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## Early Childhood Court Icebreaker Process Flow (Pinellas Only)

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When a new family is accepted into the ECC program, an email will be sent to the Senior Director of Operations and/or the Operations Specialist who champions ECC cases by the Assistant State's Attorneys office and/or by one of the case managers with Unified Family Court. The email will contain the name of the child and mother on the case.

At this time, there is one unit, with DFL, assigned to ECC cases. (CMS: Elizabeth Mahoney/CM: Kerline Raymonvil). Once the initial email is received, the Operations Specialist will email the DFL case manager and supervisor to notify them that a new case has been accepted. The Operations Specialist will also email a representative with Project HOPE to notify them. The Operations Specialist will then send an email to all Pinellas Operations Specialists who staff case transfers. This is done so that everyone is aware that the case needs to be assigned to DFL when it comes through the case transfer process.

Next, the case information should be recorded on the tracker/spreadsheet. This spreadsheet can be located on the "G" drive, under "Parent2Parent Icebreaker Meetings" and then "Parent2Parent Icebreaker Data and Trackers". The spreadsheet is labeled "FY2015-2016 ECC Icebreaker Tracker". Several items of case information are logged here. The OPS champion will search the case in FSFN for the child's current placement with contact information, as well as the parents' names and contact information.

\*For ECC cases only: Icebreakers will be conducted with all caregivers, including relatives and non-relatives. Each parent should have their own meeting with the caregiver, unless it is necessary to combine for some reason.

The Operations Specialist champion will attempt to initiate contact with the biological parents and caregiver as soon as possible after being notified of the new family to arrange the icebreaker meeting. The Operations Specialist will first contact the caregivers and then the birth parents. The Operations Specialist will introduce his or herself, discuss the goal of the co-parenting initiative, and attempt to coordinate a face-to-face Icebreaker meeting as soon as possible-the goal is within 48 hours of notification.

The Operations Specialist will find a mutually agreed upon time and date for the first “Ice Breaker Meeting” with the caregiver and birth parents. (The location of the meeting is TBD, possibly offsite (family partnership visitation center-North Clearwater, New Port Richey, or Hudson). A conference call may be considered as a last resort to overcome transportation/schedule/discomfort concerns. The child(ren) may attend, but it is preferable if they do not, as the child’s presence may interrupt the flow of the meeting. If the child(ren) must attend, it is imperative to ensure the parent is authorized visitation and that the foster parent is approved to supervise.

The Operations Specialist will facilitate the “Ice Breaker Meeting”

- The Operations Specialist will explain the purpose / goal of the meeting, as well as the agenda. Introduce the participants and clarify each role and responsibility.
- The foster parent speaks first to relieve the birth parent’s anxiety of not knowing where or who the child is with. (How the child is doing, description of home, rules, family, expectations, etc.)
- The birth parent will then share information about their child using the “About My Child” questionnaire as a guide. The Operations Specialist fills the form in as information is given and prompts discussion by asking questions from this form.
- The biological parent(s) will complete the Eco-Map for each child with the assistance of the Operations Specialist to identify who is closest to the child.
- The Operations Specialist will document the communication plan developed by all parties at the “Ice Breaker meeting”. The court ordered visitation plan will be discussed. The Operations Specialist will ask the caregiver if he/she is comfortable supervising visits. If an agreement can be reached for communication and/or visitation, contact numbers are exchanged between with the biological parent(s) and caregivers.
- The Operations Specialist will clarify any outstanding questions and wrap up the meeting. (Total time 45-60 minutes)

The Operations Specialist will create a meeting in FSFN under “other meeting”. The Operations Specialist will upload the meeting template, the “About My Child” form, the “Eco-Map,” and any other applicable documentation into the meeting icon. The Operations Specialist will then document that an icebreaker meeting has occurred in a note to file-general in the FSFN case. The note should reference that the meeting and attachments are located in the meeting tab. The CTS review template will also note that an “Ice Breaker meeting” has or has not occurred. The tracker/spreadsheet should then be updated with the date the meeting was held or the reason why meeting was not held. The Operations Specialist should also email the DFL CM, supervisor, and Project HOPE to indicate the meeting was held, so that they can be prepared for court.