

Socialization, Leisure and Recreation Skills

Kern Regional Center Policy

Socialization, leisure and recreation services are those services and supports designed to enhance the development of appropriate socialization skills for children who may have social skill challenges that limit age-appropriate socialization opportunities or adults who may have difficulty developing friendships. Such services may include activities that involve sports, hobbies, music appreciation, arts, leisure, education, service club participation and the development of other leisure time skills.

Social skills are those abilities and behaviors needed to initiate, plan, explore and participate in meaningful, age-appropriate social relationships and activities.

Social skills challenges may include but are not limited to: excessive shyness or passivity; limited responses to social approaches by others; inappropriate social interactions (e.g., teasing/bullying); excessive friendly advances toward others; socially unacceptable mannerisms, difficulty in developing friendships, and other behaviors (easily frustrated, resistive) that might interfere with appropriate social interaction with peers and others.

KRC recognizes that socialization, leisure and recreation activities are valuable and will support efforts to remove barriers and to facilitate our clients' full participation, along with other citizens, in a broad range of such community opportunities. In doing so we will pursue the goal of services to persons with developmental disabilities in the most inclusive setting and the maximum possible participation in typical socialization, leisure, and recreational settings in the community. In communities where such opportunities are not available to persons with developmental disabilities, KRC will encourage publicly and privately funded socialization, leisure, and recreational programs to adapt their services in order to accommodate our clients.

KRC also recognizes, however, that some individuals with developmental disabilities are precluded from participation in typical social activities by virtue of their behavior, physical condition or level of skill. Such children and adults often require sports that are absent from many typical social/recreation programs. Accordingly, KRC will purchase socialization, leisure and recreation services or supports under the following circumstances:

- When an Interdisciplinary Team has determined that the client has a social skill (challenge(s), as defined above, and such challenge(s) has been documented in the client's record; and
- An opportunity has been identified to achieve an improvement in the client's social, recreational and leisure life in the community or to develop friendships; and
- No socialization, leisure or recreational opportunity is otherwise available to the client. In making this determination, KRC, the client and the family must first make reasonable efforts to identify and use typical community socialization, leisure or recreation programs to meet the client's needs. Such reasonable efforts must include consideration of the provision of supports (natural or purchased) which will enable the client to participate in a typical social/recreational program. KRC will not purchase a segregated socialization program when there is a generic service which is willing (either with or without supports) to include the client in its activities; and
- The need for the purchased service is documented in the client's Individual Program Plan which also includes specific desired outcomes and plans to develop social skills or friendships with the overall goal of including the client in social/recreation activities with nondisabled peers; and
- The purchase of segregated socialization programming is for a reasonable time-limited period (the client's progress in achieving specific outcomes must be reviewed at intervals not to exceed six months

and there must be evidence that progress is being made in order to continue the service; it is expected that the client will be included in typical community recreational programs, with supports if necessary, following the purchase of segregated socialization programming); and

- In determining the frequency/duration of socialization, leisure or recreation skill development for a child with a developmental disability, care is taken not to unduly interfere with the time that families spend together in social activities during weekends and vacations; and
- Social, leisure and recreation programs are not designed to be used as a childcare service for working parents (see Guidelines on Childcare), or as an ongoing source of recreation and the purchase of these services for such purposes will not be authorized; and
- Social/recreational activities should not interfere with or occur during educational programming and or adult day programming; and
- KRC believes that participation by clients in a socialization, leisure or recreation program may also meet a family's need for respite. Accordingly, KRC will review the purchase of both respite and social, leisure and recreation services and make individual adjustments accordingly.
- Clients who live in community care and health care residential homes are entitled to receive social, leisure and recreation services as part of such residential programming as a rule these services may not be purchased for clients who reside in such licensed homes. Campership not to exceed two consecutive weeks annually will be allowed.
- Clients may choose to attend up to a two- week campership per year as a socialization, leisure and recreational activity. For minor children, families will be asked to assume parental responsibilities. KRC's participation in providing for a camp purchase will be viewed as meeting respite, socialization, leisure or recreational objectives. Individual adjustment in purchased services will be reviewed accordingly.
- KRC may purchase supported community integration programming at a 1:1 staff to client ratio based on individual needs and per the Individual Program Plan.
- When these circumstances are not met and the planning team determines an exception is warranted, an interdisciplinary team review will take place. The interdisciplinary team should include at minimum three members including the client/representative, Service Coordinator, and a KRC manager and may also include a Client Services Assistant Director/Director, and other consultants depending on need. The exception shall be granted on an individual basis per the Individual Program Plan.

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