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## **TOPIC: When the Phone Rings**

### Important questions for Resource Parents to Ask When Called for a New Placement

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

This Fact Sheet will go over questions frequently asked by experience foster parents when DYFS calls with a child for placement. **Remember:** A good match can make all the difference for you and the child, and an informed decision is always the best decision for everyone.

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#### **The Basics**

- What is the child's name, age, sex and race?
- What is the child's religion?
  - Does the child require any religious instructions?
  - If so, where? when? who is expected to provide transportation?

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#### **Health Concerns**

- Does the child have any allergies?
- Is the child on any medication?
  - If yes, for what?
- Are there any special dietary concerns?
- Are there any medical records?
  - If not, who can the pediatrician contact to get such records?
- Does the child have a Medicaid card?

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#### **Educational Needs**

- What do I need to do about the child starting school?
  - Have the records been transferred?
- Is the child classified?
  - Is there an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in place?
- Are there any special arrangements necessary for the child's education?

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#### **Developmental Concerns**

- Is the child on schedule developmentally?
  - If not, explain
- If the child is older, does he/she have a history of violence, drug or alcohol se?
- Is the child sexually active?

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**Emotional/Mental Considerations**

- Does the child receive any therapy or counseling?
  - If so, what kind and how often are the sessions?
  - Where do they take place and who is expected to provide transportation?
- Has the child been sexually and/or physically abused?
  - If so, does the child exhibit behaviors (i.e., acting out) as a result of this abuse?
- Does the child exhibit any habitual anti-social behaviors (e.g., lying, stealing)?

**Family History**

- Has any initial visitation schedule been established? If yes:
  - When will the visits occur and where?
  - Who is expected to provide transportation?
- Does the child have any siblings?
  - Are they in the DYFS system?
  - Will there be visits with the siblings, how often do they occur and where to they take place?
  - Who will provide transportation?
- If the biological parents have more children, will I be called to take them?

**Involving DYFS**

- Were the children removed through Informed Consent or a court order?
- What Local Office (LO) is placing the child, is this the only LO with whom I'll be dealing with?
- Who is the case manager?
- Is the child coming from another out of home placement?
  - Why is the child being removed from that home and may I contact the former resource parents?
- How long has the child been in the DYFS system?
  - How many placements has he/she had?
- What is the board rate for this child?
  - If coming from another out of home placement, is it the same rate, if not, why?
- What is the case plan for the child?
- What is the anticipated length of stay for this child?
- Does the child have clothing or any other belongings with him/her, if not will there be an initial clothing allowance?
- Has the Child Information Sheet (DYFS form 26-55) been prepared?
- Is a car seat available, if needed?

**Additional Questions**

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Foster and Adoptive Family Services have developed a *Placement Worksheet* that incorporates the questions raised in this Fact Sheet. It is a convenient way to record answers and make an informed decision. If you would like a copy of this worksheet, or need more information, call the toll-free FAFS Hotline at 1.800.222.0047.

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