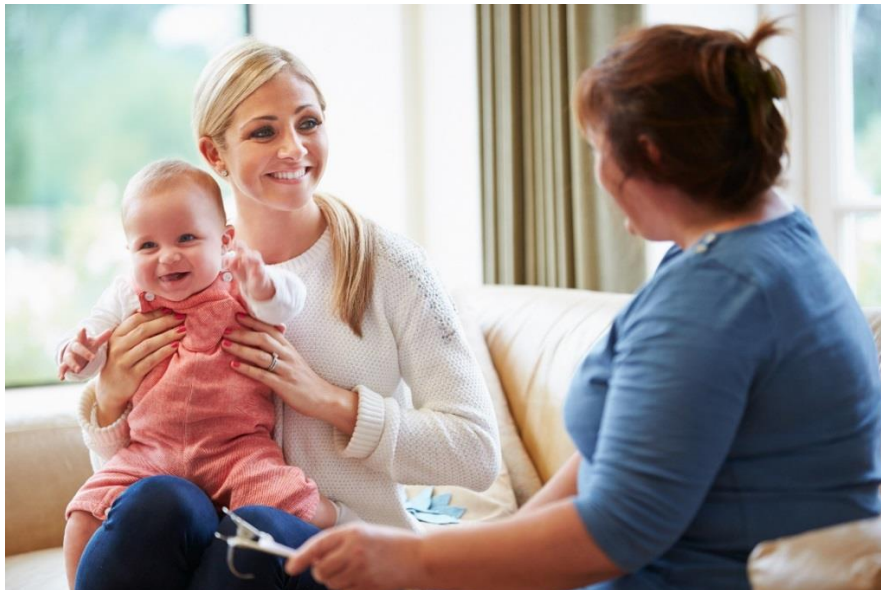


Module 5: Collaboration and Partnership for Children

Licensing Pre-Service Curriculum



Participant Guide

Office of Child Welfare

12/1/2019

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Module References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CFOP 170-11, Chapter 6, 7 and 8• <i>All legal references are available on Florida’s Center for Child Welfare website under the policies tab.</i> <p>http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/index.shtml#</p>
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Unit 5.1: The Support Team

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify the foster parent's support team, describe how to access them, and explain when they are needed.
2. Explain the importance of working with and assisting dependency Case Managers.
3. Explain the importance of establishing a relationship with foster parents as partners, especially regarding the significance of ongoing support and communications.
4. Explain how each role contributes to the child's safety and interconnects with other roles to achieve the desired outcomes for the child.

Activity A: Reflection Expression

Directions:

1. Individually, identify three learning points from Module 1.
2. Select the learning point you believe is the most important.
3. Form small groups and each person discuss the one item they selected as the most important learning point.
4. Spend five minutes trying to reach mutual agreement on the most important learning point from Module 1. You are challenged to demonstrate a spirit of partnership as you work together.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Foster Parents as Professionals

Foster parents are trained and licensed caregivers who care for youth and must keep them safe until they are reunified or secure permanency in an alternative placement (i.e., adoptive home).

When foster parents are regarded as professionals, included as valuable service team members and receive the support and guidance they need, their ability to assist children and families increases, as does their satisfaction with their role.

A Foster Parent's Support Team

The people involved in foster parent's support team include:

- **Internal Supports:** Spouse, sibling(s), parents, and other identified caregiver supports, such as adult children and backups
- **External Supports:** Child Welfare team, birth parents, church, school, community clubs, Guardian ad Litem, courts, work, respite, and childcare providers

Family and System of Care Partners

CHILD: Once the child has been adjudicated, the court has jurisdiction over the child until his/her 18th birthday and/or until the court releases jurisdiction over the child. The child has the right to go to court and should always try to attend. The child can also speak to the judge by telephone or through a letter. The child may include feelings and information in the Judicial Review Report. Court resources for the child include *Hearing Your Voice: A Guide to Your Dependency Court Case and What's Happening in Dependency Court? An Activity Book for Children Going to Court in Florida*.

BIRTH PARENT(S): Birth parents receive services that allow them to work through tasks on their case plan in order to be reunified with their child. They should be involved in the co-parenting of their child and visit their child, unless otherwise ordered by the court. Parents are also responsible for the continued financial support of their child while in out-of-home care. In court, they have a right to be represented by or appointed a lawyer. They must be notified about all court hearings and be present at them. Court resources for the parents include *A Parent's Guide to Juvenile Dependency Court*.

BIRTH RELATIVES: The extended birth family of a child in foster care should maintain a relationship with the child as long as it is a safe and healthy relationship. The birth family can be a helpful part of the team by giving family health information and helping keep the child connected to their culture.

NON-RELATIVES/SUPPORTS: Often a child will have an extended support system which includes friends and community.

FIRST RESPONSE

CHILD PROTECTIVE INVESTIGATOR (CPI): The CPI is the first responder on the team. It is his/her job to determine if a children are in immediate danger in their home environment and if they should be removed. The CPI tries to put any supports that he/she can into the home to help prevent having to remove children from their home due to the fact that the removal of children from their home can be a very traumatic experience. If removal is necessary, the CPI takes the child to a safe place, submits a Shelter Petition to the court and provides the evidence at a Shelter Hearing or Emergency Shelter Hearing within 24 hours. The CPI conducts a diligent search to find a placement at the home of a relative or close friend (pending background approval). If not, the CPI finds a foster home match. The CPI attends the Arraignment Hearing and Case Planning Conference. The CPI's case must be closed within 60 days of removal.

CASE PLANNING

CASE MANAGER: The Case Manager provides and coordinates services in the child's case. He/she maintains regular contact with the family and sees the child alone. The Case Manager provides the direct service to the foster child. The Case Manager's primary role is to be the advocate for the child in court and the source for referrals should the child need therapeutic or other related services. The Case Manager attends all hearings and tells the court what kinds of services the child and family needs. The Case Manager prepares most of the reports for the court, including the Judicial Review Report.

CASE MANAGEMENT TEAM: While developing and managing the case plan, the Case Manager, and in turn the child, family, and foster family, is supported by a team of professionals including supervisors and managers.

INDEPENDENT LIVING SPECIALIST: The Independent Living Specialist provides independent living skills training, information and referral services, peer support, employment, housing assistance, benefits assistance, and advocacy.

FAMILY FINDER LIVING SPECIALIST: Family Finders use a multi-step process to locate and connect family members to be involved in a child's life. These steps include discovery, engagement, planning, decision making, evaluation, and follow-up.

FOSTER CARE

FOSTER PARENT(S): Foster parents are trained and licensed adults who care for youth and must keep them safe until they can return home or live elsewhere. The foster parent's role includes providing a safe and caring environment for the child, meeting the child's developmental needs, and working with the rest of the team to help the child stay connected to their family, culture, and identity. The foster parent must be prepared to work as part of a care team, including the birth parents, to provide the child with normalcy and trauma-sensitive care. The foster parent has the right to and should attend Judicial Review Hearings, the case planning conference, and should advocate for the child.

LICENSING SPECIALIST: The Licensing Specialist's role is to be a support for the foster family. Each agency employs Licensing Specialists to work with families in licensing activities. These dedicated staff members are your support system in the licensed care arena. They assist with coordinating for the children in the home with the Case Manager assigned to them as well as ensure that the home is meeting all necessary licensing standards. This is the person that the foster parent can call when they need help.

PLACEMENT SPECIALIST: Placement services takes all phone calls of children newly coming into licensed care as well as requests for moves and placement changes within licensed care. They analyze information about the family and child to ensure the needs of the child(ren) are being met and placement stability is secured. Placement services also

facilitate placement stability staffings to address children who are at risk of losing their placement.

COURTS

GUARDIAN AD LITEM: A Guardian ad Litem (GAL) is usually assigned to a child at the time of arraignment, if the court deems one necessary. The GAL works for the child's best interest in court and is an additional resource for the foster parents, birth parents, and the child. However, they do not provide any case management services or transportation.

ATTORNEYS: The Children's Legal Services (CLS) attorney files the legal paperwork and is responsible for starting the case about the family and child in court. They present all the facts to the court and talk to the court about the best interests of the child. The parent's attorney provides legal advice and guidance to the parent at every stage of the court process. The child's attorney (Attorney ad Litem) is appointed by the judge to advocate for the child and represents only the child.

JUDGE: The judge decides what is in the best interest of the child and how to keep the child safe. After listening to everyone involved in the case and reading the reports, the judge determines if removal is in the best interest of the child, if the child should be adjudicated, if supervision should be terminated, and if parental rights should be terminated. The judge approves the case plan and conducts a judicial review every six months to review the status of the case plan until permanency is achieved.

GENERAL MAGISTRATE: The judge sometimes refers cases to the general magistrate, a judicial officer who assists the circuit judges by holding hearings and providing recommendations. The judge signs off on the recommendations.

OTHERS

DOCTORS / THERAPISTS: This role is to help determine the physical and mental health of a child and help improve or maintain that health.

TEACHERS: Teachers are an important part of the team. Teachers can help with identifying behavioral and developmental problems. By having open communication with the child's teacher, the Licensing Specialist can work together to help the child adjust to their new surroundings. If a foster child struggles in school, the teacher is the best person to link the Licensing Specialist to the help that the child needs in a school setting.

OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES: When preparing a Case Plan and identifying services for the family and the foster family, the Case Manager and Licensing Specialist look to other community resources such as the Florida WIC, churches, classes, etc.

KEY AGENCIES

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES: The state agency is responsible for child protection and many services for families and children.

COURT SYSTEM: The court system's job is to oversee the birth parent's Case Plan and the placement needs of the children. The court system holds hearings with the birth parents to oversee progress on the case plan and reunification. The court system oversees the permanency planning. If reunification is not possible, the court moves towards termination of parental rights (TPR) for the child.

COMMUNITY-BASED CARE AGENCY: A non-profit agency created specifically to perform the duties of the lead agency for community-based care. The lead agency holds the contract for all child protection services previously performed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). They are responsible for administrative services including financial management, contract oversight, data services, communications, quality assurance, training, and diversion services.

PARTNER AGENCIES: Case management services for children and their families are often performed by a network of local community-based agencies. Many other partner agencies and providers deliver very important services and supports for the families.

Activity B: It Takes a Village

Directions:

1. Using the System of Care Partners worksheet, determine:
 - a. How the foster parent will collaborate with each team member
 - b. How the Licensing Specialist can support the partnership relationship between foster parents and other partners
2. Be prepared to discuss.

Partner	Foster Parents	Licensing Specialist
Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parent becomes the caregiver • Foster parent can ease trauma • Foster parent advocates for the child • Foster parent loves and nurtures child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in with foster parent to see how they are adjusting with the child • Communicate with the Case Manager on needs the foster parent has identified for the child • Work with the Case Manager to ensure the foster parent receives timely responses • Provide foster parents with resources that address behaviors and other challenges that are pertinent to each child • Keep foster parent informed of community activities that are free or affordable • Assist foster parent in supporting normalcy
Birth Parent(s)		

Birth Relatives		
Non-Relatives/Supports		
Child Protective Investigator		
Case Manager		
Independent Living Specialist		

Adoption Specialist		
Other Foster Parents		
Guardian ad Litem		
CLS Attorney		
Judge		

Doctors/Therapists		
Teachers		

The Florida State Foster/Adoptive Parent Association (Florida FAPA)

The Florida FAPA is a statewide membership group for all foster, adoptive, relative, and non-relative caregivers in Florida.

FSFAPA Vision: “A state where children thrive and caregivers are fully empowered and recognized as expert partners in fostering healthy families.”

FSFAPA Goals:

- Foster a spirit of cooperation and teamwork among all entities involved with child welfare.
 - Promote quality education and training for families with the system's children, both prior to placement and as continuing education.
 - Advocate improved funding of human services for the benefit of all of Florida's most vulnerable citizens.
 - Advocate for legislative changes for protection and welfare of Florida's children at the local, state, and national levels.
 - Educate foster parents regarding the needs of children by making them more effective advocates at all levels.
 - Increase community awareness, support, and participation in foster and adoption.
 - Provide a forum for dialogue and communication among parents, the Department, agencies, and other interested persons via newsletter, meetings, and website.
 - Educate foster parents regarding the risks of foster parenting and the steps they can take to reduce those risks.
 - Educate adoptive parents about issues affecting children, promote realistic expectations of the needs and behaviors of children being adopted, advocate support services for adoptive families to reduce stress, strengthen the family unit, and reduce or eliminate adoption disruption.
 - Explain the association's purpose and mission as well as services and resources.
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Foster Allegation Support Team (F.A.S.T.)

F.A.S.T. provides support to the foster parents when allegations have been, or might be brought against them.

F.A.S.T. encourages foster parents to engage in the following:

- Call the F.A.S.T. Hotline for immediate support.
- Keep good records.
- Insist on giving full input into the investigations.
- Begin a dated, written journal of events and communications.
- Request assistance from the Department, your Licensing Support Staff, or the Case Manager in explaining to the children what is happening and why.
- Maintain your sense of professionalism and partnership as foster parents.
- Cooperate with the investigation.

The Licensing Specialist and Foster Parent: A Partnership

Research shows that most successful partnerships:

- Grow out of commonly perceived needs, address those needs and seek to serve and yield benefits beyond the partners themselves.
- Include partners who understand the mission and anticipated outcomes. You serve the vulnerable children and families of our community.
- Are supported by leadership including allocated resources, proper guidance, and empowerment of partners.
- Clearly define the roles and responsibilities. The Department of Children and Families provides the guidance, laws, policies, and procedures you must follow. The Partnership Plan provides commitments.
- Build off the skills, strengths, and resources of partners.
- Include partners who respect and value the contributions, strength, and skills of the other partners.
- Include effective communication systems and open lines of communication. Communication is important for so many aspects in what we do.

The Partnership Plan

- Defines the framework, relationships, work culture, and communication needed to build a village around the child.
- Foster parents are the focal point of partnerships because they have opened up their homes and hearts to children and their commitment is critical in ensuring success.
- A set of value statements defining what quality parenting is, but within the context of a true professional partnership that everyone shares.
- The primary goal is that children get the effective parenting they need and that birth parents get the support they need to reunify with their children successfully.
- Key element of the plan is that everyone in the system is an equal but different partner in this effort and shares a common goal.
- Plan helps everyone understand what their roles are and to assess their performance.

Show Time



Partnership Plan for Children in Out-of-Home Care Video Viewing Guide

Video I

As you watch the first 15 minutes of the video pay special attention to the following:

1. The message from leadership regarding the importance of partnership.
2. The system of care partners that communicate the partnership message
3. The importance of partnership and collaboration based on comments from experienced parents and partners.
4. The benefits of partnership.

Scenario I - Foster parent review of CPI through Licensing Specialist

How did the partners practice the principals of mutual respect, positive practice, and solving problems rather than assigning blame?

Scenario II - CPI review of foster parent through Licensing Specialist

How did the partners practice the principals of mutual respect, positive practice, and solving problems rather than assigning blame?

Partnership Plan for Children in Out-of-Home Care

Partnership Plan for Children in Out-of-Home Care

All of us are responsible for the well being of children in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The children's caregivers along with the Florida Department of Children and Families, community-based care (CBC) organizations, their subcontractors and staffs of these agencies undertake this responsibility in partnership, aware that none of us can succeed by ourselves.

Children need normal childhoods as well as loving and skillful parenting which honors their loyalty to their biological family. The purpose of this document is to articulate a common understanding of the values, principles and relationships necessary to fulfill this responsibility. The following commitments are embraced by all of us. This document in no way substitutes for or waives statutes or rule; however we will attempt to apply these laws and regulations in a manner consistent with these commitments.

1. To ensure that the care we give our children supports their healthy development and gives them the best possible opportunity for success, caregivers and DCF, CBC and agency staff will work together in a respectful partnership.
2. All members of this partnership will behave professionally, will share all relevant information promptly, and will respect the confidentiality of all information related to the child and his or her family.
3. Caregivers, the family, DCF, CBC and agency staff will participate in developing the plan for the child and family, and all members of the team will work together to implement this plan. This includes caregiver participation in all team meetings or court hearings related to the child's care and future plans. DCF, CBC and agency staff will support and facilitate caregiver participation through timely notification, an inclusive process and providing alternative methods for participation for caregivers who cannot be physically present.
4. Excellent parenting is a reasonable expectation of caregivers. Caregivers will provide and DCF, CBC and agency staff will support excellent parenting. This requires a loving commitment to the child and the child's safety and well being, appropriate supervision and positive methods of discipline, encouragement of the child's strengths, respect for the child's individuality and likes and dislikes, providing opportunities to develop the child's interests and skills, awareness of the impact of trauma on behavior, equal participation of the child in family life, involvement of the child with the community and a commitment to enable the child to lead a normal life.

5. Children will be placed only with caregivers who have the ability and are willing to accept responsibility for the care of a child in light of the child's culture, religion and ethnicity, special physical or psychological needs, unique situation including sexual orientation and family relationships. DCF, CBC and agency staff will provide caregivers with all available information to assist them in determining whether they are able to appropriately care for a child. Caregivers must be willing and able to learn about and be respectful of the child's religion, culture and ethnicity, and any special circumstances affecting the child's care. DCF, CBC and agency staff will assist them in gaining the support, training and skills necessary for the care of the child.
6. Caregivers will have access to and take advantage of all training they need to improve their skills in parenting children who have experienced trauma due to neglect, abuse or separation from home, to meet these children's special needs and to work effectively with child welfare agencies, the courts, the schools and other community and governmental agencies.
7. DCF, CBC and agency staff will provide caregivers with the services and support they need to enable them to provide quality care for the child.
8. Once a family accepts the responsibility of caring for the child, the child will be removed from that family only when the family is clearly unable to care for him or her safely or legally, when the child and his or her biological family are reunified, when the child is being placed in a legally permanent home in accordance with the case plan or court order, or when the removal is demonstrably in the child's best interest.
9. If a child must leave the caregiver's home for one of these reasons and in the absence of an unforeseeable emergency, the transition will be accomplished according to a plan which involves cooperation and sharing of information among all persons involved, respects the child's developmental stage and psychological needs, ensures they have all their belongings, and allows for a gradual transition from the caregiver's home and, if possible, for continued contact with the caregiver after the child leaves.
10. When the plan for the child includes reunification, caregivers and agency staff will work together to assist the biological parents in improving their ability to care for and protect their children and to provide continuity for the child.
11. Caregivers will respect and support the child's ties to his or her biological family (parents, siblings and extended family members) and will assist the child in visitation and other forms of communication. DCF, CBC and agency staff will provide caregivers with the information, guidance, training and support necessary for fulfilling this responsibility.

12. Caregivers will work in partnership with DCF, CBC and agency staff to obtain and maintain records that are important to the child's well being including child resource records, medical records, school records, photographs, and records of special events and achievements.
13. Caregivers will effectively advocate for children in their care with the child welfare system, the court, and community agencies, including schools, child care, health and mental health providers, and employers. DCF, CBC and agency staff will support them in doing so and will not retaliate against them as a result of this advocacy.
14. Caregivers will participate fully in the child's medical, psychological and dental care as they would for their biological child. Agency staff will support and facilitate this participation. Caregivers, DCF, CBC and agency staff will share information with each other about the child's health and well being.
15. Caregivers will support the child's school success by participating in school activities and meetings, including IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings, assisting with school assignments, supporting tutoring programs, meeting with teachers and working with an educational surrogate if one has been appointed and encouraging the child's participation in extra-curricular activities. Agency staff will facilitate this participation and will be kept informed of the child's progress and needs.

Signature of Out-of-Home Caregiver

Signature of Representative of Supervising Agency

{Signatures are requirements of F.A.C. 65C-13.030 (1)(e)}

The Partnership Plan Commitments

The document details commitments categorized into the following:

Respecting Partners (Commitments 1 – 3):

- Respectful partners give children the best possible opportunity for success.
- Respectful partners behave professionally, share information promptly, respect confidentiality.
- Everyone participates in developing and implementing a child's plan.
- All team members support and facilitate caregiver participation.

Nurturing Children (Commitments 4 – 9):

- The first responsibility of foster families is to provide excellent, nurturing for children in their care. This includes the ability to advocate for children and support their strengths.
- Excellent caregiving is a reasonable expectation of caregivers.
- All team members need to support excellent parenting.
- Children should only be placed with caregivers who are able and willing to be excellent parents.
- Caregivers will have access to and take advantage of all training they need.
- Caregivers receive the services and support they need from agency staff.
- Other than reunification, legal requirements or planned permanent placement, a child will only be removed from a caregiver for extreme circumstances.
- Any child's transition will be accomplished according to the plan.

Supporting Families and Permanent Connections (Commitments 10 – 12):

- Foster parents must support a child's ties to his birth family.
- Foster parents can be the most effective teachers and mentors for birth parents.
- If a child cannot return to their birth family, the foster parent is key to helping the child successfully become part of a new family.
- It is the responsibility of everyone in the system to support these efforts towards permanency.
- When the plan for a child is reunification, agency staff, and foster parents will work together with birth parents to improve their ability to care for and protect their child.
- Foster parents will respect and support their child's ties to their birth family.
- Everyone on the team will work together to obtain and maintain records that are important to the child.

Working with the Community (Commitments 13 – 15):

- The foster parent is a critical bridge between the child and the community including medical care and education. It is the responsibility of all the team members to prepare foster parents for this role and to help them accomplish it.

Activity C: Honoring Our Commitments

Directions:

1. Using your worksheet and the Partnership Plan for Children in Out-of-Home Care, determine how the Licensing Specialist will demonstrate commitment.
2. Be prepared to discuss.

Partner	Licensing Specialist
Respectful Partner	
Demonstrate Professional Behavior	
Participate in Plan Development	
Excellent Parenting	
Placement with Caregivers Who Honor Child's Culture, Religion, Ethnicity and Unique Needs	
Caregiver Training	
Caregiver Services and Supports	

The Importance of a Child's Stability	
The Importance of Transition Plans	
Birth Families and Reunification	
Supporting Visitation and Birth Family Relationships	
Maintaining Information Important to the Child	
Caregiver's Advocacy for Children	
Caregiver's Full Participation in Medical, Psychological, and Dental Care	
Supporting a Child's School Success	

Building Relationships

The Licensing Specialist and Foster Parent

- In order for the Partnership Plan to work effectively, the Licensing Specialist must prioritize the relationship with two primary team members: foster parents and dependency Case Managers.
- The foster parent-Licensing Specialist relationship begins during the first communication and then must continue beyond the licensing process so that foster parents view the Licensing Specialist as their primary support on the team.

The Licensing Specialist and Dependency Case Manager

The relationship between dependency Case Managers and Licensing Specialists is critical to maintaining excellent foster parents and ensuring the needs of every child is met. The Licensing Specialist must assume responsibility for nurturing this relationship.

Communication: Practice Principles

- Mutual Respect:
 - Listen
 - Compliment
 - Recognize participation and busy schedules
 - Acknowledge
- Positive Practice:
 - Share positive experiences
 - Share comments in a positive way
 - Identify positives as well as negatives
 - Create an environment where everyone feels comfortable to ask for help and bring forward ideas
 - Support the ideas of others
- Solving Problems without Assigning Blame:
 - Do not blow a problem situation out of proportion
 - Find specific solutions
 - Work together to create mutual solutions
 - Utilize the Partnership Plan to facilitate a positive outcome
 - Recognize efforts and challenges without blame

Communication: Difficult Conversations

To foster these practice principles and further the goals of the partnership plan during potentially difficult conversations, include:

- Be aware of your own reactions and biases
 - Create a safe place where risks can be taken
 - Find or create common ground to solve problems
 - Keep an eye on your motive
 - Listen to understand
 - Speak to be heard
-
-

Communication: Partnership Conflicts

Conflict can be particularly difficult to navigate in social work for two reasons:

1. The issues we are dealing with are very personal
2. The very seriousness of our work

Conflict can bring about emotional responses, fear and anxiety, differing opinions, disagreement of goals, incompatible beliefs, and clashing demands.

Activity D:

Interviewing the Foster Parent for CPI Partnership

Directions:

1. Watch the video.
 2. With your partner, practice role-playing both the Licensing Specialist Role Card and the Foster Parent Role Card.
 3. After each interview, provide feedback to your partner on their strengths and challenges of the interviews.
-

Licensing Specialist Role Card:

Your goal is to conduct an interview with the foster parent following placement of a child in their home. This is the foster parent's first placement. You will need to identify what went well during the placement process as well as determine if there were challenges. Also, you will want to inquire about how the parent and child are adjusting.

Foster Parent Role Card:

Yesterday you received the first placement of a six-year-old child into your home. You are feeling very nervous about the process and you have called the CPI for more information but they seemed busy and did not have a lot of information. You need to know more about the medications the child came with because the child is resistant to taking it. The child did not sleep well and you woke up to them crying for their mom. The CPI was nice, however, they were rushed and you have additional questions.

Show Time



Partnership Plan for Children in Out-of-Home Care Video Viewing Guide 2

Scenario I- Foster Parent Review of CPI through Licensing Specialist

How did the partners practice the principals of mutual respect, positive practice, and solving problems rather than assigning blame?

Scenario II- CPI Review of Foster Parent through Licensing Specialist

How did the partners practice the principals of mutual respect, positive practice, and solving problems rather than assigning blame?

Scenario III- Case Manager and Foster Parents

How did the partners practice the principals of mutual respect, positive practice, and solving problems rather than assigning blame?

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
CASE MANAGER/CASE WORKER REVIEW OF FOSTER PARENT**

3. Made and fulfilled a commitment to keeping the child in the home for the planned period of time or until permanency is achieved unless the family was clearly unable to care for the child or the move was in the child's best interest.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

4. Ensured the child's medical, dental, and other needs were met by scheduling and transporting child to appointments and coordinating with the case worker when assistance was needed.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

5. Provided the child(ren) with appropriate clothing, toiletries, and an allowance. The foster parent(s) ensured that items transitioned with the child if the child left the home.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

6. Recognized, encouraged and supported the religious beliefs and practices, ethnic heritage, language, and cultural identity of the child and family.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

7. Used only positive and non-physical methods of discipline.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
CASE MANAGER/CASE WORKER REVIEW OF FOSTER PARENT**

8. Maintained the Child Resource Record and provided it to the worker at the time the child left the home.

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

9. Enrolled the child in school, attended conferences, and advocated for the child's educational needs.

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

10. Supported the child's connection to family, including maintaining relationships with siblings by assisting with sibling visitation and contact (phone contact, facilitating visits - including in the foster home, and transporting to/from visits).

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

11. Provided the child with a sense of age-appropriate "normalcy," including age-appropriate privacy and privileges.

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

12. Promoted the child's sense of identity through the accumulation of personal possessions, photographs, Life Book, etc.

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

Investigator Review of Foster Parent

Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care INVESTIGATOR REVIEW OF FOSTER PARENT

The purpose of this review is to obtain your feedback on how your Foster Parent has fulfilled the Partnership Plan. It should be completed when the case is transferred, but not later than two weeks from the placement.

Name - Foster Parent(s) /Agency Date

Child(ren)'s Name DOB

The above named child(ren) was recently placed in this foster home, and your input is needed to assess the quality of care and consistency with the Partnership Plan. Your responses are important for the ongoing assessment and development of the foster family and successful implementation of the Partnership Plan.

Please rate the following: 1 – No; 2 – Yes; N/A – Not Applicable; Don't Know

Provide comment(s) to the extent possible as this will be helpful.

The Foster Parent(s):

- Were available at the time you had arranged.

1 – No
2 – Yes
N/A – Not Applicable
Don't Know

Comments: _____

- Upon arrival, welcomed the child into their home by attending to the child's physical and emotional needs and comforted the child.

1 – No
2 – Yes
N/A – Not Applicable
Don't Know

Comments: _____

- Had a clean and safe home.

1 – No
2 – Yes
N/A – Not Applicable
Don't Know

Comments: _____

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
INVESTIGATOR REVIEW OF FOSTER PARENT**

4. Asked meaningful questions about the child.

- 1 – No
- 2 – Yes
- 3 – N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't Know

Comments: _____

5. Seemed comfortable in dealing with diversity.

- 1 – No
- 2 – Yes
- 3 – N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

6. Did you have any concerns about placing the child in this home? Please elaborate.

- 1 – No
- 2 – Yes
- 3 – N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

 Investigator, Agency Date

 Investigator, Agency Date

Foster Parent’s Review of Investigator

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
FOSTER PARENT’S REVIEW OF INVESTIGATOR**
(or whoever placed the child)

The purpose of this review is to obtain feedback on how your Investigator/transportation worker has fulfilled the Partnership Plan and should be completed within 2 weeks of the placement or when the case is reassigned.

Name - Foster Parent(s)/Agency _____
Date

Name –Investigator/Agency _____
Child(ren)’s Name _____
DOB

The above named child(ren) was recently placed in your home, and your input is needed to assess the investigator/transportation worker for his/her consistency with the Partnership Plan. Please fill this out with reference to the person who brought the child to your home or who otherwise transferred custody of the child to you. Your responses are important for the ongoing assessment and development of staff and successful implementation of the Partnership Plan.

Please rate the following: 1 – No; 2 – Yes; N/A - Not Applicable; Don’t know

Provide comment(s) to the extent possible as this will be helpful.

The Investigator/Transportation worker:

1. Came to my home or met me at another location when he/she was expected or called to inform me of the change in time.

1 – No
2 – Yes
N/A – Not Applicable
Don’t know

Comments: _____

2. Provided me with documents necessary to enroll the child in school or child care.

1 – No
2 – Yes
N/A – Not Applicable
Don’t know

Comments: _____

3. Provided me with documents necessary to obtain medical care for the child.

1 – No
2 – Yes
N/A – Not Applicable
Don’t Know

Comments: _____

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
FOSTER PARENT'S REVIEW OF INVESTIGATOR
(or whoever placed the child)**

4. At the time of placement, shared all other relevant information about the child including the reason the child was removed and any health concerns or medications.

Comments: _____

1 – No

2 – Yes

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

5. Provided me with his/her contact information and contact information for his/her supervisor and other staff to be contacted in emergencies.

Comments: _____

1 – No

2 – Yes

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

6. Provided me with the Child Resource Record, including all available social, educational, and medical information on each child within 72 hours of each child's placement.

Comments: _____

1 – No

2 – Yes

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

7. Answered my questions to the best of his/her ability.

Comments: _____

1 – No

2 – Yes

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

8. Informed me of the time of the shelter hearing.

Comments: _____

1 – No

2 – Yes

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
FOSTER PARENT’S REVIEW OF INVESTIGATOR
(or whoever placed the child)**

9. Provided me with personal items belonging to the child (please list or describe).

- 1 – No
- 2 – Yes
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

10. Treated me in a respectful manner as a valued partner in caring for the child.

- 1 – No
- 2 – Yes
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

If you would like to have further conversation regarding your experience, please contact _____ at _____.

Thank you for your participation and feedback.

Foster Parent Name, Licensing Agency Date

Foster Parent Name, Licensing Agency Date

Foster Parent’s Review of Case Manager

Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care FOSTER PARENT’S REVIEW OF CASE WORKER/CARE MANAGER

The purpose of this review is to obtain feedback on how your Case Worker/Care Manager has fulfilled the Partnership Plan.

Name - Foster Parent(s) _____ Date _____

Name –Case Manager/Agency _____ Child(ren)s’ Name/ DOB _____

The above named child(ren) is in or has recently left your care and your input is needed to assess the case manager and his/her consistency with the Partnership for Children Agreement. Your responses are important for the ongoing assessment and development of staff and for successful implementation of the Partnership Plan.

Please rate the following:
1 – Never; 2 – Sometimes; 3 – Consistently/Always; N/A – Not Applicable; Don’t Know

Provide comment(s) for all “1” and “2” scores

The child(ren)’s worker has:

1. Provided support by responding promptly to telephone calls, correspondence and other requests and has provided information regarding agency policy for returning calls, including how to contact the supervisor, manager, etc.

1 – Never
2 – Sometimes
3 – Consistently/Always
N/A – Not Applicable
Don’t know

Comments: _____

2. Made face-to-face contact with me and the child in my home every thirty days.

1 – Never
2 – Sometimes
3 – Consistently/Always
N/A – Not Applicable
Don’t know

Comments: _____

3. During the visits the worker shared relevant information about the child and the case and solicited my input.

1 – Never
2 – Sometimes
3 – Consistently/Always
N/A – Not Applicable
Don’t know

Comments: _____

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
FOSTER PARENT'S REVIEW OF CASE WORKER/CARE MANAGER**

4. Provided the names and phone numbers of staff who could be contacted in emergencies.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

5. Provided basic information upon placement about the child upon placement.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

6. Provided the Child Resource Record, including all available social, educational, medical and legal information on each child upon the child's placement or within 72 hours of each child's placement.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

7. Provided on-going social educational, medical and legal information as it became available.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

8. Provided information/referral for any recommended counseling or training pertaining to the child's special needs, emotional disturbances, developmental disability or other handicaps.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
FOSTER PARENT'S REVIEW OF CASE WORKER/CARE MANAGER**

9. Shared the child's Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment (CBHA) (recommendations) and provided referrals for recommended services.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

10. Solicited my participation and input in developing the case plan, and provided me with copies of the plan and of case plan updates.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

11. Worked in partnership with me as a team member by recognizing my contributions, soliciting my input, and keeping me regularly informed about all aspects of case progress.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

12. Worked with me in a respectful manner to solve problems and informed me of the grievance process.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

13. When there has been a staff change, provided names and numbers of new staff who work with children in my home within two working days.

Comments: _____

- 1 – Never

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
FOSTER PARENT'S REVIEW OF CASE WORKER/CARE MANAGER**

2 – Sometimes

3 – Consistently/Always

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

14. Provided timely notice of all judicial reviews, administrative hearings and department staffings regarding the child(ren) placed in my home and has encouraged my input and/or attendance including by offering alternative methods of participation.

Comments: _____

1 – Never

2 – Sometimes

3 – Consistently/Always

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

15. Provided routine and specially requested information, supervision and assistance that was helpful in caring for the child. This includes information on the child's traumatic experiences and possible impact on behavior.

Comments: _____

1 – Never

2 – Sometimes

3 – Consistently/Always

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

16. Partnered with me to develop a plan (approach) to work with the birth family, promote connections, schedule visits, identify mentoring opportunities to assist the family and improve their parenting skills and provided needed support.

Comments: _____

1 – Never

2 – Sometimes

3 – Consistently/Always

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

17. Took reasonable timely steps toward permanency goal of the child's case plan, i.e., reunification, adoption, or independent living in a timely manner.

Comments: _____

1 – Never

2 – Sometimes

3 – Consistently/Always

N/A – Not Applicable

Don't know

**Partnership for Children in Out-of-Home Care
FOSTER PARENT'S REVIEW OF CASE WORKER/CARE MANAGER**

18. Engaged me in the development of a Safety Plan for the child(ren) when necessary.

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Consistently/Always
- N/A – Not Applicable
- Don't know

Comments: _____

Thank you for your participation and feedback.

Foster Parent Name, Licensing Agency Date

Foster Parent Name, Licensing Agency Date

- These tools were developed by the QPI team in order to implement the partnership plan.
- The tools help identify areas for individual improvement and systems change that will help to make sure that the children and families we serve get the best care that we can provide.
- The tools are designed so that partners can assess each other.
- Comments are more important than numbers.
- The tools can be used as a guide in navigating conversations among members of our team. They can and should be used without waiting for a formal assessment.
- Can be used to build positive relationships with the people we are working with.

Activity E:

Partnership Conflicts

Directions:

1. Pick a topic to role-play from your worksheet that you feel would most likely cause you to become irritated.
2. Act out the role-play with your partner keeping in mind:
 - *Be aware of your own reactions and biases*
 - *Create a safe place where risks can be taken and do not assign blame*
 - *Find or create common ground to solve problem*
 - *Keep an eye on your (agency's) motive for the conversation*
 - *Listen to understand*
 - *Speak to be heard*
3. Be prepared to discuss.

-
- A foster parent calls and complains to upper management that you are taking too long to complete their licensing process.
 - A foster parent calls and asks for a different Licensing Specialist because you are young and inexperienced.
 - A Case Manager does not return calls to the foster parent in a timely manner and they are blaming it on you and the system.
 - A team member infrequently participates in meetings.
 - High demands are placed on members to work for the partnership and still fulfill other responsibilities.
 - Members argue about how to do things.
 - A real conflict participants are facing.
-
-
-

Involving the Foster Parent in the Dependency Process

Unit 5.2:

Co-Parenting and Partnership with Birth Parents

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe techniques to assist foster parents in meeting and establishing relationships with caregivers.
2. Discuss the requirements of foster parents participate in all case activities.
3. Explain how to assist foster parents when difficulties develop during involvement with birth parents.
4. Explain a situation in which foster parents would not be involved with birth parents.
5. Discuss the Licensing Specialist's role in supporting co-parenting.

Foster Parent and Birth Parent Collaboration

- Case management and services are geared toward the family as center of everything they do.
 - Foster parents are partners with the birth family or family of origin. Both families need to be part of big decisions or important events, court appointments, Individual Educational Plans (IEP) meetings, and doctor/dentist appointments. Every opportunity should be used to involve the birth family.
 - Reunification is the preferred ultimate outcome.
 - The birth family or family of origin is the center of everything because reunification is the permanency goal for most cases unless identified as not being in the best interest of the child. They are the experts of their life. The Licensing Specialist and foster parents receive information from them with regard to the child's needs.
 - It is important that the Licensing Specialist respect and honor the birth family's role and participation.
-
-
-

Working with Birth Parents - The Icebreaker Meeting

Icebreaker meetings focus on the time when foster parents and birth parents initially meet.

- The purpose of the icebreaker meeting is twofold:
 - To share important information about a child
 - To be the first step in building a relationship between the child's birth parents and the new caregivers
 - Both of these purposes are critical in reducing the trauma the child has experienced as a result of placement

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has published a comprehensive guide to Icebreaker Meetings and it is available as a resource at www.aecf.org.

Show Time



Icebreaker Meetings: Connecting Birth and Foster Parents

Co-Parenting and Bridging the Gap

- Co-parenting can be seen as a continuum having some benchmarks that would take foster parents to the next level of interaction with birth parents. The benchmarks include:
 - Supporting parenting
 - Meeting together
 - Working on a plan together
- Supporting Parenting:
 - In this piece of building the relationship, foster parents may not really know or have much contact with the birth parent.
 - Sometimes the parent has to do some work before fully “coming to the table”.
 - Even if a parent cannot fully participate with the team on a plan at first, foster parents can still begin to build the relationship.
- Meeting Together:
 - When parents are participating in visitation and team planning, they may have more opportunities to build rapport.
 - This is important if they are to build future trust
- Working on Plan Together:
 - The plan’s center on parenting and creating a safe and stable home for their children.
 - As the person who is the current caregiver, the foster parent’s mentoring has the potential to be one of the most effective aspects of the work the families are doing.
 - Their mentoring and support help children and parents come back together with a personal and individualized approach.

There are four specific categories to bridge the gap of separation between children and their families.

1. Encourage the exchange of information between birth parents and foster parents.
2. Ensure that foster parents and birth parents attend meetings.
3. Assist birth parents in welcoming foster parents in birth parent’s home.
4. Assist foster parents in welcoming birth parents in foster parent’s home.

Show Time



Bridging the Gap: The Birth Parent-Foster Parent Relationship – Part 2

Activity F:
Licensing Specialist - Supporting the Bridge

Directions: Using your worksheet, record ideas on what Licensing Specialists can do to support the foster parent/birth parent (FP/BP) relationship while the foster serves as the bridge between birth parents and their children.

ENCOURAGE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN BP AND FP

ENSURE THAT FP/BP ATTEND MEETINGS

ASSIST BP IN WELCOMING FP TO BP HOME

ASSIST FP IN WELCOMING BP TO FP HOME

Team Decisions for Co-Parenting

In addition to the Team decisions above, there are additional opportunities for making team decisions including:

- Educational planning
- Selecting extracurricular activities
- Church attendance
- Membership in community organizations
- Celebrating birthdays
- Celebrating holidays and maintaining cultural traditions
- Selecting summer camps and activities
- Clothes selection, hairstyles, and personal grooming
- Jobs
- Large purchases
- Dating
- Consequences

Foster Parent Challenges in Working with Birth Parents

1. Birth parent may initially exhibit feelings of anger or resentment towards the resource family.
2. Children may feel conflicted by loyalties to both their foster and birth families.

Occasionally there are safety risks when working closely with birth families. A foster family should never feel that their safety or the safety of their family is at risk when working with birth families. Although co-parenting is strongly encouraged, there are a minimal number of situations when safety concerns must be considered. These include:

- The safety of the birth parents: Safe to be physically and emotionally capable of contact with the child, and over time, possibly with the foster parents without endangering anyone. There may be a “No Contact” order due to egregious abuse or a parent’s extensive history with DCF, or at the recommendation of a mental health professional.
- The safety of the child: Her/his readiness for a given level of contact as she/he may be recovering and healing from trauma.
- The safety of the foster parents: Ensuring that the foster parents and household members are not exposed to any danger through contact.

3. Sometimes, a child's behavior becomes more challenging before or after a visit with the birth family.
4. Having different viewpoints can easily lead to triangulation and conflict.
 - Triangulation is the tension between three parties. Because of the circumstances that create the foster parent/birth parent relationship as well as their shared concern and love of a child, triangulation can be particularly painful and difficult.
 - Triangulation occurs between people when they are engaged in work or a process together and hold different roles. At times, when working together, two of the people may join together in ways that both strengthen their relationship but can leave the third person left out, blamed, or marginalized.
 - Whenever there is triangulation, it is uncomfortable, especially when you are the one left out, blamed, or marginalized.

Activity G:

Resolving Challenges and Supporting Quality Parenting

Directions: In small groups, discuss and respond to the question you were assigned.

As the Licensing Specialist, what is your role in resolving these conflicts?

How can the Licensing Specialist help the foster parent deal with challenging situations in co-parenting?

If the conflicts are not resolved in a timely manner and with team satisfaction, what might be repercussions for you as the Licensing Specialist?

How can the Licensing Specialist avoid triangulation between themselves, foster parents, and others on the team?

Working through Conflict

These steps help in working through conflict in general and are particularly important around shared parenting, where the field is ripe for triangulation to grow.

- **Step 1: Understand your role:** Our primary roles revolve around providing a safe place for children while their families try to work on their tasks towards reunification. Focusing on the long term goal and how to get there while building a sense of extended family is key to success.
- **Step 2: Get to safety:** Foster parents need to be in a calm, regulated place so they can be as non-threatening and non-reactive as possible. This is particularly important when we consider that the trauma history and the topics it will create are likely to be a cause of the conflict: the trauma of abuse, the trauma of loss and separation, and the trauma of placement in another family.
- **Step 3: Gain perspective:** We need to step back and try to understand the perspectives of the other people involved. Reflect on your own part in the dilemma in order to be able to empathize with others.
- **Step 4: Take actions that allow for safety of others:** Bring the qualities of humility, genuineness, openness, and triangulation is the tension between three parties. Because of the circumstances that create the foster parent/birth parent relationship as well as their shared concern and love of a child, triangulation can be particularly painful and difficult.

The Case Plan as a Road Map

The Case Plan is a road map for children and families from start to finish.

- While some of the aspects of the case plan will direct visitation requirements, there is intent during the period of reunification, the team will increasingly give birth parents a chance to demonstrate their changes and to learn or practice behaviors that will lead to safe return.
- The foster parent tasks will mostly include well-being tasks or the tasks of meeting the child's physical, medical, educational, and emotional needs.
- While the child is in the foster home, it is the foster parent's responsibility to identify key tasks that are typical and important to parenting and, when safe to do so, include the birth parents in those tasks. This serves many purposes:
 - In addition to promoting visits with birth parents, the information that parents have on their children and the mentoring foster parents can do in those moments is priceless.
 - Schoolwork and activities may also represent times when foster parents will coordinate and attend with birth parents.
- For emotional and psychiatric or counseling, having birth parents available may be very helpful to the process.

Included in the Case Plan

- Permanency goals
- Reasons that the child(ren) came into care
- Parental changes that must occur in the family to make it possible for child(ren) to return home and a listing of services that must be offered or available to help with the changes
- Plans to meet child(ren)'s needs while they are in the care of the state and agency
- Timeframes and future court dates

Tasks for Caregivers

The tasks for adult caregivers will list out the responsibilities that foster parents have for providing for the child/children in their care. There are considerations for basic needs, common to all children, and then there are considerations for special needs related to the specific needs and goals for each child.

These tasks are the business of the team, particularly in regard to the role of the caregiver, the role of the Case Manager, and the role of the Guardian ad Litem. Between the three, these tasks will be carried out and monitored to make sure that the child's needs for safety, well-being, normalcy, and permanency are met.

Over time, as the birth parents progress through their plan and as the team works with parents, more responsibility will be assumed by parents in anticipation of reunification.

The role of the foster parent is critical during the case planning process. Things on a case plan must be completed, so if foster parents have concerns or recommendations they should be encouraged to provide those to the Case Manager, Guardian ad Litem, and the court.

Foster parents should be informed about what their tasks are and if that has not been clearly communicated they should be encouraged to ask questions of the Case Manager and other partners. The foster parent tasks will mostly include well-being tasks, or the tasks of meeting the child's physical, medical, educational, and emotional needs.

While some of the aspects of the case plan will direct visitation requirements, there is an intent during the period of reunification, the team will increasingly give birth parents a chance to demonstrate their changes and to learn or practice behaviors that will lead to safe return.

Activity H:
Case Plan Review

Directions:

1. Review the Case Plan.
2. Respond to the following questions.
3. Be prepared to share with the class.

Do the tasks seem reasonable?

Would the caregiver have the resources to fulfill the tasks listed?

Would any of the caregiver tasks require additional resources?

How can you assist the foster parent in obtaining the resources needed?
