

## Preparing Foster Parents for Family Visits

Foster parents are important partners along with the social worker and the family in visiting. It is the worker's role to convey this to them and to help them prepare for and be involved in visiting

First, it is important for the worker to determine the following criteria. Are the foster parents able and willing to:

- Value the child/parent relationship
- Allow visits in their home
- Supervise visits in their home
- Document what occurs as requested
- Provide transportation
- Help to prepare their foster child for visits
- Share with parents information and skills that are relevant to providing a safe home for the child
- Maintain confidentiality
- Recognize when they need assistance

1. What events currently exist in the child's day during which visits might be best planned (e.g., coming home from school, after dinner?)
2. Are there prior time commitments for parents and foster parents during which visits should not be scheduled?
3. Is the child saying anything about wishing to visit the family?
4. What visit arrangements are parents requesting?
5. What aspects of the initial visits need to be recorded in order to develop and support case recommendations?
6. The worker should also help the foster parents to express their concerns about the visits, such as dealing with:
  - Awkwardness
  - A crying child who can't be comforted
  - A parent who is angry
  - A parent who has been drinking and/or is high on drugs
  - Sadness when the visit is over

Finally, the planning meeting should make clear who will do what in carrying out the visit.