

HANDOUT #2: ROLE OF PARENTS WHO ARE FOSTERING WHEN PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION HAS BEEN PRESCRIBED

- Give the child medications exactly as prescribed by the doctor. It is very important that the medication be given at the time and amount/dose the doctor prescribed.
- Remain with the child to ensure that the medication has been swallowed.
- Monitor any changes in the child's behaviors to help determine if the medication is having the desired results.
- It can take a while to determine the exact medication and what dose works best. There may even be medication breaks.
- Watch for any possible side effects. You and the child will be the key people to notice and report any side effects. Inform the case manager/social worker and the child's doctor if there are any side effects, major or minor. These may include changes in the child's eating, sleeping, or behavior.

Notify the prescribing doctor and the case manager/social worker if any of the following occur:

- Medication overdose—**Seek emergency medical attention immediately.**
- Hives
- Breathing difficulty
- Seizures
- Change in mental status
- Significant behavior change

Foster parents should NEVER:

- Give the doctor consent to prescribe psychotropic medication to a child in foster care, as consent must be obtained from someone who has legal custody of the child.
- Give a medication from a container that has a label that cannot be read.
- Try to hide a medication error or missed dose.
- Give a child medication from another person's container.
- As with all medication, make sure the medication in the container matches the description (color, shape) on the label. If not, contact the pharmacy to get clarification before giving the child the medicine.

