

APPENDIX I: HANDOUTS

HANDOUT #2

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The caregiver can:

1. identify specific reasons why family is important to a child.
2. describe emotions and behaviours that families may present as a result of the removal and placement of a child.
3. identify and describe the roles of caregivers when working together with the child's family.
4. describe ways of involving the child's family during removal; placement; and, where applicable, the reunification process.
5. identify and describe skills when working with the child's family.

HANDOUT #3

STANDARDS FOR FOSTER HOMES

STANDARD A.2 Involving Children and Their Families in Decision-making

Children and their families are consulted and encouraged to express their views, according to their abilities, about significant decisions affecting them.

Commentary

Significant decisions affecting children and families include those that are seen from their perspective as significant. Children and families need to be able to express their views in clear and constructive ways as part of the decision-making process. The practice of consulting with children and families involves sharing information, listening to views, considering views, and finding ways of incorporating views into decisions. Children and youth in-care often sense that their fates are decided by unfamiliar adults who make decisions over which the child or youth has no control. When social workers and caregivers demonstrate to children and youth that their views will be seriously considered, children and youth are encouraged to develop trust in adults and self-determination.

Results for Children

A.2.1 Children confirm that they are consulted and are able to express their views about decisions that affect them.

A.2.2 Children confirm their views are not automatically subordinated to the views of their families or others.

A.2.3 Children and their family members confirm that, within the context of the child's comprehensive plan of care, they are consulted in decisions which affect them.

Caregiver Practices

A.2.4 The caregiver consults with the child regarding significant decisions that affect the child.

A.2.5 Within the context of the child's comprehensive plan of care, the caregiver consults with the child's family regarding significant decisions that affect the family and the lives of their children

A.2.6 The opinions and views of children and their families are listened to and the caregiver ensures that those views are considered in the decision-making process.

STANDARD C.2 Maintaining Relationships

Children are encouraged and supported to maintain relationships with their families and others of significance to them in accordance with each child's Comprehensive Plan of Care.

Commentary

Continuity of quality relationships is one of the most important factors in achieving positive outcomes for children. Child welfare research indicates that children who experience continuity of quality relationships are less likely to have ongoing emotional and behavioural problems. Quality relationships provide a crucial network of support in the child's life. Whenever possible, and in accordance with the comprehensive plan of care, children and youth are supported and encouraged to maintain and strengthen relationships with parents, siblings, extended family members, cultural community, and any other significant relationships.

Results for Children

C.2. 1 Children confirm that they are encouraged and helped to maintain or restore contact with their parents, families, and significant others in accordance with the comprehensive plan of care.

C.2.2 Children confirm that, in situations where it is determined by court order or in their comprehensive plans of care that it is not in their best interests to have contact with their parents, families or significant others, caregivers have made efforts to assist them in coming to terms with that decision.

C.2.3 Children confirm that they are provided reasonable opportunities to receive visitors in the home, including family members and friends.

Caregiver Practices

C.2.5 The caregivers fulfill their roles and responsibilities with the child's family members, as specified in the Comprehensive Plan of Care.

C.2.6 The caregiver encourages the child to have contact with his family unless access has been denied or restricted by the child's social worker, or court order.

C.2.7 Unauthorized denials of visits, telephone contacts or correspondence with family members are not used by the caregiver as consequences for the child.

C.2.8 When the Comprehensive Plan of Care indicates that a child cannot have contact with his parents or family members, the caregiver helps the child come to terms with this.

C.2.9 The caregiver encourages the child to develop and maintain positive friendships.

C.2. 10 Within the context of the child's comprehensive plan of care, the caregiver provides reasonable opportunities for the child to receive visitors in the home, including family members and friends.

HANDOUT #4

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHILD'S FAMILY

- Connections with our families are our most profound relationships. Much of who we are in the world is learned very early from our families.
- Families are a source of identity, knowledge, comfort, and support.
- Family relationships are the principal way children learn to feel loved, worthwhile, capable, and responsible.
- Families are important to establish our personal identity. This sense of identity and the images of parents become part of the child. The child identifies with the family and suffers a loss of identity as well as a loss of relationships if permanently separated. Because they identify with their parents, children see any criticism of the parents as a criticism of themselves.
- How children and youth feel about themselves is related to their sense of family and belonging, and the respect and dignity they feel about their cultural heritage.
- Breaking of relationships with family through death, divorce, or removal is very traumatic for a child.
- There is great diversity in family patterns; each family has its own culture and way of doing things.
- Families have values that help them make decisions about what to do and say and how to see the rest of the world. Each family responds differently to problems and choices.
- Family plays an important role in the healthy growth and development of children and youth.

HANDOUT #5

EXAMPLES OF LOSS AS EXPERIENCED BY THE CHILD'S FAMILY

- Loss of their children.
- Loss of control over day-to-day decisions.
- Loss of their role as parents/family.
- Loss of self-esteem if they feel they have been inadequate or failed in meeting their parental responsibilities.
- Loss of income or other related benefits associated with having the child at home.
- Loss of the emotional support and comfort of their children in day-to-day living.
- Loss of respect in the eyes of the extended family or their community.

HANDOUT # 6

LIST OF POSSIBLE EMOTIONS, BEHAVIOURS AND REASONS

Emotion	Behaviour	Reason
Shame	Reluctance to talk to anyone	"I'm a failure as a parent."
Guilt	Defensive behaviour	"I've failed." "I shouldn't feel relief that my child is away."
Sadness	Tears	"I miss my child."
Fear	Angry outbursts	"I might lose my child for good."
Anxiety	Excessive phoning	"Is my child ok?"
Relief	Withdrawal, non-participation	"Things are easier at home."
Anger	Blaming, accusing	Many of the above reasons and more.
Appreciation	Giving thanks	"Thank you for your support."

It should be noted that the whole range of these emotions is likely, but that all are often marked by anger. Anger is often a surface emotion that signals other deeper emotions. Also, the above list is not exhaustive, nor are behaviours and reasons necessarily attached to one specific emotion. Remember, these are only

speculations and are not substitutes for listening to families carefully to find out what they think and feel.

HANDOUT # 7

ADVANTAGES OF INVOLVING THE CHILD'S FAMILY

1. Maintains and supports the parent/child relationship.
2. Improves the parents' self-esteem.
3. Parents provide information about the child's development, routines and abilities, likes and dislikes, foods, activities, or any special problems.
4. Allows foster parents to model appropriate behaviour.
5. Helps the child in the transition to return back home.
6. Lets the child's parents know that their role and relationship with the child is recognized and valued.
7. Helps the child's parents to grow in understanding of the child's needs and appropriate expectations of the child.
8. The foster family is able to develop a positive relationship with the child's family resulting in benefits for the child.
9. The child can feel that his family and the foster family like each other.
10. Provides a critical support network as the child moves toward adolescence and adulthood.

HANDOUT #8

POSSIBLE CAREGIVER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THE CHILD'S FAMILY

- Fulfills their roles and responsibilities with the child's family members, as specified in the Child's Comprehensive Plan of Care.
- Encourages the child to have contact with his family unless access has been denied or restricted by the child's worker or court order.
- Provides reasonable opportunities for the child to receive visitors in the home, including family members.
- Promotes and supports the child's relationship with his primary family and extended family through regular contact and visitation.
- Works directly with members of the child's primary family to help strengthen and support them to provide care to the family.
- Assists in the reunification process of children in care with their primary families.
- Knows how visits may affect the feelings and behaviours of children and youth and helps plan and arrange visits that support the child and primary family.
- Knows the importance of strengthening and maintaining relationships between children in care and their families.
- Respects the child's family and cultural heritage and involves the child's family, consistent with the family's cultural background.
- Shares information concerning the child in accordance with the Plan of Care.
- Communicates with the child's family.

HANDOUT #9**WAYS TO INVOLVE THE CHILD'S FAMILY**

The following are some suggestions on ways that have been helpful in involving the child's family. This list is not complete, but gives the caregiver a few ideas.

Involving the Child's Family in Activities

- Complete the child's life book.
- Give family photos of the child to the family.
- Ask the child's family to bring photographs to share with the child. Pictures from the child's past help bring back memories and highlight the positive moments spent with his family.
- Encourage the child to keep and display photos and other family mementos.

- Mention the child's family in your daily conversations with the child. For example, discuss visitation, when the child might return home, the current living situation of the parents, etc.
- Maintain phone contact; encourage family members to phone the child.
- Give parents verbal progress reports.
- Arrange family visits with parents.
- Invite the child's family into the home; encourage or arrange sibling visits.
- Meet child's family at placement.

- Include the child's family in routine tasks with the child such as shopping for clothing. Include family in day-to-day appointments that are important to the child (e.g., dentist, doctor, school meetings, court appearances).
- Encourage family members to attend scheduled meetings, school programs, etc.
- Include parents in milestone events of their child, e.g., birthdays, growth spurts (buying new shoes).
- Attend parenting classes with parents.
- On special days (Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas) invite the child's parents to participate, plan activities, and shop for gifts or help the child to prepare a gift, card, etc.
- Transport the child's family to meetings.

- Learn about the family's culture.
- Attend special cultural events with the family.

Involving the Child's Family in Information-Sharing

- Be curious and respectful about the child and his family.
- Listen to the child talk about family.
- Acknowledge family with the child.
- Share caregivers' experience of their caring for the child with the family.
- Request information about development history (birth weight, age of walking, talking) and past behaviour unavailable elsewhere.
- Recognize the family's expertise in terms of child's developmental history, likes and dislikes, behavioural patterns, etc.
- Take care with the language used with the family (e.g., by not referring to "your child").

- Encourage the child to phone and send cards and letters to his family. Help the child to do so if necessary.
- Initiate phone contact.
- Exchange letter/emails with the family.
- Talk with parents during visits.
- Review child's visits with parent.

- On a regular basis, share information with the child's family regarding the child's daily activity, progress, and growth. It is preferable to discuss such information in the presence of the child.
- Request cultural information from the family.
- Share parenting information.
- Share the child's life book with the parents.
- Share copies of homework and report cards with the family.

Involving the Child's Family in Decision-Making

- Assist in planning the child's return home.
- Consult with family about day-to-day decisions (e.g., what the child will eat, wear, have as toys, bedtime, chores, hobbies).
- Consult with family about periodic decisions (e.g., if child should stay home from school, see a doctor, when the child needs help and what form it will take, religious education, how to wear her hair).
- Consult with the child's family regarding significant decisions that affect the family and the life of their child.

HANDOUT #10

CASE SCENARIOS

CASE SCENARIO #1

You, as a foster parent, have helped to arrange a visit in your home between a 10-year-old foster child and his parent. You welcome the parent and make the parent and child comfortable and offer to bring in some refreshments. You leave the room for a few minutes and when you return to join the child and parent, you determine that something is wrong. You now realize, because of her slurred speech and her difficulty focusing, that the parent is either intoxicated or under the influence of some substance.

CASE SCENARIO #2

It is about 9:30 in the evening in your foster home. You are not expecting any visits from the child's family, as no planned visitation arrangements have been made. There is a sudden loud knocking at the door. When you answer, you find the child's parent at the doorstep. The parent shouts at you with anger demanding that he see his 5-year-old child, who is in bed asleep.

CASE SCENARIO #3

You are the foster parent of a 7-year-old child. The child's family lives out of town and is not able to visit often, but family members phone fairly regularly. Today, when the child's parent phones, you greet the parent pleasantly and then pass the phone to the child and carry on with your activities in the next room. You notice something is wrong when you hear the child crying and responding loudly in an upset way.

CASE SCENARIO #4

You are the foster parent of a child who has been in care in your home for a couple of months. The child's birthday is coming up and you have made plans that include a movie and birthday cake at your home. You phone the child's parents to tell them about the birthday plans and ask them if they want to join you. The parents' response is unusually subdued.

CASE SCENARIO #5

After a lot of discussion and planning with the child, the child's family, and the child's worker, you have arranged an overnight visit for the child in his family's home. It seems everything is organized and the 13-year-old child you are caring for is quite pleased and excited about this visit. You arrive at the parent's home on time and find that the parent is not at

APPENDIX I: HANDOUTS

home. You wait about 40 minutes, but the parent does not show up.