

● ● ● Developing and Maintaining Family Connections




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STATE OF WISCONSIN  Foster Parent Pre-Placement Training

● ● ● Feelings & Emotions Children & Parents Experience


- Birth parents' grief
 - Embarrassment
 - Anger
 - Mistrust
 - Resentment



- Relative caregivers
 - Change of role
 - Resentment
 - Sense of loss
 - Develop trust



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 Foster Parent Pre-Placement Training

● ● ● Voices of foster care



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 Foster Parent Pre-Placement Training

● ● ● We're Not So Different



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● ● ● We're Not So Different

- Have you ever lost your temper and yelled at someone?
- Have you ever gotten a speeding ticket?
- Have you ever been in love?
- Have you lost someone close to you?
- Do you have people that you like to spend time with?
- Do you have hobbies that you enjoy?






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● ● ● Shared Parenting



Working together to reach the best outcome for the child



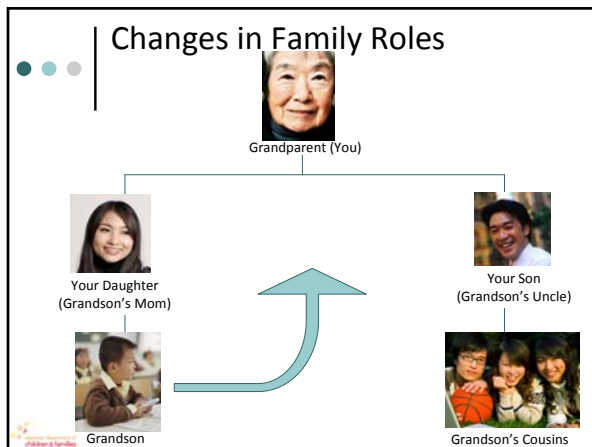
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Family Interactions

- Maintain connections to family
- Facilitate timely reunification
- Evaluate and address any safety issues
- Evaluate and help to improve parenting skills
- Minimize the trauma that was done to the child when they were removed from their parents' care
- Maintain and enhance relationships of children to their siblings and other family members
- Establish and look into other permanency options, if needed







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Family Interactions

- Type and location of interaction
- You will not be responsible for setting this up
- Considerations for relative providers
- Family Interaction Plan

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● ● ● Frequency of Family Interaction

- Within 5 working days of placement
- Weekly interaction
 - MINIMUM requirement!
- Other opportunities for interaction



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● ● ● Sibling Interactions

- Siblings should be placed together when possible and appropriate
- When not placed together, face-to-face interaction at least once monthly
 - Other opportunities for contact
- Loss of connections can lead to hopelessness
- Family interaction cannot be decreased as a punishment
- Family Interaction Plan
 - http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/memos/num_memos/2006/2006-08attach.pdf



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Types of Family Interaction

- send letters or emails to parents
- phone calls
- school & community activities
- help child create cards or gifts for family members
- face-to-face interaction
- holiday gatherings
- religious services
- family meals
- medical appointments
- play dates
- give copies of schoolwork and report cards to parents




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Tips for Positive Family Interactions

- Plan ahead with the child
- Plan an activity for when they return
- Difficulty is normal, and will probably get easier with time
- Let them know that it's okay for them to love their parents more than you. Having this relationship with one doesn't diminish the other.

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Sibling Connections



Sibling connections are very powerful



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The Ties that Bind

(Adapted from the Presley Ridge Foster Parent Training Program)



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● ● ● | Decreasing or Suspending Family Interaction

- You do not have the ability to decrease or suspend family interaction
- Family interaction cannot be used as a punishment, reward, or threat
- Focus on the child's best interests




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● ● ● | When Problems Arise

What do you do??


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● ● ● | Stereotypes

FAMILIES ARE NOWHERE

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Review

Importance of family connections

Birth parents' grief

Sibling interactions

Concerns about family interaction

Changing family roles

Teamwork = best outcomes for the child

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