

## OKDHS Guidance on the use of Social Media

The OKDHS contract states the following:

- M. Contractor shall not discuss or share information about the child placed in the home or the child's family on any media outlet including but not limited to newsprint, television, internet, or social networking sites including but not limited to Facebook, Myspace or Twitter.
- N. Contractor shall not provide, arrange for or consent to a picture or other identifying information concerning a foster child to be used on any media outlet including but not limited to newsprint, television, internet, or social networking sites including but not limited to Facebook, Myspace or Twitter.

These statements clearly guide that information regarding the child and their Child Welfare case should not be discussed or shared in any way. However, this was not intended to prevent the sharing of photos of a child as long as the child is not identified in any way as a foster child or any identifying information provided.

If a grandmother takes a family picture and shares this photo, there is not a need to blur a face or black out a child's face in the photo. Caution should be noted when sharing pictures though. Locations can be obtained either through coding on the picture or through the details found in the picture and if there are safety issues to be considered, then posting a photo is not a good decision.

If a foster child wins a spelling contest and a local newspaper would like to run a picture, this is allowable. The foster parent would advise the CW worker and permission would be granted. Again, the issue is to be certain that the child is not identified as a foster child and no other information is provided other than related to the contest. However, there are sometimes where safety concerns may need to be considered. The CW worker would be aware and could provide guidance.

This contract language does not mean that school pictures cannot be taken and that a foster child photo can not be included in a school yearbook. This is acceptable.

There are also times when a child is experiencing issues and a resource parent is looking for some guidance. Asking questions about behaviors, etc. is acceptable but these should not be tied to a child. For example, "Does anyone have suggestions for dealing with...." rather than "A. has been doing this and I am wondering if anyone has suggestions..."