Professional Parenting

Foster Parent Training
Session 1
Course Learning Goals

- Participants will be able to make informed decisions about fostering/adopting for their family.

- Participants will understand their important roles and commitments as a member of the Department of Children and Family Services professional foster care team.

- Participants will be prepared to navigate the foster care system.

- Participants will be prepared to provide quality parenting, normal childhood or youth experiences and trauma-sensitive care to the foster children or youth in their home.

- Participants will participate in the mutual selection and assessment process.
Day One Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the DCFS Safety Focused Practice and how it relates to your role as a foster parent.

- Explain DCFS’ mission and vision and how your role as a foster parent fits into the foster care system.

- Identify the Louisiana’s court process and the key partners in the foster care system.

- Articulate any attributes or issues that children or youth may have that you would not be able to accept in your home.

- Identify any issues you may have that would make you ineligible for foster parenting.

- Explain how the mutual selection process works during the foster parent training and certification process.
Ice-Breaker

GROUND RULES

Respectful
The GOAL of the DCFS Advanced Safety-Focused Practice is to:

- achieve safe and permanent homes for children, where their well-being needs are met, while safely reducing the number of children in foster care.
DCFS and Partners

Pelican Center for Children & Families

Private Child Placing Agencies
Provide TFC foster homes for children in care.

Group Homes
Provide emergency and therapeutic residential group care programs.

LCWTA

Department of Children & Family Services
Building a Stronger Louisiana

Louisiana CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates FOR CHILDREN

Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries
The Mission of DCFS is:

– Caring for the safety and well-being of all Louisiana’s people.
The Vision of DCFS is to:

– Treat all people with dignity, compassion and respect while providing services and integrity.
LOUISIANA
To ensure EXCELLENT PARENTING for every child under the care of the child welfare agency.
What Makes A Great Foster Parent

• Foster parents and kinship caregivers in LA are respected members of the professional team that determines and puts the child’s best interests first.

• They are well educated and informed about their roles and responsibilities, child development, the effects of trauma on children and families and the judicial system.
What Makes A Great Foster Parent

• Great foster parents co-parent with birth parents for a successful overall outcome for the child, birth parents and foster parents with the support of DCFS, CASA, the judicial system and other partners.

• Foster parents are given the resources to meet the immediate needs of children and their families while providing opportunities for them to thrive long term.
Activity
Partnership for Children
Partnership Commitments

- Services and Support
- Respectful Partnership
- Responsible Placement
- Obtaining and Maintaining Records
- Professional Behavior
- Professional Development
- Respect for Child’s Connections
- Smooth Transitions
- Child Advocacy
- Family Mentoring and Continuity for Child
- Mental and Physical Well-being for Child(ren)
- Excellent Parenting
- Supporting School Success
- Avoiding Disruption for Child(ren)
- Case Planning
- Child’s Connections
- Family Mentoring and Continuity for Child
- Mental and Physical Well-being for Child(ren)
ASFA

The Adoptions and Safe Families ACT (ASFA):

- Signed into federal law in 1997
- Fundamental change to child welfare
- Health and safety became primary concerns
- Promotes permanent homes for children
- Seven major outcomes for children
- Requires the states to comply to receive federal funding
Overarching Outcomes for Children

OUTCOMES
- Safety
- Permanency
- Well-Being
Overarching Outcomes for Children

OUTCOMES
- Safety
- Permanency
- Well-Being

SAFETY
- First protected from abuse & neglect
- Maintained in homes when possible
Overarching Outcomes for Children

SAFETY
First protected from abuse & neglect
Maintained in homes when possible

PERMANENCY
Reunification
Adoption
Guardianship

OUTCOMES
Safety
Permanency
Well-Being
Overarching Outcomes for Children

**Outcome**
- Safety
- Permanency
- Well-Being

**SAFETY**
- First protected from abuse & neglect
- Maintained in homes when possible

**PERMANENCY**
- Reunification
- Adoption
- Guardianship

**Well-Being**
- Families have enhanced capacity
- Appropriate services for educational, physical and mental health needs

**OUTCOMES**
- Safety
- Permanency
- Well-Being
Journey Through

FOSTER CARE

START HERE
Abuse or Neglect is reported

Agency investigates

MAY INCLUDE SERVICES:
- drug/alcohol treatment
- counseling
- find housing
- mental health treatment
- find employment
- other

Home

Home

Child’s Family works on plan to be reunited with child
Agency works with child’s family to develop an alternate permanency plan

FOSTER CARE

Foster Home
Group Home, Shelter, Residential Treatment
Relative or Kinship Home

Court Review (at least every 6 mo.)

Permanency Hearing (12 mo.)

Change of Placement

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES
Age out of foster care (age 18-21)

ADOPTIVE HOME
DCFS Foster Care System: Team

DCFS Foster Care System: Team

DCFS Foster Care System: Team
DCFS Foster Care System: Team

1st Response Team

Biological Parent(s)

Non-Relatives/Supports

Child Protective Investigator

Biological Relatives

FIRST RESPONSE

FAMILY
DCFS Foster Care System: Team

First Response

Family

Case Planning

DCFS Foster Care System: Team

Permanency & stability in living situations

First Response

Family

Case Planning

DCFS Foster Care System: Team

Permanency & stability in living situations

First Response

Family

Case Planning
DCFS Foster Care System: Team

Permanency & stability in living situations
DCFS Foster Care System: Team
Activity

- No Case Opened
- Case Opened Remain Home
- Case Opened Relative/Non Relative Caregiver
- Case Opened Foster Care

The Statistics
Deal Breakers: Certification Requirements

**Minimum Qualifications**
- Age
- Financial security
- Background checks

**Other Requirements**
- Your home
- Your transportation
- Your health
- Your motivation
- Your willingness to co-parent
Activity

Deal Breakers
The purpose of the homework element to this training is to reinforce the skills and knowledge you are building in the classroom.

The journaling assignments and self-assessment will help you identify your strengths, needs, motivations and desires which is critical if you are going to effectively bring a child into your home.

The reading assignments will help build your knowledge.

The scavenger hunt field training experience will provide you with:

- First-hand experience with the foster care system BEFORE you are directly involved in it yourself.
- An opportunity to gather resources and contact information BEFORE you have a child in foster care placed in your home.
Homework Assignments

- Complete the Family Profile and Application.
- Week 1 Journaling Assignment
  - Homework Notebook
  - Review the scavenger hunt field activities in your Homework Notebook and complete at least one activity.
End of Session One

Thank you for participating.