Foster Parent Implementation Plan

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

#1 Foster Parent Right: The right to be treated with dignity, respect, and consideration as a professional member of the child welfare team.

Criteria: Strategies to ensure that foster parents are treated with dignity, respect and considered a professional member of the child welfare team.

Hoyleton recognizes foster parents as a key team member in assisting children and families in reaching permanency. We promote and encourage this alliance with the foster parent team members through a variety of ways.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

#2 Foster Parent Right: The right to be given standardized pre-service training and appropriate ongoing training to meet mutually assessed needs and improves the foster parent skills.

Criteria: minimum standardized pre-service training per DCFS Rule 402, PRIDE or other DCFS training, co-training approach (pairing a foster parent with staff), regular utilization of mutual assessment tool for training needs, training commensurate with type of care provided, evidence of ongoing training schedule or calendar

Training is an important component in growing as any professional. Therefore, Hoyleton recognizes the need for pre-service and in-service training. Our licensing staff assist foster parents in registering them for PRIDE classes, and other classes that may be of interest, or that staff recommend to them based on the child's need.

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#3 Foster Parent Right: The right to be informed as to how to contact the appropriate child care agency in order to receive information and assistance to access supportive services for children in the foster parent care.

Criteria: 24 hour, 7-day availability of emergency support; established method for accessing support services

Hoyleton provides contact phone numbers for 24 hour/7 day support during orientation of the organization, and also upon initial placement of a child. During office hours 8:30-5pm, staff can be reached through the direct line 618-688-4727 or each worker/supervisor has a direct phone number that will avoid going through the front desk receptionist.

For foster parents living in St. Clair County the Hoyleton Crisis line is available 24/7 call **618-436-0460**.

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#4 Foster Parent Right: The right to receive timely financial reimbursement commensurate with the care needs of the child as specified in the service plan.

Criteria: Regular board payment (explain payment schedule); payment for additional services, such as respite and camp; timely assessment and payment commensurate with the type of care provided; method of resolving payment problems

Hoyleton is committed to timely reimbursement to the foster parents, and therefore will ensure regular board payment is mailed by the 10th working day of the month. This applies to licensed and unlicensed foster home payment. Rates of payment are designated by the DCFS board payment rate schedule.

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#5 Foster Parent Right: The right to be provided a clear, written understanding of a placement agency's plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent's home. Inherent in this right is the foster parent's responsibility to support activities that will promote the child's right to a relationship with his or her own family and cultural heritage.

Criteria: FP participation in development of the child's service plan; timely notification of changes in service plan/permanency goal, including method of notification; FP participation/input into plan for visitation/communication with the child's birth family.

As a team member of Hoyleton, the foster parent is encouraged to attend all pertinent meetings regarding the child. This includes administrative case reviews (ACR), court, and child and family team meetings. The caseworker ensures communication with the foster parent through in person home visits, phone calls, and other designated meetings.

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#6 Foster Parent Rights: The right to a fair investigation of complaints about licensure, to have someone present during the process, and to receive due process. The right to request mediation or review of licensing decisions, and to have corrective action plans clearly explained and linked to specific standards.

Criteria: policy describing the agency's investigation of alleged violations and demonstration of how the agency disseminates that information to foster parents; person of FP choosing present during the investigation; specified time frames for investigation as required by DCFS rule; procedure for appealing negative results/corrective action plans.

When a complaint regarding the foster family comes to the attention of Hoyleton, the family will be notified in writing of the licensing complaint. Typically, prior to this letter being delivered, the licensing worker will meet with the family to review the concerns and/or violations with the family.

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#7 Foster Parent Right: The right, at any time during which a child is placed with the foster parent, to receive additional or necessary information that is relevant to the care of the child.

Criteria: caseworker training in all information to be disclosed; description of how caseworkers are held accountable for sharing the information.

Through our agency's implementation of CARE (trauma informed practices), we realized that we needed to alter our initial meeting with the biological parents. Our first meeting the biological parent now includes the CFS 458: Let me tell you about my child.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

#8 Foster Parent Right: The right at the time of placement with the foster parent to receive in writing the medical history of the child, educational history, a copy of the child's portion of the service plan, and other relevant background information.

Criteria: the agency or DCFS region has clear rules and procedures as to what information to share and how to share it with foster parents; staff are trained in all pertinent policies and procedures; there is a description of how caseworkers are held accountable for sharing the information.

Case managers are trained during agency orientation, during ongoing training, and supervision of what information to share and how to share it with foster parents via education of the Children and Family Services Act.

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#9 Foster Parent Right: The right to be informed of and involved in meetings, decisions, and plans concerning the foster child, with input treated equally to that of professionals like therapists and teachers.

Criteria: foster parents are notified and encouraged to participate in all meetings and staffing about foster children in their care; foster parents are informed of decision made by agencies and courts; foster parents are encouraged to give input into case planning and input is given full consideration; foster parents are encouraged to communicate with all child and family team members.

As an integral part of the Child and Family Team for the child, foster parents are continually encouraged to participate in meetings and staffing about the child in their care during in-person visits and through telephone communications.

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#10 Foster Parent Right: Foster parents have the right to receive timely and relevant information about the child and their family to provide proper care and create a permanency plan. Details about the child's family will only be shared as necessary for the child's care unless the family agrees to share more.

Criteria: a description of information given to FP at intake, and a prescribed method of disclosing information is utilized; ongoing sharing of information that is pertinent to the health and well-being of the child.

During initial placement the case manager will review with the foster parent's pertinent information that is known about the child.

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#11 Foster Parent Right: The right to be given reasonable written notice of any changes in a child's case plan, plans to terminate the placement of the child with the foster parent, and reasons for the change or termination in placement. The notice shall be waived only in cases of a court order or when the child is determined to be at imminent risk of harm.

Criteria: 14 day notice (not applicable for movements involving imminent risk); notice in writing; appeal information, including clinical review process is given to FP.

Hoyleton promotes transparency with all team members, therefore, if there is an identified issue that warrants removal, Hoyleton will try and remedy the situation to the best extent possible, unless immediate safety is involved.

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#12 Foster Parent Right: The right to be notified in a timely and complete manner of all court hearings, including the notice of the date and time of the court hearing, name of judge or hearing officer, location of the hearing, court docket number, and the right to intervene in court proceedings or to seek mandamus under the Juvenile Court Act of 1969.

Criteria: method for notifying foster parents of hearings and their right to be heard; description of how caseworkers are held accountable for notifying FP

Foster parents are informed of court hearings (prior to the court hearing) and proceeding through communications with the case manager, and during Child and Family Team Meetings.

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#13 Foster Parent Right: The right to be considered as a placement option when a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster parent re-enters foster care, if placement is in the best interest of the child and other children in the foster parent's home.

Criteria: method for checking past placement records, when possible; process for determining best interest regarding placement decision.

If a child re-enters care, DCFS in collaboration with Hoyleton will review past placement records of the child to determine place foster placements. If the children are an appropriate age, information will be gathered regarding their input of the past placement.

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#14 Foster Parent Right: The right to timely access to the child placement agency's existing appeals process and the right to be free from acts of harassment and retaliation by any other party when exercising the right to appeal.

Criteria: documentation that an internal appeals system has been established and description of how it prohibits retaliation; process for accessing the external DCFS appeals system when necessary.

Foster parents are introduced to their right to service appeals during PRIDE training, which consists of an external appeals process. During orientation with Hoyleton, the foster parent is further educated on the internal and external grievance process.

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#15 Foster Parent Right: The right to be informed of the Foster Parent/Advocacy Hotline established under Section 35.6 of the Children and Family Services Act and all the rights accorded to foster parents concerning reports of misconduct by Department employees, service providers, or contractors, confidential handling of those reports, and investigation by Inspector General appointed under Section 35.5of the Children and Family Services Act.

Criteria: training/brochures available on the foster parent hotline and the Office of Inspector General

Through the education of the appeals process, the written material provided to foster parents describes the foster parents right to call the advocacy hotline.

ADVOCACY HOTLINE (800) 232-3798

During PRIDE training, and during Hoyleton orientation training brochures are disseminated and this information is reviewed with foster parents.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

#1 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to openly communicate and share information about the child with other members of the welfare team.

Criteria: Training on type & importance

Through the CARE and TCI implementation and training, it will be emphasized as an integral part of the team that the foster parent plays in reducing any trauma symptoms that a child is experiencing.

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#2 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to respect the confidentiality of information concerning foster children and their families and act appropriately within applicable confidentiality laws and regulations.

Criteria: Initial and ongoing training on the importance of confidentiality; Laws & regulations available to foster parents.

Foster parents receive their initial introduction to confidentiality guidelines during PRIDE training. During orientation training with Hoyleton foster parents receive information on confidentiality and how it applies to various situations for the child and biological families, as well as foster parents.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

#3 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to advocate for children in the Foster Parent's care.

Criteria: Educational advocacy training available; court training available; service appeal brochures and training available; encouragement to participate in all staffing, including Administrative Case Reviews (ACR's), Clinical Intervention for Placement and Preservation (CIPP) meetings;, Integrated Assessment (IA) activities, case conferences and court hearings.

The advocacy training that foster parents learned in PRIDE is reemphasized during Hoyleton orientation, along with on-going trainings. Foster parents also received advocacy training as part of PRIDE. Through PRIDE, each foster parent is trained in being an Educational Advocate.

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#4 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to treat children in the foster parent's care and the children's family with dignity, respect, and consideration.

Criteria: Initial and on-going training on this topic; monitoring by staff charged with case management.

Throughout this plan, the reference to team has been utilized. Foster parents are trained during PRIDE, but also during Hoyleton orientation, and on-going meetings regarding the composition of the team members, which include biological parents and family.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

#5 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own individual and familial strengths and limitations when deciding whether to accept a child into care; and the responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own support needs and utilize appropriate supports in providing care for foster children.

Criteria: ongoing mutual assessment method; training based on assessments, placements based on strengths; support needs addressed

During the licensing process, families are encouraged to provide a profile of information which includes their preferences of children served based on their strengths. This information is mutually assessed annually to develop training goals based on the type and ages of children desired to serve.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

#6 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to be aware of the benefits of relying on and affiliating with other foster parents and foster parent associations in improving the quality of care and service to children and families.

Criteria: internal support groups are encouraged, and information is provided to foster parents; affiliations with foster parent associations are encouraged and facilitated.

Hoyleton is active in a variety of professional organizations such as Council on Accreditation, Alliance for Children and Family, Illinois Child Care Association, council for Health and Human Service Ministry, Foster Care Adoptive Care Coalition, and Metro-East Foster Adopt Care Alliance.

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#7 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to assess the foster parent's on-going individual training needs and take actions to meet those needs.

Criteria: method and tool for assessing general training needs of foster parents; process for providing for identified needs.

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#8 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to develop and assist in implementing strategies to prevent placement disruptions, recognize the trauma of placement disruptions on a child and all members of the foster family; and the responsibility to provide emotional support for the foster children and members of the foster family if prevention strategies fail and placement disruption occur.

Criteria: Method of early identification of children at risk of disrupting or creating disruption in the family; support for foster children and family members is preventive strategies fail; training in purpose and availability of stabilization services through System of Care.

Foster parents are initially exposed to the stressors and other difficulties they may endure through the PRIDE training. This training offers the foster parents the ability to begin recognition of early symptoms, behaviors, and other signals that there is difficulty in the placement prior to disruption.

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#9 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to know the impact foster parenting has on individuals and family relationships; and the responsibility to attempt to minimize, any stress resulting from foster parenting.

Criteria: training/methods to recognize and minimize stress factors; respite available; "voluntary hold" methods explained and understood; counseling and other supports available.

Through regular utilization of the TCI and CARE methods that foster parents are trained in, the data of these evidenced based programs conclude that staff and foster parents will endure less stress because over time the child's trauma systems will be reduced, thus providing less difficulty of care and problematic systems to endure.

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#10 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to know the rewards and benefits to children, parents, families and society that come from foster parenting and to promote the foster parenting experience in a positive way.

Criteria: Foster parents are informed of events/activities that acknowledge and support foster parents and participation is encouraged; training in the public relationship aspect is made available.

Without foster parents' willingness to provide services to the children in need, foster care would essentially be non-existent. Through this realization, Hoyleton trains foster parents on how to encourage and promote community awareness and to be able to facilitate discussions when needed in public relationship encounters.

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#11 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to know the roles, rights, and responsibilities of foster parents, other professionals in the child welfare system, the foster child, and the foster child's own family.

Criteria: training and co-training with staff is required; regular meetings with other team members are held and encouraged; foster parents have a recognized voice within the agency's management of organization

Foster parents are trained on their rights and responsibilities through the following: PRIDE training, Hoyleton orientation, quarterly Child and Family Team Meetings, in-service trainings, support group meetings, and through written documents.

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#12 Foster Parent Responsibility: It is the foster parent's responsibility to always stay prepared. Know your duty as a mandated reporter under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. Stay up to date on your agency's policies for allegations involving foster parents and adhere to the steps outlined in their investigation procedures.

Criteria: training, initial and ongoing, including mandated reporting responsibilities; written foster parent acknowledgement/contract; training involving allegations against foster parents and the applicable rules and regulations which govern the investigation of the allegations.

Being a mandated reporter is required through the role of a foster parent. To adequately understand this role, and how to carry out the functions training is provided through training, and reviewed at the time of licensing, and during renewals.

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#13 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to know and receive training regarding the purpose of administrative case reviews, client service plans, and court processes, as well as any filing or time requirements associated with those proceedings; and the responsibility to participate in the foster parents' designated role in these proceedings.

Criteria: training on the importance of participating; emphasis on foster parents taking an active role in planning for permanency goal through court hearings, Administrative Case Reviews, Integrated Assessments, etc

Training on the importance of participating occurs during PRIDE modules, Child and Family Team Meetings, Hoyleton training, and is outlined in the Hoyleton Foster Care Placement Agreement form.

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#14 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to know the child welfare agency's appeal procedure for foster parents and the rights of foster parents under the procedure.

Criteria: awareness of agency's internal appeals system and its utilization; rights of foster parents are spelled out

Foster parents are provided with a copy of the DCFS appeals brochure, along with discussion of how this process is implemented. Individualized training regarding this appeals process occurs during the Child and Family Team Meeting, as applicable, and through other meetings with Hoyleton staff.

Foster parents are informed, and their rights are spelled out through the training and acknowledgement form of the grievance procedures that are signed during orientation and at renewal. On-going training is also provided to ensure foster parents are reminded of their rights. All foster parents are provided with a copy of the Foster Parent Implementation Plan which also outlines the foster parent's rights, along with providing a listing of supervisory staff with contact information.

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#15 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to know and understand the importance of maintaining accurate and relevant records regarding the child's history and progress; and to be aware of and follow the procedures and regulations of the child welfare agency with which the foster parent is licensed or affiliated.

Criteria: training is provided on the importance of maintaining complete records; regulations/expectations are available in writing; agency provides folder, notebook, or case record for actual storage/transportation of foster parent records

During PRIDE and during Hoyleton orientation, emphasis is placed on record keeping of client information.

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#16 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to share information, through the child welfare team, with a subsequent caregiver (the child's parent or another substitute caregiver) regarding the child's adjustment in the foster parent's home

Criteria: training on this expectation is offered

Stabilization and the child's well-being is paramount. As foster parents, biological parents, and even case managers know a child's likes and dislikes, it is important to share with the team to allow for continuation of a child's strength during subsequent caregivers.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

#17 Foster Parent Responsibility: The responsibility to provide care that is respectful and responsive to the child's cultural needs and are supportive of the relationship between the child and his or her own family; recognize the importance of maintaining a child's cultural identity when the race or culture of the foster family differs from that of the foster child; and the responsibility to take action to address these issues.

Criteria: training, both initial and ongoing, is encouraged and made available; internal and external resources are made accessible or available.

Foster parents are encouraged to seek training and attend agency and community sponsored trainings regarding diversity. Hoyleton offers diversity training as part of the CARE and other culturally diverse training courses, but also seeks to find community training tailored to fit the needs of the child and family.

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