October 1, 2009

To: Regional Managers
    Directors, Local Offices, Department of Child Services

From: James W. Payne, Director
      Angela Green, Deputy Director Practice Support
      Dave Judkins, Deputy Director of Field Operations
      Indiana Department of Child Services

Subject: Smoking in Resource Homes
          DCS-09-20

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is committed to partnering with families and communities to provide safe, nurturing, and stable homes for children under DCS care and supervision. In fulfilling our mission, it is important to ensure that children under DCS care and supervision are not exposed to second-hand smoke.

This administrative letter outlines recent revisions to policy regarding smoking in resource homes. Below is a summary of the changes effective January 1, 2010.

In order to better protect children under DCS care and supervision from the dangers associated with exposure to second-hand smoke, DCS requires resource parents to abstain from exposing children under DCS care and supervision to second hand smoke. Resource parents must not purchase tobacco products for any child in DCS care, as it is illegal for children under 18 to consume or have cigarettes. If a resource parent discovers a child under DCS care and supervision in possession of tobacco products, then he or she should contact the child's Family Case Manager (FCM) as soon as possible.

Resource parents or household members who smoke must do so in an area where children under DCS care and supervision are not exposed to second-hand smoke. If a resource parent or household member must smoke inside his or her home, smoking should be limited to rooms where windows can be opened and/or air purifiers can be used. Smoking should not occur in the immediate living area of the resource parent’s home and again, cannot be done in the presence of
Protecting our children, families and future
children under DCS care and supervision. Smoking is prohibited in the child's sleeping area(s). Resource parents and DCS staff must refrain from smoking in vehicles while transporting children in DCS care and supervision.

Updates will be made to Chapter 8 Out-of-Home Services and Chapter 12 Foster Family Home Licensing to reflect these important changes.

If you have any questions regarding the information presented in this administrative letter, please address them to the DCS policy mailbox at despolicy@dcs.in.gov.

Sincerely,

James W. Payne, Director
Department of Child Services