

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency



Administrative Issuance: CFSA-22-1

TO: All CFSA Staff

FROM: Ann Reilly
Deputy Director for Clinical Case Management & Support

DATE: March 10, 2022

RE: The BOND Program

In order to increase quality support and respite services for resource families (traditional and kinship), and to further secure the permanency, well-being, and safety of children, the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) has implemented the Bridge, Organize, Nurture, and Develop (BOND) model for CFSA resource parents. Under this model, a “squad” is formed out of a group of 12–15 resource parents and one BOND lead family. The lead family’s role is to provide peer support to assigned resources families, coordinate special activities, and provide or assist with coordinated respite care.

The primary goals of the BOND program are to:

- Increase the sense of safety and well-being for children in care
- Increase placement stability
- Increase resource parent retention
- Strengthen the resource parent community through peer support

The BOND Program will help CFSA meet the goals through the following activities:

1. Scheduling social and recreational activities for the squad to increase children’s connections with peers and adults
2. Coordinating respite care so that children can stay with a known family within the squad when needed
3. Establishing a network for resource parent peer support among squad members

This administrative issuance outlines the roles and responsibilities of the participants in the BOND program. If you have any questions about this administrative issuance, please contact the BOND program coordinator.

Lead Parent Responsibilities

A lead parent’s primary objective is to provide supportive services and respite to all resource families in the squad. The fulfillment of this objective is essential to the successful development of the squad’s strong micro-community of caregivers focused on the health, safety, growth, and stability of children in foster care.

A lead parent has the following responsibilities as they relate to the BOND program:

1. Provide respite care for resource parents when there is availability.



2. Be available from 7am to 7pm by phone, text, or email to provide peer support, consultation, and crisis management (such as the de-escalation of situations to stabilize the parent and child).
3. Maintain regular contact with the resource parents, including weekly contact via phone, email, or face-to-face contact.
4. Maintain a respite log that documents the date, time, and hours of respite services.
5. Organize, coordinate, and host 6 activities per year for resource parents and foster children to promote fun, networking, information exchange, and mutual support.
6. Provide adequate supervision to promote a safe and healthy environment for foster children in their care for respite.
7. Utilize conflict resolution and crisis management skills to address problems and issues that arise for resource parents and foster children.
8. Contact the BOND program coordinator immediately for any safety concerns or emergency needs or within 24 hours for any important issues that arise within the squad.
9. Maintain all receipts for squad expenses, recording such expenses and submitting the records to the BOND program coordinator.
10. Participate in meetings with the BOND program coordinator.
11. Cooperate with any CFSA evaluation of the BOND Program.
12. Maintain the confidentiality of all information concerning resource parents and foster children.¹
13. Report suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with [District law](#).

Resource Parent Requirements and Responsibilities

Resource parents are dedicated to the safety and well-being of the foster children in their care. Resource parents receive access to respite and supportive services from the lead parent within the squad.

A resource parent has the following responsibilities as they relate to the BOND Program:

1. Work cooperatively with the lead parent and other resource parents in the squad.
2. Maintain regular contact with the lead parent and other resource parents within the squad, including involvement with squad meetings, trainings, and other social activities.
3. Provide adequate supervision to promote a safe and healthy environment for children placed in their home.
4. Encourage children and youth to engage and participate in BOND squad social activities.
5. Complete any training specific to the BOND program.
6. Cooperate with any CFSA evaluation of the BOND program.
7. Report suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with [District law](#).

¹ In the course of performing their duties, the lead parents may receive sensitive information, including Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Protected Health Information (PHI), from a resource parent or other source, regarding a foster child. Lead parents must maintain the confidentiality and privacy of all information received, and may only share confidential information when critical and necessary for serving the child.

The Role of the BOND Program Coordinator

The BOND program coordinator helps BOND families manage resources and information and assists with the scheduling and planning of meetings and program activities.

At a minimum, the BOND program coordinator serves as the resource parent support worker for the lead families and has the following responsibilities:

1. Oversee and manage the squads, problem-solving and supporting the lead families as they fulfill their roles by:
 - a. providing logistical support
 - b. troubleshooting issues
 - c. ensuring strong communication, within and across squads
 - d. coordinating calendars
 - e. maintaining a master calendar
2. Facilitate respite arrangements when cross-squad coverage is necessary
3. Collect and report on program data
4. Maintain a squad-spending tracking document
5. Monitor activity levels by and across BOND families and squads, to assess utilization and whether program expectations are being met
6. Collaborate with the lead parents on program evaluation and program impact on placement stability
7. Conduct formal assessments and provide recommendations on the effectiveness of the program annually

Termination from the BOND Program

A lead or resource parent shall be removed from the BOND Program under the following circumstances:

1. Suspension or revocation of the license in accordance with [29 DCMR § 6031](#).
2. Renewal of the license is denied in accordance with [29 DCMR § 6029](#).
3. The license has expired, including an expiration after one year due to a failure to comply with the requirements of [29 DCMR § 6028.7](#).
4. The lead parent fails to comply with all District and federal laws, and all requirements of the BOND Program.

If, while serving as a lead or resource parent, the individual has a criminal conviction, is identified as a possible maltreater in an open child abuse or neglect case, or is identified as the maltreater in a supported case of child abuse or neglect, the Agency shall determine, in accordance with applicable federal and local laws, whether the lead or resource parent can continue to participate in the BOND program.

Note: The decision to remove a lead or resource parent from the BOND program is final and may not be appealed in an administrative or judicial proceeding. A resource parent may appeal Chapter 60 licensure decisions, but not their removal from the BOND program.

A lead may request to be removed from the BOND program through the following procedures:

1. Providing the BOND program coordinator with a written statement of intent to discontinue participation in the BOND program; the date of discontinuance shall be at least 60 days from the date of the letter of intent unless exigent circumstances require an earlier discontinuance date.
2. Relinquishing all documents concerning the BOND Program to the BOND program coordinator at a minimum within 5 business days of the date of discontinuance, including all past and present BOND program-related documentation related to foster children and resource or lead parents.
3. The BOND program coordinator shall provide a letter to the lead parent, within 30 days of the parent's letter of intent to discontinue, advising them of their discontinuance in the BOND program.

Although participation in the BOND Program is strongly encouraged, a resource parent may decline participating in the program after 3 months of licensure.

1. The resource parent must notify their resource parent support worker and sign the *Notification to Decline Participation in BOND Program form*.
2. The resource parent may return to the BOND Program at any time by notifying their resource parent support worker, who shall notify the BOND program coordinator for reassignment to a BOND squad.