, reliable transportation)
- Signed current statements from the provider attesting lack of any communicable diseases or other health risks of any household member at the time of placement
- Successful completion of pre-service training requirements
- Successful completion of First Aid, CPR, and Universal Precautions training
- Positive personal reference statements
- Successful home visits from the Host home agency and successful monitoring visits
- Possession of a valid driver's license, reliable transportation, and sufficient vehicle insurance
- Completion of the following forms:
 - [Host Homes Application form](#)
 - Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status
 - Acknowledgement of Compliance of Host Homes Standards Agreement
 - Well Water Agreement (if applicable)
 - Water Temperature Agreement
 - Firearms, Drugs and Alcohol Agreement (if applicable)
 - Corporal Punishment Agreement
 - Child Supervision Plan Agreement
 - Safety Plan for Pools, Hot Tubs, Ponds, and Other Potential Water Hazards (if applicable)
 - Emergency Evacuation Plan
 - Confidentiality Form
 - Acknowledgement of Grievance Policy and Procedures

General Minimum Requirements for Host Home Providers:

- (a) Host Homes providers shall be mature individuals who are capable of exercising and do exercise good judgment in the handling of a child.
- (b) The health of all members of the Host Homes family or other individuals living in the home shall be such that it will not be detrimental to the health and welfare of the Host Homes children.
- (c) There shall be sufficient income and resources in the home to insure a reasonable living standard within the boarding home and proper care for the children.
- (d) No adult boarder or roomer shall be permitted to live in the boarding home for full-time care except with the consent of the State Department of Public Welfare and/or Host home agency.
- (e) The provider shall report to the county department of public welfare or child-Host home agency or any other designated representative of the State Department of Public Welfare any change in the home conditions affecting the welfare of the children, such as the number of persons living in the home, change in residence or in the use of rooms, reduction of income, or employment of Host Homes providers.
- (f) Each Host Homes provider shall keep a record of the names of children admitted, the time of admission, the time of release, and any other specific information required by the agency authorized by law to supervise the home.
- (g) The Host Home provider must submit written notification in the event of a name change (with supporting legal documentation) within 10 working days.
- (h) When a Host Home provider plans to move to a new address, notification must be submitted by the provider and submitted to the supervising agency at least 10 working days prior to the change of

address. The licensing/Host home agency representative shall visit the home at its new address within 10 working days following the date of the host home's move to determine compliance with the standards related to the physical environment of the home, including presence of operable smoke detectors and appropriate sleeping arrangements, and verify that there is no change in the family's composition.

- (i) Members of the Host Home who will be transporting children will provide proof of a valid Indiana driver's license and proof of automobile insurance liability.

Housing Minimum Requirements:

- (a) The boarding home for full-time care of children shall not be located where unusual conditions exist that would be hazardous to the physical or moral welfare of the child.
- (b) The home shall be heated to provide for comfort, and the heat of all rooms used for infants shall provide at all times a temperature of at least seventy degrees Fahrenheit.
The applicant/licensee who uses wood burning stoves/ fireplaces as the primary source of heat shall explain the methods by which the heat is dispersed throughout the home and how the safety of the home is maintained and protected from fire. The wood-burning stove/fireplace shall be protected from contact by family members in the home with a fireproof barrier around the wood burner/fireplace.
- (c) The home shall be kept free from all unnecessary fire hazards.
- (d) When natural light is insufficient, it shall be supplemented by artificial light properly diffused and distributed so that adequate light will be available at all times.
- (e) Facilities for proper bathing shall be provided.
- (f) The room used for eating shall be sufficiently large to enable the Host Homes children and Host Homes family to eat together as a normal family group.
- (g) Sleeping rooms shall have adequate ventilation for health, safety and welfare of the child. Each child shall have an individual bed equipped with springs, mattress and suitable bed clothing in good repair and free from spillage, tears, sags or insect infestation in a room used exclusively as a sleeping room; provided.
- (h) There shall be closet and drawer space provided for each child's possessions.
- (i) Proper facilities and opportunity shall be provided for school children to study.
- (j) Recreational facilities shall be made available for indoor and outdoor play or shall have adequate recreational equipment suitable for children who will be using the home.
- (k) The rooms of the intermediate boarding home for care of children shall be so arranged that, if necessary, children may be isolated.
- (l) There must be a sufficient number of bedrooms so that (unrelated) children of the opposite sex have their own bedroom.
- (m) Host homes shall conform to all rules and regulations of the local police, fire and safety authorities.
- (n) The host home youth must have access to a functioning phone at all times. The provider must provide plan to maintain charged batteries or electrical devices to assure accessibility of the phone at all times.
- (o) Sleeping room must have at least one exit leading directly to the outside with means to reach the ground level without traversing another room in the home, e.g. a window with a fire escape ladder.
If the second exit is an easily accessible outside window, it must have:
 - an unobstructed opening;
 - a means of opening it from the inside without special tools; and
 - an opening large enough to accommodate an adult.

Sanitation- Minimum Requirements:

- (a) The host home for full-time care of children shall conform to the sanitary laws and ordinances of the State and the city or town in which it is located. It shall be kept clean and in a fit sanitary condition as evidenced by the following:
 - Windows and doors shall be screened as required by the climatic conditions.
 - The kitchen is clean, equipped for the preservation, storage, preparation, and serving of food, and reasonably safe from hazards.
 - The garbage and refuse containers used to discard diapering supplies and food products are clean.
 - Safe insect and rodent control is practiced when necessary.
 - Outside play areas well drained and free of animal feces, inoperable motor vehicles, chipped

paint, broken glass, garbage, and inoperable/junked appliances.

- (b) The milk supply, the water supply and the sewage disposal shall conform to the standards set by the State Board of Health under its rules and regulations and all laws pertaining thereto.
If a private water supply is used instead of an approved public water supply, the applicant shall supply written records of current test results indicating the water supply is safe for drinking at initial licensing.

Health and Safety Minimum Requirements:

- (a) A child suffering from a communicable or a contagious disease shall not be admitted to a home where there are other children unless plans are based on competent medical advice.
- (b) If a person in the home should contract a communicable disease, the Host Homes child shall not be permitted to remain there unless suitable health precautions are taken for protection of the child.
- (c) The Host Homes providers shall cooperate with the providers or person in loco parentis in providing proper medical treatment for the Host Homes child.
- (d) Host homes for full-time care of children shall conform to all rules and regulations of the local health authorities and the State Board of Health as to diet, medical care and sanitation and to all laws pertaining thereto.
- (e) The home must be kept clean and in good repair.
Cleanliness shall be defined as conditions of the home that provide a sanitary and healthy environment that benefits the growth and well being of individuals living in the home. The licensing representative must assess the surroundings and determine the difference between conditions that are created through every day living and filth that has been accumulated over an extended period where no efforts have been made to correct the level of cleanliness.
Unacceptable conditions are those that pose a threat to the health of a child including, but not limited to:
- spoiled food
 - spoiled garbage
 - animal or human feces
 - extensive insect or rodent contamination
 - unsanitary toileting conditions
 - unsanitary eating conditions
- A well-ventilated Host home family home is one with adequate windows or cooling/heating systems or both that provide movement of air throughout the home and bring fresh outside air into the home.
- (f) Working smoke detectors be installed near sleeping areas and working portable fire extinguishers are available on each floor of the home.
- (g) Swimming pools, wading pools, hot tubs, ponds, fountains, or any other possible water hazard, are appropriately maintained and supervised.
- (h) Host Home providers that accept children under age 10 or children who are developmentally disabled are required to regulate the maximum hot water temperature to 115° Fahrenheit.
- (i) Portable space heaters are not used in rooms where children (Host home children and non-Host home children alike) are sleeping and, if used in other areas occupied by children, are separated by fire resistant partitions or dividers to prevent contact by the children.
- (j) The home must be free from hazardous conditions. Hazardous materials, including medications, household chemicals, tools, and weapons and ammunition, must be stored in a place that is inaccessible to children.
The representative of the Host home agency shall verify that prescription and non-prescription drugs, including needles, are stored in a place that is not readily assessable, when not being dispensed or immediately assessable due to medical necessity. This may be a container, cabinet, section of a room, or entire room, which is locked or otherwise inaccessible to children.
The representative of the Host home agency shall advise providers to take precautions with used needles or any medical waste to ensure that children do not have access to these materials during disposal. An asthma inhaler is one example of medication that must be immediately accessible due to medical necessity.
- (k) Guns, rifles, and ammunition shall be stored in a locked place, inaccessible to children. This may be a container, cabinet, section of a room, or entire room, which is locked and inaccessible to children.
Ammunition and firearms shall be stored separately.

- (l) Household Pets - Host home agency staff shall assess any safety issues associated with household pets. If questions arise from the types or conditions of animals in the home, consultation with supervisor and professionals such as veterinarians shall occur prior to approval of licensure. If issues pose a concern for the safety of children, such as the presence of allergens that affect the child, another placement should be sought.
The representative of the Host home agency shall review certificates of inoculation for household pets that are required by Illinois law to have inoculations.
- (m) Emergency Evacuation Plan - The representative of the Host home agency shall review the fire and emergency (including tornado protection plans) evacuation plan for the home upon placement of a youth.
Exit doors shall be kept clear of equipment and debris at all times.

Food Minimum Requirements:

- (a) Host Homes providers shall show a reasonable knowledge of the principles governing the feeding of children.
- (b) Food supplied to children shall be of good quality, properly prepared, and sufficient in quantity to meet their individual needs, to include specific dietary care for medical needs (i.e. lactose intolerance, gluten-free diets, etc.).
- (c) Three Balanced Meals - The representative of the Host home agency shall verify types of meals served through discussion with the children and applicants/licensees and, if necessary, through observation of meals.
- (d) The representative of the Host home agency shall verify that there is no force feeding of the children through discussion with the children and the applicants/licensees and if necessary from observation of meals. Food cannot be deny a youth as a form of discipline.

Personal Care of the Child Minimum Requirements:

- (a) Each child shall receive the same treatment as members of the Host Homes family. Each child shall be treated as the Host Homes providers' child insofar as participation in normal family life is concerned. No child shall be subjected to cruelty, neglect or exploitation.
- (b) In the absence of the Host Homes providers, reliable supervision shall be provided by the Host Homes providers for any child living in the home. The provider shall leave an emergency telephone number where he/she may be reached and the number of the Host home agency in case of emergencies.
- (c) Host Homes providers shall cooperate with the legal guardian in providing education for each child in accordance with the ability of each child.
- (d) The religion of each child shall be given preference in planning for his attendance at the appropriate religious/spiritual institution.
- (e) Each child shall be provided for care that fits their appropriate developmental levels and follow the minimum guidelines for trauma-informed care and positive youth development.
- (f) Child's Right to Privacy - The representative of the Host home agency shall review this requirement with providers to ascertain whether the provider(s) understand(s) that "children's right to privacy" means that children's sleeping hours, toileting and dressing time may not be disturbed or abruptly interrupted by anyone (provider or others), without a good reason such as assisting children with bathing, toileting or dressing as needed.
- (g) In the event that the Host Home provider must be away for home for an extended period of time (72 hours or more) the provider will notify the Host home agency of their unavailability during this time. If a youth is placed in the home and the provider must be away for more than 24 hours, the provider will notify the Host home agency and an alternative placement will be found for the child.
- (h) The representative of the Host home agency shall assure that the child's personal belongings acquired by or given to the child during placement such as; clothing, books and school items, medications, Medicaid Card, toys, gifts, private collections, photographs, child's private savings, allowances and other personal items, follow the child's placement and are returned to the child when the child changes placement or leaves care. Host Home providers are required to send all of the child's belongings with the child to the next placement.
- (i) Host Home youth will not be asked to complete any hazardous task/household duties. A hazardous task is any task or act that has a strong potential to produce physical or emotional harm to the child.
- (j) Host Home providers will contact the Host home agency immediately when an emergency occurs

involving the provider or the youth placed in the home. The representative of the Host home agency will ensure the provider/s have all emergency contact information for the Host home agency/staff.

- (k) Prescription drugs and/or medicines are given to the Host Home child(ren) only according to a physician's prescription or authorization and in compliance with medical directions.
- (l) Discipline - A goal of Host Home care is to give children a safe, nurturing environment where they can experience physical and emotional growth, and feeling of security and positive self-esteem. **Physical punishment is an unacceptable tool for providing these conditions.**

Corporal punishment, which means any type of physical punishment, discipline, or retaliation inflicted upon any part of the body of the child, is clearly prohibited. This includes slapping, hitting, punching, spanking, shoving, pinching, or any type of action geared toward inflicting pain or body discomfort upon a child. Corporal punishment also includes smacking a child's hands, shaking a child, or placing a noxious substance, including but not limited to Tabasco sauce, soap, or pepper, in a child's mouth. Corporal punishment may involve the use of an instrument such as a paddle, belt, or switch or using one's hands. Any form of public or private humiliation, including, but not limited to, verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about a child or a child's family is also prohibited.

The withholding of food, clothing or sleep is not an acceptable form of discipline under any circumstances.

Restraints should only be used to prevent a child from hurting themselves or others. Objects cannot be used to restrain a child. Training in restraint techniques is available and should be utilized by a provider if restraint is necessary for the control of children in care.

Any use of restraints should be reported as an Incident Report.

Host Homes Parent Training Minimum Requirements:

- (a) Each Host Homes parent applicant shall successfully complete as a part of the family preparation process, a pre-service training course prior to being initially selected as a Host Home.
- (b) Each Host Homes provider applicant shall submit evidence of the successful completion of a current course in first aid prior to placement and retake the first aid course every three (3) years. An updated first aid manual shall be available in the Host Homes.
- (c) Applicable agency policies and procedures
- (d) Each Host Homes provider shall be required to successfully complete in-service training as specified by the Federal Youth Services Bureau prior to being relicensed as a Host Homes home to include:
- Roles and responsibilities of Host Homes providers
 - Child development
 - Behavior management and appropriate methods of discipline
 - Cultural sensitivity
 - Attachment separation and loss issues
 - Home and child safety
 - Trauma-informed care
 - Positive youth development
 - Suicide prevention
 - Universal Precautions
- (e) Prior Host Homes care training or education in child care or child development may be substituted for a part of the training requirements in this section.

Ground for Withholding Approval:

- The applicant does not meet the required regulations for training, experience, or financial obligation of the program.
- The applicant or any family member is found to be of unsuitable character to provide safe and appropriate care.
- The applicant's home is found to be unsafe or inadequate to provide for the needs of Host Homes children.
- The applicant suffers from a physical or mental health condition that would interfere with providing

appropriate care for Host Homes children.

- The applicant is found to have provided false or misleading information to the agency.
- The applicant or any member of the household has a record of a criminal conviction of a nature that could put Host Homes children at risk of harm or any of the following:
 - A felony or a misdemeanor related to the health and safety of a child such as:
 - Murder, voluntary manslaughter, or reckless homicide
 - Battery, domestic battery, or aggravated battery
 - Kidnapping
 - A felony sex offense or incest
 - Arson
 - Neglect of a dependent
 - A felony involving a weapon
 - A felony relating to controlled substances
 - An offense relating to material or a performance that is harmful to minors or obscene
 - A misdemeanor for operating a child care center or Host Homes family home without a license
- The applicant or any member of the household has a record of substantiated child abuse or neglect by any person residing in the home who is age 18 or older.

Host Home - Home Physical Environment Checklist

Date: ___/___/___

Address: _____

Name: _____

		YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Interior is clean and free from dangerous or hazardous conditions (exposed wiring, chipped paint, etc.)			
2	Exterior premises are clean and free from dangerous or hazardous conditions			
3	Host family has access to a working telephone			
4	Living areas are safe, comfortable and accessible			
5	Bedroom space provides fifty (50) square feet per Host home child			
6	No bedrooms are in a hall, basement or living area			
7	All children have their own beds and adequate storage for personal belongings			
8	Every sleeping room has two (2) exits			
9	Home has a functioning bathroom			
10	Home has working utilities			
11	Household poisons, cleaners, detergents and medications are out of reach of children			
12	Unloaded firearms and ammunition are stored in separate locked places			
13	Received documentation that all household pets have up-to-date rabies vaccinations			
14	Home has one (1) smoke detector that is within ten (10) feet of each bedroom door, with at least one (1) smoke detector in operating condition on each level of the home			
15	Home has a 2 ½ pound ABC fire extinguisher on each floor of the home			
16	Furnace, stoves, heaters, etc. appear to be properly ventilated and operational			
17	The inside and outside of cooking and refrigeration equipment is in clean and sanitary condition			
18	Resource family has access to transportation			
19	Carbon monoxide detector if gas is used for cooking or heating			
20	Copy of driver's license, registrations and automobile insurance if applicable			

21	Appropriate car seats, if applicable			
22	Residential Pool Requirements met/Body of Water Safety Plan completed, if applicable			
23	If applicable, the mobile home is skirted and securely anchored and has two (2) exits at least twenty feet (20') apart, one (1) exit within thirty-five feet (35') of each bedroom			
24.	If applicable, well water analysis completed; or bottled water is used for cooking and drinking.			

Compliance plan comments:

Signature of applicant	Date:
Signature of YSB	Date: