



Center for Excellence in Resource Parent Development (CfE) Parent Partnership Practice Profile

This Parent Partnership Practice profile is designed to articulate the role of Center for Excellence (CfE) resource parents in supporting the goals and values of the CfE. It builds on the existing Integrated Practice Model Resource Parent Profile by adding reflective prompts related to partnering with families of origin to support reunification and prevent congregate care placement.

The Department of Human Services/Social Service Administration (DHS/SSA) believes resource parents should be fully represented, informed, and utilized (e.g., in Family Involvement Meetings, Case Planning, Caseworker Visitation, Birth Parent/Family of Origin, Family and Sibling Visitation, Court Hearings, Educational Meetings) to support children, youth, emerging adults, their families, and their support systems. DHS' goal is to work in partnership with and provide support to resource parents. Maryland resource parents should be involved in developing goals, addressing concerns, assessing progress, shared decision-making, and creating plans that build upon strengths, resiliency and other protective factors with the children in their care and their families of origin. Resource parents are an integral part of a team to promote safety, well-being, and stability, as well as reunification or other timely permanency.

Our Goals as Resource Parents are to:

- Create a safe and supportive environment for children, youth and emerging adults in our care.
- Be equipped with knowledge and training to address the complex needs of children and youth in care.
- Develop relationships with birth families or families of origin to provide support and mentorship as needed to support reunification.
- Advocate for the needs, concerns, and strengths of children, youth and emerging adults in our care and their families of origin that are included in the development of permanency plans.
- Partner with children, youth, emerging adults and their families as a member of the family team.
- Partner with birth families and families of origin during visits to model and support useful parenting strategies and promote reunification.

Our Principles in Action: We Demonstrate

- We are **Family-Centered** when we support children, youth, emerging adults and their birth families or families of origin by managing their needs and concerns as a member of the family team with the whole family and permanency plan in mind; supporting these needs during family and sibling visits; and by valuing and incorporating their opinions, insights, and wishes.
- We are **Trauma-Responsive** when we proactively work with individuals and families in conjunction with caseworkers to identify topics that may cause a trauma reaction and plan how to appropriately attend to these responses if they occur during, before or after visits with family or siblings or at other times when trauma reactions may potentially occur.
- We are **Outcomes-Driven** when we work together with the family team to contribute information about the individual or family progress observed in visits as well as information that may indicate

the need to closely monitor or adapt service goals and support optimal outcomes for safety, permanence, and well-being.

- We are **Individualized & Strength-Based** when we are able to interpret individual and family behavioral responses as strengths in the context of their trauma; acknowledge each youth, child, or emerging adult in our care as unique and requiring customized attention and support; and voice these specific needs on their behalf as a valuable member of the family team.
- We are **Culturally & Linguistically-Responsive** when we are attuned and responsive to the individual's/family's preferred language and cultural needs and encourage children, youth, and emerging adults to share their values, beliefs, and traditions with us so we can honor and celebrate them accordingly.
- We are **Community-Focused** when we work with the family team and community supports to collaboratively support the children, youth, and emerging adults in our care as well as seek their assistance during planning and making decisions pertaining to their care.
- We are a **Safe, Engaged and Well-Prepared Professional Workforce** when we demonstrate our values of collaboration, advocacy, respect and empowerment with individuals and families and when we routinely consult our colleagues and DSS staff for support when we experience challenging situations.

Parent Partnership Reflective Prompts

Resource parents' partnership with the family of origin can be instrumental in supporting timely and lasting reunification. Resource parents are asked to consider the following reflective prompts when partnering with the family of origin.

Have I.....

Routinely participated in the Family Team and Permanency Planning process?

- Given the information needed by the DSS staff and family team to effectively parent the youth in my home?
- Participated in the development of youth's goals and case planning process by providing support, feedback, and advocacy as needed.
- Voiced concerns?
- Participated in court review hearings?

Routinely supported family in efforts toward reunification?

- Modeled and supported the family using CfE parenting strategies learned in KEEP or Parent Partnership Training?
- Offered to share and discuss home practice assignments and troubleshoot issues that may arise if the family is participating in parenting support and education such as Parenting through Change for Reunification?
- Offered to drive parents to a meeting or appointment? Attended meetings/appointments with the parents?
- Asked ways to support progress toward reunification? Provided assistance with progress toward reunification?

Built initial relationships?

- Initiated contact with the family of origin, even if incarcerated, hospitalized or lives out of state?
- Participated in Comfort Calls and Icebreakers with an open, interested and supportive attitude?

- Exchanged contact information for various forms of media?
- Welcomed family of origin into the home?
- Encouraged family of origin to remain in contact with their child?

Routinely supported child/youth to maintain family ties/culture?

- Asked about and shown a genuine interest in getting to know their background, culture, religion, beliefs/values, etc.?
- Supported child/youth in maintaining a LifeBook and requested pictures of the family to display in their Lifebook and the child's room?
- Communicate with other resource families caring for siblings (if applicable)?
- Keep a journal on the child's life or support the child in keeping a journal to share with the family?

Routinely supported family time?

- Talked positively about family time?
- Brought things from the child/youth's life that would help family time go smoothly? (e.g. packing a diaper or activity bag with snacks)
- Brought pictures and shared updates with the parents in a journal?
- Arranged and hosted sibling time?

Routinely communicated with family?

- Invited family to the child's extracurricular activities, school plays, and birthday celebrations?
- Provided family with updates on the child's well-being and progress towards goals?
- Shared copies of the child's school pictures, artwork, homework, and report cards?
- Talked to the child/youth about their family in a positive way and acknowledged their accomplishments?
- Had reasonable expectations? Established clear boundaries when considering when and what type of contact is appropriate to initiate?

Offered family post- reunification support?

- Offered to provide respite care?
- Maintained contact with the child/youth that was in my care and/or their family?



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