UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT/EASTERN RECRUITING REGION
P.O. Box 19001
PARRIS ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA 29905-9001

DepO 1710.31B
MCCS/CYP

18 APR 2018

DEPOT ORDER 1710.31B

From: Commanding General
To: Distribution List

Subj: CHILDREN IN SELF-CARE

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

1. Situation. Per reference (a), an 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 child(ren) at all times.

2. Cancellation. DepO 1710.31A.

3. Mission. This Order is applicable to service members and their families residing in government quarters aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island (MCRD PI), Questions concerning the appropriate age at which a child may be left in self-care often arise. Reference (a) states that installation commanders shall "develop and implement, with consultation of 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). The installation policy shall be consistent with or more stringent than the applicable laws and ordinances of the States or country in which Installations are located."

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 directive 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 that they are safe and not left without direct accountable supervision, age-appropriate, for any period of time. 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.

(a) Several important variables, in addition to age criteria must

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be considered before parents decide their child(ren) safely can 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.

b. Task

(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 will be notified.

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

(3) Children babysitting other children are encouraged to complete the American Red Cross Baby Sitters Course offered the Child and Youth Program.

(4) The following chart outlines the minium ages for child supervisory requirements.

AGE	UNATTENDED IN QUARTERS	LEFT ALONE OVERNIGHT	SELF-RELEASE FROM YOUTH CENTER	WALK TO SCHOOL	RIDE BIKE TO SCHOOL
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.

AGE	CAR UNATTENDED	BABYSIT SIBLINGS	BABYSIT OTHERS	BABYSIT OTHERS OVERNIGHT
0-9	NO	NO	NO	NO
10-11	YES	NO	NO	NO
12-15	YES	*YES	**YES	NO
16-17	YES	YES	**YES	YES

* No overnight

** Encouraged to complete the American Red Cross Baby Sitter's course

c. Coordinating Instructions

(1) Definitions

(a) Babysitting. An agreement to care for another's child or sibling on and occasional basis, defined as less than 10 child care hours per week, 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 or herself and generally includes children who are responsible for him or herself before or after school, during school vacations, and holiday.

(d) Self-release from the Youth Center/School Age Care Program. Parental approval is granted for a youth to sign himself or herself into and out of activities offered at the Youth Center/School Age Care Program. Parent(s) shall specify the allowable destination(s) (i.e., 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 or she is to walk straight to and from school and back again with no stops or delays along the way.

(f) Auditory and Visual supervision. Parents of children ages 4 and 5 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 4 and older when walking to and from school).

5. Administration and Logistics. Recommendations concerning the contents of this Order are encouraged and invited. Recommendations should be submitted to the Director, MCCS (Attn: Children, Youth and Teen Program Administrator).

6. Command and Signal

a. Command. This Order is applicable to all personnel assigned to MCRD PI.

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

M. G. ST. CLAIR
Chief of Staff

DISTRIBUTION: A