

Transition Planning Guide

Preparing for the move

Current caregiver shares information about the child in a write up to include:

- Anything that will help the new caregiver in caring for the child.
- The child's typical routine – bedtime, meal time, bath time, home work, etc
- Likes and dislikes – foods, games, hugs, etc.
- Strengths and areas of improvements
- Favorite foods
- Comfort items
- Stressful times and fears
- Effective discipline techniques
- Hobbies, extra curricular activities, etc.

Trade pictures

- Both families share pictures
- Foster family provides the child with a photo album commemorating his time with them
- Receiving family sends pictures to the foster family to hang in child's room and for them to talk about the new family

How to tell the child?

- This should be a team decision made by those that know the child best – foster family, therapist, case manager, etc.
- It should be explained at a age appropriate level.
- If possible explain the timeframe and steps towards the move.
- Don't over promise.

When should it occur?

- Week day or weekend? – It shouldn't be during a time that is rushed
- Allow time to pack all of the child's items.
- What is going on in the child's life at that time? School, little league, birthday party, school play, etc.
- How will this impact school? Was an ESSA staffing held? Testing, grades, clubs, etc.
- Can the move wait until after the important event?
- When is the best time for the child to say good bye to everyone important to them?
 - At school
 - After school care
 - Day care
 - Neighborhood
 - Foster family members

Who will take the child?

- Ideally the foster parent should take the child to the new placement or meet the new caregiver in a neutral location.
- Does the case manager need to be present?
- Do we need to involve the Child Placing Agency to support the foster parent?

The move

- This will be an emotional time for everyone but the big people need to put on a happy face for the child.
- If appropriate, take pictures.

After the move

- Ideally everyone would stay in touch – visits, back up baby sitter, phone calls, pictures.
- The sending parent needs to respect the boundaries of the receiving parent.
- Celebrate that you made a difference in a child's life

Transition Planning Resources

Child Centered Transitions (QPI Florida Training Video) – 7 minutes

Charles H. Zeana, Jr., M.D., Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, Tulane University – School of Medicine

<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/qpi/transitions/transitions.html>

Improving Transitions for Infants...What Do They Need? (Grieving Infant and Toddlers: What Do We See? What Do We Need?) – 89:33 minutes

Julie Ribaudó, LMSW, ACSW, IMH-E (IV)

Introduction by Jennifer Rodriguez, Executive Director, Youth Law Center

<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/QPI/cali/GrievingInf/GrievingInfants.html>

The Science of Attachment: Implications for Foster Care in Early Childhood – Abridged Version (Just in Time Florida Training Video) – 66:56 minutes

Charles H. Zeanah, M.D., Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, Tulane University School of Medicine

<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/qpi/sciattachabridge/start.html>

Supporting Children and Families During Transitions: Part 1 – Grief, Loss, and Child Welfare (Just in Time Florida Training Video) – 44:31 minutes

Dr. Kate Rosenblum, Assistant Research Scientist, University of Michigan & Julie Ribaudó, LMSW, ACSW, IMH-E (IV) Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Michigan Quality Parenting Initiative Florida Just in Time Training

<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/qpi/supportchild/start.html>

Techniques For a More Effective Transition (Just in Time Florida Training Video)

Loryn E. Smith, MSW – 52:03 minutes

<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/qpi/techtrans/techtrans.html>

When Children Move ... We Can Do Better (QPI Florida Training Video) – 23:23 minutes

Jennifer Cardinal, Foster/Adoptive Parent, Dania Guzman, Foster/Adoptive Parent, Erik Guzman-Chavis, Dania's Adoptive Son, Anna Brown, Foster Parent, Roberto Varela, Adoptive/Guardian Parent

<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/qpi/bettertransition/bettertransition.html>

Adopting and Parenting Teens: A Journey of Hope and Healing (Just In Time Florida Training Video) – 77:10 minutes

Loryn E. Smith, M.S.W., Director, Woven Basket Christian Adoption Services

<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/qpi/teenadopt/teenadopt.html>

www.qpiflorida.org

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Transitions

Thoughtful transitions are critical for the child's best interests and foster parent retention. Below are materials related to this topic.

409.145 (2)(c) *Transitions*

1. Once a caregiver accepts the responsibility of caring for a child, the child will be removed from the home of that caregiver only if:
 - a. The caregiver is clearly unable to safely or legally care for the child;
 - b. The child and his or her biological family are reunified;
 - c. The child is being placed in a legally permanent home pursuant to the case plan or a court order; or
 - d. The removal is demonstrably in the child's best interest
2. In the absence of an emergency, if a child leaves the caregiver's home for a reason provided under subparagraph 1., the transition must be accomplished according to a plan that involves cooperation and sharing of information among all persons involved, respects the child's developmental stage and psychological needs, ensures the child has all of his or her belongings, allows for a gradual transition from the caregiver's home and, if possible, for continued contact with the caregiver after the child leaves.

New! FL Administrative Code Ch. 39, definition

REPORTS AND MEMOS

- CLS PowerPoint from the 2016 Florida Conference (March 2016)
- Transition Planning for Children in Out of Home Care (April 2013)
- Transitioning Children in Care: A Review of Practices Around the State (December 2010)
- Guidelines on Moving Infants and Young Children (10/1/2010)
- CLS Transition Considerations

FORMS, TEMPLATES AND RESOURCES

- Transition Plan
- Permanency Staffing: Caregiver Input Form
- Transition Information Sheet
- Sample Court Order with Transition Language
- **New!** Transition Planning Checklist / OurKids FL
- Transition Planning Resources
- Florida Children's Legal Services Managing Attorneys Contact Information

TRANSITION OUT OF CARE RESOURCES

- Transitions
- Transition Planning Training

PANEL / INFORMATIONAL VIDEOS

- Child Centered Transitions
- When Children Move...We Can Do Better
- Just in Time Webshow: "The One About Transitions & the Work at Children's Legal Services"

IN-DEPTH TRAINING VIDEOS

- Every Child Needs a Transition Plan
- Improving Transitions for Infants...What Do They Need?
- Supporting Children and Families During Transitions
- Techniques for a More Effective Transition
- QPI Florida Mini Conference: Transitions for Children



Florida abuse hotline | 1-800-962-2873



The Quality Parenting Initiative is a joint project of the
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C.R.E.S.T. Statement

(Culture of Respect, Empowerment, Support and Trust)

To: CBCCFL Partners

From: Glen Casel, CEO

Date: May 18, 2017

Re: CREST Best Practice: Transition Planning essential when making placement changes

As you know, and our CREST values reflect, the best interests of the children we serve must always be our top priority. While the below information is not new, I did want to remind our entire CMO network about the need to ensure that careful transition planning is done before any child undergoes a change in his or her placement, whether that change involves reunification to parents; a move to or among family members; a move from one foster home to another; or to an adoptive or guardian placement.

Trust and attachment are the building blocks that make up the foundation on which our children build their futures. While we have always known that moving kids from one placement to another can be stressful, we have learned that when we move kids without a proper transition plan it can do damage. How we treat our kids and how we move them affects their ability to trust, attach, and build relationships in the future. This applies to all children: infants, toddlers, school agers, pre-teens, and teenagers.

It is the expectation of CBCCFL that when we move a child from one place to another we have a transition plan in place that recognizes the child's needs, attachments, and ability to adjust to change. Behaviors, uncertainty, fear and excitement will all be a part of the process. Team members must work together to create a child centered plan and be prepared to adjust based on the child's needs. This pertains to all moves including reunification to parents, moves to family members, from one foster home to another, or to an adoptive or guardian placement.

Attached you will find some basic guidelines in things to consider when moving a child. Over the next month CBCCFL will be offering training on how to assist with transitions. Foster parents, biological parents, case managers, guardian ad litem, etc. all play an important role and the team must be on the same page.

Moves aren't easy on anyone, but our kids don't have a choice about being a part of our system. We owe it to them to take the time to properly plan for their transitions. Children may be resilient, but we need to teach them about the importance of relationships through easy and difficult situations.

Thank you for everything you do for our children and your commitment to creating healthy adults.



TRANSITION PLAN GUIDELINES

Things to consider when moving a child from one placement to another:

1. If this is not a move to permanency is there any way to avoid this move? Have we done everything we could to stabilize the current placement?
2. Is this new placement the right one? – We want each placement to be the last one prior to permanency.
3. What is the best way for this child to make the move? – Not all children are the same.
4. How long should the transition take? – The move should be child driven and not system driven.
5. In determining the transition plan, have we talked to all the team members that know the child best? – All team members must be prepared to work with other team members.
6. Does the child understand why the move is occurring? – This should be explained at an age appropriate level.
7. Is the team prepared to change the plan based on the child's needs? – Things may go better than expected and the team needs to be prepared to transition more quickly if the child is ready. Or slow down, if the child is not ready.
8. Can there be visits and phone calls between the child and both caregivers prior to the move and after the move?
9. Can these caregivers support one another and maintain their individual relationships with the child?
10. What else can we do to help the child prepare and adjust to the transition?