

SAFETY AND WELL-BEING IN FAMILY FOSTER CARE

MODIFY THIS POWERPOINT TO MEET LOCAL TRAINING NEEDS OF CPIS, CBCS, ETC

Reporting and
Responding to
Concerns in
Foster Homes

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Distinguish between a report of abuse/neglect and a foster care referral
- Describe the role of foster parents in the system
- Explain the importance to children and foster families for reporting/referring/responding appropriately
- Identify key components in responding to reports or referrals





SUCCESSFUL TRAINING WILL MEAN:



- Children in foster care experience less trauma
- Appropriate type of staff are responding (law enforcement/CPI or CBC/CPA)
- Investigations are not compromised but strengthened
- Foster families are treated with respect and supported to provide the best quality care
- More foster families are available to provide quality care
- Staff have adequate resources for placement and matching

FOSTER CARE REFERRAL OR ABUSE/NEGLECT INVESTIGATION?

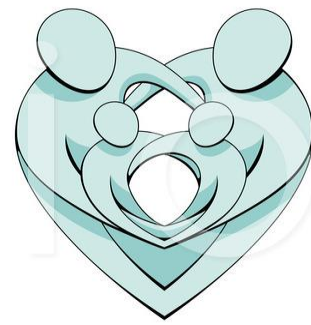
- Foster care referrals do NOT meet the criteria for abuse/neglect investigations
- Foster Care Referrals refer to “calls to the Hotline regarding concerns about the care provided in a licensed foster home, group home or emergency shelter that do not meet the criteria for acceptance of a report of abuse, abandonment, or neglect.” {F.A.C. 65C-30.001(57)}
- Foster Care referrals are not handled by CPIs but by licensing or foster home support staff
- Abuse/neglect investigations must meet criteria specified in law and must be handled by CPIs
- Hotline counselors are trained to ask questions to determine the difference



MORE ON FOSTER CARE REFERRALS

- Foster Care referrals are most often licensing violations
- A common Foster Care referral is corporal punishment without injury
- Many situations can be managed by case management
- Case managers should develop relationships with local licensing staff to learn more about expectations for foster parents and child welfare partners
- If a concern about a foster parent is called into the Hotline that does not meet the requirements for an intake, a foster care referral will be taken

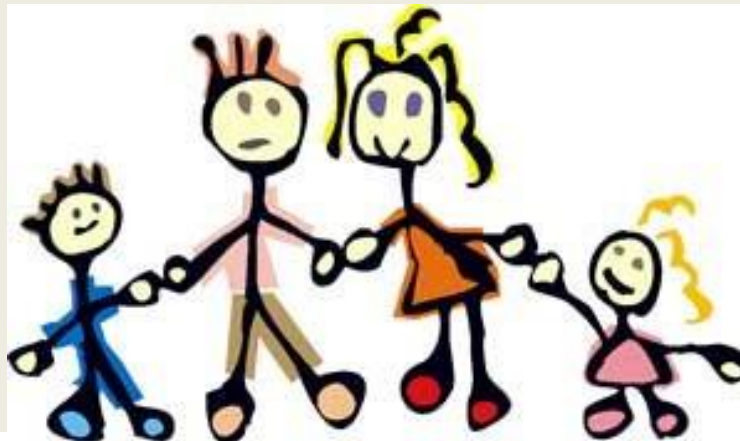
MORE ABOUT THESE FAMILIES FOSTER PARENTS:



- Volunteer to provide care in their homes to children in state custody
- Have the most knowledge and experience with the children
- Are partners with child protection/welfare staff, GALs, attorneys, etc
- Provide the most homelike setting for children when their families cannot care for them
- Are assessed and licensed by DCF prior to being allowed to provide care
- Have licensing staff assigned to support them
- Have specific expectations to meet (See the Partnership Plan- DCF Form CF-FSP 5226 or go to www.qpiflorida.com)
- Care for children who have been traumatized with a range of behaviors and needs

BENEFITS TO CHILDREN AND FOSTER FAMILIES

- Licensing issues are handled by staff familiar to/with the child and foster family
- Children are not confused or upset by an “investigation”
- Foster families have the opportunity to develop skills without feeling threatened
- Law enforcement is involved only in abuse/neglect reports (when required)



RESPONSE TIPS

Investigations conducted by CPIs

- Respond with local licensing staff
- Communicate – explain time frames, outcomes, etc
- Use the approach warranted for the situation
- Ensure foster parent knows how to get follow-up information

Foster Care Referrals handled by CBCs

- Determine if additional services are needed
- Connect Foster Parents with other training and supports
- Use the opportunity to teach/inform/mentor
- Coordinate with case manager, GAL, CLS as needed
- Communicate next steps

RESOURCES

- [CFOP 175-12 and CFOP 175-21](#)
- [F.A.C. 65C-13.034 Complaint Investigations and Foster Care Referrals](#)
- www.qpiflorida.com (training website for foster families)
- www.floridafapa.org/fast.html (foster allegation support team)
- www.fosteringflorida.com (DCF's recruitment website for foster parents)
- **Fill in other local resources**

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