

Section 6 Overview

This section is developed to guide Children's Service Workers in decision making, the provision and documentation of services to children and their families, development of community resources, and their subsequent assessment and utilization. These resources are designed to enhance and augment services to children and their families in need of preventive, protective, and out-of-home care services.

Procedures contained in this chapter incorporate assessment standards (largely based on licensing rules) which reflect the concern of the agency for those children who must live apart from their families during some part of their minority. The purpose of these standards is to protect those children from abuse, neglect, injury, and exploitation, and to assist in treatment and improved social functioning.

It is recognized that such direction cannot be all inclusive; therefore, staff will still need to exercise judgment in individual case situations. In those situations in which staff do not follow the procedures, they will be expected to document the justification for their actions in the individual case record.

With each procedure, and each step within a procedure, it may be necessary for the worker to secure supervisory assistance in order to make a decision. The procedures do not contain a reference to worker-supervisor conferences, but this joint decision-making activity is understood to be an integral part of service delivery to community resource providers.

Chapter 2 Overview

Per RSMO 210.566 the Children's Division shall provide foster parents with regularly scheduled opportunities for pre-service training and regularly scheduled opportunities for pertinent in-service training as determined by the Missouri State Foster Care and Adoption Advisory Board.

This chapter pertains to the Foster/Adopt STARS process which is based on Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE program for the pre-service training, assessment, and selection of prospective foster parents and adoptive parents. Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE was developed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) in collaboration with several other states including Missouri.

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Attachments:

Attachments were incorporated into the chapter with memo CD07-48.

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2.1 Mandate And Rationale

Mandate and Rationale that governs licensure of foster home, residential care or child placing agency:

1. Section 210.486, RSMo, specifies that:
 - a. No person shall operate or maintain a foster home, residential care facility, or child placing agency without having in full force and effect a valid license issued by the Division or the Department of Health as provided in Section 210.484.
 - b. The Division or the Department of Health as provided in Section 210.484 shall conduct an investigation of all applicants and such investigations shall include examination of the physical facility and of persons responsible for the care of, planning, and services for the children being served.
2. Rule 13 CSR 35-60 addresses procedures for approval, denial, or revocation of foster family home licenses.
3. Section 453.070, RSMo, specifies that:
 - a. No decree for adoption of a minor child under eighteen years of age shall be entered nor shall transfer of custody of such child to petitioners occur until a full investigation has been made. A report of the findings of the investigation shall include the physical, mental, racial and ethnic conditions and antecedents of the child and whether the petitioner(s) is suitable for the child.
 - b. The court may appoint the Children's Division or other individuals/agencies to conduct the investigation. The result of the investigation must be submitted to the court in a written report within ninety (90) days of the request.
4. Section 210.660, RSMo, specifies that:

"Reasonable and prudent parent standard", the standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child while at the same time encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child, that a caregiver shall use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care under the responsibility of the state to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.

5. Section 210.665, RSMo, specifies that;
 1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 8 of this section, the court and all parties to a case under chapter 211 involving a child in care shall defer to the reasonable decisions of the child's designated caregiver involving the child's participation in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.
 2. A caregiver shall use the reasonable and prudent parent standard when making decisions relating to the activity of the child.
 3. The division or a contracted agency thereof shall designate at least one onsite caregiver who has authority to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard for each child placed in its custody.
 4. The caregiver shall consider:
 - (1) The child's age, maturity, and developmental level;
 - (2) The overall health and safety of the child;
 - (3) Potential risk factors and appropriateness of the activity;
 - (4) The best interests of the child;
 - (5) Promoting, where safe and as appropriate, normal childhood experiences; and
 - (6) Any other relevant factors based on the caregiver's knowledge of the child.
 5. Caregivers shall receive training with regard to the reasonable and prudent parent standard as required by the division. The training shall include:
 - a. Knowledge and skills relating to the developmental stages of the cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities of a child;
 - b. Knowledge and skills relating to applying the standard to decisions, including but not limited to whether to allow the child to engage in social, extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities, such as sports, field trips, and overnight activities lasting one or more days; and
 - c. Knowledge and skills relating to decisions, including but not limited to the signing of permission slips and arranging of transportation for the child to and from extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities.

6. A caregiver shall not be liable for harm caused to a child while participating in an activity chosen by the caregiver, provided the caregiver acted in accordance with the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

7. No court shall order the division or a contracted agency thereof to provide funding for activities chosen by the caregiver.

8. A caregiver's decisions with regard to the child may be overturned by the court only if, upon notice and a hearing, the court finds by clear and convincing evidence the reasonable and prudent parent standard has been violated. The caregiver shall have the right to receive notice, to attend the hearing, and to present evidence at the hearing.

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2.2 Working with Prospective Foster/Adoptive Parents

The way the Children's Service Worker responds to individuals who inquire about becoming foster parents or adoptive parents is critical to the process of developing and supporting foster parents and adoptive parents as essential resources. It can set the tone, both attitudinally and behaviorally, for future contacts.

Many prospective foster parents and adoptive parents have given considerable thought to making this first call. Typically, it is not a spontaneous decision precipitated by viewing a recruitment poster or reading a newspaper story. Research indicates that individuals interested in fostering have thought about it for months and, sometimes, years. Individuals calling about adoption may have spent years of emotional and financial investment dealing with infertility issues.

The Children's Service Worker who accepts the inquiry from a prospective foster family or adoptive family should do the following:

- a. Introduce self by name and title;
- b. Respond to the caller's stated interest;
- c. Educate the caller about the program;
- d. Use the inquiry worksheet to give and get information;
- e. Assess the caller's knowledge of fostering and adopting to determine the information they and the Division need at this point in the licensing/certification process;
- f. Give information about the fostering or adoption program, addressing the questions/concerns raised by the caller including:
 - Goals and challenges of the family foster care and adoption programs;
 - Importance of foster parents and adoptive parents;
 - Description of children needing foster families and adoptive families;
 - Specific requirements for fostering or adopting;
 - Competencies for fostering or adopting;
 - Importance of participating in the resource family's development process; and

- Steps in the licensing/certification process.
- g. Conclude inquiry call, clarifying next steps;
- h. Mail to caller a Foster/Adopt Home Assessment Application, CS-42; and
- i. Schedule an at-home consultation meeting within ten days of the inquiry.

NOTE: Indicate a follow-up contact with callers who choose not to receive an information packet or schedule an at-home family consultation meeting at this time, but who appear to have the ability to foster or adopt.

2.2.1 At-Home Consultation Meeting

The first at-home family consultation meeting is an extension of the first telephone inquiry response. During this meeting the Children's Service Worker continues to provide the family with more specific information about what is involved in the job of being a foster parent or adoptive parent, the process by which the Division carries out the mutual assessment, and selection outcomes. The worker also begins more in-depth discussion with the family about their expectations and motivation for considering this job at this time. During this interview the worker may identify, through conversations or review of the application, issues that may raise preliminary questions about the family's willingness or ability to become foster parents or adoptive parents. Depending on the nature of these issues, the worker may need to explore these issues with the family during this meeting. During this meeting the worker must explain the licensing requirements including the house assessment, the Foster Family Profile, CD-56, the Family Care Safety Registry, Fingerprinting, the child abuse/neglect screens, and criminal background checks with the family, and explain which are non-negotiable and which are subject to more subjective assessment criteria. During this first in-home meeting the worker will present the Safe Sleep Practice, CD-117, Discipline Agreement, CD-119, and Resource Acknowledgement of Home Assessment & Case File Information Access, CD-128 and Notification of Hazards, CD-101, if applicable. The content is reviewed, agreed to and signed indicating agreement by the resource parent(s). In addition, the worker will discuss the dangers of co-sleeping with an infant and direct the resource provider to information presented in the PowerPoint, SIDS and Safe Sleep, located on the State Technical Assistance Team Web site. <http://www.dss.mo.gov/stat/statpres/prevention.htm>.

At the end of this meeting, the family and Children's Service Worker should both have additional information that will allow them to make a mutual decision about the next steps in the process.

During the at-home consultation meeting the Children's Service Worker must do the following:

- a. Introduce self;
- b. Explain the purpose of the at-home consultation meeting;
- c. Ask family about impressions so far and answer any questions; and
- d. Explain the mutual assessment process.
- e. Initiate necessary paperwork for the background checks, including child abuse/neglect, Family Care Safety Registry, Fingerprinting, sexual offender registry, and CaseNet. Explain that a CA/N check will be conducted in every state which each household member 17 and older has resided during the past five (5) years, per Adam Walsh Protection and Safety Act.
- f. Provide the applicant with the Foster Family Profile cover letter, CD-55, and Foster Family Profile, CD-56, for completion. Inform the applicant that the Foster Family Profile should be returned to the local licensing worker within 10 business days.
- g. Present the Safe Sleep Practices form, CD-117; Review the information on the form and explain that the applicant(s) must agree to adhere to the practices and sign the form.
- h. Present a copy of the Foster Parents Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, RSMo 210.566.
- i. Present a copy of the Resource Parent Acknowledgement of Home Assessment & Case File Information Access, CD-128; Review the information on the form and obtain signature(s).
- j. Present the Resource Parent Discipline Agreement, CD-119; Review the information and explain that applicant(s) must agree to adhere to the agreement and sign the form.
- k. Present the two Health Information Portability and Accountability Act, HIPAA, documents, MO866-4061 and Resource Provider Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Information, CD-194, and obtain signature on the CD-194.

The Children's Service Worker should explain the potential outcomes of the mutual assessment process, which are:

- a. The Division and the family make a mutual decision to select the family into the program;
- b. The Division and the family make a mutual decision to select the family out of the program;
- c. The Division may feel that the family has the skills to become a foster parent or adoptive parent, but the family is not willing or does not feel it has the skills to take on the job and the family makes a decision to select-out of the program; or
- d. The family is willing to become a foster parent or adoptive parent and feels they have the ability to take on the job, but the Division disagrees and does not invite the family to select-in to the program.

The Children's Service Worker should explain that the focus of the training is to help the participants understand the skills involved in being a foster or adoptive parent. Only when the family understands what skills are needed will they have the information necessary to make an informed decision about whether they are willing or able to do the job:

- Explain the role and focus of the consultation meetings in the mutual assessment process, which are as follows:
 - a. Clarifying the family's changing understanding of what the job of being a foster parent or adoptive parent entails as they learn more about the role in the pre-service training;
 - b. "Checking in" with the family to determine if they are still willing to take on the job as they expand their understanding of its complexities; and
 - c. Carrying out a dialogue with the family about their history, their current family system and networks, and how becoming a foster parent or adoptive parent will change the family system. This discussion will focus on understanding strengths and needs in regard to the family's willingness and ability to be foster parents or adoptive parents.
- Introduce the idea of the five competencies necessary for foster and adoptive parenting which are:
 - a. Protecting and nurturing;
 - b. Meeting developmental needs and addressing developmental delays;

- c. Supporting relationships between children and their families;
 - d. Connecting children to lifetime relationships; and
 - e. Working as a member of a professional team.
- Inform the family about the non-negotiable licensing requirements.
 - Provide the applicants with a copy of the Foster Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities.
 - Review the paperwork (Foster/Adopt Home Assessment Application, Safe Sleep Practices, Discipline Agreement, and Foster Family Profile) the family has provided or assist the family in completing the paperwork.
 - Explain to the family that the case file which is created in the licensing process and maintained for the duration of the family being licensed with the Division is an open record and available to the public upon a Sunshine Law request.
 - Watch for responses to sensitive issues, i.e., motivation, expectations, etc.
 - The Children's Service Worker should inspect the house by walking from room to room to ensure compliance with "Physical Standards for a Foster Home." Utilize the Resource Home and Safety Checklist, CS-45, to document any safety concerns with the household.
 - Explain the requirements for CA/N and background checks.
 - Explain the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard which requires the resource family to provide the foster youth with opportunities to participate in activities that are age- and developmentally- appropriate.
 - Determine the next steps.

2.2.2 Mutual Assessment Process

The Mutual Assessment Process includes the integrated functions of preparation and assessment and should lead to a final decision about the willingness and ability of the applicants for fostering and adopting. The process includes the applicant's participation in nine pre-service training sessions, a series of meetings between the Children's Service Worker and applicants, supplemental

information obtained through meetings, the preparation program, references, and other licensing or approval checks.

The selection of prospective foster parents and adoptive parents has been based on the concepts of:

- a. Assessing strengths and needs;
- b. Selecting families in; and
- c. Mutual assessment.

Each prospective foster family or adoptive family should have been encouraged to participate in an open and honest assessment of their strengths in fostering or adopting, as well as their needs for support. Their strengths should be identified so they can be matched with the needs of a specific child to be placed. The needs should be identified so it can be determined if the Division can provide the supports required to meet those needs.

As a result of this process, the final decision should be made to reflect the family's ability and willingness to foster or adopt. The decision should be based on whether the prospective foster parent or adoptive parent:

- a. Has the potential for meeting the needs of the children and their families served by the Division;
- b. Has the personal commitment necessary to provide the required continuity of care throughout the child's need for family foster care or adoption;
- c. Has sufficient flexibility to meet the needs of particular children as these change in the course of the child's development;
- d. Is able to identify with the Division's foster care and adoption program goals, work within its policies, share responsibility with the agency, and benefit from assistance and training opportunities;
- e. Is able to accept and support the child's relationship with parents and kin; and
- f. Is able to work within the limitations of the Division and its supports available for foster families and adoptive families.
- g. Demonstrates the ability to apply the Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards including providing normalcy for the foster youth, co-parenting with the foster youth's parent(s) or guardian(s), mentoring and

encouraging the foster youth's participation in his/her case planning, and understanding the responsibility of decision making for the foster youth's participation in age- and developmentally-appropriate activities

2.2.3 Family Assessment

The first meeting for the purpose of beginning the Family Assessment is scheduled between the third and fourth training sessions. Additional meetings needed to assess the family should be held between the fifth and sixth sessions and again after the ninth Family Resource Development training session.

The Family Assessment is completed utilizing the following tools:

- a. Genogram;
- b. Ecomap;
- c. Loss History Worksheet;
- d. Pathways Through the Grieving Process; and
- e. History and Current Functioning of Prospective Family.

These tools will not be retained in the family's case file. They are tools to utilize in completing the Assessment.

It is at the final at-home consultation that the family and the Children's Service Worker conclude their mutual assessment leading to a decision. The family must decide if they wish to foster or adopt. The worker must decide if this family has the skills, willingness, and resources to foster or adopt available children. The preceding tasks have allowed the worker and families to accumulate assessment information that must now be organized and assimilated into a clear and defensible decision. The worker must complete all of the following steps either before or during the final at-home consultation visit.

The Children's Service Worker must be sure that all required data has been collected before scheduling the final at-home consultation, including the following:

- a. Application;
- b. References;
- c. Health/Psychological Reports;
- d. Fingerprinting report;

- e. CA/N check of every state each household member age 17 and older has resided during the past five (5) years;
- f. Documentation of CaseNet review;
- g. Family Care Safety Registry report;
- h. Documentation that family has attended all training sessions;
- i. Trainer's observations of the family; and
- j. Foster Family Profile, CD-56.

The Family Assessment is a composite of information collected through the collection of required data and interviewing the family members. Basically, the strengths and needs of the family are organized according to the five competency categories.

- Protecting and nurturing;
- Meeting developmental needs and addressing developmental delays;
- Supporting relationships between children and their birth families;
- Connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime; and
- Working as a member of a professional team.

Each statement made in the Family Assessment must be stated in behavioral terms and referenced. In other words, the Children's Service Worker must list where, when, or in what document he/she read, observed, or been told about the strength or need.

To prepare for writing the Family Assessment the Children's Service Worker should review the following:

- a. Required forms listed above;
- b. Ecomap and genogram;
- c. Family Resource Development Connections (assignments completed between training sessions);

- d. Family Assessment Worksheet; and
- e. References.

Having reviewed the pertinent documents listed above the Children's Service Worker can now make a final decision to:

- a. Invite the family to select-in to the foster care or adoption program;
- b. Invite the family to select-in with a plan, i.e., correction of physical/tangible deficiency, i.e., smoke detector, furniture, etc.;
- c. Counsel the family out of providing family foster care or adoptive care.

The family can decide to select-out and not participate as foster parents or adoptive parents.

Prepare Family Assessment.

Related Subject: Section 6 Chapter 3 [Resource Family Assessment and Licensing Process](#)

Discuss recommendations with supervisor. A supervisor must approve the final decision and recommendation. The Children's Service Worker should meet with the supervisor to share any borderline decisions and all decisions to counsel a family out of the program.

Make phone call and send confirming letter to set up consultation.

Begin at-home consultation by establishing an agenda. The agenda will vary with each family, but should generally include:

- a. Discussion of the family's final decision regarding participation in the foster care or adoption program;
- b. Discussion of the Division's final decision;
- c. Negotiation of a mutual decision;
- d. Review of the Family Assessment Summary;
- e. Introduction of the Professional Family Development Plan, CD-100, for families invited to select-in the family foster care program (see 2.5.1 for more information on the Professional Family Development Plan);

- f. Explanation of the next steps if the family disagrees with the Division's decision to counsel the family out of the program.
- g. Plan for the meeting to complete the Professional Family Development Plan, CD-100.

Initiate a collaborative process for discussing the Family Assessment.

The Family Assessment is used as a tool to facilitate a process in which a mutual decision, not a compromise, is reached. The Children's Service Worker presents the Assessment in order to work for agreement on areas in which the family is competent and areas that need support.

The Children's Service Worker relates all comments, positive and negative, to the strengths and needs identified with each of the five competencies.

To create a collaborative environment the Children's Service Worker should use interviewing and relationship techniques like:

- a. Making clear statements about strengths and needs documented in materials generated by the mutual assessment process or observed through previous meetings;
- b. Avoiding biased or inflammatory words, for example, "your answer was wrong" or "your discipline style is bad";
- c. Reminding applicants of previous conversations where strengths and concerns were shared so that this final at-home consultation brings no surprises;
- d. Encouraging families to share their feelings and the results of their family discussion by using open ended questions and non-verbal displays of interest in what is being said;
- e. Communicating respect for the family, regardless of the decision made, by hearing their feelings and recognizing their interest and commitment; and
- f. Allowing an appropriate amount of anger from families disappointed with the final decision by not taking it personally or reacting unprofessionally.

Present the Final Agency Decision; and present placement recommendation to the families who have been invited to select-in.

The Children's Service Worker and family should discuss the number, the age range, and the kinds of children they could most safely and successfully parent

and the supports the Division would need to provide. This discussion should be based on the family's strengths in the five competencies and supports they need from the Division.

Begin the process for assessing learning needs and building a professional family development plan with the family invited to select-in;

Schedule the consultation meeting to complete the family development plan and conclude consultation with next steps for foster families and adoptive families who have been selected-in.

At the end of the Mutual Assessment process (training and family assessment) the family and Children's Service Worker will decide whether to select-in or select-out the foster parent or adoptive parent applicant.

When the Children's Service Worker and family decide to select-in to the program, the worker should complete the following tasks:

- a. Notify family in person and in writing that they have been selected in; and
- b. Complete Vendor Licensure/Approval and Renewal screen in FACES.

When the Children's Service Worker and/or family decide to select-out, the worker should complete the following tasks:

- a. Recommend license denial using Resource Home Adverse Action Report, CS-20, through supervisory lines to the Regional Director;
- b. Include a summary of the licensing rules on which the decision is based;
- c. When an adverse action is CA/N related, submit a copy of the form CA/N 4;
- d. Submit a copy of the Family Assessment to Regional Director; and
- e. If the decision to deny a license is supported by the Regional Director, notify the applicant in person and with the Notification of Resource Home Adverse Action, CS-20a, sent via registered mail.

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2.3 STARs Training Objectives

The STARs program is designed to facilitate the development of relationships between prospective foster parents and adoptive parents and co-trainers which promote the communication necessary for team building. This is accomplished through the content of the curriculum and the methods used to present the material.

2.3.1 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of Foster/Adopt STARs are to help prospective foster parents and adoptive parents:

- Discuss realistic expectations of themselves and the agency;
- Identify their strengths and needs in fostering or adopting;
- Develop a plan to build on strengths and meet needs;
- Make an informed decision about their willingness and ability to work together to connect children with safe and nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime;
- Learn the purpose and goals of the agency's family foster care and adoption program, and its relationship to the other child welfare services;
- Learn about the selection process and the criteria for being licensed, certified or approved as a foster parent or adoptive parent;
- Learn the laws, regulations, policies and values that direct the agency's child welfare program in general and the family foster care and adoption program specifically;
- Obtain realistic information about the needs, and strengths, of children and their families who voluntarily or involuntarily require family foster care and adoption services;
- Learn about the role of foster parents and adoptive parents as effective and essential members of a professional team, including expectations, responsibilities, rights, potential rewards and potential risks, such as abuse allegations;
- Learn the differences between foster parenting and adoptive parenting regarding attachment, commitment, relationship with the children's families or origin, expectations, responsibilities, supports, lifelong impact;
- Learn the knowledge and practice the skills necessary to become a licensed, foster parent or adoptive parent;

- Learn about the diversity of families;
- Share similar and differing knowledge, ideas and values by participating in a group preparation program;
- Consider the impact of fostering or adopting on themselves, their children, and all aspects of their family life, including jobs, health and mental health, and financial resources;
- Experience the professional team as it operates within the agency, since the program should be conducted by experienced Children's Service staff assisted by experienced foster parents and adoptive parents who can model team work;
- Learn about foster parent associations or adoptive parent support groups that can provide valuable information, friendship, peer support, and advocacy;
- Develop admiration and respect for the role of foster parents and adoptive parents in caring for vulnerable children; and, with the agency, mutually;
- Assess their willingness and ability to become:

A foster parent who can:

- Protect and nurture children who have been physically abused, sexually abused, emotionally maltreated, abandoned, neglected and/or who have special medical needs;
- Meet the developmental needs of these children and address their developmental delays;
- Support the relationship between children and their parents, siblings and kin to the fullest possible extent;
- Help connect children to safe and nurturing lifetime relationships, with reunification with parents or kin as the primary goal;
- Work collaboratively with the agency as an effective and essential member of a professional team;

Or, an adoptive parent who can:

- Protect and nurture children who have been physically abused, sexually abused, emotionally maltreated, abandoned, neglected and/or who have special medical needs;

- Meet the developmental needs of these children and address developmental delays;
- Support the relationship between children and their parents, siblings and kin as appropriate;
- Make an earnest commitment to provide a child with safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime; and
- Work collaboratively with the agency as an effective and essential member of a professional team to adoption finalization.

2.3.2 Competencies And Learning Objectives

Competencies take into account the person's knowledge, attitude, and practice in performing the desired skills necessary to successfully parent the children in the custody of the Division. The competencies for Foster/Adopt STARS were developed by the "Developing Competencies Work Group" of the Illinois Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE Steering Committee. They turned to the recommendations of the National Commission on Family Foster Care (convened by the Child Welfare League of America in collaboration with the National Foster Parent Association) as well as to other consultants. The result was the development of areas of responsibility or competency categories.

The competency categories for foster parents include:

- Protecting and nurturing;
- Meeting developmental needs and addressing developmental delays;
- Supporting relationships between children and their birth families;
- Connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime; and
- Working as a member of a professional team.

Adoptive parent competency categories were developed through consultation with additional adoption experts and include:

- Knowing how adoptive families are unique;
- Understanding the importance of separation, loss and grief in the adoption process;
- Understanding attachment and its importance in the adoption process;

- Anticipating and managing challenges as an adoptive family; and
- Making a lifelong commitment to a child.

From the competency categories, specific competencies were developed. Because some knowledge and skills are essential before children are placed with families and other knowledge and skills would be more appropriate for licensing, training competencies were organized into two groups - pre-service and core.

Pre-service competencies are the grouping of knowledge and skills essential for foster parents and adoptive parents before a child is placed. Foster/Adopt STARs addresses competencies only at the pre-service level. For example, a pre-service training competency for foster parents is: "Foster parents know that regular visits and other types of contact can strengthen relationships between children and their birth families."

Core competencies are the knowledge and skills that are more effectively learned after a foster parent is licensed, and a child is placed. Core competencies typically are those which foster parents acquire in their first two years of experience. An example of a core competency is "Foster parents are able to support visits and contacts appropriate to each child/family situation." Foster STARs addresses competencies at the core level.

As foster parents become more experienced, they will need advanced and specialized competencies. Advanced competencies build on core competencies. For example, an advanced competency is "Foster parents are able to demonstrate parenting skills for the parents of children in their care." Specialized competencies relate to a particular area of expertise, such as working with teen parents, caring for medically fragile children, or preparing youth for young adult living.

The competencies were used to direct the development of all of the in-session and at-home learning objectives which are included in Foster/Adopt STARs. These learning objectives directed the development of all the material included in this training program.

The Child Welfare League of America Standards for Family Foster Care (revised 1993) reference the competency categories presented here in Foster/Adopt STARs.

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2.4 Pre-Service Training and STARs Competencies

This section will review the foster/adoptive parent pre-service training available. It also includes an explanation of the competencies upon which the training is based. Competencies refer to the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully parent the children in the care and custody of the Division. A resource licensing worker also referred to as a family development specialist, must successfully complete Specialized Training, Assessment, Resources, Support and Skills, STARs, and STARs Making the Commitment to Adoption – Spaulding, Train the Trainer training to provide STARs and Spaulding training and to complete Resource Provider and Adoptive Family Assessments.

2.4.1 Pre-Service Training and Competencies

The pre-service competency categories for parents include:

1. **Protecting and Nurturing Children:** Children placed with foster families and adoptive families need to live in a safe place that keeps them from harm, is friendly, and where the parents show they care. Some children who have not been kept safe or cared for may not accept or understand the efforts to do so at first. Others are hungry for attention. The pre-service training will help the caretaker to understand a child's feelings and reactions to separation and help the caretaker to deal with those feelings and reactions.
2. **Meeting Developmental Needs and Addressing Developmental Delays:** For most of us, growing up is a natural, predictable development process. For example, infants who have the opportunity and encouragement to walk at the right stage of their development will learn how to walk. Many of the children who need foster families or adoptive families did not have the opportunity or encouragement to grow by learning how to do things at the "right" time in their development. They may be "behind" in some ways or "ahead" in others, compared with children of the same age who had their developmental needs met. The pre-service training helps prospective foster parents and adoptive parents understand the reasons for these developmental delays and differences and how to cope with them.
3. **Supporting Relationships Between Children and their Families:** Birth family relationships include brothers, sisters, and other relatives, as well as parents. Children do not arrive at the door of a foster family or adoptive family without bringing some kind of personal history with them. Even infants who have never been held by their parents have a prenatal, birth, or hospital history. The memories, experiences and attachments children bring with them will vary, but they will come with the child. The

pre-service training prepares the caretaker to understand the importance of a child's history and how to deal with it.

4. **Connecting Children to Safe, Nurturing Relationships Intended to Last a Lifetime:** The Division believes—and the law requires—that children are entitled to permanent, lifetime family relationships. Children's Division (CD) works with the parents to correct problems so children can return home whenever possible. If the parents cannot or do not respond, the Division looks for another permanent family for the children. The different roles of foster parents and adoptive parents in providing a permanent family for a child will be explained in the training sessions.
5. **Working as a Member of a Professional Team:** Whatever a child's circumstances, needs or past experiences, the Division, foster parents, and adoptive parents work together for the child's benefit. There are many troubled families and children who need help. The work that needs to be done is too much for any of us to do alone.

One way these competencies are demonstrated is in the resource parent's ability to apply the required Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards.

Adoptive parents are expected to meet additional competencies:

6. Knowing how adoptive families are unique;
7. Understanding the importance of separation, loss, and grief in the adoption process;
8. Understanding attachment and its importance in the adoption process;
9. Anticipating and managing challenges as an adoptive family; and
10. Making a lifelong commitment to a child.

2.4.2 Pre-Service Training

2.4.2.1 STARs Curriculum

STARs pre-service training is a prerequisite to becoming a licensed foster/adoptive home. Foster/adopt parents must successfully complete 27 hours of training as well as the ten hours of assessment interwoven with the training. After demonstrating that they meet the required competencies, they then become professional foster/adoptive parents.

Foster and kinship care providers wanting to adopt must take an additional 12 hours of STARs, Making the Commitment to Adoption

(Spaulding) Pre-service training. Relative care providers are encouraged to complete the Spaulding training but are not required to complete this training.

All STARs and Spaulding sessions are co-taught by a professional staff member of the agency/contracted provider and an experienced, currently licensed, professional foster/adoptive parent.

The following is an overview of the nine STARs sessions, each of which is three hours in length. More than one session can occur a day, however, the nine sessions are to be taught over a minimum of three (3) dates:

Session One: Connecting with STARs

Session One connects participants with the Foster STARs/Adopt STARs program. Participants learn how the pre-service training provides the formative principles of assessment, selection, licensing, and approval. The competencies needed for successful fostering and adopting are reviewed in relation to the STARs pre-service sessions and the process of becoming a foster or adoptive family.

Participants discover how to define family foster care and adoption. They learn how children and families get referred for services, and they explore challenges and rewards of fostering and adopting. Emphasis is on the participant's understanding the requirement to provide normalcy for foster youth as defined in statute and regulation. Participants should be able to identify ways to make decisions for the foster youth to participate in age- and developmentally- appropriate activities by co-parenting with the foster youth's parent(s) or guardian(s). Session One features a video that dramatically portrays fostering and adopting experiences.

Session Two: Teamwork Toward Permanency

This session introduces the importance of family relationships and the role families play in supporting the child's identity, cultural identity, and self-esteem. Participants identify major tasks in planning for permanence, including ways to preserve connections and continuity through times of change. Participants are introduced to co-parenting with the foster youth's parent(s) or guardian(s) for making decisions about activities the youth may participate in. Teamwork is presented as the best way to promote permanence for children and families. Trainees discover the unique role of foster parents and adoptive parents as members of a professional team. Emphasis is made regarding the resource parent's responsibility to mentor and encourage the foster youth to actively participate in his/her case plan.

Session Three: Meeting Developmental Needs: Attachment

This session reviews the “basics” about child growth and development. It considers how important bonding and attachment are for growth and development. Session Three emphasizes ways that the team, and especially the foster or adoptive parent, may build positive attachments in order to meet developmental needs. Important information is provided regarding brain development and how allowing the foster youth to participate in age- and developmentally- appropriate activities impacts brain development.

Session Four: Meeting Developmental Needs: Loss

Separation and loss critically affect the child’s growth and development, particularly in family foster care and adoption. Participants learn the types of losses children encounter before entering foster care. They learn how placement can deepen the child’s sense of loss. Trainees review the stages of loss and consider how they influence the child’s feelings and behaviors. Loss is presented as a universal issue. Foster families and adoptive families consider how they have dealt with losses in their lives. They discuss how they might approach losses that come with fostering and adopting, and how they can be “loss managers” for children. Emphasis is made on providing normalcy for the foster youth to minimize loss of their normal activities and life experiences. Co-parenting strategies are explored to ensure decisions are made to allow for participation in age- and developmentally- appropriate activities.

Session Five: Strengthening Family Relationships

This session revisits how families promote identity, cultural identity, and self-esteem in children. Participants review the child welfare concept that children in placement should rejoin their families whenever possible. They discuss how the team can support reunification.

The role of visiting in strengthening family relationships is explored. Concrete information explains how to plan for visits, how to prepare children for them, and how to handle reactions afterwards. The importance of families to children in the adoption process is discussed in terms of lifelong needs for identity and self-esteem.

In this there is emphasis of how co-parenting helps not only for making good decisions for the foster youth’s activities, but also shows the value and importance of the foster youth’s family from which they have been removed.

Session Six: Meeting Developmental Needs: Discipline

This session focuses on the challenges of instilling discipline in children. The content and activities focus on protecting and nurturing children and meeting their developmental needs. Discipline is defined, the goals of effective discipline are identified, and the difference between discipline and punishment is illustrated.

Trainees review the agency's policy on discipline and discuss the negative effects of physical punishment. Participants learn about the knowledge, skills, and personal qualities needed to instill discipline. They explore the meaning of a child's behavior and the factors that influence behavior. The session outlines the methods foster and adoptive parents, as team members, can use to meet the goals of effective discipline.

Session Seven: Continuing Family Relationships

This session looks at different ways the team can help to connect children to safe and nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime. Permanency planning goals are outlined, starting with efforts to support families and reunite children with families and kin. Adoption, guardianship, and independent living activities are presented as other ways to promote lifelong connections when children cannot grow up with their families.

Implementation of Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard is explored and explained throughout this session.

Session Eight: Planning for Change

How placement impacts the foster or adoptive family is the focus of this session. The first hours, days, and weeks of a child's placement in the home are viewed practically. Trainees learn what to expect, what to ask the caseworker, and how to talk to the child. The importance of providing normalcy for the foster youth and co-parenting with the foster youth's parent(s) or guardian(s) is stressed.

Longer-term placement impact is also discussed, including how placement changes the foster or adoptive family. The notion that fostering and adopting carry risks is highlighted through a discussion of abuse allegations. Use of the team for support and focus is emphasized.

Session Nine: Making an Informed Decision

This session offers foster and adoptive parents a chance to learn first hand from experienced members of the foster care team. Panelists

including foster parents, adoptive parents, caseworkers, and family members present their perspectives and answer participants' questions. Participants will reflect on their growth and development regarding the pre-service competencies. They begin to make a final decision regarding their commitment to fostering or adopting.

2.4.2.2 STARs, Making the Commitment to Adoption Curriculum

STARs, Making the Commitment to Adoption, was developed by the Spaulding for Children National Resource Center for Special Needs Adoption. The name Spaulding has been used interchangeably with the adoption portion of STARs. The following is an overview of the four pre-service sessions of STARs, Making the Commitment to Adoption: **(Although the foster / adopt STARs curriculum allows only one session per week, the STARs, Adopt curriculum allows for more flexibility. Two sessions may be conducted in one week.)**

Session One: Exploring Expectations

Trainers share the history and intent of the Making the Commitment to Adopt Curriculum as well as its objectives and assumptions about the training. The meaning of adoption, the process, and the important players in the process are discussed. The video "Before the Adoption Process Begins" is shown to acknowledge participants' hopes and fears about the process and to lead to a discussion of empowering strategies. Participants explore their fantasies and expectations about the child or children that they wish to adopt.

Session Two: Meeting the Needs of Waiting Children

Participants will explore the reasons they feel they could adopt particular children and view the videotape, "The Children Who Wait", to focus on the realities of adopting children who have been abused, neglected, abandoned, and have lived in the child welfare system. Particular attention is given to the issues of separation, loss, grief, attachment, and issues related to parenting the child who has been sexually abused.

Session Three: Exploring Adoption Issues

Using the Family Network Diagram, participants will explore family supports that may assist them in adopting children who have been abused, neglected or abandoned. The videotape, "Common Issues in Adoption," addresses issues for which participants will develop strategies in their teams. Participants will be given information on predictable crisis periods in adoption and use their Family Network Diagrams and

Genograms to explore their strengths, needs, and challenges in planning for adoption.

Session Four: Making the Commitment

This final session of the training focuses on helping participants look at resources, the commitment necessary for adoption, and tools to help parents get information to make a decision and commitment to adoption of a particular child. The participants will review their ecomaps, view the videotape, "Characteristics of Successful Adoptive Families," and review a number of tools for getting information and to guide them in making their decisions about adopting. Participants will also be recognized for completing the training.

2.4.2.3 STARs For The Caregiver Who Knows The Child.

STARs for the Caregiver Who Knows the Child is an adaptation of the Foster STARs / Adopt STARs resource training curriculum published by the Child Welfare League of America. The guide is used as pre-service training for caretakers who already have a meaningful relationship with the child to be placed. The relationship can be a connection by family or by association (a teacher, neighbor, etc.).

The guide is meant to be used as an independent study guide, but may be used in group training sessions, or in a combination of both methods. The worker should be flexible in presenting the training method without detracting from the integrity of the program. The provider will receive 9 hours of pre-service training credit for successfully completing the training and homework for STARs for the Caregiver Who Knows the Child.

At least 9 hours of in-home assessment is required to occur during the pre-service training process.

2.4.2.4 Pre-Service Training Process:

1. Enroll applicant in nearby STARs (Specialized Training, Assessment, Resources, Support and Skills) Pre-Service Training sessions.

Content must be:

- a. Co-taught by a currently licensed, Teaching Professional Foster Parent (For certification of Teaching Foster Parent, see Attachment A.) and an agency/contracted provider professional staff member who has completed the STARs Train the Trainer course;
 - b. A minimum of 27 hours in class training;
2. Reimbursement of child care expenses (\$2/child/hr), and mileage that is over 10 miles round trip, if necessary, at current state rates, may be made through the SAM II system after the applicant has been licensed. SAM II is the method of reimbursement to foster parents for expenses incurred during any training (Pre-Service, In-Service, Behavioral Foster Care, Medical Foster Care, etc.). The cost (\$2/child/hr) is to be applied to all children in the foster home, including the biological children of the foster parent(s).

NOTE: Special expenses (i.e., registration fees) may be approved by the Regional Office and paid through SAM II.

3. Evaluate training experience with foster/kinship applicant and training facilitators.
4. Verify training hours completed.
5. Record required information on in FACES on the Resource Parent Training screen.

Chapter Memoranda History: (prior to 01-31-07)

[CD06-64](#)

Memoranda History:

[CD07-48](#), [CD09-106](#), [CD12-30](#), [CD13-100](#), CD16-65

2.5 In-Service Training

Licensed resource providers (foster/relative/kinship) can receive \$100 per month in addition to maintenance payments for foster youth in their household, with the exception of emergency and Youth with Elevated Needs-Level B foster youth. This is a professional parent payment based upon the completion of pre-service and in-service training hours. ICPC resource providers are not eligible for the Professional Parenting Payment or for Elevated Needs Level A and Level B payments.

2.5.1 Professional Family Development Plan (CD-100)

Within 30 days of the family becoming licensed, the worker is to schedule a meeting to develop a Professional Family Development Plan, CD100, with the resource provider. A new CD-100 must be developed when the resource provider license is renewed. The CD-100 is reviewed quarterly and annually and should be updated as necessary.

Related Subject: Refer to the STARS Resource Development Specialist's Handbook, [Step 11](#)

This plan should be a joint process between the resource provider and worker that assesses the provider's learning needs in an ongoing, proactive, and purposeful way.

The Professional Family Development Plan has four components:

- assessment of the resource provider's present level of competencies,
- their annual educational goals,
- methods of reaching those goals, and
- a way to determine if goals have been met.

Performance Based Criteria have been established to help staff assess the present level of competencies for resource providers. These criteria are:

Competency – Protecting and Nurturing

- Accepts placements of foster youth with abuse/neglect histories on an emergency basis with little notice and works to learn and understand the impact of that history on the youth's emotions and behaviors.
- Uses discretion in accepting placements in order to promote placement stability and minimize placement changes.

- Cooperates with and promotes keeping siblings in the same placement.
- Uses discretion in sharing information about foster youth placed in their home, within the guidelines established by the Foster Parent's Bill of Rights.
- Does not discuss any permanency plan with the foster youth until this plan becomes the case goal (i.e. discussing adoption while case goal remains reunification).
- Works to protect the feelings of the foster youth by speaking positively about all members of the Family Support Team.
- Works with the other Family Support Team members to determine what negative information is appropriate to be shared with the foster youth and when.
- Works diligently to provide the child with opportunities for participation in tutoring, therapy, extracurricular activities, community events, and church which offer the child the opportunity to grow and develop in cognitive and interpersonal skills,
- Learns and applies appropriate and consistent parenting to include both nurturing activities and disciplinary techniques.

Competency – Meeting Developmental Needs and Addressing Developmental Delays

- Makes and keeps all medical, psychiatric, counseling, dental, and rehabilitation appointments including all required and emergency appointments, or requests timely assistance from the foster youth's case worker for appointments which cannot be kept by the resource provider.
- Requests necessary diagnostic evaluations and once diagnoses are identified, learns the etiology and course of the diagnosed conditions and enlists the help of medical and psychiatric professionals to address the conditions identified.
- Maintains contact with the therapist on a regular basis for each foster youth placed in the home and participates in the therapy is requested by the therapist.
- Requests additional therapy and reports additional concerns to the Family Support Team when the need arises.
- Knows, understands, and follows the treatment plan developed by the therapist for each foster youth and assists in the development if requested. Documents both positive and negative examples of the foster youth's behaviors at home and at school and provides the documentation to the worker and Family Support Team.
- Takes an active role in the school serving as the foster youth's educational advocate, including requesting evaluation for an Individual Education Plan (IEP) if necessary, attending all IEP meetings, collecting report cards and other performance indicators, providing copies of the documents to the worker for the youth's case file.

- Works with the biological family to help them understand and meet the special needs of the foster youth including but not limited to:
 - ◆ Shares information about the foster youth's developmental and educational progress.
 - ◆ Invites the birth family (if appropriate) to participate in school programs, back to school nights, award assemblies and teacher's conferences.

Competency – Supporting Relationships between Children and Their Birth Families

- Cooperates with the family and sibling visitation plan by working with all members of the Family Support Team and other resource parents involved in developing a visitation plan that considers the needs of all parties.
- Supervises visitation between the foster youth and family/siblings when necessary or requested.
- Is respectful of the birth family by speaking about and to the birth family kindly and respectfully.
- Works with the therapist regarding the most appropriate methods to provide difficult information regarding the parents and/or the case to the foster youth.
- Provides mentoring to the birth family to help work toward reunification.
- Provides transportation to and from visitation with the family as needed.
- Assists the birth family in identifying community resources which may be useful to them in meeting their children's needs once the foster youth have transitioned back home.
- Keeps birth family informed of all appointments and school functions and invites them to these as appropriate.
- Provides the birth family with photographs, drawings, and other souvenirs which encourage their belief in their ongoing importance in the children's lives.

Competency – Connecting Children to Safe, Nurturing Relationships Intended to Last a Lifetime

- Starts and maintains a life book on each child in their care to be sent with the child when they move or return home.
- Works to develop for and with the foster youth an understanding of their cultural and familial heritage, and encourages the foster youth to participate in activities which help them develop their individual identities.
- Finds opportunities for the foster youth to participate in activities in the community, school, church, etc.

- Supports the foster youth's involvement in activities outside of the foster home by attending, photographing, promoting, and encouraging the foster youth as he/she interacts with the larger community
- Supports transitions into permanent settings such as adoptive placement, kinship/relative placement, reunification, or an independent living arrangement by extending friendship, information, resources, and support to the other family/resource throughout the process of transition and as a support once the transition is complete..

Competency – Working as a Member of a Professional Team

- Attends Family Support Team Meetings and/or provides written report on the foster youth to include information on the child's positive and negative behaviors, accomplishments, developmental needs, any services the resource provider believes are necessary which are not currently provided, and any reports on interactions observed between the foster youth and his/her parents, other service providers, and any other significant information.
- Knows and follows the Children's Division policies and procedures and requests clarification or explanation of policies and procedures which are unclear to the resource provider.
- Supports the case plan developed by the Family Support Team even if they are not in agreement with the plan including but not limited to facilitating visits and appointments.
- Expresses their concerns regarding the case plan with the child's worker and during team meetings and understands the Children's Division's grievance process to challenge decisions of the Family Support Team.
- Keeps the case manager or service worker informed of all the foster youth's activities.
- Allows items purchased for the foster youth to go with the youth when they move or return home.
- Provides or makes arrangements for transportation for the foster youth as needed.

This is not a comprehensive list. Other criteria may be found in the STARS curriculum, specifically Step 11, for each of the competencies and/or may be suggested by the resource parents during the assessment process. These criteria should be utilized in evaluating the performance of resource providers during their license renewal process and are an integral part of developing an appropriate Professional Family Development Plan.

The following additional competencies are required of those resource providers who choose to be contracted to provide foster care for youth with elevated needs:

Promote Successful Integration into the Family and the Community

- Understanding how much supervision the youth requires (before placement occurred and during current placement)
- Assist the youth in adjusting to a new school and community
- Transitioning the youth into another setting

Meeting Exceptional Care Needs (for Special Needs and/or Traumatized Youth)

- Addressing those needs that are not developmental (social, emotional, daily care)
- Understanding risk factors in the community, school and home setting
- Understanding but not diagnosing mental illness and other developmental delays

Assessing Crisis Situations and Utilizing Proper Crisis Intervention/Prevention

- Understanding what a crisis is
- Using appropriate skill sets to deescalate crisis situations
- Understanding attention seeking behaviors and knowing when to respond
- Understanding power, authority and control
- Setting fair and consistent limits
- Understanding risk factors in the community, school and home setting

Recognizing and Implementing Positive Approaches to Challenging Behaviors

- Identifying challenging behaviors early
- Clearly defining target behaviors
- Use of multidisciplinary service team for coordinating care
- Team based wrap around services

2.5.2 In-Service Training Hours, Requirements, and Process

Enroll licensed resource providers in nearby in-service training sessions, as appropriate and approved by the local office. Available in-service training is listed in the next section of this chapter.

- a. Licensed resource providers are required to complete the following number of in-service training hours.
 - Resource providers are required to complete 30 hours per two-year licensure period.
 - Level B resource providers are to complete 32 hours per two-year licensure period.
 - Level A resource providers are to complete 30 hours per two-year licensure period.
 - Medical care resource providers are to complete 30 hours per two-year licensure period.
 - All licensed homes must successfully complete the following training. These hours are obtained within the first year of licensure:
 1. Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR); Three (3) training credit hours using the code V252. The resource provider must successfully complete the CPR training prior to each re-licensure every 2 years.
 2. First Aid; Three (3) training credit hours using the code V898. The resource provider must successfully complete the First Aid training prior to each re-licensure every 2 years.
 3. Health Information Portability and Accountability (HIPAA); One (1) hour of training credit hours for reading and signing the CD-194 using code V980. The form is read and signed at each re-licensure. However, the training credit is only earned for initial time.
 4. Ready, Set, Fly training; Five (5) training credit hours using the code V706. This training is for all homes accepting placement of foster youth age 14 or older (Ideally, this training would be completed prior to the placement of a child age 14 or older in the home.)

5. Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard; Two (2) training credit hours using code V280. This must be completed within 3 months of the license/approval begin date.
- All licensed homes must successfully complete the following training during the first two-year licensure period:

Year One:

1. **Trauma Care**- 3 training credit hours (V815)
Read the following four documents from the Child welfare Trauma Training Toolkit and complete webinar:
 - *Understanding Child Trauma Stress*
http://www.nctsnet.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/understanding_child_traumatic_stress_brochure_9-29-05.pdf
 - *What is Child Traumatic Stress?*
http://www.nctsnet.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/what_is_child_traumatic_stress_0.pdf
 - Parenting In A Challenging World
http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Parenting_in_a_Challenging_World_rev3-17-06.pdf
 - The 12 Core Concepts; Concepts for Understanding Traumatic Stress Responses in Children and Families
<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/parents-caregivers/what-is-cts/12-core-concepts>

and

Complete the following webinar:

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2013/cd13-053.pdf>

2. **Psychotropic Mediations** – 1 training credit hour (V254)
Read the following two documents:
[Making Healthy Choices: Guide to Psychotropic Medications for Youth in Foster Care](#)
[Supporting Youth in foster Care in Making Healthy Choices](#)
3. **Laws, policies and procedures governing child welfare** – 5 training credit hours. (V400)
Each office has a copy of the DVD series Refer to memo CD11-38, <http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-038.pdf>

The Legal Aspects for Relative Placement training may also be accessed at, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzPj6sE5Wso>

Year Two:

4. **Healthy Relationships**- 2 training credit hours (V803)

Strong Relationships, Strong Families: Introduction to Healthy Relationship Education Skills for Stakeholders

<https://healthymarriageandfamilies.org/virtual-training-center#.UTYP7qL5Xj4>

Additional Resources:

- <http://ncsu.edu/ffci/publications/2007/v12-n1-2007-spring/wiley/Wiley.pdf>
- <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/FY/FY127500.pdf>
- <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/FY/FY127600.pdf>

5. **Importance of Sibling Placement** – 7 training credit hours (V804)

Instructor Led with curriculum from NRC

- Module #1 , Issues– 3.5 hours
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/nrcfcpp-sibling-curriculum-module1.pdf#_blank
- Module #2, Practice 3.5 hours
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/nrcfcpp-sibling-curriculum-module2.pdf#_blank

Handouts

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/downloads/nrcfcpp-sibling-curriculum-handouts.pdf#_blank

- b. The preferred method of training delivery is instructor led. Instructor-led training is live, interactive training facilitated by an individual with training and expertise to deliver the training topic. Only 14 hours of non-instructor led in-service training may be approved per two (2) year licensure period.

In-service training may be approved on a case by case basis for viewing a video, reading a book, or participating via a website. Other approved in-service training must be approved by the licensing worker and supervisor. Other approved in-service training must address some aspect of foster care. The resource provider must submit the Resource Family In-Service Training Request, CD-114, to the licensing worker to obtain approval. The licensing worker will submit the request to his/her supervisor for approval.

The approval should be obtained prior to the completion of training, if the resource provider is requesting mileage or babysitting reimbursement. The intent is that the training will address areas identified within the resource provider's Professional Family Development Plan. The total amount of other approved in-service training accepted per licensing period is to be determined by the Regional Director based upon the availability of training and the training needs of the region.

Related Subject: See Section 6 Chapter 2.6 [Other Approved In-Service Training](#).

- c. Credit for educational/informational meetings (less than 8 hours) may be given, following the guide contained in 2.5.3 paragraph Attachment D. The curriculum and number of hours must have local office approval.
- d. Arrange reimbursement of babysitting expenses (\$2/Child/Hr), and mileage that is over 10 miles round trip, if necessary, at current state rates through SAM II. Meals may be reimbursed at the per diem rate when the provider attends training in which they are in overnight status according to the [Administrative Manual Chapter 7, Travel](#). The babysitting reimbursement (\$2/child/hr) is to be applied to all children in the foster home, including the biological children of the resource provider(s).
- e. Special expenses (i.e., registration fees) may be approved by the Regional Office and paid through SAM II.
- f. Evaluate use of training experience with resource provider and training facilitators.
- g. Verify training hours completed and record required information on the Resource Parent Training screen in FACES.

2.5.3 In-Service Training Modules

In-Service Training is a requirement for continued resource provider licensure. Training hours are to be checked at the time of re-licensure.

The resource provider may choose from the following selections:

- A. STARS In-Service Training**
12 Modules (99 Hours)

Module 1: The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children at Risk. (12 hours)

- Session 1 Understanding and Assessing Self-esteem
- Session 2 Building Self-esteem and Understanding Behavior
- Session 3 Communicating with Children and Youth (Part 1)
- Session 4 Communicating with Children and Youth (Part 2)

Module 2: Using Discipline to Protect, Nurture and Meet Developmental Needs. (9 hours)

- Session 1 Promoting Positive Behavior
- Session 2 Promoting Self-responsibility and Responding to Unacceptable Behavior
- Session 3 Responding to the Challenges

Module 3: Addressing Developmental Issues Related to Sexuality. (3 hours)

Module 4: Responding to the Signs and Symptoms of Sexual Abuse. (6 hours)

- Session 1 Understanding Sexual Abuse
- Session 2 Responding to the Issues of Sexual Abuse

Module 5: Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families. (9 hours)

- Session 1 Respecting and Supporting Child/Birth Family Ties
- Session 2 Supporting Contact Between Children and Their Families
- Session 3 Becoming Partners in Parenting

Module 6: Working as a Professional Team Member. (9 hours)

- Session 1 Strengthening Teamwork Skills
- Session 2 Developing Your Professional Role
- Session 3 Conflict as Opportunity

Module 7: Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Identity. (6 hours)

- Session 1 Valuing and Making a Commitment to Cultural Competence
- Session 2 Helping Children Develop Lifebooks

Module 8: Promoting Permanency Outcomes. (12 hours)

- Session 1 Providing Children Safe and Nurturing Lifetime Relationships Through Reunification
- Session 2 Providing Children Permanent Families Through the Goal of Adoption
- Session 3 Providing Permanency through Guardianship, Long-term Foster Care and Independent Living
- Session 4 Foster Parent Adoption

Module 9: Managing the Impact of Placement on Your Family. (6 hours)

- Session 1 Managing the Change in Your Family
- Session 2 Managing the Impact of Child Abuse/Neglect Allegations

Module 10: Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children and Families. (15 hours)

- Session 1 Understanding Risk and Protective Factors
- Session 2 Understanding Chemical Dependency
- Session 3 Recognizing the Impact of Parental Chemical Abuse on the Child and Family
- Session 4 Understanding the Implications of Prenatal AOD Exposure for Parenting Young Children
- Session 5 Developing Partnerships with Birth Parents and Working with the Team to Strengthen Families

Module 11: Understanding and Promoting Infant and Child Development. (6 hours)

- Session 1 Where It All Begins
- Session 2 Toddlers, Preschoolers, and School-Aged Children

Module 12: Understanding and Promoting Positive Teen Development. (6 hours)

- Session 1 Identity, Self-Esteem, and the Pre-Teen Years
- Session 2 Positive Teen Development

B. Elevated Needs Training

Resource providers of youth with elevated needs receive specific training in addition to the 27 hours of Specialized Training Assessment Resources and

Support (STARS) pre-service training to enable them to work with youth with elevated needs.

Level A

Prior to signing the Cooperative Agreement to provide Level A care, the resource provider shall successfully complete the 27 hours of STARS pre-service training and 18 hours of specialized training workshops which cover the following topics:

1. Team and relationship building;
2. Communication skills;
3. Behavior management techniques;
4. Discipline and punishment procedure;
5. Management of behavior crisis situations;
6. Development of an individual treatment plan;
7. De-escalation skills;
8. Negotiation;
9. Positive reinforcement technique;
10. Professional skills for foster parents.

The list of approved Level A training curricula is located on the [Resource Development](#) program intranet page.

Level B

Prior to signing the Cooperative Agreement to provide Level B care the resource provider must successfully complete the 27 hours of STARS pre-service training, the 18 hours of Youth with Elevated Needs-Level A training and successfully completed 9 hours of specialized training and practicum designed specifically for Level B. Level B resource providers must demonstrate acquisition of required knowledge and skills. However, participation in Level B training does not guarantee acceptance into the Level B resource provider program. The Level B training workshops include:

1. Crisis Intervention – Two (2) hours
2. Behavior Management – Two (2) hours

3. Suicide Management – Two (2) hours
4. Medication Management – Two (2) hours
5. Family Orientation – One (1) hour (training shall include how the child may impact the resource provider’s family)

The list of approved Elevated Needs Level B training curricula is located on the [Resource Development](#) program Intranet page.

C. STARS, Making the Commitment to Adoption Curriculum- Spaulding

Foster and kinship care providers wanting to adopt must take an additional 12 hours of STARS, Making the Commitment to Adoption (Spaulding) Pre-service training. Relative care providers are encouraged to complete the Spaulding training but are not required to complete this training.

The additional 12 hours of Spaulding may be counted as in-service training credit hours using the V-198 training code.

D. Other approved in-service training resources may also be used to help a resource provider participate in needed training.

Other approved in-service training including but not limited to Children’s Division sponsored, facilitated, or provided must have prior approval by the licensing resource worker and supervisor if the placement provider is requesting the Division reimburse babysitting and or mileage. This approval is obtained by the resource provider completing and submitting the Resource Family In-Service training Request, CD-114.

Staff review the licensing competencies, discuss the needs of the home, and the needs of the placements in the home with the resource parent(s) to determine if the training fulfills the competencies required in Division policy and how many hours of other approved in-service hours will be permitted.

Related Subject: See Section 6. Chapter 2.6 Other Approved In-Service Training .
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Chapter Memoranda History:(prior to 01-31-07)

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[CD07-48](#), [CD08-106](#), [CD09-94](#), [CD09-105](#), [CD10-08](#), [CD10-27](#), [CD12-82](#), [CD12-85](#),
[CD13-71](#), [CD14-20](#), [CD15-61](#), [CD16-09](#), CD16-87

2.6 Other Approved In-Service Training

Credit may be granted for other approved in-service training not identified in Subsection 5 of this chapter, if the following guidelines are met:

- The resource provider must submit the completed CD-114, Resource Family In-Service Training Request form, to the licensing worker prior to participating in the in-service training if the resource provider is requesting mileage or babysitting reimbursement
- Prior approval is not required. Obtaining prior approval is encouraged since not all training attended may be approved.
- After review of the request and discussion with the resource provider regarding the request, the licensing worker submits the form to his/her supervisor for approval
- The worker will notify the resource provider that the training is approved or denied and return the signed CD-114 to the resource provider
- The resource provider will attend the training and obtain documentation to present to the licensing worker (i.e. brochure, sign-in sheet, syllabus, training hand outs, etc.)
- The resource provider will complete the summary of what was learned on the CD-114 and submit to the licensing worker
- Training credit hours will be entered locally as Other Approved In-Service Training using the appropriate "99" code for the general topic of the course.
- Only 14 hours of non-instructor led in-service training may be approved per two (2) year licensure period
- If the training is going to become a statewide accepted training, the Regional Director will submit the requested training to the Professional Development and Training Unit to assign a code number.

Other approved in-service training, including but not limited to Children's Division sponsored or facilitated should be competency based. Flexibility can be allowed for training to occur in various formats such as, but not limited to, small or large group sessions, individual study, readings, coaching, web trainings, conferences, college courses, etc.

Training should have learning objectives outlined to take into account the participant's knowledge, skill, willingness and ability to practice and perform the desired parenting to meet the needs of the children in care, or to increase knowledge of local resources that may assist in addressing the needs of the children in care.

Credit may be granted for "educational/informational meetings" (less than eight hours) if the content is related to foster care and pre-approved by the Regional Office. A maximum of 2 hours training credit will be allowed. An attendance sign-in sheet will be completed by participants and attached to a copy of the CD-114.

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For resource licenses supervised by private agencies, the resource parent should contact their licensing worker regarding from whom they should obtain pre-approval.

Credit hours for approved training may be granted using the following guidelines:

- Reading a book; one credit hour for each 100 pages
- Viewing a video; actual viewing time rounded to the hour and half hour increments
- Completion of a web-based training; actual participation time rounded to the hour and half hour increments
- Foster Parent College is a currently pre-approved web-based in-service training resource; training credit for completing Foster Parent College courses is as listed on its website
- Attending a conference; actual time in training session, not to include travel, meal, or personal time
- Completion of College courses; each semester credit hour earned equals 15 hours of training

The resource provider shall use the CD-114 for pre-approval of other in-service training credit. If the Regional Office or private agency already has a request form in use it may be used instead of the CD-114 as long as it contains all of the following information:

- Name and Vendor Number of the resource provider
- Date training occurred
- Training, Book, or Tape title
- Instructor / Author
- Competency (ies) addressed (Protecting and Nurturing, Meeting Developmental Needs and Addressing Developmental Delays, Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Own Families, Connecting Children to Safe, Nurturing Relationships Intended to Last a Lifetime, Working as a Member of a Professional Team)
- Hours of credit requested
- Signature of licensing worker and his/her supervisor approval
- Location for resource provider to compose a summary of what was learned including any new parenting skills the provider plans to use in their home or with a specific child

The resource parent may appeal to the Circuit Manager, or Circuit Manager Designee in the Metro areas, if requested in-service training hours are denied by their licensing worker and supervisor. The request should be in writing. The worker and the supervisor must be prepared to provide support for the decision to deny training credit hours. For resource licenses supervised by private agencies, the resource parent should contact their licensing worker regarding to whom they submit an appeal.

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