



Traditional (Non-ECC) Icebreaker Process Flow

When a child enters licensed foster care homes, the Placement team will send notification the next business day to designated ECA Operations Specialist with child's name, parents name and current placement information. If a case is identified for Early Childhood Court, the designated Operations Specialist will be notified and will be tracked separately (See ECC Icebreaker Process Flow for more information).

Once information has been received, the ECA Operations Specialist will copy and paste the needed information into the Icebreaker Tracking log. The Operations Specialist will go into the FSFN case shell to obtain the parents contact information and case ID number and review the appropriateness of parent to parent contact. The CPI or CM may need to be contacted for further assessment and information.

An icebreaker meeting will also not be held if:

1. The goal is expedited TPR (CPI) or adoption (if CM)
2. The parent(s) is/are incarcerated
3. The child is placed with a relative/non-relative
4. The child is placed in a group home

The ECA Operations Specialist will first contact the foster parents and then the birth parents. The ECA 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 ECA Operations Specialist will find a mutually agreed upon time and date for the first "Icebreaker Meeting" with the foster parents and birth parents. (The location of the meeting is TBD, possibly off sight (family partnership visitation center (North Clearwater, New Port Richey, Hudson). A conference call may be considered as a last resort to overcome transportation/schedule/discomfort concerns. The first meeting should be held no later than 14 days from date of placement. The child(ren) may attend, but it is preferable if they do not. 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 ECA Operations Specialist will facilitate the “Icebreaker Meeting”

- The ECA 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 share information about their child using the “About My Child” questionnaire as guide (Operations specialist fills the form in as information is given).
- The biological parent(s) will complete the Eco-Map for each child.
- If the child is present, he/she will share information about his/herself and express any desires or ask questions they may have.
- The ECA Operations Specialist will document the communication plan developed by all parties at the “Icebreaker meeting”. The court ordered visitation plan will be discussed. The Operations Specialist will ask the foster parent if he/she will supervise visits or agree to exchange contact numbers with the biological parent(s) to continue communication going forward.
- ECA Operations Specialist will clarify any outstanding questions and wrap up the meeting. (Total time 45-60 minutes)

ECA Operations Specialist will create a meeting in FSFN under “other meeting”. The operations specialist will upload the meeting template, the “About My Child” or “All About Me” forms, 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 “Icebreaker meeting” has or has not occurred. The Icebreaker tracking log will be updated with date meeting held or reason why meeting was not held. The tracker can be found on the G drive under Parent2Parent Icebreaker Meetings.

The Icebreaker data is tracked and calculated on a daily basis. The most recent information is presented at Foster Parent Task Force Meetings and on the Coparenting Initiative Calls. In addition, the Senior Director of Operations, Jess Sternthal, requires the information be given to her by COB on the 3rd of each month. The information will also be recorded on a Word document and placed in the Icebreaker section of the G Drive under the folder “Data Roll Up.” The self-imposed goal is to facilitate an Icebreaker meeting on at least 75% of qualifying foster homes entered for the given timeframe (month, quarter, year, ongoing). This is calculated using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Icebreakers Held}}{(\text{Total FH entered} - \# \text{ of Homes Not Qualified} - \text{Already Coparenting})}$$

Common Barriers:

Already Coparenting:

If it is determined that the foster parent is already communicating with the biological parents, and the foster parent does not feel a formal IB meeting is necessary, OPS will ask the foster parent to fill out the "About My Child" form with the parent ASAP and return it to OPS. The form will be uploaded into the Meeting tab of FSFN.

Unable to be Reached:

If the biological parents cannot be reached during the tracking process, a letter will be sent to the last known address asking for the parent to call the Operations Specialist.

Foster Parent Unwilling:

If the foster parent is unwilling to meet the biological parent, the Operations Specialist will contact the appropriate Director of Licensing to explain the reason why the foster parent is not comfortable participating. Beforehand, the Operations Specialist should attempt to educate the foster parent on the importance of coparenting, the structure of the Icebreaker meeting, and offer to conduct the meeting via phone instead.