

Transition Planning

Letter from Anna Brown, Leader Foster Parent Trainer at Community Based Care of Central Florida, explaining how these resources are currently being utilized:

I do meetings with foster families to learn their strengths, needs and the types of children they can best meet their needs. To get to know the children I request copies of their Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessments, current treatment plans, Sexual Safety Plans (if applies) and talk to people that know them best (current caregiver, DCM, GAL, etc.) In some cases I meet the youth. I ask the sending family to do an extensive write up on the child. See attached Transition Planning Guide. From there, when I make a match I share as much information with both parties (parent and child). We then schedule a meeting and outline a transition plan.

I encourage my families to attend my Every Child Needs a Transition Plan training. I included the link to the training below and attached the handouts from the training. When I have families I matched attend the training we talk through a customized transition plan for that child. Our families do some pretty incredible things for our kids. We had one foster parent doing sleep overs at the home that was receiving the children. I also reference the Dr. Zeanah training on transitions and the Improving Transitions for Infants...What Do They Need? (Grieving Infant and Toddlers: What Do We See? What Do We Need?)

Every Child Needs A Transition Plan training

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

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.
- 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 Ribaudo, LMSW, ACSW, IMH-E (IV)
Introduction by Jennifer Rodriguez, Executive Director, Youth Law Center
<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/QPI/california/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. Zeana, 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 Ribaudo, 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

Click on "Videos" – on top right of screen
Click on "Just In Time Training Videos"
Click on "Topics"