



Creating *hope*. Changing *lives*. Challenging *all limits*.

**Little City's  
ChildBridge Center for Children  
and Families  
*Foster Care and Adoption Program***

**2012 Foster Parent Law  
Implementation Plan**

**PURPOSE:**

- This booklet is a *resource* for you
- Outlines mutual Rights and Responsibilities
- Developed from Illinois Foster Parent Law
- Describes how to *resolve issues*, problems or grievances

**QUESTIONS or SUGGESTIONS?**

- Emily Rawsky at 773-265-1539;  
[erawsky@littlecity.org](mailto:erawsky@littlecity.org)
- Little City's Foster Parent Advisory Group at  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LittleCityParents/>



Creating *hope*. Changing *lives*. Challenging *all limits*.

## Little City's 2012 Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan

### Foster Parent & Staff Receipt / Input / Development

### Signature Page

1 Delivery method chosen by foster family:

- a. Email \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Web Pickup \_\_\_\_\_
- c. CD Rom \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Paper Copy \_\_\_\_\_

2 Foster Family Name \_\_\_\_\_

3 Signature Confirming Receipt \_\_\_\_\_

4 Date \_\_\_\_\_

5 Approval

- a. I/We approve of this Plan in total \_\_\_\_\_
- b. I/We do not approve of this Plan \_\_\_\_\_
- c. I/We suggest the following changes be made: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6 Signature/Date of Staff Delivering:

\_\_\_\_\_

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**2012 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**  
**Rule 340**  
**FOSTER PARENT CODE**

**LITTLE CITY FOUNDATION**  
**Main Office**  
**1760 West Algonquin Road**  
**Palatine, IL 60067**

**Chicago Office**  
**700 N. Sacramento Blvd, Ste. 220**  
**Chicago, IL 60612**



## 2012 Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan Annual Report

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Little City Foundation received a rating of “Acceptable” for our 2011 Foster Parent Implementation Plan. The comments provided by the reviewers were as follows:

### Strengths:

- The plan was scored in its entirety
- Staff Educational Advocate is available to foster parents
- Supervisors make random phone calls regarding foster parent satisfaction
- Foster parents are expected to perform “volunteer” service to become familiar with the children served by this agency
- The agency stresses practical knowledge rather than training credits
- Foster parents may serve on the agency training committee
- Reimbursement is available for supervising visits, doctor’s visits, school activities, etc.
- Narrative #9 is very well done. Impressive!
- 24-hour crisis intervention support is available

### Suggestions for Improvement:

- Narrative #4 needs to address assessment/payment for the type of care provided.
- #10 needs to define respite. Is it both formal and informal?
- Narrative #11 – Revise to remove copy placed over graphic. Reword C for logical flow. Add detail on appeals.
- Describe the method used to check records in #13
- Revise the Responsibility narratives for clarity. Some are pretty vague. Especially address ways you “encourage” participation.

### General Comments:

- The agency acknowledges the DCFS 14-day notice, but requires a 30-day notice from foster parents.
- Proofread your plan, checking grammar, spelling and formatting.
- Please include a clear foster parent signature sheet with a clear endorsement/approval of your completed plan.

Little City Foundation (LCF) was very pleased with the strengths of the plan noted by the Advisory Council. Little City ensured the strengths identified in last year’s plan were implemented throughout this year and operationalized as part of our foster care and adoption program processes. The suggestions for improvement regarding Little City’s 2011 plan were all addressed within this year’s revised plan by providing more detailed information within the noted Narratives about Little City’s policies and procedures in those respective areas (see information in the Rights’ Narratives #4, 10, 11, 13 and all of the Responsibility Narratives on page 50.)

## **Successful Implementations of Little City's 2011 Plan**

Little City was very proud of our 2011 Foster Parent Implementation Plan's complete revision of content and organization into a more user-friendly format per foster parent feedback and input. Little City also enhanced the availability and distribution of our 2011 plan to bolster access and feedback (see *Distribution Section* below.) In addition to the complete revision, reorganization and distribution of our 2011 plan, Little City believes we were also successful in implementing the following Rights and Responsibilities:

- (1) Right #1: Dignity, Respect and Consideration
- (2) Right #2: Training
- (3) Right #3: Contact with the Agency for Support
- (4) Right #5 & #8: Placement Plan Information & Information Given About Children at, or Prior to Placement
- (5) Responsibility #10: Promote Foster Parenting Positively

### *(1) Dignity, Respect and Consideration*

Little City ensures foster parents' right to dignity, respect and consideration by including value statements within our agency's policies, procedures, and treatment philosophy; including foster parents in treatment planning for a child; providing an on-staff Educational Advocate; conducting regular Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs) at scheduled intervals or when requested by the foster parent or a team member; completing satisfaction surveys; providing direct contact with supervisors; conducting regular home visits; offering foster parent training; and recognizing foster parents in newsletters. Each of these components was successfully implemented this year. As evidenced within Little City's bi-annual and annual program outcome report, Little City's child welfare specialists were over 87% compliant with the minimum of in-person contacts with the child and his/her foster parent as required per program plan (1x/month for traditional cases; 2x/month for specialized cases; 3x/month for adolescent specialized cases.) Child welfare staff were also over 70% compliant with timely completion of CFTMs, with supervisors participating in a minimum of two CFTMs a year. Little City maintained on-going communication about program policies, procedures and changes through the distribution of quarterly newsletter and additional mass mailings as appropriate. Satisfaction Surveys were distributed with a minimal return rate; however, the returned surveys were utilized to bolster program practices and incorporated into this year's plan.

### *(2) Training*

Little City recognizes foster parents' right to be provided with pre-service and on-going training to ensure they have the tools they need to meet the needs of the children in their care, as well as their own needs. Little City made significant gains regarding our offering and facilitation of trainings, but we continue to struggle with participation. Little City successfully hosted two pre-service trainings; hosted and provided resources for external on-going trainings; required volunteering within the program as part of the licensing process; used multifaceted communication mechanisms about training opportunities including the issuance of training newsletters; and utilized a foster parent co-training model. Little City continued to host a Little City-specific pre-service training required by all foster parents prior to licensure that totals an additional 27 credit hours with a plan

to offer our pre-service training quarterly beginning in January 2012. We also offered monthly trainings for our foster parents (see Attachment A) Little City continues to utilize a co-training model when hosting our agency-hosted trainings including pre-service and our on-going monthly trainings. Foster parents trained on the “Working as a Team” module of pre-service and foster parents are being added to the Trauma training offerings in 2012. Little City hosted an Adoption In-Service Day that was met with good attendance and very positive feedback. Little City learned that personal phone calls to participants who may benefit from certain training offerings significantly increases participation. DCFS added Little City as a DCFS Training site beginning in 2012. Little City continues to notify our foster parents of on-going training through the distribution of mass mailings, quarterly newsletters, personal phone calls, and information sharing during licensing visits and CFTMs.

### *(3) Contact with the Agency for Support*

Little City ensures foster parents’ right to be well-supported in their efforts to be excellent parents to special needs children by having a thorough matching and pre-placement process; having 27/4 crisis support that includes contact with Little City’s clinical team; offering paid respite; coordinating supportive services; offering an on-line foster parent support group; and notifying foster parents about external supports. Little City’s successful implementation of matching and pre-placement visits is detailed in #4 below. In fiscal year 2011, Little City’s 24/7 Crisis Response protocol was communicated to all foster parents during Little City’s pre-service training and within the paperwork provided upon placement. The quarterly newsletters provided staff names, contact numbers, and the crisis procedure including the on-call schedule. Child welfare, clinical, and supervisory staff are accessible to foster parents 24/7.

Little City also ensured the successful implementation of coordinating and liaising with supportive services to support our foster families and the child in their care by offering an on-line Foster Parent Advisory Group fully operated and managed by foster parents that is accessible at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LittleCityParents>. Foster parents are reminded about supports available to them, including Foster Parent Associations and Advisory Groups, in the quarterly newsletters and/or upon issuance of a Child File at placement or licensure.

Little City offers paid respite to all of our specialized foster families (see Right #4 for detailed information about Little City’s respite program) and we successfully connect foster parents with one another to facilitate support. Little City foster parent mentoring program also successfully connected several existing foster parents with new foster parents to serve as a mentor/resource to that parent. This foster-to-foster parent mentoring initiative has proven to be highly successful in foster parent retention and satisfaction. Little City no longer offers informal respite via free Saturday Arts programming at our Chicago office due to a loss in funding; however, we hope to revive this program in 2012 with the attainment of grant-funding.

*(4) Right #5 & #8: Placement Plan Information & Information Given About Children at or Prior to Placement*

Little City achieved over a 98% placement stabilization rate for all children served within our foster care and adoption program in 2011. We believe we achieve such a high rate of stabilization due to our intensive licensing, training, home study, and pre-placement processes, in addition to the on-going collaborative efforts between the agency staff and foster family via engagement in CFTMs and regular home visits. Little City completes very thorough home studies on all prospective foster parents that clearly details a family's strengths, areas in need of improvement, and the type of child best suited for one's particular home based upon this mutual assessment.

Little City also provides all foster parents with resource binders, which we call "Child Files," upon the placement of a child and/or upon issuance of a new license. Little City updated these binders to include more information about supports, resources and trainings available to foster parents. Included within the "Child Files" are placement responsibilities, which outlines the foster parents' and agency's rights and responsibilities related to the care of children in foster care; descriptions of LCF's board payment procedure and a breakdown of how the money is supposed to be used to support the child's care, emergency phone numbers and procedures; grievance policy and grievance form; Service Appeal and OIG brochures; support opportunities; information about the child's biological family and visitation plans; and information specifically related to the child and his/her special needs such as their portion of the IA and Service Plan, IEP, medical information, psychological/psychiatric information, and the likes. Little City values the use of the Child File because it provides our foster parents a centralized place to maintain all information related to the child in their care and provides full disclosure of his/her needs upon placement. Little City also fully discloses our Disruption Policy, which requires a 30-day notice on placement versus the 15-day notice required by DCFS, in order to ensure appropriate placement, service coordination and minimize trauma to the children with special needs served within our program.

*(5) Responsibility #10: Promote Foster Parenting Positively*

Little City ensures that foster parents' responsibility to know the rewards and benefits of foster parenting are promoted within our program by believing that our current foster parents are our best recruitment tools; realistically describing the foster parent experience in writing and through trainings; offering a mentoring program; highlighting the benefits in our quarterly newsletters; and encouraging participation in community events.

Little City values our foster parents. We strive to ensure collaborative working relationships in efforts to bolster recruitment. Little City has experienced a significant increase in foster parent referrals of new foster parents to our program due to increased outreach and client-engagement efforts. Little City also encourages program outreach by offering \$50 recruitment bonuses to all foster parents who refer a parent to our program who becomes licensed. Little City regularly engages our prospective and current foster parent pool in the promotion of foster parenting in a positive light via highlights and articles in agency newsletters and on our website, co-trainings during our pre-service training and through our pre-licensure volunteering and on-going trainings. Little City's foster parent mentoring program is our most successful implementation of this Right.

## **Challenging Implementations of Little City's 2011 Plan**

Little City struggled to implement the following Rights and Responsibilities:

- (1) Right #2: Training
- (2) Responsibility #11: Roles, Rights and Responsibilities of Child Welfare Team

### *Right #2: Training*

While Little City successfully implemented several components of our the Training Right as outlined within our 2011 plan, we continue to struggle in obtaining consistent participation in our trainings. Little City hosted a successful pre-service training with over eight (8) participants; however, our monthly training offerings were often canceled due to limited participation. When hosted, participation averaged at 2 attendees. Little City increased awareness about our training offerings this year though multifaceted communications and marketing, and increased our offering of trainings in both available times and number of dates, but all of these efforts yielded limited improvements in attendance.

Little City's Adoption In-Service training achieved the highest attendance outside of pre-service training with over six attendees; increased participation was attributed to personal calls made to families who may benefit from this training. Little City plans to continue to make personal calls to bolster attendance. We have also included foster parents in our training committee and enlisted the support of several foster parents to co-train with Little City staff in 2012. Little City hopes that these initiatives, along with being a DCFS Training host site, will increase attendance at agency-hosted trainings.

### *(2) Responsibility #11: Roles, Rights and Responsibilities of Child Welfare Team*

Despite Little City's significantly enhanced distribution and accessibility of our 2011 plan, Little City received a "Somewhat Acceptable" rating from the Foster Parent Council regarding our staff and foster parents' knowledge about our agency's plan and its implementation. Little City believes that we have a multifaceted foster parent implementation plan distribution strategy that ensures all families served by Little City receive a copy of the plan. Additionally, Little City added our 2011 plan to our website for viewing by parents, clients, associates and others. Components of Little City's Foster Parent Implementation Plan were also highlighted in the quarterly newsletters. Little City intends to continue our current distribution and posting strategy for our 2012 plan, while increasing awareness via in-house training of staff and on-going engagement of foster parents in the foster parent implementation plan development.

## **Unsuccessful Implementation of Little City's 2011 Plan:**

Little City was unsuccessful in implementing the following Rights and Responsibilities:

- (1) Right #2: Training

### *Right #2: Training*

Little City failed to add a Court Preparation and Service Appeals training to our on-going training curriculum. The training committee will review this in efforts to add to our 2012 trainings. The agency currently provides information about both topics within our foster

parent implementation plan, and inclusion of information about service appeals in our Child Files.

Little City also failed to create a foster parent implementation plan advisory committee responsible for meeting quarterly in the development of the 2012 plan. Little City hosted foster parent implementation plan trainings three times from January 2011 to present with no participation. Little City is desirous of creating a designated team to create our plan each year. Spearheading of this initiative will begin in January 2012.

Little City indicated that they would create a Foster Care and Adoption Program Policy Binder and distribute to all foster parents. Most of the program policies were created and updated, but were not approved and assembled into a binder for distribution to all families this year. Little City is reevaluating this initiative as part of the training committee in efforts to revise the Policies and Procedures training offered as part of Little City's pre-service training. Little City also did not ensure the successful training of all staff members on our 2011 plan. Little City distributes our plan to all staff with the expectation that the plan will be read in its entirety; however, on-going trainings will be added at a minimum of quarterly for staff during meetings.

### **Description of Involvement**

This year's plan was the result of staff and foster parents coming together to develop the plan. The foster parents and child welfare staff in attendance found the information discussed to be meaningful. Those in attendance at the trainings and/or meetings had an opportunity to discuss their concerns and to make suggestions for changes or additions to the plan; these changes and additions were added to our 2012 plan.

The Foster Parent Implementation Plan Review and development trainings were added to our 2011 training calendar. Foster Parent Implementation trainings were conducted in March, July and September. Little City provided ample notice of the Foster Parent Implementation training by including the trainings in the 2011 agency training calendar. Additionally, quarterly newsletters, e-mails and phone calls were made to foster parents to increase participation. These efforts were met with limited success and continue to be an area for development for Little City.

### **Staff Training**

Little City believes in "doing what we say we are going to do," and continual growth and change. An integral component for this is ensuring that Little City delivers on our promises to our foster parents as outlined in our Foster Parent Implementation Plan. Little City's Foster Care and Adoption policies are reflective of the services and supports we provide to foster parents as outlined in the plan. Additionally, trainings and our correspondence to foster parents via newsletters, on-line, placement paperwork included within the Child Files and the likes reflects our commitment to ensuring foster parent's rights and responsibilities. Staff is trained about implementing the foster parent implementation plan by being informed of Little City's Foster Care and Adoption program policies and procedures. Little City's management team reinforces Little City's

commitment to ensuring foster parents' rights and responsibilities in supervision and meetings at the team and department level.

All Little City staff were provided a copy of the 2011 plan and asked to read the plan in its entirety. The plan was also reviewed during staff meetings. Staff participated in the development of the 2012 plan during meetings and trainings. Staff was also encouraged to notify management of plan additions at anytime in-person or via e-mail at anytime. Little City recognizes our need to increase staff training about our Foster Parent Implementation Plan.

### **Impact of Little City's 2011 Plan on Daily Service Delivery**

The annual creation of Little City's Foster Parent Implementation Plan drives program policy and procedure. This annual review of what our program is doing well, and not so well, based upon feedback from staff and those receiving services from Little City (namely our foster parents) drives not only the creation of our next year's plan, but more importantly, how we practice our work. Little City strives to operationalize our practices and procedures to the fullest extent possible. In doing so, we hope that components of Little City's Foster Parent Implementation Plan are ingrained in the daily work we do. Little City also ensures on-going, multifaceted communication about our plan, including discussions at meetings, trainings, sharing information via written correspondence, and inclusion on Little City's website. Little City believes that our Foster Parent Implementation Plan most directly impacts daily service delivery by ensuring that all staff members recognize and value foster parents as integral members of a child's treatment team, which means ensuring collaboration and communication in pursuit of the best outcomes for the minors in care.

### **2011 Foster Parent Implementation Plan Distribution**

Little City enhanced the distribution and accessibility of our 2011 plan in efforts to ensure successful implementation of the plan's practices and procedures, while practicing full disclosure, and to bolster feedback in creation of our 2012 plan. Little City ensured the distribution and access of our 2011 Foster Parent Implementation Plan to all program participants by including the sign-off page within our 2011 plan that requested the foster parent's desired delivery of the plan, acknowledges receipt of the plan, and asked for suggestions and comments related to the plan. Little City added our 2011 plan to our main website at: [www.littlecity.org/foster](http://www.littlecity.org/foster) for public viewing. Paper-copies of the plan were distributed to all foster parents who failed to indicate a preferred way to receive the plan per the sign-off page.

### **Foster Parent Law Grievances**

Little City did not receive any grievances related to our 2011 Foster Parent Implementation Plan. Little City provided every foster parent with a copy of our 2011 Grievance Procedure and Grievance Form through inclusion within our Foster Parent Implementation Plan. Our 2011 plan sign-off page also requested suggestions related to our plan. Additionally, foster parents were instructed about our grievance procedure, including our foster parent implementation plan grievance procedure, in Little City's Policies and Procedures pre-service training. Copies of the Grievance form are available

on our website, on Little City's Foster Parent Advisory Group homepage, and hard-copies are included within Child Files provided to all parents upon placement. Little City's grievance procedure was reviewed in a quarterly newsletter this year as well, with our Grievance Form enclosed.

Little City reviewed our grievance procedure during the trainings to develop this year's plan. No revisions were recommended during trainings, or amendments received in any other form as outlined above.

## FOSTER PARENT RIGHTS

Your rights (and responsibilities) are dictated by Illinois Law, Rule 340  
found at: [http://dcfswebresource.dcf.illinois.gov/rules/rules\\_340/homepage/](http://dcfswebresource.dcf.illinois.gov/rules/rules_340/homepage/)

### YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

<p><b>1. <u>Dignity, Respect and Consideration:</u></b> <i>Be treated with dignity, respect and consideration.</i></p>	<b>page 14</b>
<p><b>2. <u>Training:</u></b> <i>Be provided Pre-Service and on-going training to meet needs and improve skills.</i></p>	<b>page 16</b>
<p><b>3. <u>Support:</u></b> <i>Be informed on how to contact the placement agency for assistance and access to support services.</i></p>	<b>page 18</b>
<p><b>4. <u>On-Time Financial Reimbursement:</u></b> <i>Receive timely financial reimbursement for care included in the service plan.</i></p>	<b>page 21</b>
<p><b>5. <u>A Placement Plan:</u></b> <i>Be provided with information about the agency's plan for placement that includes supporting family relationships and cultural heritage.</i></p>	<b>page 24</b>
<p><b>6. <u>Fair, Timely and Impartial Investigations:</u></b> <i>Be provided fair, timely and impartial investigations, including mediation and/or administrative review and explanations of decisions concerning licensing.</i></p>	<b>page 26</b>
<p><b>7. <u>Information About Children: (Grouped with #8 and #10)</u></b> <i>Receive additional and necessary information relevant to the child's care.</i></p>	<b>page 29</b>
<p><b>8. <u>Information Required by Acts of Law from DCFS *(See # 7):</u></b> <i>Be given information concerning the child.</i></p>	<b>page 29</b>
<p><b>9. <u>Be Included in Team Meetings:</u></b> <i>Be notified of scheduled meetings concerning the child and decisions made concerning the child. To have input concerning the plan of services for the child and to communicate with other professionals who work with the child.</i></p>	<b>page 34</b>
<p><b>10. <u>Disclosure of Information *(See # 7):</u></b> <i>Have any information the caseworker has about the child and his family that pertains to the child's needs and care.</i></p>	<b>Page 29</b>
<p><b>11. <u>Written Notice of Placement Changes: (Grouped with #13)</u></b> <i>Receive written notice of any plans to end placement, along with the reason and appeal information.</i></p>	<b>page 37</b>
<p><b>12. <u>Appear at Court:</u></b> <i>Receive timely notification of court hearings.</i></p>	<b>page 40</b>
<p><b>13. <u>Placement Option for Children Re-entering Care *(See # 11):</u></b> <i>Be considered as a placement option for foster children formerly in their care.</i></p>	<b>page 37</b>
<p><b>14. a. <u>File a Grievance with LCF</u></b></p>	<b>page 42</b>
<p><b>b. <u>File a Service Appeal (Formal DCFS Process)</u></b> <i>Have access to an agency's or DCFS's appeals process without retaliation.</i></p>	<b>page 44</b>
<p><b>15. <u>Call the Foster Parent Hotline</u></b> <i>Be informed of the Foster Parent Hotline and information on reporting staff misconduct.</i></p>	<b>page 46</b>

# 1. DIGNITY AND RESPECT

**Foster Parents have the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and consideration. They are professional members of the child welfare team.**

**We strive to ensure dignity and respect in these ways:**

- A.** Statements in our published Core Values
- B.** Foster Care Policies and Practices
- C.** Treatment Philosophy
- D.** Inclusion in all planning and caring for the child
- E.** Providing educational advocacy
- F.** Convening team meetings
- G.** Satisfaction Surveys
- H.** Regular contact with supervisors
- I.** Regular home visits, scheduled at the foster parents' convenience
- J.** Training for both foster parents and staff
- K.** Foster Parent service recognition in newsletters



**A.** One of Little City's Core Values statements is "Balancing Choice, Risk, and Dignity," which shows that there are important things to weigh in every decision we make together, and that dignity for you and the child is important among them.

**B.** LCF policies and practices strive to recognize and include foster parents as *crucial* members of the child's treatment team.

**C.** LCF's Treatment Philosophy is introduced in foster parent orientation and throughout our on-going trainings. LCF defines the foster parent relationship with the child as being *the key change agent* in the child's treatment, and life.

**D.** Each foster parent has the right and is invited to participate in all aspects of care and planning for the child including:

- Court Hearings
- Administrative Case Reviews (ACRs)
- Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs)
- Education and School related meetings

**E.** LCF has an on-staff Educational Advocate to assist parents in ensuring their foster child's needs are met within the school setting. LCF hosts two Educational Advocacy trainings each year (see Attachment A.) LCF requires all foster parents to become Educational Advocates to ensure competency in making educational decisions for the child.

**F.** Foster parents have the right to request a team staffing or a meeting with supervisors and other team members at any time. The team ensures quarterly CFTMs at a minimum.

**G.** Foster parents are both encouraged and given the opportunity to formally report satisfaction levels with program services through annual surveys. All surveys are anonymous. Results of the surveys are incorporated into the program's internal biannual outcome report that measures program efficiency, effectiveness, satisfaction and access. The findings are also used to drive improvements to practice. Survey results are shared with foster parents via newsletters and with staff through meetings and trainings.

**H.** Supervisors conduct random phone calls regular home visits and participate in CFTMs to the families on their workers' case loads to inquire about services, offer consideration for foster parents when coordinating services and visits, and provide timely follow up on any issues. Concerns are addressed with workers during supervision and reflected in annual performance evaluations.

**I.** Twice monthly home visits and quarterly CTFMs provide an opportunity for foster parents to partner with staff, management and collaterals to share information. Little City has created a detailed home visit checklist and CFTM guide for case managers to use to ensure comprehensive care is being provided to the children in our program. Topics for discussion include:

- Reasons for case opening (if a new case)
- Child's demographic information
- Child's developmental, medical, behavioral/emotional and special accommodation needs & services
- Child's educational needs
- Adolescent-specific needs, including transition planning
- Birth family visitation plan review
- Court status, including permanency goal and next court date
- Adoption specific questions (as applicable) including recruitment, matching, and subsidy status
- Important dates including ACR, upcoming evaluations and appointments, and the next CFTM.

**J.** Little City Foundation hosts pre-service training, totaling an additional 27 hours of training specific to the needs of the children served by Little City, required pre-licensure for all prospective foster parents. Little City also hosts monthly trainings (see Attachment A.) Little City's Working as a Team and Family Ties trainings are currently co-facilitated with foster parents, with the addition of a Trauma training being added to our co-training curriculum in 2012. Little City was added a DCFS Training Host site beginning in 2012 in order to bolster training opportunities for our families.

**K.** Foster parent recognition and appreciation is vital to our program's on-going vitality and success. Foster families are recognized in the quarterly newsletter for their years of service with our program and celebrated at our annual Holiday Party.

## **2. TRAINING**

**Foster Parents have the right to be provided training both pre-service and ongoing training to ensure they have all the tools they need to meet the needs of children in their care, as well as their own needs.**

**We strive to meet training needs in these ways:**

- A.** Valuing Lifetime and Continuous Learning
- B.** Pre-service Training
- C.** Ongoing Training
- D.** Identified Placement-Specific Training
- E.** Frequent, Multifaceted Communication about Training Opportunities

**A.** Another one of Little City's Core Values statements, distributed to all foster parents within the Child File, is "Lifetime and Continuous Learning." This agency core value recognizes the importance of continuous learning and utilization of best practice models in order to teach new skills to promote the best possible outcomes for the clients we serve.

**B.** Little City Foundation's Foster Care and Adoption Program serves children with intellectual and developmental disabilities in our specialized foster care program and siblings of these minors in our traditional foster care program. Given the higher level of needs of our program participants, LCF provides specifically tailored pre-service and ongoing trainings specific to the clients we serve, consistent with our policies and procedures, and in compliance with the DCFS required 12 annual training hours a year for specialized foster parents.

LCF's foster care & adoption program has a training committee that is comprised of staff and foster parents (although more foster parent participation is needed.) The committee focuses on pre-service and ongoing foster parent training. Trainings are developed based upon foster parent identified needs determined by completing the satisfaction survey, reporting needs during home visits, CFTMs and six month licensing and monitoring visits, and/or via participation on the training committee.

The following 27-Hours of training are required as part of Little City Foundation Foster Care Pre-Service Training and must be completed prior to receiving a license:

1. Little City Foundation Policy and Procedures
2. Introduction to Developmental Disabilities
3. Clinical Interventions
4. Working as a Team
5. Family Ties & Life books
6. Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI)
7. Adult/Infant/Child CPR & First Aid

Little City hosts our pre-service training a minimum of twice a year, with quarterly trainings planned for 2012. Foster parents are also required to complete DCFS PRIDE

Training, Child Trauma, and Educational Advocacy Training pre-licensure, in addition to 10 volunteer hours with children within our specialized foster care and adoption program.

**C.** LCF added new on-going training opportunities for 2011 & 2012 that include\*:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Trauma – co-facilitated with DCFS-trained foster parents
- Clinical Interventions I
- Clinical Interventions II
- Educational Advocacy
- Court Advocacy & the Service Appeal Process

*\*See Attachment A for course descriptions*

Trainings are generally provided by Little City clinical and licensing staff or community based professionals and foster parents are asked to facilitate when available.

**D.** Foster parents are assessed for any child specific trainings that may be needed to facilitate placement. Many families receive one-on-one skill-building and support from a LCF therapist. We stress the gain in practical knowledge, rather than just focusing on training credits.

**E.** Little City values lifetime and continuous learning and conveys this to prospective foster parents during orientation and pre-service; additionally, foster parents are encouraged to seek training opportunities in order to increase their capacity for understanding the traumas that children in care have faced as well as enhancing their skills in meeting the needs of children placed in their care.

In order to accommodate all learning styles and foster parent schedules, Little City's foster care and adoption program has a resource library with nearly 200 books and videos that foster parents can check out and report on for training credits. Parents are also provided with DCFS-sponsored and community-based training information via our newsletter, mass mailings and home visits and licensing visits. DCFS training information can be accessed at: <http://www.state.il.us/dcf/index.shtml> or by calling (877) 800-3393. DCFS also has a 36-page lending library catalog accessible at <http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/lendinglibrary.pdf>

Little City promotes access to trainings by allowing use of our computers during business hours in order for foster parents to participate in online trainings. Little City offers free child care to encourage participation in Little City hosted trainings.

### **3. SUPPORT**

**Foster Parents have the right to be well supported in their efforts to be excellent parents to special needs children.**

**We strive to provide outstanding support in these ways:**

- A.** Providing comprehensive supportive services
  - B.** 24/7 Crisis Response that includes access to management and clinical teams
  - C.** Respite (formal & informal)
  - D.** Support from other foster parents through the Yahoo! Group, LittleCityParents.
  - E.** Support through many Foster Parent Associations and Advisory Groups
- A.** Little City provides comprehensive home- and community-based wraparound services to the clients in our care. Services may include mentoring, tutoring, respite, clinical support, intensive case management, and the likes. Our staff and/or your worker will be happy to help support you to make sure that your child's needs are being met in the community, at school, and in healthcare. We can help you identify and select resources, plan meetings and advocate as needed. Little City ensures completion of twice monthly home visits and quarterly CFTMs, with bi-annual meetings to update the Service Plan and visitation plans, to ensure appropriate service array.

If a child in Little City's traditional foster care program, or placed within a relative foster home, requires placement stabilization or is experiencing a crisis, SOC services may be utilized. SOC uses a wraparound model to ensure support a child and his/her family. Examples of services SOC may be able to provide include individual, family and group therapy; mentoring and tutoring; support groups for foster parents; case and school management; and advocacy.

- B.** Little City Foundation maintains a detailed Emergency Contact Procedure, which states that child welfare specialists will be available on a 24-hour/7 day a week basis to provide guidance and support to families during crisis or emergency situations. Therapists and supervisors are also available 24/7 as back-up support. At the time of placement, foster families are given an emergency contact sheet that lists the name and phone number of the worker and supervisor along with the afterhours emergency number, DCFS hotline, DCFS medical emergency hotline number, SASS, and CARES phone number. Little City's on-call schedule and staff phone list is included within the Child File and mailed out regularly in newsletters. Little City's pre-service training is reviewed in pre-service and on-going trainings.
- C.** Children served within Little City's specialized foster care program are eligible for paid respite through the agency. (See Right #4 for detailed Respite information). The agency supports informal respite by connecting foster parents with one another and occasionally offering free recreational offerings such as art classes.
- D.** Little City supports a Foster to Foster Parent Mentoring Program where several of Little City's experienced foster parents have volunteered to be resources to other foster parents

who may have questions, issues or need support. Foster parents are available by telephone, email or via our online Yahoo! Group where information, suggestions, tips, ideas and support can be exchanged freely. Membership to the group is completely open, however parents must join the group in order to participate or download files. The website link is: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LittleCityParents/>

## **E. Foster Care Associations and Links**

[Foster Care Connection](#)

[Foster Parent Home Page](#)

[Foster Parent Community](#)

[Foster Parent Associations Network](#)

[Foster Parent Java Chat Page](#)

[Interstate Compact on Placement of Children Act.](#)

[National Foster Parent Association](#)

[Foster Kids Are Our Kids \(Illinois campaign\)](#)

[Foster Parent Associations Network](#)

[Foster Parents CARE](#)

[Grandparents Raising Grandchildren – Illinois](#)

[Illinois Foster and Adoptive Parent Association](#)

[Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Law](#)

### **Foster Care Advisory Councils and Links**

[African American Advisory Council](#)

[Asian American Advisory Council](#)

[Child Death Review Team](#)

[Child Welfare Advisory Committee](#)

[Child Welfare Employee Licensure Board](#)

[Children and Family Services Advisory Council](#)

[Children's Justice Task Force](#)

[Confidential Intermediary Advisory Council](#)

[Illinois African Family Commission](#)

[Latino Advisory Committee](#)

[Latino Consortium](#)

[Partnering With Parents Advisory Council](#)

[Illinois Adoption Advisory Council](#)

[Statewide Citizen's Committee on Abuse/Neglect](#)

[Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council](#)

## **4. ON-TIME FINANCIAL REIMBURSEMENT**



**Foster Parents have the right to receive timely financial reimbursement commensurate with the care needs of the child as specified in the service plan.**

**We strive to achieve timely reimbursement in these ways:**

- A.** Clearly spelled out and communicated policies and procedures; inclusion in our agency's Core Values
- B.** Accounting support and resolution of issues, including
  - a. 24 hour response and
  - b. 5 day issue resolution in most cases.
- C.** Grievance procedure for any unresolved financial issues
- D.** Respite Reimbursement
- E.** Summer camp and/or school supplies reimbursement
- F.** Biological parent and sibling visitation reimbursement
- G.** Transportation stipend

**A.** The policy of Little City Foundation's Foster Care Program on foster parent payments states that Little City Foundation Foster Parents will be reimbursed on a per diem basis for each night that a child lives in their home. Payments are sent by mail to the home twice each month, by check, on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, or on the soonest business day following. Foster parents may elect to pick-up their checks from our Chicago or Palatine locations as well.

Little City's Core Value of "Financial Accountability," shared with foster parents in the Child File, recognizes that as an agency we must recognize the financial impact of the decisions we make in order to promote fiscal integrity as an organization.

Little City subcontracts with DCFS to provide care to children within four different foster care contracts:

- 1) **Traditional Contract:** Children in foster care on Little City's traditional contract have experienced abuse and/or neglect and may have some behavioral, emotional, or other special needs, but not at the level requiring the specialized services and supports of a child served in our specialized program. Foster parents are paid the traditional rate based upon the child's age (see Table below.) All of the children served on Little City's traditional contract are siblings to a child served on Little City's specialized contract, or is a part of Little City's private adoption contract. Traditional children receive a minimum of once monthly home visits. They may also engage in supportive services that include therapy, educational supports, or medication management.

- 2) **Specialized Contract:** Children in foster care in Little City’s specialized program have complex, multi-faceted documented specialized needs; primary among those needs is being diagnosed with an intellectual and/or developmental disability. Specialized children require intensive service provision and coordination, supervision and care to promote their well-being. Foster parents are paid the specialized rate (see Table below.) A child’s case must be heard before a multidisciplinary team of professionals at a Child and Youth Investment Team (CAYIT) meeting convened at DCFS and moderated by a neutral party (a DCFS staff) in order to be classified as “specialized” and thus, receive the specialized rate. Specialized children receive 2x/month home visits at a minimum and may also receive weekly therapy, psychiatric and medication monitoring, special education, social/emotional/behavioral interventions and supports; tutoring; developmental therapies such as speech, physical, and occupational; and specialized medical care to address identified medical needs.
  
- 3) **Adolescent Specialized Contract:** Children served on Little City’s Adolescent Specialized Contract must be at least 11 years old and exhibit moderate to severe adjustment, behavioral, emotional or developmental needs requiring intensive supports and services in order to maintain the minor in a foster home placement. Children often served on this contract have stepped-down from a residential placement setting and require rigorous supervision and support to maintain placement in foster care. A child’s case must be heard before a multidisciplinary team of professionals at a CAYIT meeting in order to be classified as “adolescent specialized” and thus, receive the adolescent specialized rate. Adolescent minors receive a minimum of 3x/month home visits and receive weekly therapy, group therapy and/or family therapy; weekly mentoring; psychiatric and medication monitoring; special education; social/emotional/behavioral interventions and supports; tutoring; developmental therapies such as speech, physical, and occupational; and specialized medical care to address identified medical needs.
  
- 4) **Home of Relative Contract:** Children residing within unlicensed homes of relatives are reimbursed on a monthly basis by DCFS at the difficulty of care rate (approximately \$300/month/child.) Little City assumes reimbursement of these homes once they become licensed.

*If at any time, you feel that a child is incorrectly classified, we will work with you and DCFS to rectify this right away.*

**Specialized Board Payment Rates:**

Contract	Daily Board Rate + Daily Transportation Stipend=(Total Board Payment/Day) = Averaged Monthly Board Payment
<b>Adolescent Specialized Contract</b>	\$52.46 + \$9.20 = (\$61.66) = \$1875.49/averaged monthly board payment
<b>Specialized Contract</b>	\$37.32 + \$6.18 = (\$43.50) = \$1323.13/averaged monthly board payment

**Traditional Board Payment Rates:** *(these rates are consistent with those tendered by DCFS)*

<b>Age of Child</b>	<b>Board</b>	<b>Clothing</b>	<b>Allowance</b>	<b>Total Rate/Month</b>
0 – 11 months	\$335.00	\$37.00	\$12.00	\$384.00
1 – 4 years	\$337.00	\$42.00	\$13.00	\$392.00
5 – 8 years	\$329.00	\$56.00	\$14.00	\$409.00
9 – 11 years	\$346.00	\$65.00	\$24.00	\$435.00
12 years and up	\$354.00	\$74.00	\$43.00	\$471.00

**B.** Foster parent payments are handled by the Little City accounting department. If there are any questions or concerns regarding their payment, foster parents may contact the Office Administrator at 773-265-1539 who will investigate the inquiry with Accounting. The Administrator will respond to the situation within 24-hours and attempt to determine whether the problem involves the accounting department or mail system. Within the 24-hours the Administrator will inform the foster parent of how and when the matter is to be resolved if it cannot be dealt with immediately. If the problem does not have unusual circumstances it should be resolved within five business days.

**C.** If, after following these methods, there are still unresolved issues, the foster parent may file a grievance or service appeal according to the grievance procedure (See Right #14.)

**D.** Little City Foundation’s Foster Care Program offers additional financial reimbursement for respite services as stated in our respite policy. Highlights include:

- Respite services are offered to foster parents providing care to children served on our specialized contract in order to maintain a high quality of care for children in placement.
- Respite must be provided by an agency-approved alternate caregiver, selected by the caregiver, who agrees to abide by the agency’s policies and procedures.
- Monthly allotted respite hours are based on each child’s need and the amount of time that foster parents devote to direct care to the child in their home.
- Respite is not the same as daycare for parents who work outside of the home.
- Respite hours average about 15 hours per month; exceptions are made in circumstances where placement may be unstable.
- Hours are reviewable at each Child and Family Team meeting and may be altered depending on the child’s required level of care and the needs of the family.
- Foster parents chose their own caregivers to provide respite and the agency completes a background check on all caregivers.
- The agency pays the foster parent who is then responsible for paying the caregiver a rate of \$7.50 per hour.

- The payment is processed upon receipt of the respite summary forms; required monthly.
- The respite payment is included within the foster parent board payment mailed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.
- Little City Foundation reserves the right to provide a staff to the foster parent in the event that children are not receiving essential services, such as medical, mentoring, and therapy. In this instance, respite hours will be negotiated with the foster parent schedule to allow the foster parent respite and children will be provided with essential services.

**E.** Foster parents may be offered reimbursement for summer camp, graduation expenses and school supplies for each child in their care. Foster Parents should seek approval for payment from the agency before enrolling the child in summer camp or other activities for which they expect reimbursement. With documentation of registration and fees, Little City Foundation will either pay the service provider or reimburse the foster parent for fees up to \$250.00 per year. LCF offers reimbursement of up to \$50.00 per year for school supplies to families who submit reimbursement and up to \$100 for graduation expenses. Initial clothing and equipment reimbursement is available based upon DCFS-set rates.

**F.** Little City Foundation strives to maintain and strengthen family relationships. LCF reimburses foster parents for their supervision of sibling visits at the rate of \$25/hour up to \$100/month plus a maximum of \$50/month for mileage traveled between the foster family home and the visit site. Travel reimbursement is calculated at the agency’s mileage reimbursement rate, currently set at \$0.39/mile. Documentation for the supervision of sibling visitation and transportation must accompany the request for reimbursement; the agency requests receipt of these on a monthly basis.

Biological parent reunification visits are reimbursed according to the Family Reunification Support Special Service Fee Log (CFS 1042-L) schedule, which is as follows:

Level 1	3 Activities	\$75
Level 2	6 Activities	\$150
Level 3	9 Activities	\$250
Level 4	12 Activities	\$400

Foster parents and biological parents must mutually agree to participate in the family reunification project, and timely reimbursement requires monthly submission of the Special Service Fee Log.

**G.** Little City reimburses foster parents for transporting their children to and from school, doctor visits, social activities, etcetera. For each calendar day, they are reimbursed \$6.18 for transportation, which is included monthly in the board payment. Little City reserves the right to reduce or eliminate the transportation stipend if transportation, or arrangements for transportation, are not provided by the foster family.

## **5. A PLACEMENT PLAN**

**Foster Parents have 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 responsibility to support activities that will promote the child's right to relationships with his or her birth family and cultural heritage.**

**We strive to ensure a clear placement plan in these ways:**

- A.** Making Placement Decisions
- B.** Providing a Child File that includes placement paperwork
- C.** Holding quarterly Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTM), with bi-annual meetings to develop the child's Integrated Assessments (IA), Service Plans and Visitation Plans.
- D.** Maintaining a Disruptions Policy, which addresses issues in the event of a placement disruption

**A.** Little City primarily seeks to place children in the homes of relatives or along with siblings if possible. Placement within a child's community of origin, or nearby, and/or within a home of similar cultural, ethnic, racial, religious background as the child is desirable. In instances when this cannot occur, Little City educates the foster parents about the child's cultural, ethnic, racial, religious background and ensures the family can accommodate those needs before proceeding with placement. Adherence to this expectation is reviewed on-going during bi-annual licensing visits.

**B.** Little City seeks to ensure that foster parents have all the necessary information needed to make sound placement decisions, as the agency views placements into our foster homes as long-term commitments. In order to support our parents, we provide them with extensive information about the child verbally on the phone to determine interest in placement. If a family is interested in pursuing the placement of a child, the agency develops a transition plan that involves on-going visitation between the family and the child to assess fit. Prospective foster parents have the opportunity to speak with the case manager, therapist, current caregiver and other collaterals during this time to obtain more information about the child. The agency also completes a Child Caregiver Matching Tool (CFS 2017) to ensure the foster family's strengths match with the need of the child. If all pre-placement visits go well, the team will convene a staffing to determine a transition date into the home.

Foster parents are provided with a Child File that includes placement paperwork upon the placement of a child into their home. The Child File and placement paperwork includes a copies of placement verification documentation (906, Placement Clearance, Placement letters;) emergency contact information; background information about the child including developmental, case history, social/emotional, educational, etc. as outlined on the LCF Foster Child Disclosure Form and shared within the child's portion of the IA and Service Plan; day care and respite information; life book resources; HealthWorks

passport; Behavior Logs; Allowance information and sign-off sheets; Little City's on-call schedule and staff phone list; as well as information about grievance, service appeal and other foster parent-specific rights/policies.

**C.** Child and Family Team meetings (CFTM) are held quarterly; two of which are scheduled in preparation for the Administrative Case Review (ACR) and Service Plan and Visitation Plan development.

- Foster parents are active participants in creating the new service and visitation plans, celebrating achievements and making revisions.
- The service plan that is developed includes detailed information regarding the case permanency goal, visiting plan and services to be provided to the child and family.
- The visiting plan is developed to accommodate the schedule of the foster family as well as the biological family.
- If birth family visits are appropriate, the agency will work with the foster family to support their decision to participate in these visits and provide ongoing support and monitoring of the continued appropriateness of these visits.
- Additionally, if there are unplanned changes in the Service Plan, changes are discussed during a home visit or scheduled staffing and the foster parent is provided with the new plan.
- During home visits, CFTMs, and bi-annual ACRs, agency staff and foster parents are continuously discussing the permanency plan for the child and how it affects the placement of the child in the home.

**D.** Little City Foundation has a disruptions policy, provided annually to foster parents in Child Files and reviewed in LCF Pre-Service Policies and Procedures training (See Right #11 for more information about our Disruptions Policy.)

## **6. INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED LICENSING VIOLATIONS**

**Foster Parents have the right to be provided a fair, timely, and impartial investigation of alleged violations concerning the foster parent’s licensure, including the right to request mediation and an administrative review and explanation of the decisions made concerning the investigation and/or foster home license.**

**We work to ensure these rights by:**

- A.** Practicing full disclosure about the investigations process and completing investigations in a timely manner
- B.** Making sure parents are provided the opportunity to have a person of their choosing present during the investigation
- C.** Stand Alone versus Concurrent Investigations Explained
- D.** Time frames for Licensing Investigations & the Approval Process
- E.** Results of a Licensing Investigation
- F.** The Supervisory Review Process
- G.** Communicating their right to request and receive mediation or an administrative review of decisions that affect licensing parameters, or both mediation and an administrative review

**A.** Little City Foster Parents are trained on LCF’s licensing complaint procedure in pre-service training prior to initial licensure. Policies are reviewed annually via training offerings throughout the year and during bi-annual licensing and monitoring visits. The procedure reflects that “any violation of licensing standards will be reported to the licensing staff that will be responsible for completing a formal investigation of the complaint.”

The purpose of a licensing investigation is to assess whether there has been any violation to 402 licensing standards or the Child Care Act within an agency-licensed foster home facility. Complaints may come from a variety of sources, including direct observation from agency staff visiting the home. Complaints are also sometimes routed to the agency through the State Central Register when a Hotline call has been made against the home. Little City receives SCR notices in writing via the mail and conducts a concurrent licensing investigation in these instances (more information below.)

After a complaint is received in the licensing department, the licensing supervisor reviews the complaint and assigns it the Family Development Specialist (FDS) who is typically assigned monitoring responsibilities of the home. The licensing supervisor and FDS meet to review the allegations and create a plan of action regarding the investigation. Little City follows DCFS Rule and Procedure 383 regarding licensing investigations.

Licensing staff are responsible for conducting non-judgmental, objective investigations into the allegations, which includes interviewing all parties within the foster home, the reporter, and any collaterals that may provide useful information into the investigation. An unannounced home visit is conducted to the foster home to notify the parent of the licensing violations noted in the report. Licensing workers are responsible for explaining the investigation procedure with the foster parents, and documenting their investigative assessments on the CFS 596 series of forms.

**B.** Foster parents are informed of confidentiality related to licensing investigations, and their right to have an advocate present, at the initial unannounced home visit. Foster parents consent or decline the right to an advocate by signing the Right to an Advocate (CFS 596-29) form. If the foster parent requests the presence of an advocate, who is any person of the foster parent's choosing, the interview component of the licensing investigation may be delayed up to 4 hours; however, licensing workers have the right to investigate the premises of the home to ensure there are no environmental risks to any children in placement or household members.

**C.** There are two types of licensing investigations depending on the nature of the allegations: stand-alone investigations and concurrent investigations. Stand-alone investigations are when violations to licensing rules are alleged. Concurrent allegations are when Little City's licensing department and DCFS Department of Child Protection (DCP) investigate the allegations at the same time because there has been a report of abuse or neglect within the foster home made to the DCFS Hotline.

**D.** Stand-alone licensing investigations are initiated within 2 business days of when the complaint was received within the licensing department by conducting an unannounced home visit. Concurrent investigations that involve DCP are initiated when DCP makes a decision to unfound the allegations if done within 14 days or after the DCP investigation becomes formal (which is after the 14-day timeframe.) Regular contact between Little City and DCP is vital to ensuring an accurate and fair investigation.

Investigations require completion within 30 days per DCFS rule; however, a 30-day extension may be granted by the licensing supervisor if needed to gather all information and complete interviews necessary for a fair and impartial investigation. The supervisor reviews the investigation within 5 days. The licensing worker is responsible for notifying the licensee of the findings of the investigation within five days after receiving supervisory approval. The Guardian Ad Litem of any children in placement is notified via 596-L letter when any concurrent investigations occur and caseworkers are always notified of the investigation results.

All completed licensing investigations are sent to Little City's Agencies and Institutions (A&I) Representative from DCFS. The A&I Representative is also responsible for reviewing the licensing investigation in its entirety to ensure accuracy. If the investigation meets the Procedure 383 standards for licensing investigations, the A&I representative will sign-off on the 596-D form approving the investigation and its findings; the investigation is maintained within the licensing file. If the A&I

Representative finds any errors to the investigation, Little City's licensing team is responsible for correcting those errors in order to obtain approval of the investigation. Correcting errors may involve additional interviews, visits to the home, and collection of documents.

**E.** Licensing investigations will yield one of two results: substantiated or unsubstantiated. A substantiated violation means that the licensing team found violations to 402 and/or the Child Care Act within the home as alleged, or as observed/assessed during their home visits and interviews. The FDS will notify the family of any substantiated findings in writing via the 596-04 letter; this letter offers the foster parent the opportunity for an informal review of the investigation findings with the licensing supervisor.

The agency will also develop a Corrective Plan and review this with the foster parent in order to correct any violations noted within the investigation. Foster parents must sign the corrective plan as indication that the corrective action plan has been reviewed with them. Foster parents typically have 30 days to correct any violations. The agency conducts regular unannounced home visits while a Corrective Plan is pending. If a foster family fails to correct the violations as noted on the Corrective Plan, the agency may begin to enforce further licensing actions that may include placing the home on hold for future placements or revocation of the license.

**F.** A supervisory review should be arranged when:

- The foster parent disagrees with the alleged violations
- The foster parent disagrees with the finding of a licensing investigation
- The licensing supervisor believes a review would help resolve any outstanding issues related to the investigation.

**G.** Foster parents have the right to mediation of alleged licensing violations. They also have the right to request an administrative review. They may employ both of these, neither, or only one at their choosing if they feel it would help to yield the fairest result of the investigation. Foster parents may also file a grievance with the agency per Little City's Grievance Policy (Attachment G; also see Right #14.)

Licensing Complaints and Grievance Procedures are reviewed with all foster parents during pre-service. Grievance forms and a copy of the *Service Appeal* and *What you Need to Know about Child Abuse or Neglect Investigation* brochures during an investigation and during foster parent pre-service and are included within the Child Files upon placement and within the LCF policy guide provided annually. Policies are reviewed throughout the year in the newsletter and during home visits and CFTMs. Staff is also trained on the policies during their orientation and ongoing at staff meetings. Should there be a complaint concerning a foster parent's license, the foster parent will be informed again of their rights at that time.

## **7. INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDREN**

**The right at any time during which a child is placed with the foster parent, to receive additional or necessary information that is relative to the care of the child.**

## **8. INFORMATION REQUIRED BY ACTS OF LAW FROM DCFS**

**The right to be given information concerning a child from the Department. (Additional information included in the Code 340)**

## **10. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION**

**The right to be given, in a timely and consistent manner, any information a case worker has regarding the child and the child's family which is pertinent to the care and needs of the child and to the making of a permanency plan for the child. (Additional information included in the Code 340.)**

There is almost nothing worse for a child or family than to have a placement terminate, and Little City Foundation works fervently to prevent this by making sound placements and supporting our families.

We have always believed that prospective foster parents have the right to all critical information about a child when making the decision to accept that child's placement into the home. There are stages at which various levels of information can be conveyed, largely regulated by law, with the overall principal being "need to know."

**We strive to ensure this right in the following ways:**

- A.** Complete verbal disclosure of factual and implied characteristics and concerns regarding the child and his/her needs
- B.** If a family wants to proceed, pre placement visits of an increasing frequency and length are scheduled to give the family, child and agency ample opportunity to assess the match, and also to assess any outstanding training needs.
- C.** Confidentiality is maintained rigorously as a component of child placement. Foster parents always have the right to information about Placement, Social and Behavioral issues, Medical issues and Education that pertain to the child.
  - a.** A Foster Child Disclosure statement is prepared for the foster family to ensure they have documentation of all of the issues, plans, goals and other

pertinent data (i.e.: IA, Service Plan, and data related to child's special needs.)

- b. Any known missing information is sought and tracked in a formal LCF process.
- c. Providing foster parents with all available information per DCFS's written policy guide 2007.04.

**A.** When families are approached about a specific placement, all behavioral and emotional concerns, educational accommodations, case goals, visitation arrangements, and other child specific information are shared verbally with the family. In order to care properly for a child being placed in their home, foster parents, relatives, or other foster care providers need to know as much information as possible regarding the reason for the child's placement and the needs of the child. Confidential information specific to the family's identity, background, criminal history or struggles is not shared unless that information has an impact on the child's care.

Foster parents always have a right to receive the following:

- **Case history** including the reasons the case came to the attention of DCFS.
- **Placement information.** Information about why the child is in foster care and what the primary and concurrent permanency plans are provided to foster parents at the time of placement and updated as needed to help the foster parent anticipate and respond to the child's needs. Providing this information also helps the foster parent to be an informed partner in the planning process.
- **Social/behavioral/developmental information** is shared with the foster parent/caregiver at the time of placement, including information about the kinds of behavior the caregiver is likely to encounter and the parental responses that seem to be the most helpful to the child. The child's strengths and abilities should be shared along with any needs.
- **Medical information** is shared with foster parents at the time of placement and updated as information is received. The foster care provider needs to know of any special medical problems that the child may have. The Health Status Component of the Service Plan must be completed and provided to the foster parents within seven days of placement. Also, the child must be referred by the placing agency for a physical examination within seven days of placement. The foster parent/caregiver signs the form to verify he or she has received it.
- **Educational information** is shared with foster parents at the time of placement and updated as information is received. The foster parent/caregiver shall receive the Educational Component of the Service Plan. In addition, the foster parent/caregiver should be a part of any discussion regarding Individual Educational Plans or other remedial efforts to assure that the child's educational needs are met.

**B.** If the family agrees to pursue the placement, a pre-placement visitation schedule is developed that includes an increasing frequency of visits that allow the family to

determine if they are capable of meeting the ongoing behavioral/emotional concerns, educational needs, and permanency goals of the child.

**C.** Staff is trained on all Little City policies and procedures including confidentiality and information sharing during new employee orientation. Employees sign a Statement of Confidentiality that is maintained within their personnel file. The concept of confidentiality is covered in-depth during DCFS' Foundation Training for Child Welfare Specialists. Supervisors meet with Child Welfare Specialists on a regular basis for supervision and utilize this time to ensure that new information is discussed with foster parents.

Confidentiality is complex, but it basically falls down to sharing information on a "Need to Know" basis. Little City can share with a prospective foster family, for example, everything relevant about the child's emotional, behavioral and medical issues, but not the medical history of the birth family.

**D.** A Little City Foster Child Disclosure Statement is created for the family by either the staff member handling the child's intake into the program or by the worker assigned to the child's case and provided to the foster parent within 10 days of placement. A thorough case file review is required to complete all of the domains included within the Foster Child Disclosure Statement, and includes each of the domains outlined above. The child's portion and visitation plan of the Integrated Assessment and Service Plan are also provided to the foster parent, in addition to all supporting documentation needed to promote the child's care.

**E.** If any information is missing, the reason is documented on a critical tracking form maintained within Little City's Quality Assurance Division and a plan is developed to obtain the missing information and provide it to the family in a timely manner. Failure to meet QA standards is reflected on staff's on-going and annual performance evaluations. The foster parent is given a copy of their signed receipt and the original is kept in the Child's File. Per Policy Guide 2007.04, the worker is responsible for forwarding a copy of all information given to the foster parent to the child's GAL as well.

**F.** Little City works to fulfill all of the Information Disclosure as outlined in Policy Guide 2007.04 and these Rights by:

- Providing the Foster Child Disclosure form as described in "D" above.
- Supervisors meet with Child Welfare Specialists on a regular basis for supervision and utilize this time to ensure that new information is discussed with foster parents. The twice monthly home visits and quarterly CFTMs are another time when Child Welfare Specialists share information with the families. Child Welfare Specialist's written documentation is expected to maintain confidentiality (on-going QA checks monitors this.) Understanding of confidentiality as it relates to practice is a component of all employee's annual reviews and is an integral component of LCF's on-going training.

- Little City believes that it is the relationships that our children have with their primary caregivers are the catalyst for all changes and growth that the foster children will make. It is encouraged and in some instances expected by our therapeutic team for the foster parent to actively participate in the therapeutic process with the child. In this way, the therapist can transfer his/her knowledge of the child, his/her needs, and appropriate interventions to the family so they can build their relationship and develop a better understanding of the child and his/her needs.

## **8. INFORMATION REQUIRED BY ACTS OF LAW FROM DCFS**

**SEE PAGE 29**



## **9. BE INCLUDED IN TEAM MEETINGS**

**Foster parents are invited to be present and to participate at court hearings, Administrative Case Reviews (ACR), quarterly Child and Family Team Meetings, Individualized Education Planning (IEP) meetings and staffings.**

**We strive to ensure that right in these ways:**

- A.** Advance notification of meetings
- B.** Present alternatives if a foster parent cannot attend a meeting
- C.** Purposeful inclusion in the child's team
- D.** Full description of the Administrative Case Review (ACR), and link

**A.** Foster Parents are notified of the dates and times of all court hearings, agency staffings and Administrative Case Reviews by their Child Welfare Specialist during home visits, by phone, and in writing per the quarterly CFTM minutes. In addition, the GAL's office sends written notification of all court hearings to foster parents. DCFS also sends out invitations to foster parents for participation in the ACR staffing; Child Welfare Specialists update the CRMR screens on the DCFS database to ensure accurate delivery of invitations to ACRs at a minimum of six month intervals.

**B.** If a foster parent is unable to attend in person, the worker will work with the foster parent to call-in or to provide information prior to the meeting/court hearing to determine if there is information that the foster parent would like presented. If a foster parent is unable to attend a court hearing or ACR, the Child Welfare Specialist will inform the family of the events by phone, at the next home visit, and during quarterly CFTM meetings and bi-annual Integrated Assessment interviews.

**C.** Little City Foundation's Foster Care/Adoption program values team work and recognizes the important contribution that foster parents bring to the team. Child and Family Team Meetings are held quarterly so that the foster parent can contribute information from the team and receive feedback from all of the team members. Foster parent's input from CFTM meetings and from the twice monthly home visits contribute to the development of the bi-annual Integrated Assessments and Service Plans for the child. CFTM minutes, IA, and Service Plans are provided to the foster parents to maintain within the Child File and reviewed with them each time they are updated.

Collateral team members and service providers are invited to attend all quarterly CFTMs. If they are unable to be present, their input is added to the CFTM minutes and provided to the foster parents for their records. Foster parents are able to speak directly with service providers (therapists, mentors, etc) and do not have to go through the caseworker to receive information. Therapy is also provided in home and usually with the foster parent to ensure that foster parents are participating in and fully contributing the growth and development of the child in their care.

**D. What is an Administrative Case Review (ACR)?** The Administrative Case Review (ACR) is a process that the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS) uses to ensure that appropriate services are being provided to achieve the desired permanency goal for a child and that everything is going well with the case. An Administrative Case Reviewer, employed by DCFS, facilitates the ACR meeting at a DCFS office. This is not the same person as the caseworker, so the reviewer is a neutral party and can fairly assess the case. Foster parents are encouraged to tell the reviewer about any disagreements or concerns that you may have with the service plan, service providers or the caseworker. As the caregiver, you can provide valuable information during this time regarding how the child is doing academically, behaviorally, emotionally and medically.

If a caregiver disagrees with any portion of the service plan, including any amendments made by the Administrative Case Reviewer, he/she may request a decision review within five working days after the ACR by sending a written request to:

Associate Deputy Director of  
Administrative Case Review  
1921 S. Indiana  
Chicago, Illinois 60616

**Here is a link to the brochure:**

[http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/ACR\\_Caregiver\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/ACR_Caregiver_Brochure.pdf)

## **10. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION**

**SEE PAGE 29**

## **11. KNOW ABOUT PREVENTING DISRUPTION AND WHEN A CHILD MOVES**

Receive written notice of any plans to end placement, along with the reason, and appeal information.

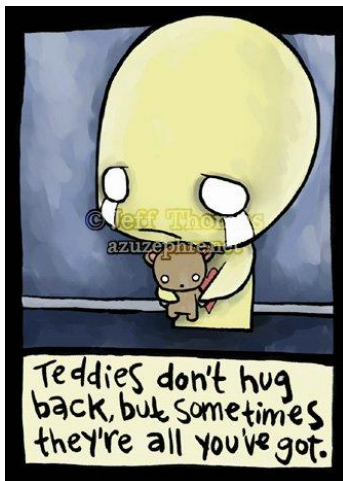
## **13. PLACEMENT OPTION FOR CHILDREN RE-ENTERING CARE**

Be considered as a placement option for foster children formerly in their care.

Little City values placement stability and recognizes the loss and trauma associated with multiple moves. LCF provides individualized, wraparound services to support a child in his/her placement.

Little City Foundation has developed a Disruption Policy in order to establish protocol for preventing and dealing with disruptions. Foster parents receive a copy of this policy upon licensure and in Child Files.

**We strive to ensure this right in these ways:**



- A. Distribution of and training on the disruption policy.
- B. Conducting very thorough home studies and employing all matching tools
- C. Conducting monthly home visits with the family and child
- D. Providing 24 hour crisis intervention support
- E. Requiring 30 days notice if the family requests a disruption
- F. Ensuring that foster parents understand their rights to file a grievance and/or service appeal.
- G. Accepting nomination from former foster parents if a child re-enters care.

A. Little City distributes the disruption policy to foster parents during LCF Pre-Service training. Expectations are included within the annual placement paperwork they review and sign for their licensing files.

B. By conducting a thorough home study, completing the CFS 2017 Child/Caregiver Matching Tool, having pre-placement visits, reviewing the child's CANS and other assessments, and creating a transition plan it is the agency's intention to identify the best placement for a child with the least likelihood of having a placement disruption. When a

foster family accepts a child into their home, it is Little City's expectation that the family is making a long-term commitment to that child. Therefore, a change or disruption of the placement would only occur under the most serious of circumstances.

**C.** Foster parents with a specialized child in placement receive twice monthly (three monthly visits are conducted to homes with children with a higher level of specialized needs) home visits and participate in quarterly CFTMs. Concerns regarding the stability of the placement are regularly addressed during these meetings. Little City provides comprehensive wrap-around services in response to the child's needs, will refer a foster parent to training, create a safety plan, among other efforts to ensure placement stability. Little City team maintains contact and communication with the foster families to ensure stabilization efforts are successful, and if not, to develop an appropriate plan for care of the child.

Traditional foster care placements can utilize SOC services for placement stabilization. SOC services described previously in Right #3. Little City asks foster parents to give 30 days' notice to the Child Welfare Specialist, in writing, to have the child removed from their home. This time period allows the treatment team to make the best possible transition plan for the child, to locate another placement for the child and to prepare the child for the move. The time period is also used to ensure that all services the child needs will be transitioned with him or her, this is essential when caring for children at the specialized level of foster care. It is expected that foster parents will participate in transition planning and pre-placement activities of the child to his/her new home.

**D.** Little City offers 24 hour a day/7 day a week crisis support, in addition to therapeutic consultation from on-staff therapists. All foster parents are informed of crisis contact numbers, such as the , SASS, Systems of Care and CARES line resources, in writing upon initial placement of a child into their home. This information is maintained within the "Child Files" created for each child in Little City's program and kept within the foster home.

**E.** If Little City Foundation believes that another living arrangement is in the best interest of the foster child, but the child is not in imminent risk of harm, LCF will give the foster parent a 14 Day Notice of Change (CFS 151-B). Foster parents have a right to appeal this decision. Little City provides foster parent with documentation about the appeal process upon issuance of a 14 Day Notice. Additionally, LCF must send a notice to DCFS Clinical Placement Review Team and they will conduct a staffing within 10 days of notice. The Clinical Placement Unit can be reached via phone at (312) 633-3754 or fax at (312) 633-4091. The Clinical Placement Review Team will make a recommendation regarding the placement decision, and if determined that a placement move is appropriate, will consult with LCF on services to support the new placement. If it is determined that a foster child is at imminent risk of harm in a foster home or if there is a court order, the child will be removed immediately from that home and written notice may be waived.

**F.** Foster parents have a right to appeal removal of a child from their home as described in the Grievance Procedure (Attachment G).

Foster parents may also elect to file a service appeal. The service appeal process is a two-step process, mediation and an administrative fair hearing. Foster parents may file a service appeal when they are in disagreement with actions or decisions taken by Little City under the following circumstances:

- When decisions are made that directly affect you, such as payments to you for the child in your care for whom DCFS is legally responsible
- When decisions are made about services, such as day care, medical, educational, or psychological services, for the benefit of the child for whom the Department is legally responsible
- Agency failure to provide services as specified in the service plan for the benefit of the child.
- A change in the child's substitute care placement

Foster parents must request a service appeal within 10 days from receiving notice on a decision or action by Little City, which may result in stopping Little City from acting on its decision until such a time that the case has completed the service appeal process.

Written requests for a service appeal are sent to:

Administrative Hearings Unit  
DCFS  
State of Illinois Center  
160 N. LaSalle St, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601  
(312) 814-5540

Little City will aid in the submission of written requests if foster families encounter any difficulties. Additional service appeal information is found in the "Service Appeal Brochure," which is given to the foster parents in "Child Files" and with the written notice. (See Right #14 for additional information on service appeals.)

**G.** Foster parents also have the right to be considered as a placement option when a foster child who was formerly placed with the foster family is to be re-entered into foster care. This must be consistent with the best interests of the child and the family.

Little City makes every effort during the time spent working with the child and his/her family to prepare them for permanency in the hopes that permanency via adoption, guardianship, or return home can be achieved and maintained. However, if permanency efforts are unsuccessful and a child returns to care, Little City Foundation will work with the former foster family to assess their desire and ability to accept the child back into their home as this is the least traumatic transition for the child. Placements are made based upon a mutual decision of family members considering the best interests of the child and the family. The child's placement history while away from the foster home will be supplied by the LCF worker, when possible, by examining the files and court records, and researching with other placement professionals, hospitals, centers or agencies.

## **12. APPEAR AT COURT**



**Foster parents have the right to receive timely notification of court hearings.**

**Little City strives to ensure the right to appear at court in these ways:**

- A.** Training and documentation about the judicial system and the foster parent role.
- B.** Notification and explicit invitations to court proceedings.
- C.** Supporting foster parent interaction with the GAL.

**A.** Little City Foundation provides a full explanation of the juvenile court process as part of the licensing process. Foster parents are given a copy of the DCFS Foster Parent Handbook, which covers explanations of administrative case reviews, service plans, and the role of foster parents in the court process. Little City added additional court training to our 2012 training calendar.

Little City's ongoing training program also addresses issues of the juvenile court process and the role of the Guardian Ad Litem (GAL). Information regarding changes in procedure is provided regularly in the newsletter. Either at court or when a GAL comes out to a foster home, foster parents are provided with an opportunity to find out more about the court process.

**B.** Little City Foundation Child Welfare Specialists notify and invite foster parents to all court hearings by telephone and in person during home visits. Child Welfare Specialists document in the progress notes when notification is given to foster parents. Foster parents are provided with the date, time, location and purpose of the hearing in CFTM minutes. Copies of the biannual Integrated Assessment also indicate the dates of upcoming ACRs, court hearings, and concerns/progress related to the case that will be presented during these meetings. Foster parents are invited to attend the hearings and to intervene as appropriate. They are especially encouraged to be present and heard during the following: change of goal or best interest hearings, trials and termination.

Child Welfare Specialists prepare for court, discuss foster parent involvement, and discuss the outcomes of court during weekly supervision. Child Welfare Specialists must document the outcomes of court hearings in their progress notes for QA review.

**C.** The GAL's office sends written notification of all court hearings to foster parents in an effort to include them in all hearings. If a foster parent is unable to attend a hearing the Child Welfare Specialist will notify the foster parent by phone, in person, and during CFTMs of the outcome of the hearing.

**13. BE CONSIDERED FOR  
PLACEMENT OF A FORMER  
FOSTER CHILD**

**SEE PAGE 37**

## **14. TIMELY ACCESS TO SERVICE APPEAL SYSTEM**

**Have access to an agency or DCFS' appeals process without retaliation.**

### **(A). FILE A GRIEVANCE WITH LITTLE CITY**

First and foremost, you are incredibly important to all of us here at Little City. We could not do what we do without our foster parents' period. Just the same, there will be times when we have to make decisions you may not agree with, and there will definitely be times when we make mistakes.

During LCF pre-service training and in the Foster Parent Handbook and Child Files, foster parents are provided with information and documentation regarding the Little City Foundation Grievance Procedure (Attachment G).

We want you to know that our door is ALWAYS open, that you can bring any complaint you have to any one of our staff and receive fair treatment and considerate response to your issue, from the Director to Supervisors, Caseworkers and Office Staff. Just call 773-265-1539. We will assign any grievances and begin investigating within 3 business days.

Sometimes, it is just easier or more meaningful to write down what the problem is, and for that purpose we have created this grievance form. You may submit this included form to us by:

- Mailing it to 700 N. Sacramento Blvd., Suite 220, Chicago IL 60612
- Faxing it to 773-265-1755
- Giving it to your caseworker or their supervisor in person
- Filling it out online and emailing it to [erawsky@littlecity.org](mailto:erawsky@littlecity.org), or
- Bringing it to the office in person.

The following page contains the actual form for your use, if you ever wish. The form is also included within the Child Files, Foster Parent Handbook and on-line via Little City's Foster Parent Advisory Group: <http://group.yahoo.com/group/LittleCityParents>



## Grievance Form

Date of Grievance?:

Subject of Grievance?:

**What happened to cause you to be dissatisfied?**

**How can we make this right?**

Name:

Address:

City, State & ZIP:

Best Phone Number:

Email:

## **14 (B). FILE A SERVICE APPEAL** **(FORMAL DCFS PROCESS)**

Foster parents may file a Service Appeal with DCFS when you may have a difference of opinion than your case manager, the managing agency, and/or DCFS regarding an agency or DCFS decision or action on the child's case in your care.

The Service Appeal process is a two-step process and involves mediation and an administrative fair hearing. Both of these meetings provide foster parents an opportunity to share their opinions about what is in the child's best interest regarding his/her care with the hopes of creating a plan to resolve the issue(s).

### **We strive to ensure this right in these ways:**

- A.** Training and Documentation about the Service Appeal Process.
  - B.** Accepting complaints by telephone (773-265-1539).
  - C.** Providing the specific address to submit a formal Service Appeal.
  - D.** Including this information in the Foster Parent Law distributed to all foster parents each year.
  - E.** Ensuring that there is no retaliation or consequence from issuing an Appeal.
- A.** During pre-service training, foster parents are provided with information and documentation regarding the DCFS appeals process. All policies, including the appeals process, are reviewed with foster parents during the initial home visits and at ongoing trainings. The Service Appeal Process Brochure is included in the Child File along with numbers for the Advocacy Office and Director's Office as well as the Office of The Inspector General brochure. Little City will furnish the foster parent with copy of the Service Appeal Process brochure at any time; they are also available in the office.
- B.** Each parent has the right to contact the Child Welfare Specialist or Social Work Supervisor by telephone to present a complaint or disagreement. If the disagreement cannot be immediately resolved, the Child Welfare Specialist or Social Work Supervisor will provide information to the foster parent of their right to file a grievance and request the grievance in writing. The Social Work Supervisor and the individual will attempt to resolve the situation through discussion. The Social Work Supervisor will document, in writing, the process and its results within ten business days. All involved parties will sign the documentation and will receive copies for their records.
- C.** If the situation has not been resolved successfully, the individual/family may appeal the Agency's decision by contacting the following:
- Administrative Hearings Unit
  - DCFS
  - State of Illinois Center
  - 160 N. LaSalle St, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor
  - Chicago, IL 60601
  - (312) 814-5540

All appeals must be in writing, and must include:

- Your name
- Your address
- Your phone number
- The reason(s) for the appeal

**E.** Foster parents receive a copy of the Foster Parent Law Implementation each year that explains their rights and responsibilities. The plan also includes a copy of the service appeal and grievance procedures for violations of the Foster Parent Law.

**F.** Foster parents, biological parents and foster children have a right to be free from acts of harassment and retaliation by any other party when exercising the right to file a grievance.

**Here is a useful link:** <http://www.state.il.us/dcf/docs/337.pdf>

## **15. CALL THE FOSTER PARENT HOTLINE**

**Be informed of the Foster Parent Hotline and information on reporting staff misconduct.**

Little City strives to ensure the safety and well-being of all of the clients in our care. Foster parents are fully informed of how to report child abuse and neglect.

Foster parents may elect to call the foster parent hotline, or file a complaint with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), if they believe a Little City or Department employee, service provider or contractor may have violated their rights, or the rights of the children in their care. Examples include acts of abuse or neglect against a child, breaches of confidentiality, and the likes.

During the pre-service training, foster parents are informed about the Foster Parent Hotline and the Office of Inspector General. The phone numbers are made available as well. Foster Parent Hotline: 1-800-722-9124 and OIG 1-312-433-3000. The phone numbers are also listed in the Foster Parent Handbook given to families by DCFS at the time of licensure and listed on the DCFS website. Foster Parent Hotline and OIG brochures are available at the Little City office. Foster parents are periodically reminded of the services of these programs in the newsletter and postings will be added to Little City's website. In addition, any foster parent can contact any staff within the agency that will provide them with the phone numbers without any fear of retribution for exercising their rights.

**Here is a DCFS link for the Office of Inspector General:**

[http://www.state.il.us/dcf/library/com\\_communications\\_inspector.shtml](http://www.state.il.us/dcf/library/com_communications_inspector.shtml)

**Foster Parent Hotline:  
1-800-722-9124**

## **FOSTER PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Your responsibilities (and rights) are dictated by Illinois Law,  
[http://dcfswebresource.dcf.illinois.gov/rules/rules\\_340/homepage.phtml?page=4](http://dcfswebresource.dcf.illinois.gov/rules/rules_340/homepage.phtml?page=4).

### **YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:**

<p><b>1. <u>Communicate with Child's Team (Grouped with #11, #16)</u></b>  <i>Openly communicate and share information about the child with the child welfare team.</i></p>	<b><u>page 49</u></b>
<p><b>2. <u>Respect Confidentiality:</u></b>  <i>Respect the confidentiality of information about foster children and their families.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 52</u></b>
<p><b>3. <u>Be An Advocate:</u></b>  <i>Advocate for children in their care.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 53</u></b>
<p><b>4. <u>Treat Child and Birth Family With Dignity and Respect:</u></b>  <i>Treat children in their care and their families with dignity, respect and consideration.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 55</u></b>
<p><b>5. <u>Recognize Your Own Strengths, Limitations and Need for Support:</u></b>  <i>Recognize their own strengths, limitations and support needs when considering placement of a child.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 57</u></b>
<p><b>6. <u>Team With Other Foster Parents / Support Groups:</u></b>  <i>Be aware of the benefits of relying on and affiliating with other foster parents and foster parent groups in improving the quality of care.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 60</u></b>
<p><b>7. <u>Assess Need for and Obtain Training:</u></b>  <i>Assess their on-going individual training needs and take action to meet those needs.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 62</u></b>
<p><b>8. <u>Work (Hard) to Prevent Disruption:</u></b>  <i>Develop and implement strategies to prevent placement disruptions, and to provide support if preventative strategies fail and disruption occurs.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 63</u></b>
<p><b>9. <u>Acknowledge and Minimize Stress:</u></b>  <i>Know the impact that foster parenting has on individuals and the family and minimize the resulting stress as much as possible.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 65</u></b>
<p><b>10. <u>Promote the Foster Parenting Experience:</u></b>  <i>Know the rewards and benefits of foster parenting and promote the experience in a positive way.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 67</u></b>
<p><b>11. <u>Know Everyone's Roles, Rights and Responsibilities *(see #1):</u></b>  <i>Know the roles, rights and responsibilities of foster parents, other child welfare professionals, and the child and his/her family.</i></p>	<b><u>page 49</u></b>
<p><b>12. <u>Serve as a Mandated Reporter:</u></b>  <i>Know their role as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse/neglect. Know the policy regarding allegations against foster parents.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 69</u></b>
<p><b>13. <u>Know and Actively Participate in Administrative Case Reviews, Service Planning and Court:</u></b>  <i>Understand the purpose of and participate in administrative case reviews, service plans and court processes, according to their designated role.</i></p>	<b><u>Page 71</u></b>

<p><b>14. <u>Know Appeal Process</u> <i>*(see #3):</i></b>  <i>Know the child welfare agency's appeal procedure for foster parents and their rights.</i></p>	<p><b><u>Page 53</u></b></p>
<p><b>15. <u>Maintain Good Records:</u></b>  <i>Maintain accurate and relevant records regarding the child's progress and history and follow agency procedures and regulations.</i></p>	<p><b><u>Page 73</u></b></p>
<p><b>16. <u>Share Information</u> <i>*(see #1):</i></b>  <i>Share information about the child's adjustment with a subsequent caregiver, whether it is the parent or another substitute caregiver.</i></p>	<p><b><u>page 49</u></b></p>
<p><b>17. <u>Encourage Cultural Identity:</u></b>  <i>Respect and maintain a child's cultural needs and support relationships with his own family.</i></p>	<p><b><u>Page 76</u></b></p>

# **1. COMMUNICATE WITH TEAM**

The responsibility to openly communicate and share information about the child with other members of the child welfare team.

## **11. KNOW CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM**

Know the role, rights and responsibilities of foster parents, other child welfare professionals, the child, and the child's birth family.

## **16. SHARE INFORMATION**

The responsibility to share information, through the child welfare team, with the subsequent caregiver (whether the child's parent or another substitute caregiver) regarding the child's adjustments in the foster parent's home.

As a foster parent, you are a key member of the team providing for the children in your care. It is so important that you communicate openly, are proactive and recognize how other team members can help you and the child in your care succeed.

**We help you achieve these responsibilities by:**

- A.** Appreciating and acting on the information you share with us
  - B.** Providing pre-service training on how to collaborate as a team
  - C.** Emphasizing the importance of teaming in the placement agreements
  - D.** Making ourselves available to help you 24 hours a day, every day
  - E.** Using home visits and CFTMs to promote open communication
  - F.** The Yahoo! Group LittleCityParents (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/littlecityparents>) promotes communication and support
  - G.** If a child is moving for any reason, we will ask you explicitly how the child adjusted to your home and how to help facilitate the transition
  - H.** Reviewing with you the roles, responsibilities and rights of every member of the team, including the child and the child's birth family members
  - I.** Soliciting your input as to how Little City is performing to meet your needs
- A.** Little City Foundation values the information and knowledge that our foster parents provide to us and working as a team is the only way that the needs of the children and families we serve can be met. LCF ensures to listen to what is communicated and provide follow-up.

**B.** Little City Foundation’s pre-service training devotes a section of the training to “Working as a Team.” This training identifies the participants and roles of the child welfare team. Learning to work as a team is key to having open communication. Teamwork training is offered several times throughout the calendar year and is co-trained with a foster parent.

**C.** Little City Foundation also provides a written contract that is signed upon placement and updated annually. The placement contract communicates to the foster parent Little City Foundation’s expectations for working together as a team to meet the needs of the child and family.

**D.** Little City Foundation has staff on-call 24-hours a day, everyday; therefore, foster parents can contact staff at anytime. Crisis intervention training is provided to foster parents annually. Foster Parents may also communicate with staff via e-mail.

**E.** Little City Foundation staff is provided with a policy on topics that should be covered during home visits and quarterly CFTMs with the foster parent to help encourage them to share information about the child with the worker.

**F.** Little City’s online networking and support group, The Yahoo! Group LittleCityParents: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/littlecityparents> allows members a forum to vent, post questions and share stories.

**G.** There is a responsibility to share information, through the child welfare team, with the subsequent caregiver (whether the child’s parent or another substitute caregiver) regarding the child’s adjustment in the foster parent’s home.

- Prior to moving a child, Little City Foundation staff meet with a foster parent to discuss the child’s move and the adjustment needs of the child. The foster parent is provided with a LCF Foster Child Disclosure Summary. This form allows the foster parent to provide any information pertaining to the foster child’s needs, culture, schedule, likes and dislikes. This discharge summary is then provided to the subsequent caregiver. The Child File and life book are also expected to follow the child to any subsequent placement and contains the foster parent’s notes regarding the child’s special needs.
- The pre-placement visits also serve as a time for the caregivers and staff to discuss the child’s adjustment. Staff therapists are also involved at this time, as necessary, to assess or share information regarding the child’s adjustment. We have a placement checklist to ensure all the required tasks and paperwork are completed at placement. We also do a thirty-day staffing after the placement to assess the placement and child’s adjustment.
- Families who transition a child for a more permanent placement or for families who did not have concerns regarding care of the children are encouraged to remain a support in the child’s life and for the new foster family. The agency counsels the foster family after the child has moved on ways the family can remain involved in the child’s life (respite provider, phone calls, etc.)



**H.** You have the responsibility to know the role, rights and responsibilities of foster parents, as well as other professionals in the child welfare system, the foster child, and the foster child's birth family.

Little City Foundation staff recognizes that without our foster families, our program would cease to exist. We acknowledge that the daily work our families do in the home with the children in their care is the reason why our traumatized children make developmental, educational, and behavioral changes.

- The agency has developed a Treatment Philosophy that is given to families in orientation that help them understand the important role they play in the life of the child in their home. This information as well as an expansion of every team members' role, rights and responsibilities is repeated in the pre-service and on-going trainings and the home study process as well as during the initial 45 day staffing where the therapeutic team outlines the roles and responsibilities of the foster parent to engage in the therapeutic process with the child.
- From a family's initial contact with Little City Foundation, they are provided with experiences that help them identify the roles, rights, and responsibilities for themselves and other professionals working with them. Foster parents are provided with program policies, staff co-training, manuals, a copy Illinois Foster Parent Law, and the Little City Foundation placement contract and a monthly newsletter. All of these materials speak to the roles, rights and responsibilities of those fostering.
- In addition, they are provided materials on the roles, rights and responsibilities of other child welfare professionals and the child's own family. Staff reviews the foster child and biological parent rights with foster parents, as well. The "Working as a Team," "Roles and Responsibilities" and "Family Ties" training helps to identify roles, rights and responsibilities of all team members. The training committee, which is open to staff and foster parents, works to develop and provide trainings that help foster parents with their roles, rights and responsibilities.
- During quarterly CFTMs with the child's care team reviews their roles and responsibilities regarding the care of the child. This allows everyone involved an opportunity to meet as a team and work collectively on goals.

**I.** An important role of the foster parent is to provide the agency with input on how the program is functioning. Foster Parents are given various ways to provide input including the satisfaction surveys, Grievance Form, licensing visits, CFTM, Newsletters, and Foster Parent Implementation training. Surveys are distributed to foster families annually. Staff or a neutral party follows up with any concerns or new ideas found in the surveys and changes are made based on the results. The management of Little City Foundation also reviews the results of the surveys so that they know the thoughts and concerns of the foster parents. The results of the survey are incorporated into program outcomes report, drives practice and is shared in the newsletter.



## **2. RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY**

**Foster parents have the responsibility to respect the confidentiality of information concerning foster children and their families and act appropriately within applicable confidentiality laws and regulations.**

**We help you meet this responsibility in these ways:**

- A.** Introducing the concept of confidentiality early on in training
- B.** DCFS PRIDE training also covers this important area

**A.** Little City Foundation views foster parents as team members in working with children and their families. Prospective foster parents are informed in orientation that members of the foster care staff may share sensitive, personal information regarding the child, his or her history, reason for coming into care, and progress of the birth family with foster parents. It is at this time, that foster parents are introduced to the concept of confidentiality.

- It is important that foster parents recognize that, as members of the foster care team, they are bound by the rule of confidentiality. In order to inform foster parents of this responsibility the Statement of Confidentiality is reviewed during the pre-service and foster parent are asked to sign the statement. The statement includes information regarding the need to maintain confidentiality and the method by which information should be shared with relevant professionals when necessary to service provision.
- Confidentiality is also discussed during the pre-service when reviewing the policy regarding foster parent's rights and responsibilities. Little City Foundation's licensing staff discusses confidentiality with foster parents as required by Licensing Standard: "Section 402.24 Confidentiality of Information," during their initial licensing and at renewal.
- Confidentiality is also reviewed during six-month license monitoring visits, at the time of new placements and at other times when a staff member feels it is appropriate to the situation
- The staff is educated on this information during monthly supervision, department and team meetings. Staff signed confidentiality statements for their personnel files.

**B.** In the DCFS Foster Parent Handbook that is provided to parents during PRIDE training and is available for download on the DCFS website, families have access to guidelines for sharing confidential information and keeping their records regarding the child and the biological family confidential.

### 3. BE AN ADVOCATE

**A primary responsibility of foster parents is to advocate for the children in your care.** In a sense, this means to be willing to stand up for them, to argue for their rights and appropriate services, and to not back down the first time someone at school or an agency tells you “no.”

ADVOCATE



HELP INSPIRE HOPE  
AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR A BETTER TOMORROW.  
**ADVOCATE IN A  
LIVE UNITED WORLD.**  
**DO IT PUBLIC.  
BE VISIBLE.  
BE LOUD.**

### 14. KNOW APPEALS

**Know the child welfare agency’s appeal procedure for foster parents and their rights.**

**We help you champion this responsibility in these ways:**

- A. Including this idea in our primary mission statements
- B. Outlining several specific steps of advocacy that are expected in your foster parent contracts
- C. Offering Educational Advocacy and Court Trainings
- D. Training you on advocacy within the Court proceedings, including Appeals

**A.** Little City Foundation values the individuals that we serve in our program. Our Primacy of Purpose, as stated within our Core Values statement is to, *“improve the quality of life of the children and adults within our care. We do so in a way that demonstrates that we value self, family, and community as partners in our quest, while we understand our limitations and utilize the full force of our skills and abilities at all times.”* Our core values are reviewed at orientation with families and again during pre-service. We invite families into the agency that wish to join us in the advocacy of creating better lives for children who have special needs, and their families. This explicitly means that we invite you to and expect you to participate in all staffings, Administrative Case Reviews (ACRs), Child and Youth Investment Teams (CAYITs), CFTMs, Integrated, CANS, and other assessments, case conferences and court proceedings.

**B.** The Little City Foundation “Foster Parent Contract for Specialized (or Traditional) Foster Care” addresses several ways in which Little City Foundation expects foster parents to advocate for the needs of the child in their care. The placement contract not only outlines the foster parent’s responsibility to advocate for the child in their care in medical and educational settings, it outlines that advocacy includes maintaining their knowledge of the foster child’s culture, religious beliefs, family situation and mental health/health needs. Foster parents sign the agreement at the time of placement and annually thereafter.

**C.** Educational Advocacy Training is offered twice annually at LCF and foster parents must also take Educational Advocacy training through DCFS. Little City to add Court

Training to our 2012 training calendar as part of the “Roles and Responsibilities” training. Foster parents may currently attend court trainings offered through DCFS.

**D.** During the orientation and licensing process, we provide documentation and information to foster parents of the Juvenile Court process, “Child Protection Proceedings.” Also during the pre-service training, foster parents are provided with information and documentation regarding the Little City Foundation grievance procedure and the DCFS appeals process.

Foster parents are further informed that through the service appeal process they can advocate for the needs of the child in their care that they do not believe are being addressed. Little City Foundation also keeps service appeal brochures in the office and makes them available to families upon request. The process for filing a service appeal is also outlined in the DCFS Foster Parent. Families also have access to the Advocacy Office phone number through the DCFS Foster Parent Handbook or by calling the agency.

## **4. TREAT OTHERS WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT**

**Foster parents have the responsibility to treat children in their care, their birth families, and members of the child’s treatment team with dignity, respect and consideration.**

**We help you meet this responsibility by:**

- A.** Providing “Child Rights” training
- B.** Asking you to cooperate in establishing a visitation schedule
- C.** Collaborating to create a visitation schedule
- D.** We will ask the child to share with us any concerns they have, and will work together with you to resolve any issues for positive growth and healing.

**A.** Little City Foundation believes in the rights of all individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. Little City Foundation includes the “Child Rights” as part of materials distributed during the pre-service foster parent training manual. Foster parents review and discuss each point. These rights include:

- Foster children have the right to be cherished by a family of his own, either his biological family, a foster family, or an adoptive family.
- Foster children have the right to receive sensitive, continual help in understanding and accepting the reasons for her natural family's inability to take care of her, and to develop confidence in her own self worth.
- To receive continual loving care and respect as a unique human being...and a child who is growing to trust in herself and others.
- To grow in freedom and dignity in a neighborhood of people who accept him with understanding, respect, and friendship.

Clients’ Rights reviewed during licensing visits and updated annually, per DCFS policy and procedure.

**B.** The staff, foster parents and biological family work together to develop a visiting schedule with biological family members. Families willing to engage in reunification visits with biological parents are encouraged and are supported through the DCFS Special Service Fee that families can use to reimburse their time and activities that they engage in with biological families. Workers monitor these activities when necessary and follow up with all individuals to ensure that the reunification visits are in the best interest of the child, biological family and foster parent.

**C.** Little City’s policies emphasize to foster parents the importance of working with a foster child’s biological family. All of Little City Foundation prospective foster parents attend DCFS PRIDE classes, which includes a module regarding biological family connections. During Little City Foundation’s Pre-Service and on-going trainings, a module on the importance of “Family Ties” and life books is discussed with families in regards to maintaining a child’s connection to his/her family, including cultural, racial, ethnic, and religious identity.

**D.** Child Welfare Specialists are in the foster home at least two times per month. They take time to meet with the child alone to discuss any concerns the child may have. If a child brought up issues of concern in regards to how they are treated by the foster parents the Child Welfare Specialist would address the issue with the foster parents. Child Welfare Specialists typically supervise most interactions between foster families and biological families. Any observation that dignity, respect and consideration were not given to the biological family would be addressed with the foster parent.

When there is a staff therapist assigned to a child, part of the therapist's role is to work with the child, foster family and biological family to develop an environment of dignity, respect and consideration among the individuals. Foster Parent strengths and needs are discussed during quarterly staffings. If treating the child and family with dignity, respect and consideration was a concern this is another place the issue would be addressed. Working with biological families is also discussed during Child and Family Team Meetings.

## **5. RECOGNIZE YOUR OWN STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND NEED FOR SUPPORT**

**Foster parents have the responsibility to recognize your own individual and familial strengths and limitations when deciding whether to accept a child into your home; and the responsibility to recognize your own support needs and utilize appropriate supports in providing care for foster children.**

**We work to help you meet this responsibility by:**

- A.** Explicitly communicating the needs of the children we serve
- B.** Conducting a thorough home study to assess strengths and needs
- C.** Extensive pre-placement screening and transition planning
- D.** Discussing home utilization during bi-annual licensing visits
- E.** Assessing family training needs during quarterly team meetings
- F.** Providing therapy support in the home, and extending that to foster parents to help them address their own needs for skill development, information and guidance
- G.** Providing families with respite care resources
- H.** Ongoing mutual assessment

**A.** All families interested in Little City Foundation's foster care or adoption program attend a short orientation meeting about our program prior to turning in an application. Orientation contains a detailed description of our agency's working philosophies and types of children served. Families are encouraged to think carefully about their abilities to meet the needs of a specialized population. Prospective families are also mandated to volunteer in the program for 10 hours of hands-on activity with our current population prior to becoming licensed to help them assess the best match of potential needs for their home.

**B.** The licensing and home study process comprehensively assesses each family's strengths and needs as a foster parent. Part of this process is to discuss and assess the foster parents' strengths and weaknesses in determining the best possible match for the placement of a child in the home. The Family Development Specialist speaks to every member of the home (including children) to determine that the entire family is supportive of fostering. Any information obtained from individual family members is discussed with the applicants prior to licensure.

**C.** The foster family meets with both the licensing and placement staff prior to the placement of a child. Little City Foundation staff and foster parents complete the CFS 2017 Child/Caregiver Matching Tool together as required by DCFS Procedure 301.60 Placement Selection Criteria and the Interethnic Placement Act. Foster parents are required to have pre-placement visits with a child. This gives them an opportunity to evaluate their ability to care for the child prior to placement. Foster parents are given

full authority to accept or decline a particular child, based on available information. The foster parents' rights in this regard are discussed in orientation, the foster parent pre-service training and again with the placement staff, at each potential placement.

**D.** During six month monitoring visits, the Family Development Specialist speaks with the foster parent about the utilization of the home. The Utilization Assessment provides the family the opportunity to discuss what type of child they are best matched with and why they have turned down placements in the past. The Utilization Assessment can then be used by the Supervisor of Licensing and Support Services Supervisor to match the family with appropriate referrals.

**E.** Child and Family Team meetings are held quarterly to discuss the child's needs and family's ability to meet those needs. Additional trainings are identified in these meetings with the foster parent and added as tasks to the service plan if necessary. Little City Foundation staff helps foster parents secure these trainings outside of the agency if not being offered internally.

**F.** In addition to training, every family that has a child who is seeing a Little City therapist in home has the opportunity to meet with the therapist for additional support in meeting the child's needs. Therapists provide 24/7 support via on-call rotation.

**G.** It is the policy of the Little City Foundation Foster Care Program to provide foster families who care for children in the Specialized Foster Care Program with sufficient respite time in order to maintain a high quality of care for children in placement. It is essential that foster parents have time away from the responsibilities of parenting, to reduce stress and allow for relaxation and rejuvenation. Each family caring for a specialized foster child is offered monthly respite hours based on the needs of the child and the amount of time the parent currently spends with the child. Foster Parents apply for respite, the application is reviewed and the hours are determined by the Director of Foster Care and Adoption. Respite hours are reviewed and adjusted as needed. Respite is separate from job-related daycare. (See Right #4 for detailed Respite Information.)

**H.** Explain the role and focus of the consultation meetings in the mutual licensing and home study assessment process, which are as follows:

- 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;
- "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
- 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.

The LCF Worker should explain the potential outcomes of the mutual assessment process, which are:

- LCF and the family make a mutual decision to select the family into the program;
- LCF and the family make a mutual decision to select the family out of the program;
- LCF 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
- The family is willing to become a foster parent or adoptive parent and feels they have the ability to take on the job, but LCF disagrees and does not invite the family to select-in to the program.

The LCF 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.

## **6. TEAM WITH OTHER FOSTER PARENTS**

**Foster parents have the responsibility to be aware of the benefits of relying on and affiliating with other parents and foster parents—and/or foster parent associations—in improving the quality of care and service to children and families.**

**We help you to connect by:**

- A.** Providing networking and collaboration opportunities at trainings
- B.** Offering a Foster to Foster Parent Mentoring Program
- C.** Offering information on networking with other foster/adoptive parents
- D.** Offering Little City Parents online support group
- E.** Encouraging families to seek out support groups, within Little City or in the community, formal or informal, online or in person, whatever will help them most

**A.** Little City Foundation believes that foster parents should regularly come together to support and educate each other. We have continued to offer monthly trainings at our Chicago Office as a means to provide information to foster parents but to also build a network of families supporting each other. We have also encouraged our families to begin cluster support groups in their area with other local foster parents. Agency staff is willing to come to these meetings to facilitate discussions if requested. To date several foster parents utilize each other for support and respite but there are no formal support group meetings. Little City has an annual holiday party with foster and biological families to increase moral and networking opportunities.

**B.** Little City offers a Foster to Foster Parent Mentoring program that connects foster parents with one another for support and resources. Participation is completely voluntary. LCF has noted this program to be especially beneficial for new foster parents, and an intrinsic result has been increased foster parent program satisfaction and retention!

**C.** A resource list is provided to encourage foster parent involvement in both informal and formal support networks. This list along with important DCFS and Little City Foundation phone numbers is sent to families upon licensure and thereafter upon request. The Foster Parent Newsletter also includes information about other support groups.

Here is a link that may be useful:

[http://www.adoptionservices.org/adoption\\_support\\_groups\\_family/adoption\\_support\\_groups\\_illinois.htm](http://www.adoptionservices.org/adoption_support_groups_family/adoption_support_groups_illinois.htm)

**D.** Little City hosts an on-line support group managed by LCF's foster parents. Membership is open and free to all. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/littlecityparents>

**E.** Foster parents are also encouraged to seek out support from other families by joining support groups. We try to inform foster parents of such meetings through our newsletter and additional mailings with the board checks. Here are links to several Chicago area family support group, including special needs:

<http://www.chicagoparent.com/resources/special-needs-resources/therapy/jewish-child-and-family-services/events/parenting-a-child-with-special-needs-a-parent-support-group?refID=2069>

<http://www.npnparents.org/index.asp>

<http://www.chicagoparent.com/resources/special-needs-resources/therapy/community-therapy-services/events/parent-support-groups>

<http://www.chicagokids.com/resources/parentinggroups.html>

[http://www.frcd.org/pb\\_parent\\_coalitions\\_09.pdf](http://www.frcd.org/pb_parent_coalitions_09.pdf)

<http://www.lilaguide.com/groups/city-chicago-il.aspx>

<http://users.ameritech.net/frcdptiil/phone2.htm>

## **7. CONTINUE TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE AND OBTAIN TRAINING**

**Foster parents have the responsibility to assess your ongoing individual training needs and to take action to meet those needs.**

**We help to support you in this responsibility by:**

- A.** Offering training
- B.** Discussing training with you, offering options and suggestions
- C.** Opening up our pre service training to currently licensed families so they can benefit from the updated information and reinforcement of key concepts

Little City Foundation values continuous and lifetime learning, which is a Core Value of the agency. Foster parent are required to complete 12 training hours a year and utilize these trainings in order to keep their skills fresh and learn new or more effective interventions.

**A.** In order to help foster parents meet their training needs, we offer monthly agency sponsored trainings based both on the foster care team assessment of training needs via the foster parent evaluation form and input received from foster parents through satisfaction survey, CFTMs, home and licensing visits, and/or foster parent participation in LCF's training committee.

- We have developed a training resource library. Foster parents can check out one of our 200 books or videos to seek more information and training credits.
- In-home training for families whose children are receiving therapeutic treatment from our staff is provided.
- Families are informed of DCFS's Virtual Training Center and their ability to register for an account. The Virtual Training Center allows families to register themselves for training and to take online trainings as well. The DCFS Training Catalogue can be viewed at DCFS' website or registering by phone at (877) 800-3393.

**B.** Little City team discusses foster parent training with families during CFTMs and six month monitoring visits and encourage a variety of ways in which the foster parents can meet their training goals. Little City Foundation foster parents are also encouraged to seek out and attend seminars, workshops, or other types of training that specifically speak to their needs and interests.

**C.** Little City Foundation opens our pre-service training to currently licensed families so they can benefit from information and topics that may have changed since their licensure.

## **8. WORK (HARD) TO PREVENT DISRUPTION**

**Along with child safety, placement stabilization may be the most important responsibility you take on. It includes the responsibility to develop and assist in implementation strategies to prevent placement disruptions and recognize the traumatic impact of placement disruptions on a foster child and all members of the foster family.**

**We will support you with this weighty responsibility by:**

- A.** Providing support and wrap-around services to the child in care
- B.** Establishing a clear, written disruption policy
- C.** Completing detailed home studies to enhance matching between child & family
- D.** Ensuring that parents attend child trauma training
- E.** Ensuring that the parent is aware of the agency's crisis procedure and resources
- F.** Working to ensure stabilization during the monthly home visits
- G.** Utilizing SOC services for Traditional Foster Children to stabilize homes
- H.** Requiring a 30 day notice to put a serviceable transition plan in place

**A.** Little City realizes the importance of supporting families in order to ensure placement stabilization. Child Welfare Specialists complete the CANS assessment tool (that assesses child and family needs/strengths within a trauma lens) bi-annually that drives service planning.

**B.** Little City's disruption policy establishes protocols for preventing and dealing with disruptions. It is extremely important that while a child is in foster care s/he is provided with the most stable, caring environment possible to assure continued development of trust and growth. When a foster family accepts a child into their home, it is assumed that the family is making a long-term commitment to that child. Therefore, a change or disruption in placement would only occur under the most serious of circumstances. During pre-service, the disruption policy is reviewed and the foster parents are informed on whom to contact, what to do and how to get help when there is a possibility of a placement disrupting. They are reminded that the program has 24/7 coverage so there is always a way to contact the agency for support during a crisis. The families are informed about our program's Division of Therapeutic Services that offers crisis intervention.

**C.** By conducting a thorough home study, completing the CFS 2017 Child/Caregiver Matching Tool, having pre-placement visits and creating a transition plan it is the agency's intention to identify the best placement for a child with the least likelihood of having a placement disruption. Little City averages over a 90% placement stabilization rate each year due to diligent licensing and matching processes.

**D.** Foster parents are sent to the DCFS Childhood Trauma training so that they may better understand the trauma history that a child may have and how traumas can impact the needs of the child in their home. Little City plans to begin hosting a foster parent co-

facilitated trauma training in 2012. System of Care (SOC) training is also an integral part of this training.

**E.** Once a child is placed in the home, the family receives a Child File that includes the CARES and SASS line and provided with the phone number to access during psychiatric crises. They are also provided with the Little City Foundation 24 hour emergency number and the agency's on-call process is reviewed with them.

**F.** Child Welfare Specialists meet with the family in their homes at least twice per month. Families are encouraged to share any information regarding caring for the child. Workers also speak to the children alone regarding any concerns in the home that need to be addressed. Should a family experience any difficulties or uncertainties, it is requested that the family bring the situation to the attention of the Child Welfare Specialist as soon as possible so that the team can problem-solve together. It is expected that foster parents will do everything to maintain the child in their home. An agency staffing will be scheduled when necessary to discuss placement stabilization needs. Little City Foundation is able to put a variety of services in place to stabilize a placement such as therapy, mentoring, SOC, respite and the likes.

**G.** If the foster parent terminates a placement and the child is considered traditional, Little City Foundation must send notice to the System of Care (SOC) in the Local Area Network (LAN) in which the foster family resides. The SOC agency will then convene a child and family team meeting no later than ten days after the date of notice. During the team meeting, the SOC provider will assess the need for removal and recommend services to stabilize the placement. If the foster family is unwilling to accept services or the SOC provider does not recommend services, SOC will consult with Little City Foundation on appropriate services to support the new placement. This may include working with a staff member of our Therapy Team to help all involved members with the transition to a new placement.

**H.** Per LCF policy, foster parents are asked to give 30 days' notice to the Child Welfare Specialist, in writing, to have the child removed from their home (DCFS policy requires a 14-day notice.) This time period allows the treatment team to make the best possible transition plan for the child, to locate another placement for the child and to prepare the child for the move. The time period is also used to ensure that all services the child needs will be transitioned with him or her, this is essential when caring for children at the specialized level of foster care. It is expected that foster parents will participate in transition planning and pre-placement activities of the child to his/her new home.

## **9. UNDERSTAND THE FAMILY**

### **IMPACT OF FOSTER PARENTING**

**Foster parents have the responsibility to assess the impact foster parenting has on individuals and family relationships; and the responsibility to work to minimize, as much as possible, any stress that results from foster parenting (that means taking care of you, so you can care for the child.)**

**We support you in this responsibility by:**

- A.** Disclosing care needs of the children in placement
- B.** Describing the realistic impact of time and energy commitments of foster Parenting through training and foster parent mentoring
- C.** Providing support to help minimize the stress and impact of foster parenting
- D.** Discussion of the voluntary hold process

**A.** From the initial contact between potential foster parents and Little City Foundation, parents are apprised of the significant requirements of fostering children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. A program description explains the special needs of the children served in the Little City Foster Care Program. All interested individuals are invited to Little City Foundation pre-service training where the rights and responsibilities of providing foster care are again reviewed through a variety of methods including a video about typical behaviors of children who have experienced grief, loss and separation in their lives.

**B.** As part of the pre-service training and licensing process, foster parents are made aware of the impact fostering will have on the foster family, in terms of time, energy and levels of stress and/or frustration. There is complete discussion of the medical and emotional needs of the foster child and the foster family's required involvement level.

Through Little City's foster to foster parent mentoring program, new foster parents can call on experienced foster parents with questions or troubles or just for support. Foster parents are also required to provide supervision to children currently in our program for 10 hours before becoming licensed. This provides the family with useful information regarding specific diagnoses and behaviors associated with those diagnoses so they can make the most informed choice about the child they are willing to foster in their home.

During the home study process the family is asked to speculate the impact that fostering will have on their entire family. The licensing staff is able to inform the family about the impact that occurs with many of our families. Foster parents always make the final decision in whether or not to accept a child in their home.

**C.** Little City Foundation makes every effort to minimize stress and provide support to the foster family. These supports are offered by the agency and shared with foster parents in LCF's Pre-Service:

- Pre-service training will be offered to all families prior to placement
- Licensing services and supervision of foster and relative homes
- Ongoing foster parent training
- Matching, pre-placement visitation and other placement services
- Court representation and advocacy
- School advocacy
- Mentoring
- Respite (formal and informal)
- Case management and advocacy for foster children
- Assessment and service planning
- Completion of Adoption Assistance Application (if the child is to be adopted)
- Clinical services to address behavioral, emotional and cognitive needs
- Post-adoption consultation
- Resource and post-adoption referral services
- 24 hour on-call assistance
- In home training and support services as needed

**D.** If a family wishes to take a voluntary break from fostering, the family has the option to place themselves on hold. The agency will continue to make six month monitoring visits to the home and continue to assess the family's desire to return to fostering. Families who are not actively fostering or seeking a placement will need to maintain their training hours in order to be eligible for renewal of their license and for future placements.

Foster parents may also elect to put their license in non-active status. This means that they will not be considered for foster or adoptive placements and not subject to 6-month licensing and monitoring visits; although, they are expected to keep their home in compliance with licensing standards. Foster parents may elect to remove their home from non-active status at any time. At this time, LCF will reassess the family for child matching and the home for safety.

## **10. PROMOTE THE FOSTER PARENTING EXPERIENCE**

**Foster parents have the responsibility to know the rewards and benefits to children, parents, families and society that come from foster parenting and promote the foster parenting experience in a positive way.**

**We strive to support you by:**

- A.** Believing that YOU are our best recruitment tool
- B.** Describing and sharing the foster parent job description and benefits
- C.** Offering a Foster to Foster Parent Mentoring Program
- E.** Recognition in Quarterly Newsletters
- F.** Participation in Community Events

**A.** Little City believes that the most effective recruitment tool that we have is our current foster parents who are satisfied with the services of the agency and the support that they receive in being a foster parent; therefore, LCF continuously works to ensure foster parent satisfaction with our program through in-person contacts and surveys.

**B.** Little City Foundation provides numerous opportunities for discussion about the rewards, both concrete and intangible, of foster parenting. This discussion begins with the initial packet that is sent to interested individuals. A detailed “job description and job benefit” sheet is included so that foster parents know the rewards and benefits of fostering. This includes training on how to represent what you do and the needs in public forums and community meetings.

**C.** We have a mentoring program that allows new foster parents to call on experienced foster parents with questions or troubles or just for support. Foster parents are encouraged to refer other family members; friends and colleagues to Little City Foundation to learn more about foster parenting. They receive a \$50 cash referral bonus if a person they referred to Little City Foundation becomes a licensed foster parent. There is a year round recruitment plan in place designed to positively promote fostering. Foster parents are encouraged to hold orientation meetings in their home with interested family and friends.

**D.** Our foster parent newsletter and special flyers are sent out to families and highlight special events hosted by Little City Foundation as well as in the community that support families. We also recognize foster parents each month in the newsletter with information regarding their years of service as foster parents, permanencies within their home, and if they have made any referrals to the program.

**E.** If the agency is participating in a community recruitment event, foster families are encouraged and invited to attend with staff to discuss their experiences in fostering/adoption.

## **11. KNOW CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM**

**SEE PAGE 49**

## **12. SERVE AS A MANDATED REPORTER**

Foster parents have the responsibility to know and, as necessary, serves as a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. Call 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873).

**We help you fulfill this responsibility by:**

- A. Training you as a mandated reporter
- B. Providing instructions on making a report
- C. Sign an acknowledgement that you are now a mandated reporter
- D. Newsletter reminders
- E. Training, support and due process regarding complaints against foster parents
- F. Safety plan to prevent issues from arising

A. Foster parents licensed by Little City Foundation are informed of their status as mandated reporters. This information is presented both in the foster parent licensing process and in subsequent policy review trainings. Foster parents are instructed on the proper reporting procedure, which states that:

- As a Foster Parent of Little City Foundation, you are a MANDATED REPORTER. You are required by law to report any abuse or neglect. This includes reporting any suspicions of abuse or neglect, even if you are not sure that the action was abuse or neglect. You must also report any failures of others to report abuse or neglect of which they have knowledge. Remember, you are considered a Mandated Reporter by the State of Illinois, and it is against the law to refrain from reporting abuse or neglect.

B. Little City Foundation also provides instruction on the proper procedure for making a report. The procedures are listed below:

- Upon witnessing, gaining knowledge of, or suspecting a case of abuse or neglect, the foster parent will immediately report the information to the DCFS hotline and then to his/her Child Welfare Specialist or their supervisor. The report will be made verbally and documented in writing. The written report must contain information from the hotline call, including the date, time, and name of the contact person on the hotline. The Child Welfare Specialist or supervisor will notify the Director of Foster Care and Adoption of the program. The Director of Foster Care and Adoption will insure that DCFS is informed and all the proper paperwork is completed. If necessary, an investigation will be conducted by Little City Foundation and/or DCFS. When the investigation has been completed, the foster parents will be notified that action has been taken.
- In the event that the foster parent suspects Little City staff of abuse or neglect, the foster parent should contact the Director of the Foster Care Program, who will ensure that an investigation is conducted and that DCFS is informed.

**C.** Foster parents are asked to sign an "Acknowledgment of Mandated Status Reporter" (CANTS 22) indicating their understanding and agreement with the rules of mandated reporting. This form is updated per initial licensing and renewal cycles.

**D.** The newsletter continues to be used as a method to keep parents informed about their responsibilities as mandated reporters.

**E.** Families who have had abuse/neglect allegations made against them are informed by the worker or the therapist that a call has been made to the hotline and the allegation made about the home. During pre-service training, families are informed of the possibility that a child may make an allegation of abuse or neglect about a family member that per mandated reporter responsibilities the agency/foster parent must report. Families are encouraged to fully participate with the investigation and informed that their rights are similar to those during a licensing investigation. In addition, the DCFS Foster Parent Handbook offers a section for foster parents about their rights if they are a subject of an abuse/neglect investigation. Foster children in the home who can be maintained through the investigation with a safety plan will remain in the home as long as the agency and DCP (if call is accepted) determine that the children's safety can be maintained through the documented plan.

**F.** Whenever a child is placed in a home, the need for a safety plan is assessed. If it is determined one is needed, the foster parent, Child Welfare Specialist, and Supervisor work together to develop and implement that plan. Some plans are reviewed with DCFS if needed. The foster parent is trained on any aspects that are unfamiliar to them and the reporting requirements. The safety plans are reviewed quarterly. Others involved in the child's care (school, respite provider, etc.) are made aware of the plan on a need to know basis. The plan is reviewed and revised as necessary with the input of the foster parents. If an incident occurs within the foster home that requires the development of a safety plan, the Child Welfare/Adoption Specialist, supervisor, and foster parent will work together to develop a reasonable plan and Little City Foundation will help the foster parent secure any additional services or equipment (monitors, alarms, etc.) that may be needed to protect the safety of the child and family.

# **13. ADMINISTRATIVE CASE REVIEWS AND COURT HEARINGS**

**Foster parents need to know the purpose of administrative case reviews (ACR), client service plans and court processes, as well as any filing or time requirements associated with those proceedings; and have the responsibility to actively participate in the foster parent's designated role in these proceedings.**



**We work to support you in this responsibility by:**

- A.** Training on juvenile court and the various types of meetings conducted and encouraging you to actively participate
- B.** Updating DCFS regularly to ensure they have the correct information to notify you of upcoming events relevant to your child

**A.** Little City Foundation provides full training on the juvenile court process as part of the licensing process. A handout detailing the child protection process is also provided and discussed.

- Foster parent are given a copy of the DCFS Foster Parent Handbook, which covers explanations of administrative case reviews, service plans, and the role of foster parents in the court process. This information is also discussed in the licensing process and pre-service training.
- Little City's ongoing training program also addresses issues of the juvenile court process and the role of the Guardian Ad Litem (GAL). Information regarding changes in procedure is provided regularly in the monthly newsletter. Either at court or when a GAL comes out to a foster home, foster parents are provided with an opportunity to find out more about the court process.
- When Child Welfare Specialists inform foster parents of upcoming court dates and ACRs at home visits and CFTMs, they encourage the foster parents to attend and explain the purpose of the court date, especially the permanency goal. Their continuous attendance gives them a better understanding of how the processes work. Foster parents are interviewed during home visits and their information, concerns, strengths and areas for improvement are added into the biannually Integrated Assessment.

**B.** In addition to during home visits, workers complete the CRMR on the DCFS web network each six months to ensure that foster parents are notified by DCFS of the upcoming ACR schedule and the importance of their participation in the process.

## **14. KNOW APPEALS**

**SEE PAGE 53**

## **15. KEEP GOOD RECORDS**

**Foster parents have the responsibility to maintain accurate and relevant records, regarding the child's medication, medical visits, history and progress, along with the responsibility to follow the procedures for record keeping.**

**We support you in this by:**

- A.** Explaining the Records Maintenance procedure through the licensing process and training
- B.** Outlining the Records to Maintain

**A.** The Foster Parent Placement Contract states that the foster parent is responsible for maintaining all medical and educational records of the child. This responsibility is discussed fully during pre-service training. During the initial licensure, at renewals, and at six month monitoring visits “Licensing Standard: Section 402.26 Records to be Maintained” is reviewed with foster parents. At placement the foster parent is given a Child File in order to maintain accurate and relevant records regarding the child’s history and progress. The Child Welfare Specialist reviews the child file with the foster parents on a routine basis. The foster parent completes a monthly medication and behavior report as necessary on the child for the Child Welfare Specialist. Little City Foundation workers often include an expectation for timely documentation in the child’s service plan.

**B.** Little City provides a Child File containing the records to be maintained by the foster family shall include:

- The name and date of birth of the child, the legal guardian of the child, religion of the child, and arrangements for education of the child
- A record of immunizations the child has received; any physical problems, limitations, or allergies the child has; any current recommendations for special medical care
- The name, address, and telephone number of the child’s physician, guardian, and supervising agency
- A log of medication prescribed and given
- The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of person to contact in case of emergency
- The names of persons to whom the child may be released
- A record of waivers and consents for immunizations, medical examinations, and treatment
- A record and/or receipts for distribution of allowance and clothing funds.
- A record of the emergency evacuation plan and quarterly rehearsals.
- A record of the childcare supervision plan
- A copy of the CFS 592 Overnight Visit Arrangements that shall be kept for the duration of the visit

- A copy of any CFS 432, Guardian's Consent for Out of State Travel or Extended Trips
- Copies of completed medical, dental, vision, hearing and other specialty appointments
- Copies of a child's school report card, disciplinary notices, progress reports, meeting notices, Individualized Education Plan and all other school records
- Copies of evaluations completed (psychological, psychiatric, developmental, etc.)
- Others as applicable/appropriate and/or as pertaining to a child's special needs
- Records of completed foster parent training and information relevant to the maintenance of a foster care license (ie: updated vaccination records, medical forms for household members, etc.)
- Sibling and Biological Parent visitation forms

Records are required to be maintained while respecting confidentiality. Records may be requested and/or inspected by the supervising agency during monthly home visits and/or licensing visits. Additional requests for records may occur in order to ensure compliance with DCFS and LCF case file maintenance, in preparation for ACRs and/or Court, or in response to an internal or external case file audit.

## **16. SHARE INFORMATION**

**SEE PAGE 49**

## **17. ENCOURAGE CULTURAL IDENTITY**

**Foster Parents have the responsibility to provide care and services that are respectful of and responsive to the child's cultural needs and are supportive of the relationship between the child and his or her birth family; the responsibility to recognize the increased 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.**

**We work to support you in this responsibility by:**

- A.** Training you
  - B.** Discussing it explicitly once a placement is identified
  - C.** Helping you with the Life book
  - D.** Offering to help you acquire specific cultural knowledge and training
- A.** Little City Foundation emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness to our foster parents throughout the licensure process and pre-service training, and through the subsequent ongoing training program. Little City's Pre-Service "Family Ties" training educates families on how to preserve the child's cultural identity, retain links to the past, and provide increased awareness for both the child and the foster family.
- B.** During the pre-licensure period and on-going at 6-month licensing and monitoring visits, home visits, CFTMs, and once a placement has been identified, there is discussion about the family's cultural identity and how they will incorporate the cultures of a child that may be different than their own. Incorporating a child's culture into the home, or promoting culture through food, visiting museums, reading books, and/or attending community events to name a few, aid in bolstering one's sense of self. If a family needs additional information we have many tools and resources to help them understand how to support a child's ties to their family and culture. This learning and assessing process is ongoing throughout the entire placement.
- C.** Foster parents are also trained on the importance of the foster child's life book. A life book is a tool which has been developed to assist the child in placement understands his or her past and what is currently happening in the child's life. A life book training is included in our pre-service curriculum and families attending the training are provided with a hands on training where they create pages from their life book to understand how the tool can be used in supporting the child's relationship to his/her family and history. The training was also added to our yearly training calendar.
- D.** When a family expresses a need for a specific training on meeting the cultural needs of a child or if a staff member identifies a deficiency in the foster parent's knowledge of cultural issues relevant to the child, the agency will work with the family to find educated staff to conduct a hands on training with the family or find community resources to provide training.

**Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan 2012**  
**Little City Foundation**  
**List of Attachments**

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## Attachment A

### **2012 FOSTER PARENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

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Little City training calendars:

1. Little City's 2011 Foster Parent Pre-Service Training Flyer
2. Little City's Master Training Calendar (open for staff and foster parents)
3. Little City's 2011 Monthly Foster Parent Training Calendar
4. 2011 Monthly Foster Parent Training Course Descriptions

**Please join us for  
Little City Foundation's Pre-Service Training**

Thursday, September 22, 2011

6:00-8:00pm

Little City Foundation Policies and Procedures

Trainer: Katherine Oglesby

Tuesday, September 27, 2011

6:00-8:00pm

Family Ties and Life Books

Trainer: Tricia Miller

Thursday, September 29, 2011

6:00pm—8:00pm

Working As a Team

Trainer: Katherine Oglesby

Thursday, October 6, 2011

6:00pm—8:00pm

Introduction of Developmental Disabilities

Trainer: Training Department

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

6:00pm—8:00pm

Utilizing LCF Treatment Philosophies

Trainer: Clinical Staff

Arrive on time for trainings, entrance is NOT permitted once training starts.

In addition to the above trainings, CPI, CPR and First Aid trainings are also required for licensure. These trainings are offered at LCF monthly. Required DCFS trainings include PRIDE and Educational Advocacy. 10 hours of volunteerism within our foster care/adoption and/or Palatine-based programs is also a requirement for licensure.

Call Family Development Specialist, Tricia Miller, for additional information and to register for ALL trainings including LCF pre-service at (773) 265-1539 x.228; or Katherine Oglesby at (773) 265-1671 x. 236.

Trainings will be held at Little City Foundation,  
700 N. Sacramento, Suite 220  
Chicago, IL 60612

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 10:00 AM NCI - Keypoint Refresher  10:00 AM QSP 8-Medical Issues	2 9:00 AM New Employee Orientation  2:30 PM Blood-Borne Pathogens/Exposure Plan Review (Annual)	3 9:00 AM Nonviolent Crisis Intervention - Foundations Course (NCI - aka CPI) 9:00 AM Advanced NCI - Autism Spectrum Disorders 5:00 PM DSP 5 - ISP/ITP	4 9:00 AM DSP 3 - Abuse & Neglect	5 9:00 AM Blood-Borne Pathogens/Exposure Plan Review (Annual)  10:00 AM AHA CPR/FA/AED
7	8 9:00 AM AHA CPR/FA w AED (NEO) 9:00 AM Abuse & Neglect Refresher 2:30 PM NCI Behavior Lab 6:00 PM Foster Parent Series: Clinical Interventions II collapse	9 9:00 AM PACE Training  9:30 AM Civil Rights  11:00 AM DSP 2 - Human Rights 5:00 PM DSP 1 - Intro to DD/Autism collapse	10 9:00 AM AHA CPR/FA/AED 11:00 AM DSP 5 - ISP/ITP	11 11:00 AM QSP 9-Applying Rules & Regs	12 10:00 AM Adoption In-Service Day
14	15 10:00 AM NCI - Keypoint Refresher  10:00 AM QSP 1-Intro to QSP	16 9:00 AM New Employee Orientation  2:30 PM Blood-Borne Pathogens/Exposure Plan Review (Annual) 6:00 PM Foster & Adoptive Parent Orientation	17 9:00 AM Nonviolent Crisis Intervention - Foundations Course (NCI - aka CPI) 9:00 AM Advanced NCI - Applied Physical Techniques  5:00 PM DSP 2 - Human Rights	18 9:00 AM DSP 3 - Abuse & Neglect  10:00 AM Med Pass Remedial Course	19 9:00 AM Nonviolent Crisis Intervention - Foundations Course (NCI - aka CPI)
21	22 9:00 AM AHA CPR/FA w AED (NEO) 2:30 PM NCI Behavior Lab	23	24	25	26
28	29 9:00 AM PACE Training  9:30 AM Civil Rights	30 5:00 PM DSP 3 - Abuse & Neglect	1	2	3 9:00 AM Blood-Borne Pathogens/Exposure Plan Review (Annual) 10:00 AM AHA CPR/FA/AED

# **2011 Foster Parent Training Calendar Little City Foundation**

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**All trainings are offered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month from  
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

<b>January 11</b>	<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>
<b>February 8</b>	<b>Trauma</b>
<b>March 8</b>	<b>Educational Advocacy &amp; Foster Parent Implementation</b>
<b>April 12</b>	<b>Clinical Interventions I</b>
<b>May 10</b>	<b>Clinical Interventions II</b>
<b>June 14</b>	<b>Family Ties &amp; Foster Parent Implementation</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>Off-Summer Vacation</b>
<b>August 9</b>	<b>Educational Advocacy</b>
<b>September 13</b>	<b>Trauma &amp; Foster Parent Implementation</b>
<b>October 11</b>	<b>Clinical Interventions I</b>
<b>November 8</b>	<b>Clinical Interventions II</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>Off-Holidays</b>

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## 2011 Monthly Foster Parent Training Calendar Description of Courses

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### Roles and Responsibilities

Discuss foster parent, clinical and case management roles and responsibilities as well as each team member's role in crisis intervention. The agency's emergency response procedure is reviewed. Court advocacy, Grievance Procedure, and Service Appeals reviewed.

### Trauma

Discuss loss/attachment/PTSD/anger management; impact of placement disruptions

### Educational Advocacy

*March:* Discuss graduation preparation, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), summer school enrollment and activities (ie: camp)

*August:* Discuss school enrollment, school supply reimbursement, school calendar, special services available in schools (OT/PT/SW/SP/LANG/Tutoring/Nursing/Other) and High School Academic Plans

### Clinical Interventions I

Discuss the clinical interventions and approaches utilized by Little City's therapy team, including PECS, Sensory Integration, DIR, TEACCH, and others

### Clinical Interventions II

Discuss behavior modification/management techniques, effective discipline, toilet training, and others

### Family Ties

Discuss engaging biological family members as related to permanency goals of return home, long-term foster care, guardianship and adoption. Include considerations of a child's cultural, religious, ethnic, racial identity.



## Attachment B

### **2012 FOSTER PARENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

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Documentation of foster parent and staff input into the development of Little City's 2011 Foster Parent Implementation Plan (includes 3 training sign-in sheets):

1. March 08, 2011 Training Sign-in Sheet
2. June 14, 2011 Training Sign-in Sheet
3. September 13, 2011 Training Sign-in Sheet

\*See supplemental e-mail with these 3 sign-in sheets



## Attachment C

### 2012 FOSTER PARENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

#### SUMMARY OF FOSTER PARENT COMMENTS

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Little City foster parents were able to receive a copy of the agency's 2011 plan via paper copy, web pick-up at <http://www.littlecity.org/foster>, e-mail, via Little City's on-line Advisory Group's homepage, or CD-Rom. All program foster parents (approximately 55 homes) were asked to review, sign and return the second page of our 2011 plan, the Signature page. Little City received over 30 Signature pages back from our foster families; however, no comments were made regarding suggested changes to our plan.

Little City hosted three 2012 Foster Parent Implementation development meetings throughout 2011 with minimal participation. Most of the comments received this year were reported to the Foster Parent Implementation Plan coordinator, Emily Rawsky, by child welfare specialists after they distributed the 2011 plan. FIP Coordinator also personally called families soliciting their feedback about our 2011 plan.

One comment Little City received about our plan was that it is very informative, but a lot of information to read.

Another foster parent commented that several of the on-line links within the plan were disabled.

Several foster parents commented that they liked the revised format of the plan and believed it was more user-friendly.

Several foster parents also remarked that they appreciated having multiple ways to access the 2011 plan.

A few foster parents requested more detailed information about Little City's financial reimbursement policy, specifically the rates paid under the different contracts.



## Attachment D

### 2012 FOSTER PARENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

#### **AGENCY RESPONSE TO FOSTER PARENT COMMENTS**

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Responses to the comments received in regards to Little City's 2011 plan are as follows: Little City was told that our 2011 plan was informative, but a lot to read. We agree with this comment; however, struggle to shrink the document based upon feedback received from the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council that has asked for detailed explanation of our policies and procedures related to the rights and responsibilities and how we enforce them as an agency. Little City is considering reformatting our plan (again) for 2012 to make it more user-friendly. Foster parent input and feedback will be solicited prior to making any changes.

Another foster parent commented that several of the on-line links within the plan were disabled. Little City staff experienced this as well. Many of the document's internal links were removed from this year's plan. The links to external websites work, or will work when right clicking on the link and selecting "open link."

Several foster parents commented that they liked the revised format of the plan and believed it was more user-friendly. Little City was very proud of our improved plan and grateful for this feedback.

Several foster parents also remarked that they appreciated having multiple ways to access the 2011 plan. Little City was pleased with this feedback and will continue to make our 2012 plan accessible through the same avenues.

A few foster parents requested more detailed information about Little City's financial reimbursement policy, specifically the rates paid under the different contracts. The financial reimbursement section of our 2012 plan was updated at length detailed tables outlining our various payments based upon contracts.



## Attachment E

### 2012 FOSTER PARENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

#### SUMMARY OF AGENCY RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

Little City did not receive any comments from the public about our 2011 Foster Parent Implementation Plan. Little City's plan was publically available on our website at <http://www.littlecity.org/foster> and via publication in the Taylorville Breeze-Courier.



## Attachment F

### 2012 FOSTER PARENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

#### PLAN ENDORSEMENT

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See supplemental e-mail with the scanned endorsements from foster parents and staff.



## Attachment G

### 2012 FOSTER PARENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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#### Little City Foundation Grievance Procedure

##### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose is to provide a formal procedure for the foster/pre-adoptive parents and to state their grievances related to the Foster Parent Implementation Plan developed in collaboration with foster parents annually and submitted to DCFS.

##### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all foster/pre-adoptive parents in the Foster Care and Adoption Program.

##### **POLICY:**

It is the policy of Little City Foundation's Foster Care Program to provide foster/pre-adoptive parents with the opportunity to file a grievance regarding concerns noted within the annual Foster Parent Implementation Plan. Little City Foundation will respond to all grievances or complaints as outlined in this procedure.

Foster/pre-adoptive parents are informed of their right to present a grievance at the time of admission and annually thereafter through the receipt of Little City's Foster Parent Policy Manual. In addition, whenever this policy is updated, the updated policy will be sent to all foster/pre-adoptive parents via mail and available on-line.

##### **PROCEDURE:**

Upon initial contact from the foster parent regarding the subject of complaint or grievance, the Child Welfare Specialist/Adoption Specialist or Social Work Supervisor will attempt to solve the problem without the need for further action. This discussion will be documented. If the issue is not addressed to the satisfaction of the complaining party, a formal grievance to address the complaint can be made. The individual will notify, in writing using the Grievance Form, the Social Work Supervisor of the wish to file a grievance. The notification must be signed dated and must contain a description of the issue needing resolution. If needed, the Child Welfare/Adoption Specialist or other staff member will provide assistance in writing the notification. A decision regarding the grievance will be rendered within 30 days.



<b>Grievance Form</b>	
Date of Grievance:	
Subject of Grievance:	
<b>What happened to cause you to be dissatisfied?</b>	
<b>How can we make this right?</b>	
Name:	
Address:	
City, State & ZIP:	
Phone Number & E-mail	



## Attachment H

### 2012 FOSTER PARENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

#### Copies of Foster Parent Law Grievances filed during the past year

Little City did not receive any Foster Parent Law written grievances in 2011.