

Policy and Procedure Manual 5236

Foster Family

A foster family provides temporary out-of-home care for the child.

A. Selection of Foster Family

The goal for selecting a foster family is having the child's first placement be his/her only placement. Case management provider staff shall ensure the child and child's family are fully involved in making this decision to the extent that they are willing and able to participate.

Selection of a foster family that can best meet the needs of the child takes into consideration:

1. Proximity to the child's family in order to facilitate parent/child interaction and reintegration
2. Preservation of the child's racial, cultural, ethnic and religious background
3. Proximity to the school the child was attending when he/she entered out-of-home placement, so the child can continue to attend this same school
4. Interests, strengths and abilities that enable the family to relate to the child's needs, including individual needs, age, interests, intelligence, moral and ethical development, family relationships, educational status, social adjustment and plans for the future
5. Ability to serve as a mentor to the parents to facilitate a more timely reintegration and continue to be a source of support following reintegration
6. Placing siblings together
7. Ability to support and encourage the child's relationship with his/her family and can actively participate in permanency planning for the child
8. Proximity of the foster family to specialized services or facilities that the child may need

B. Information Shared with the Foster Family

To assist the foster family in making an informed decision regarding their acceptance of a particular child, the provider agency shall provide in full the following information as it becomes available:

1. Strengths, needs and behavior of the child
2. Circumstances that necessitated placement
3. Information about the child's family and the child's relationship to the family that may affect the placement
4. Important life experiences and relationships that may affect the child's feelings, behavior, attitudes or adjustment
5. Medical history of the child, including third-party coverage that may be available to the child
6. Education history, to include present grade placement, special strengths and needs
7. Case-plan goals for the child
8. Role of the foster family in helping maintain the parent/child interaction schedule and contact with significant others
9. Role of the foster family in mentoring and serving as a role model for the parents

C. Maintaining the Foster Family Placement

Case management provider staff shall work with foster families to achieve stability of care for children in out-of-home placement.

Stability of care is best achieved when:

1. Children are carefully matched with families who can meet their individual needs.
2. Foster families are adequately prepared and supported to provide services to the child and the family.
3. Foster families partner with parents to obtain the resources necessary to meet the child's needs.
4. Foster families are active members of the planning team for the child and family.

D. Termination of the Foster Family Placement

Except in emergency situations, termination of a placement shall be anticipated as part of the service plan for the child and his/her family, and preparation for this event shall begin well in advance of the expected date of termination. When there is a threatened disruption in the placement, provider staff shall offer services needed to prevent the disruption and maintain placement stability.