



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION
BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29904-5001

ASO 1710.31
MCCS/CYP

MAR 03 2020

AIR STATION ORDER 1710.31

From: Commanding Officer
To: Distribution List

Subj: CHILDREN IN SELF-CARE

Ref: (a) MCO 1710.30 (Child and Youth Programs)

1. Situation. Per the reference, installations shall establish standardized guidelines concerning the minimum age at which children may be left in "self-care" and may be left in the care of older children. This guidance is presented in the context that all parents are responsible and accountable for their children at all times.

2. Cancellation. ASO 5100.27A.

3. Mission. This Order is applicable to all service members, their families, and visitors residing in government quarters aboard Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort and the Laurel Bay Housing Area. Questions concerning the appropriate age at which a child may be left in self-care often arise. Per the reference, installation commanders shall develop and implement, in consultation with the Family Advocacy Program Manager, a home alone/self-care policy addressing the ages and circumstances under which a child or youth under the age of 13 can be left at home alone or use services provided at installation facilities without adult supervision (when applicable given the availability of youth services).

4. Execution

a. Commander's Intent and Concept of Operations

(1) Commander's Intent. Parents are responsible and accountable for their children at all times. This Order establishes minimal guidelines, but in no way abdicates parental responsibility for supervision of their children. Parents, guardians, or designated caretakers of children are expected to have full accountability of their children to ensure they are safe with the appropriate supervision. This includes such situations as being unattended in quarters, left alone overnight, participation in self release programs, unattended in vehicles, and unattended on playgrounds.

(2) Concept of Operations. Several important variables must be considered before parents decide their child can safely be left in self-care. These factors include maturity of the child, duration and frequency of time without direct supervision, the child's knowledge of emergency procedures, presence of physically and/or emotionally handicapping conditions, accessibility to parent or other specified or informed caretakers, number and ages of other children present without direct adult supervision, age appropriateness of responsibilities given to the child, and specific nature of ongoing child activities while unsupervised.

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b. Tasks

(1) When a reasonable suspicion exists that the responsible adult(s) did not properly consider and apply these relevant factors, the Provost Marshal's Office shall be notified.

(2) All children in self-care must receive instructions from parents to include emergency procedures and phone numbers.

(3) The following chart outlines the minimum age for child supervisory requirements.

<u>AGE</u>	<u>UNATTENDED IN QUARTERS</u>	<u>LEFT ALONE OVERNIGHT</u>	<u>SELF-RELEASE FROM YOUTH CENTER</u>	<u>WALK TO SCHOOL</u>	<u>RIDE BIKE TO SCHOOL</u>
4	NO	NO	NO	**YES	NO
5	NO	NO	NO	**YES	***YES
6-9	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
10-11	YES	NO	*YES	YES	YES
12-15	YES	NO	*YES	YES	YES
16-17	YES	YES	*YES	YES	YES

* Parental authorization for self-release must be on file at the Youth Center/School Age Care Program.

** Parent must provide auditory and sight supervision or child must be accompanied by a child 10 years or older.

*** Parent must provide instructed supervision.

<u>AGE</u>	<u>CAR UNATTENDED</u>	<u>BABYSIT SIBLINGS</u>	<u>BABYSIT OTHERS</u>	<u>BABYSIT SIBLINGS AND/OR OTHERS OVERNIGHT</u>
0-9	NO	NO	NO	NO
10-11	YES	NO	NO	NO
12-15	YES	*YES	*YES	NO
16-17	YES	*YES	*YES	*YES

* Encouraged to complete the American Red Cross baby sitter's course offered by the Child and Youth Program Coordinator.

c. Coordinating Instructions(1) Definitions

(a) Babysitting. An agreement to care for another's child or sibling on an occasional basis, either in the sitter's or the child's home. The babysitter may or may not be paid for services, depending upon agreements reached between the babysitter and the parent(s).

(b) Parent. The biological father or mother of a child; a person who, by order of a court or competent jurisdiction, has been declared the father or mother of a child by adoption, the legal guardian of child, or a in loco parentis to that child contributes at least one half of the child's support.

(c) Self-care. Supervisory category when the child is responsible for himself/herself and generally includes children who are responsible for himself/herself before or after school, during school vacations, and holidays.

(d) Self-release from the Youth Center/School Age Care Program. Parental approval is granted for a youth to sign himself/herself into and out of activities offered at the Youth Center/School Age Care Program. Parent(s) shall specify the allowable destination(s) (e.g., home or the parent's work location) for their children who self-release.

(e) Instructed Supervision. A parent has given very specific instructions to the child (e.g., a child can be allowed to walk or ride a bike to school with specific instructions from the parents that he/she is to walk straight to and from school with no stops or delays along the way).

(f) Auditory and Visual Supervision. Parents of children ages four and five who walk to school must provide auditory and visual supervision of the child. Children 10 and older may be granted responsibility to provide supervision to children four and older when walking to school and back home.

5. Administration and Logistics. Recommendations concerning the contents of this Order are encouraged and invited. Recommendations should be submitted to the Marine Corps Community Service, South Carolina Director (Attn: Family Care Branch Head).

6. Command and Signal

a. Command. This Order is applicable to all personnel aboard MCAS Beaufort and the Laurel Bay Housing Area.

b. Signal. This Order is effective the date signed.


T. P. MILLER

DISTRIBUTION: A