

MidSOUTH Training Academy

Out-of-Home Unit 10

Participant Manual



MidSOUTH
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, HEALTH,
AND HUMAN SERVICES
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

AGENDA

Day 1

- I. **Section 1 — Group Cohesion/Introduction/Overarching Practice**
 - A. Competencies
 - B. ReMoved Video & Reflection
- II. **Section 2 — Overarching Practice Considerations (Continued)**
 - A. ReMoved Processing: Identifying Behaviors
- III. **Section 3 — Policy/Procedure Requirements**
 - A. Scavenger Hunt: DCFS Policy
- IV. **Section 4 — Placement Considerations**
 - A. Guest Speaker
 - B. Tamela Boyers: Safety Considerations
 - C. Placement Preparation & Skill-Building
 - D. Preparing Caregivers: PUB-10
- V. **Section 5 — Division Information Management System**
 - A. Lab Work Day 1

Day 2

- I. **Section 1 — Review**
 - A. Review
- II. **Section 2 — Medical Requirements**
 - A. Health Service Specialist
- III. **Section 3 — Constructing the Family Time Plan**
 - A. Developing the Plan for Family Time
- IV. **Section 4 — IV-E Eligibility and Practice Implications**
 - A. Experiential Exercise: Title IV-E Funds
 - B. Title IV-E Funds Review
 - C. Deprivation (Income Gathering)
 - D. Provider Eligibility
- V. **Section 5 — Division Information Management System**
 - A. Lab Work Day 2

AGENDA

Day 3

- I. **Section 1 — Review & Ticket Out**
 - A. Review
- II. **Section 2 — Educational Considerations**
 - A. Policy Practice
 - B. Guest Speaker: Education
- III. **Section 3 — Assessment (CANS)**
 - A. Scoring the CANS
- IV. **Section 4 — CANS Entry**

Day 4

- I. **Section 1 — Clustering CANS & S.M.A.R.T. Family Case Plans**
 - A. Clustering the CANS
 - B. S.M.A.R.T Planning Discussion
 - C. Concurrent Planning
 - D. Drafting the Family Case Plan
- II. **Section 2 — Entering a Family Case Plan**
 - A. Quick Reflection
- III. **Section 3 — Transitional Youth Services - Life Plan Meeting**
 - A. TYS Transitional Planning Meeting
 - B. Extended Foster Care
 - C. After Care Services
 - D. Planning for and Conducting the Meeting

Day 5

- I. **Section 1 — Writing Court Reports**
 - A. Effective Court Reports
 - B. Improving Court Reports
 - C. Documentation “R’s and P’s”
- II. **Section 2 — Division Information Management System Tasks**
 - A. Practice Activity: CANS
 - B. Closing a Case
- III. **Section 3 — Testifying at the Review Hearing**
 - A. Videos & Court Testimony
 - B. Roles & Debriefing Questions

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

NAME: _____

My role/job in DCFS is:

I have watched a removal.

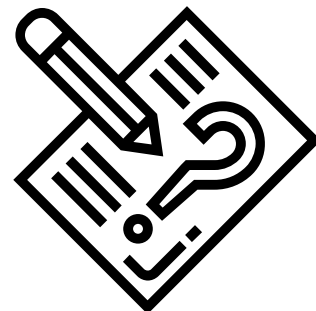
☐ Yes

☐ No

I have done a removal.

☐ Yes

☐ No



Strengths I bring to my work (especially in out-of-home care):

Areas where I need to grow (especially in out-of-home care):

Questions about online training:

What I hope to learn about out-of-home care:

Resource Tab

- **Court Prep** – materials prepared by DCFS that provide helpful tips and Division expectations related to court preparation, testimony, and documentation
- **TYS** – materials to help improve services to youth ages 14+ who are in out-of-home care.
- **Engagement** – good practice suggestions and information to enhance engagement with birth families of children in out-of-home care.

**SOP Tab**

- **Family Time Resources**

A simple illustration of a computer window. The window has a title bar with three buttons (minimize, maximize, close) on the right. The main area of the window is a large rectangle with the text "notes:" in the top left corner, followed by a large empty space for writing.

OUT-OF-HOME CARE COMPETENCIES**104 Core: Separation, Placement, Reunification and Permanency**

104-1: The worker understands the process and dynamics of normal, reciprocal attachments of children with their families and other significant caregivers.

104-2: The worker understands the potentially traumatic outcomes of separation and placement for children and families - including psychological crises, serious disruption of family relationships and attachment, and disturbances in the child's development – and can weigh the risk to a child of remaining with his/her family against the trauma of separation when deciding whether to place a child out-of-home.

104-3: The worker understands the serious negative effects on children in changing and inconsistent living arrangements, including any changes in out-of-home caregivers, and can recognize the physical, emotional, and behavioral indicators of placement-induced stress.

104-4: The worker understands the necessity of permanency planning and reasonable efforts to prevent removal, to prevent placement disruption, and to achieve timely reunification or other permanency options.

104-5: The worker can identify ways that agency foster care policies and practices can contribute to successful out-of-home placements, including properly structuring a placement to help prevent crisis and its consequences; involving agency team members, and designing placement activities, including pre-placement preparation and visits, that minimize stress and provide emotional support to the child and family.

104-6: The worker understands the concept of "continuum of care" in determining the best placement for a child; knows strategies to identify, strengthen, and maintain the least restrictive, most homelike, culturally relevant placement to meet a child's needs; and knows how to prepare kinship relatives, foster parents, and other caregivers to receive children in placement to reduce stress and facilitate adjustment.

104-7: The worker knows the necessity of regular and frequent visits to maintain family members' relationships with the child in out-of-home placement, and can use casework strategies that empower families to participate in planning and attending visits, assessing the child's developmental, medical, social, and emotional needs and determining appropriate services.

Notes on ReMoved**Attachment****Trauma****Child Stress Indicators**

- **Physical**

- **Behavioral**

- **Emotional**

Mom Stress Indicators

- **Physical**

- **Behavioral**

- **Emotional**

Family Time

Plan to Improve Child Welfare Services**MOVING BEYOND CRISIS
EFFORTS TO IMPROVE CHILD WELFARE SERVICES**

- 1** Focus on prevention and reunification with an emphasis on safety.
- 2** Increase the number of children placed in family-like settings (rather than group residential or emergency settings).
- 3** Increase the number of family resource homes – kinship and traditional.
- 4** Slow the growth of the number of children in out-of-home care.
- 5** Increase placement stability.
- 6** Increase the number of children placed with kinship.



Notes



**Boyers Family
Part 1****TAMELA BOYERS**

Youth in Care: Tamela Boyers –age 15 (DOB: 06-29-2001)

Mother: Esther Boyers – age 36 (DOB: 04-02-1981)

Father: Ernest Boyers – age 39 (DOB: 03-20-1978)

Address: 6753 E Pine St, Pine Bluff, AR. 71603

Home Phone: 870-541-9999

Cell: 870-541-8888

Half Sister: Angelina Franklin– age 17 (DOB: -7-31-1999)

Mother: Esther Boyers – age 36 (DOB: 04-02-1981)

Father: Anthony Franklin– age 45 (DOB: 01-01-1972)

Address: (Anthony Franklin) 2464 Winchester, Pine Bluff, AR 71603

Home Phone: 870-541-7637

Cell Phone: 870-541-2222 (Angelina)

Prior to coming into state custody, Tamela lived with her mother and father, Esther and Ernest Boyers. Tamela has a half-sister, Angelina Franklin, who is two years older than Tamela. Esther married Anthony Franklin when she was 17 years old and Angelina was born the following year. The couple divorced when Angelina was two months old. Anthony tried to stay involved in his daughter's life after the divorce. He paid support and visited regularly until Angelina came to live with him when she was 13 years old. Esther married Ernest when Angelina was 18 months old. Tamela was born 5 months later.

Angelina was the one who called the Hotline to report that Tamela's father, Ernest Boyers, was sexually abusing Tamela. Angelina told the Hotline that Ernest abused her until she was 13 years old and she knows he is doing the same to her sister. She is calling at this time due to fears that her sister will get pregnant if the abuse continues.

Tamela initially denied the allegations, but during the forensic interview at the Child Advocacy Center she disclosed the following information:

**Boyers Family
Part 2**

Tamela described a progression of sexual acts for nearly as long as she could remember. Her earliest memories involved her father touching and stroking her external genitalia under her panties and nightgown. Tamela recalled that the year she started school (either kindergarten or 1st grade), he began sticking his fingers in her vagina and kissing/licking her genitals. By the time she was nine years old, her father was having vaginal and anal intercourse with her several times a week. The last date of sexual contact was the day before the interview (within the time frame for a sexual assault kit).

During the interview, Tamela verified that her father has also done “the same stuff” to Angelina. When Angelina was 13, she went to live full-time with her daddy. This made Tamela very sad because she and her sister were very close.

She felt abandoned by Angelina but said Angelina had to get out because she had “come into her womanhood” and was afraid Ernest would get her pregnant. Esther was also angry with Angelina and accused her of “making up terrible lies” about their stepfather. Tamela begged Angelina not to tell about Tamela’s abuse because she was afraid her father would hurt her mother.

Until the Hotline call, Angelina never told anyone that Tamela was being abused. Angelina’s father did not make a report to the Hotline about his daughter’s abuse. When questioned during the investigation, he said he did not report because he feared “the State” would put his daughter in foster care. He sought full custody, and Esther did not contest it. Angelina has no contact with her mother, and her father has not requested support.

After Angelina went to her Daddy’s, Tamela only got to see her every few months or so. The girls text and visit by phone but are in different schools. Angelina constantly pled with Tamela to tell someone what was happening to her.

During the interview, it became clear that one method Ernest used to ensure Tamela’s submission to him was threatening to hurt her mother. He also told Tamela that if she told anyone, she would wreck the home, her mother would never believe her, and her mother would be angry with her for seducing her father, “just like she’s mad at Angelina.”

**Boyers Family
Part 3**

Tamela described a violent home environment where her father frequently beats her mother, screamed and threatened Tamela and her mother, broke dishes and furniture, and punched holes in the walls of the house. At one time, Tamela told her mother about some of the abuse. Her mother responded, “Baby, we do whatever we have to do to keep him happy.”

Tamela also fears for her own safety. She described one incident where she asked her father to stop having sex with her. He accused her of being a whore and backed her up against the wall, where he proceeded to punch holes in the sheetrock all around her head. Later, he was sorry for screaming and punching the wall. Tamela was quick to point out, “He has never hit me, only Mama.”

Tamela came into care on an emergency basis on April 6, 2017. The police arrested Ernest Boyers, and the Prosecutor charged him with multiple counts of sexual abuse of both Tamela and Angelina. Ernest made bail and was released pending trial. There is a no-contact order in place. Esther is supportive of Ernest and alternates between not believing Tamela, blaming her for seducing Ernest, and blaming Angelina for coaching Tamela on what to say to get attention.

Tamela is two years behind in school. Angelina left when Tamela was in the 6th grade. Tamela failed that year and had to repeat it. While she passed 6th grade the following year (when she was 12), she failed the 7th grade because of excessive absences. She is currently in the 8th grade. She is mostly shy and quiet.

However, there was an incident where a classmate called her “a freak” and a “moron.” This escalated into a loud shouting match in the hall, with both girls threatening to hurt the other. Due to the difference in age between her and her classmates, Tamela has few friends at school. She makes mostly Cs and the occasional D. She has one area where she excels: art class. She has an extensive portfolio. She passed the 8th grade but, again, had many absences.

Physically, Tamela is a very thin teenager. She frequently complains of stomach pains, especially when facing stressful events. She began her menstrual cycle at age 14.5 years. She has not had a medical evaluation of her reported pain. Her mother thinks it is only an attempt to gain attention.

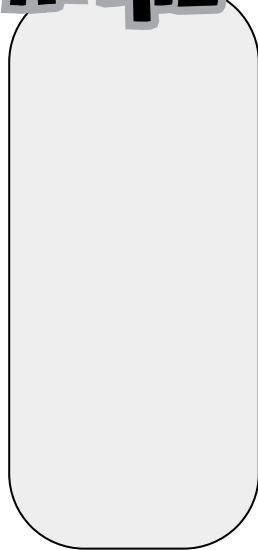
**Boyers Family
Part 4**

Tamela is very anxious about the outcome of her disclosure. At times, she is relieved that everyone believes her and that her father has been arrested. Other times, she is fearful about what he will do to her and to her mother because she told him. She is very concerned about her mother's safety, and Tamela is overwhelmingly sad because her mother has discounted her disclosure.

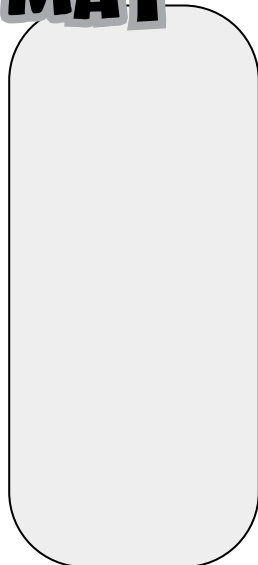
However, Tamela shows occasional glimpses of anger towards her mother for making Tamela responsible for the mother's safety. Tamela wonders if she should take it all back and wonders if things would be better if she "just weren't around." DCFS and the family (including Tamela) identified the following people as potential placements for Tamela (relative and fictive kin):

- **Maternal grandmother:** Shirley Owens – age 65 (DOB: 10/09/1953)
 - Address: 808 Palm, Pine Bluff, Jefferson County, Arkansas 71603
 - Phone: (870) 537-1983
- **Art Teacher:** Melissa Rogers
 - Note: This was Tamela's choice. She did not know her teacher's address, but she thinks her teacher would be willing to let her stay with her.
 - If DCFS considers this person as a possible placement, they would need to contact her at the school.

Tamela Boyers: Calendar

APRIL

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

MAY

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Tamela Boyers: Calendar

JUNE

M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

NOTES

SCAVENGER HUNT***Placement Issues***

1. When a child comes into out-of-home care, what is the preferred type of placement?
 - a. Relative/ Fictive Kin
 - b. Shelter
 - c. Foster Home
 - d. Adoptive Home

2. What publication needs to be given to the family at the time of removal?
 - a. Publication 85
 - b. Publication 6
 - c. Publication 10
 - d. Publication 357

3. Placements must be:
 - a. Least restrictive
 - b. In the best interests of the child
 - c. Matched to the child's unique physical and emotional needs
 - d. Siblings placed together
 - e. All of the above.

4. Who must initiate the CFS-450 to assess relatives as placement resources?
 - a. The investigator
 - b. The resource worker
 - c. The foster care worker
 - d. Any of the above may end up initiating the CFS 450

5. Children and youth can be placed directly with relatives identified by the family.
 - a. True
 - b. False

SCAVENGER HUNT***Paying for Out-of-Home Care***

6. What is the major source of Federal Funding for children in out-of-home care?
 - a. Title IV-E
 - b. Title IX
 - c. Title XX
 - d. Title V

7. When a child comes into foster care on an emergency basis, in which court order must the court make a finding that it was contrary to the welfare of the minor to remain in the parent's (or caregiver's) home?
 - a. The order from the Permanency Hearing
 - b. The order from the Review Hearing
 - c. The order from the Adjudication Hearing
 - d. The order from the Ex-parte hearing

8. What date starts the clock for establishing IV-E eligibility?
 - a. Date of the maltreatment report
 - b. Date of abuse incident
 - c. Date of removal
 - d. Child's birthdate

Medical Issues in Out-of-Home Care

9. When a child comes into care, when does the child have to be examined by a physician?
 - a. Within 24 hours (initial health screen), if it was severe maltreatment or the child appears to be ill or injured
 - b. Within 72 hours (initial health screen) when the reason for removal was something other than severe maltreatment
 - c. Any time after coming into care
 - d. Within 60 days of removal
 - e. Answers a and b are correct

10. When must the comprehensive health assessment be completed on children in care?
 - a. 30 calendar days from the date of removal
 - b. 45 calendar days from the date of removal
 - c. 60 calendar days from the date of removal
 - d. 90 calendar days from the date of removal

11. What form is filled out by the Health Care Provider at the Initial Health Screening according to VI-D1?
- a. CFS – 6010
 - b. CFS – 911
 - c. CFS – 366 – A
 - d. CFS – 366 – B
 - e. Both c and d are correct answers
12. Which medical passport forms are provided to Resource Parents at the time of placement?
Circle all that apply.
- a. CFS-362
 - b. CFS-352
 - c. CFS-365
 - d. CFS-6012

Maintaining Family Ties

13. What is the minimum acceptable visitation between parents and children in out-of-home care?
- a. Weekly
 - b. Twice per week
 - c. Every two weeks
 - d. Once per month
14. There is a legal presumption that parent/child visitation will be unsupervised
- a. True
 - b. False
15. If a judge orders supervised visitation, there is a minimum of one hour in the DCFS office per week.
- a. True
 - b. False
16. The FSW for the child in out-of-home placement must visit no less than once per week during the first month of a new placement. If the FSW cannot fulfill this requirement, a Program Assistant (PA) may visit instead.
- a. True
 - b. False

SCAVENGER HUNT***Educational Needs***

17. Which of the following statements about meeting the educational needs of foster child is correct?
- a. A foster child cannot continue in a “School Improvement” school (even if that is the school they are enrolled in before entering care.)
 - b. Parents are never allowed to participate in school conferences or decisions about their children’s education as long as the child remains in care.
 - c. There are no circumstances under which a foster child may be home-schooled.
 - d. Recommendations about the child’s education needs are part of the comprehensive health assessment.
18. With regard to a child’s education and a child’s entry into care, the FSW does all of the following except:
- a. Accompany the child to school and let the school counselor know the child has been placed in care.
 - b. Tell the counselor that the parents cannot receive information about the child’s progress and cannot attend parent-teacher conferences.
 - c. Gather available school and health records to help guide the Comprehensive Health Assessment.
 - d. Give the resource parents the name of the child’s teacher and counselor.

Supporting Resource Families

19. Can resource families receive confidential information about the child that is being placed in their home, such as the reason the child entered care:
- a. Yes
 - b. No
20. Family preservation services may also be used to address problems in a resources home with the goals of preventing placement disruption.
- a. True
 - b. False

Before Provisional Placement**BEFORE PLACING IN A PROVISIONAL KINSHIP RESOURCE HOME**

Children coming into care must be placed in an approved placement. This can be with a relative or with fictive kin (referred to as kin or kinship). Placement can be done before they complete all the requirements to be approved (such as pre-service training). However, certain conditions must be met before placing a child or youth.

It is helpful for all FSWs to know what conditions these individuals must meet to make effective referrals to the Resource Supervisor or Resource Worker.

Approval for Placement Requires:

- **A visual inspection of the home** – can be completed the day child/youth enters care
- **A central registry check** - can be completed the day child/youth enters care; State criminal record checks may be signed via notarized signature or electronic signature (ACT 186) via the link <https://ardhs.formstack.com/forms/dcfscbc>
- **A State Police criminal background check** - can be completed the day child/youth enters care
- **A vehicle safety check** - can be completed the day child/youth enters care
- **FBI fingerprint check** - can be initiated on the day the child/youth enters care; does not have to be completed before placement
- **Assessment of financial ability**; no board payment until everything required for approval of the home can be completed.
- *Family and the Division have 60 days to meet all requirements.*

Tamela Boyers Questions & Concerns

Tamela lives in Jefferson County. For purposes of this training, let's say that the forensic interview and the sexual assault exam took place at the CAC* in Jefferson County. Esther was at the CAC, but Ernest was not. Based on the disclosure, law enforcement has taken Ernest into custody, and he is at the police station.

What are your thoughts about taking Tamela to her house to pack up some of her things?

What issues do you think you might run into with Esther if you take Tamela by the house? List or describe what you might say to her to give Tamela some time to get some of her personal belongings.

List any immediate safety threats that might be present at the home address for either Tamela or you. List specific questions you might ask Tamela or her mother to help you assess whether there are immediate safety threats and how you would deal with them.

Kinship Conversation

Fictive Kin are defined as persons who have a strong, positive emotional tie to the child and have a positive role in the child's life but are not related by blood, adoption, or marriage.

Your first determination is to see if Melissa Rogers meets this definition. List the questions you would ask Tamela to explore her relationship with Ms. Rogers. Be specific. Use the skills you have acquired to formulate the questions. There is no one "right" answer here.

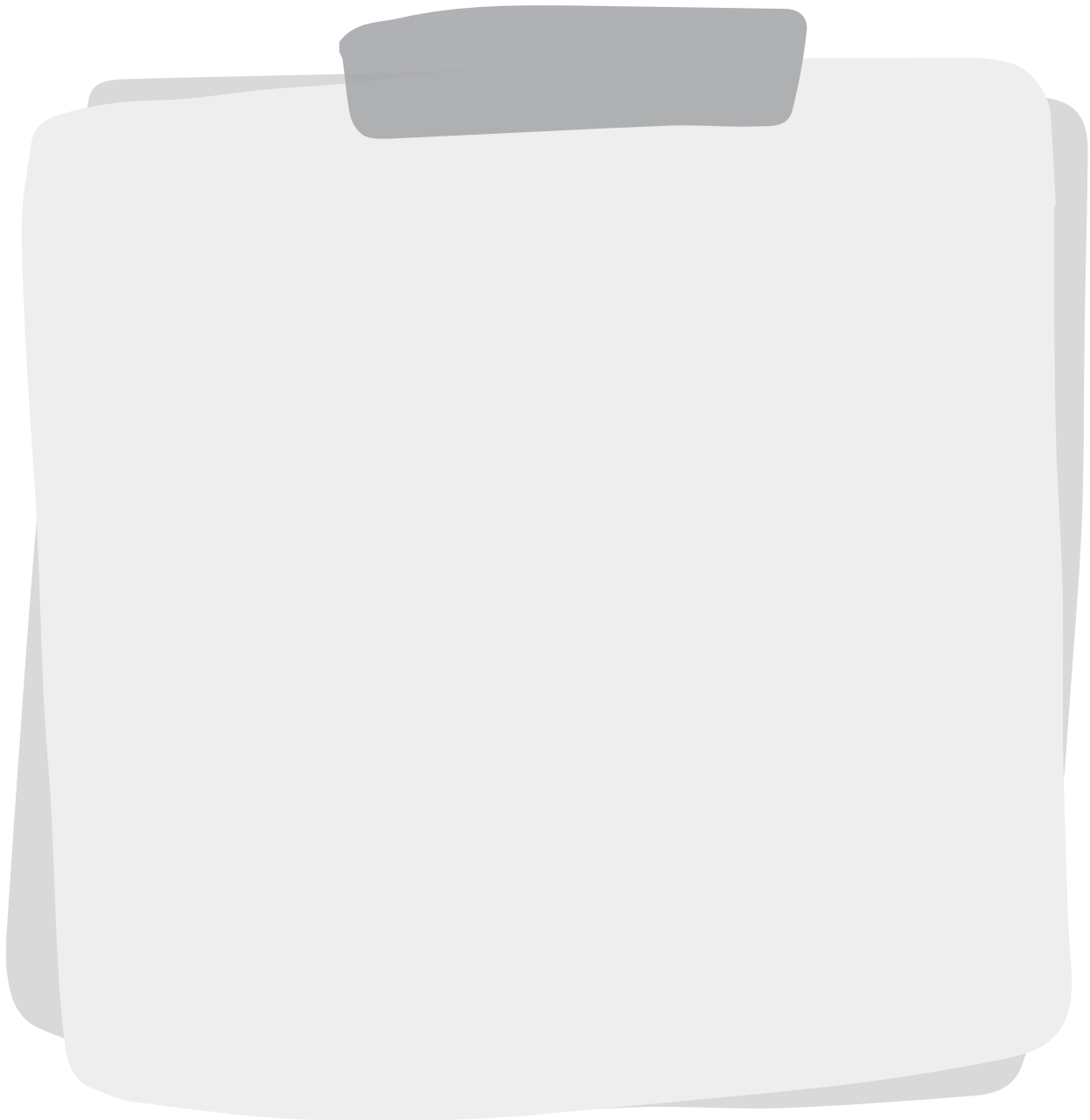
List questions you might use to explore why Tamela would rather stay with her teacher than with her grandmother. Be sure to explore whether Tamela feels safe at her grandmother's house.

Describe how you would explain the Agency's decision to choose the grandmother as a potential resource home instead of Tamela's choice.

PREPARING TAMELA FOR PLACEMENT

Use this page to write down specific things you would tell Tamela to let her know she is not going home and prepare her for what happens next. Start with an easy one and write down how you would introduce yourself.

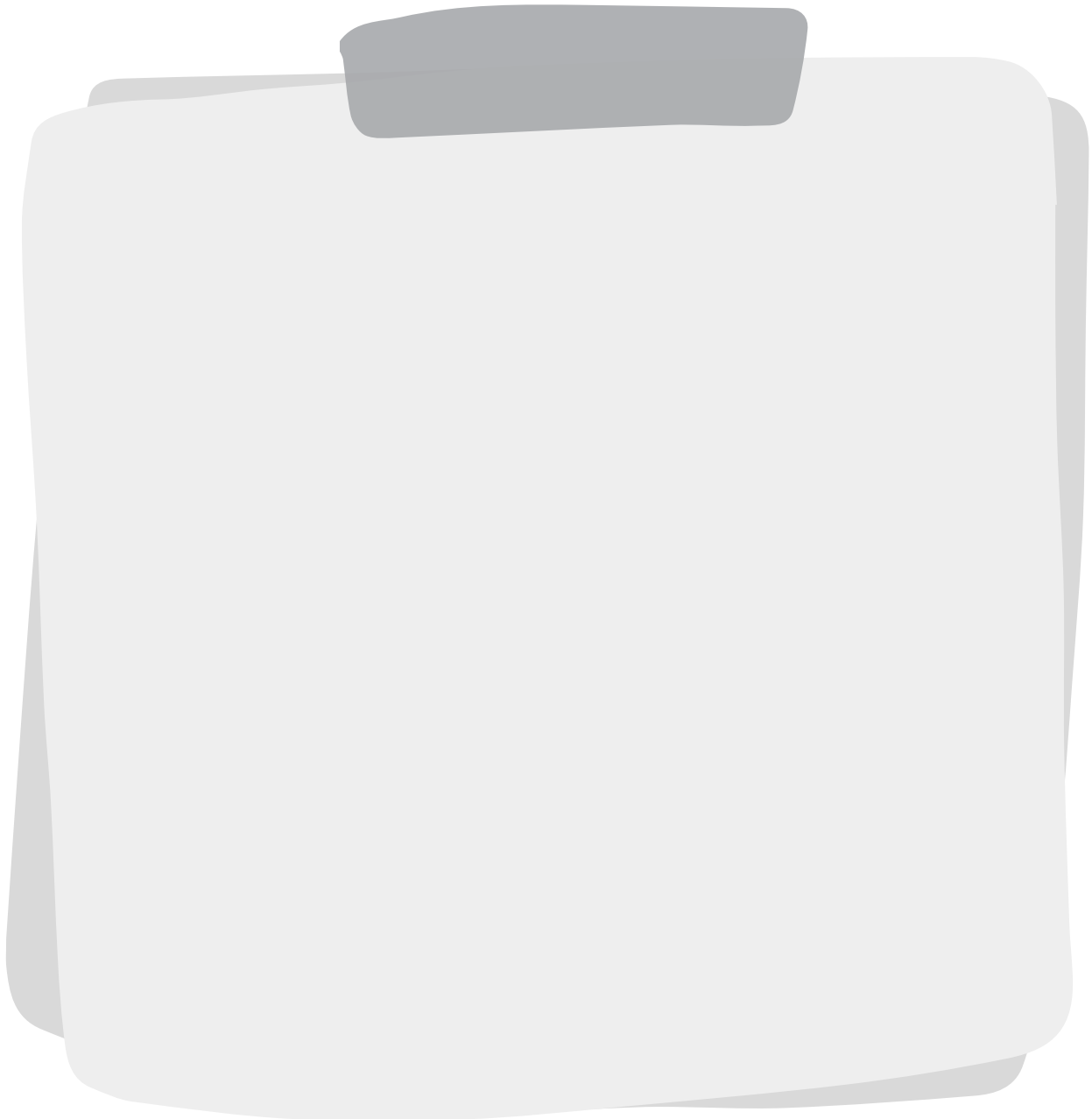
Remember to ask about the art teacher, Melissa Rogers.



PREPARING MRS. BOYERS FOR TAMELA'S PLACEMENT

Write down the specific words you would use to prepare Mrs. Boyers for Tamela's placement out of the home. What information would you try to gather at this time?

Here is a starter: *Mrs. Boyers, what do you know about out-of-home care?*



MRS. BOYERS – WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Use this page to write down things you need to know and/or feelings you have when the worker lets you know that Tamela is not coming home with you.

Here's a starter: *Ernest is down at the courthouse right now. You know he's probably going to jail. Why can't Tamela come home with me if he isn't even there?*



**MY FORMAL NETWORK:
AREA RESOURCE PLACEMENT TEAM**

Teaming is an essential survival mechanism in out-of-home care work. Let's look at who is in your network. Think about any formal or informal teams in the offices where you work. Who are the team members? How do they help one another out? Each Area has an Area Resource Placement Team. Your job over the next week: Find out the names and contact information of the people on your Area Resource Placement Team.

These people are my formal network for help in out-of-home placements.

AREA DIRECTOR:

RESOURCE SUPERVISOR:

RESOURCE/ADOPTION WORKERS:

FOSTER CARE WORKER:

MY INFORMAL WORK NETWORK

These folks are the ones who help me get through the day.

They help by doing:

ASSESSING AND PREPARING SHIRLEY OWENS

Some of the initial work on assessing Shirley Owen's appropriateness as a placement resource and preparing her for Tamela's placement may fall on any of the FSWs (investigator, caseworker, resource worker) involved in the case.

Write down specific questions you would use to explore Shirley's willingness and ability to be a placement resource for her granddaughter.

Areas to consider include but are not limited to:

- How supportive is Shirley of Tamela and Tamela's disclosure?
- How is the relationship between:
 - Tamela and Shirley?
 - Esther and Shirley?
 - Ernest and Shirley?
- How confident is Mrs. Owens that she can keep Tamela safe, especially if Ernest is released on bond?
 - What are specific actions of safety (behaviors) that she might engage in?
 - Has she taken actions to assure safety in the past?
- Financial ability to support Tamela in the interim between placement as a provisional home and approval as a kinship resource caregiver eligible to receive a board payment.



BOYERS INFORMATION
(Lab Work – Day 1)**Family of Removal**

Mother: Esther Boyers, DOB:04-02-1981; not employed outside the home
Father: Ernest Boyers, DOB: 03-20-1978; employed Data Systems, Inc., Pine Bluff
Youth in Care: Tamela Boyers, DOB:06-29-2001

Date of Removal: 04-06-2017
Time of Removal: 6:00 pm
Reason for Removal: Sexual Abuse by father; mother non-supporting
Date of Case Connect: 04-06-2017

Address of Home: 6753 E Pine St, Pine Bluff, AR. 71603
Phone: 870-541-9999 (Home)
Phone: 870-541-8888 (Cell)
Phone: 870 – 541 – 7878 (Work), ext. 10

Annual Household Income: \$72,000.00
Marriage: January 2, 2001

Extended Family: Franklin

½ Sibling: Angelina Franklin DOB:-7-31-1999
Sibling's Father: Anthony Franklin DOB: 01-01-1972 (no relation to Tamela)
Address: 2464 Winchester, Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Phone: 870-541-7637 (Home)
Phone: 870-541-2222 (Angelina cell)

Extended Family: Owens

Grandmother: Shirley Owens, DOB: 10/09/1953; employed
Address: 808 Palm Street, Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Phone: 870-537-1983 (cell)
Annual Household Income: \$52,000.00

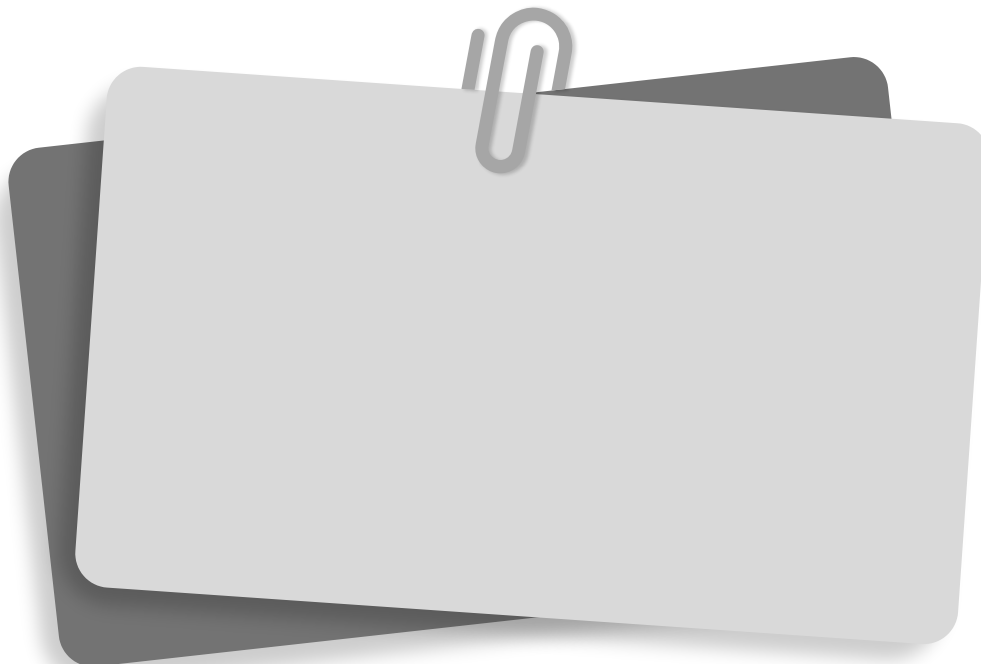
Education:

Watson Chapel School District
Watson Chapel Junior High School
3900 Camden Road, Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Last Grade Completed: 7th
Current Grade: 8th
Special Education: No
Status: Attending



Case Collateral Guidelines: Is the Person a Client OR a Collateral?

- Caregivers (in-home or out-of-home) must be entered as CLIENTS. The absent caregiver needs to be identified as a client for Child Support Enforcement purposes.
- A relative who is also a placement resource for the children/youth in care is entered as a client.
- Factors to consider for other people and/or kinship who are not placement resources:
 - o Will you have frequent case-related contact with this person?
 - o Will this person be part of the Family Case Plan?
 - o If the answers to the above questions are yes, consider adding this person as a collateral. If they are a collateral, they are in your contacts pick list, and you will not have to type their names repeatedly.
- Anyone notified via the CFS-323A or B should be keyed as a client (not in the household selected) within the case in order to key their response with the relative/fictive kin interest box within the court report section. Once they respond, you can end-date them if they do not want to participate in the case.
- Do **not** enter DCFS staff, OCC Attorneys, Attorney Ad Litem, or CASA volunteers as collaterals.
- The collateral screen lets you add collateral with just the name and relationship. You do not have to enter addresses and phone numbers that you prefer not to show in a report.



THE HEALTH NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN CARE

Referral for the Comprehensive Health Assessment

- Form used and how soon does the Health Service Specialist need it?

- What information does the Health Specialist need?

- How does the Health Service Specialist let me know that the assessment is complete?

- What forms or Division Information Management System screens need to be updated when the assessment is done, and who does it—me or the Health Service Specialist?

- When do they have to be completed?

- What is PACE, and how do we work together?

- Who completes/updates the CFS 6012 and the CFS 368, and when?

- After the Comprehensive Health Assessment – what then? (On-going follow-up of child/youth's medical, dental, educational, and psychological needs)

Tamela Boyers

1. What would you recommend for family time between Tamela and her parents? *Remember, in court, you must discuss family time between family members.*

a. Would you recommend supervised family time between Tamela and her mom? *Explain your reasons behind the recommendations.*

b. How would you address family time between Tamela and her father? *Explain your reasons behind your recommendations. In addition to legal requirements, what other facts in the case support your recommendation?*

c. What would you recommend with regard to family time between Tamela and her sister Angelina? *Explain your reasons behind your recommendations. Do you think family time between Tamela and Angelina needs to be supervised?*

2. If you are unsure of what to recommend, who are you going to ask about this?

FAMILY TIME PLANNING AND REFLECTION

Family Name: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Worker Name: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Date and Location of Upcoming Contacts: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Key Agreements:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Network Members Participating in Family Time:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

WORRY STATEMENT(S)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

GOAL STATEMENT(S)

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

FAMILY TIME PLANNING

When completing this exercise, keep in mind where each person’s rating is on the safety scale of 0–10. On this scale, 0 means the worry statement is happening all the time, and 10 means the goal statement is happening all the time. What are you looking for to happen next that would demonstrate movement toward the goal statement and away from the worry statement? In other words, what would take us one step closer to a 10?

In order to include everyone’s ideas, also consider: Who needs to be involved in the family time? (Network members? Other professionals?)

- 1. What could happen during family time that would move you up the safety scale by 1 (or leave you in the same place on the scale)?

CAREGIVER/CHILD/FAMILY/NETWORK IDEAS	DCFS/PROFESSIONAL IDEAS
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

- 2. What will adults do during family time to make sure the safety threat will not take place and that the children will be safe? How will adults respond if the children are frightened or need help? What steps will adults take if the unsafe behavior begins?

CAREGIVER/CHILD/FAMILY/NETWORK IDEAS	DCFS/PROFESSIONAL IDEAS
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

3. What are we worried about happening during family time that would demonstrate no movement away from the worry statement? (This would not move you up the safety scale and might move you down the safety scale, depending on severity.)

CAREGIVER/CHILD/FAMILY/NETWORK IDEAS	DCFS/PROFESSIONAL IDEAS
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

REFLECTING AFTER FAMILY TIME

On a scale of 0–10, how would each person involved rate this family time session?

Parent(s)

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Child(ren)

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Network

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

DCFS

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Why did you give it this rating? What would move you up by 1 for the next session? (Be behaviorally descriptive.)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Worker Name: _____ Case Name/ID: _____ Date: _____

WHAT ARE WE WORRIED ABOUT?	WHAT IS WORKING WELL?	WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN NEXT?

0 ← → 10

This three-column framework is based on the Signs of Safety Assessment and Planning Framework (Turnell and Edwards, 1999; Perth [Australia] Department of Child Protection, 2011); The Consultation and Information Sharing Framework (Lohrbach, 2000); and The Massachusetts Safety Mapping Framework (Chin, Decter, Madsen, and Vogel, 2010).

FAMILY TIME PLANNING
Part 1

Questions for consideration -- These questions are for the caregivers and children having family time together **or** the siblings having family time/contacting one another (Tamela Boyers and Angelina Franklin):

What is family time designed to do?

What do we want to see coming out of this time together?

Who will be involved in a family time session?

How often must it take place? How often would you recommend it take place?

What day and time will family time take place?

How long will family time last?

Where will family time take place?

Will family time be supervised?

At what point will family time increase or decrease, and for what reasons?

FAMILY TIME PLANNING
Part 2

When would you consider letting children/youth stay overnight?

How do you prepare caregivers for family time?

What do you do if the caregivers begin to miss scheduled family time?

What happens if the children/youth become excessively upset during family time?

What are some options for places for family time and/or other contact between Angelina and Tamela?

Write two statements to engage Tamela in planning for family time with her mother **or** write two questions to engage Tamela in what behaviors she would need to see from her mother and father in order to feel safe having family time with them.

Write two statements to engage Tamela in planning for family time with Angelina.

Write two statements to engage Shirley Owens in planning family time between Tamela and her family members.

**Family Time
Part 1**

The Importance of Family Time between Caregivers and Their Children in Placement

- Frequent family time between caregivers and their children can promote both placement stability and successful reunification. The absence of regular and frequent family time may have serious consequences for both the child and caregivers.
- Without family time, the caregiver/child relationship can deteriorate. Both caregiver and child may become emotionally detached. Once this has occurred, successful reunification is extremely difficult.
- Frequent contact can reduce the negative effect of separation for the children.
- Seeing the caregiver during family time reduces the child's fantasies and fears of "bad things" happening to the caregiver, and can often help older children eliminate self-blame for the placement.

The criteria for decisions regarding the location, frequency, and duration of family time, and whether family time should be supervised include the following:

- The location of the visit should be the least restrictive, most normal environment in the community that can assure the safety of the child.
- The agency is the least normal, most institutionalized setting where family time can occur. Family time should be held in the agency only if it is the only way to ensure the child's protection.
- Family time should take place, in order of preference: 1) in the home of the caregiver, 2) in the home of kin, 3) in the resource home, or 4) in a park or public location.
- Family time should be scheduled at least weekly, and more often if at all possible.
- Family time should be of adequate duration to maintain the caregiver/child relationship. In general, one to four hours is an appropriate time range.
- Overnight family time can be considered when it is assured that the child can be protected in the home. Theoretically, if the child is safe at home for lengthy family time contacts, including frequent overnight family time, he probably should be moved home with close follow-up supervision and in-home supportive services.

**Family Time
Part 2**

The Importance of Family Time between Caregivers and Their Children in Placement

Supervision of the family time may be warranted if:

- There is concern about physical or emotional abuse to the child during family time.
- The caregiver's behavior may be inappropriate or unpredictable.
- When family time is with the perpetrator in situations of physical or sexual abuse.
- When the caregiver verbally abuses the child, speaks critically of the agency or resource parent, or makes unrealistic and inappropriate promises to the child.
- When the child is afraid to be alone with the caregiver.
- If family time must be supervised, the caseworker, the resource parent, a non-abusive or non-neglectful family member, or a family friend can provide supervision. The supervising person should maintain a low profile and interfere only if needed. The caregiver should be allowed privacy with the child if the child's safety is assured.
- If the goal of family time is to help caregivers learn more appropriate parenting skills, the caseworker or resource parent can supervise the visit and become directly involved in family time activities.

If caregivers frequently fail to attend family time, make unrealistic promises, or exhibit other destructive behavior during family time, the following should be considered:

- A caregiver's failure to come to scheduled family time will be less disruptive to the child if family time can be conducted within the context of the child's normal daily activities, in the resource home, or another "natural" setting.
- Family time can be held in the home of kin; the child still experiences family time with family and friends even if the caregiver does not attend.
- The caseworker should stress the caregiver's responsibility to attend family time sessions, and should make transportation available when lack of transportation is a barrier.
- Regular conferences between the caregiver, the resource parent, the caseworker, the supervisor, and appropriate others can address the caregiver's failure to participate in family time.

**Family Time
Part 3**

The Importance of Family Time between Caregivers and Their Children in Placement

There are times when a child may become excessively upset either prior to or after family time with the caregiver.

- Normal feelings of loss and separation may be reactivated by seeing the caregiver and may be expressed in emotional distress or behavioral acting out.
- The child may be anxious and fearful when with the caregiver; their time together may be stressful.
- The child may experience loyalty conflicts after having family time with the caregiver and may need to reject the resource parent upon return to the resource home in order to continue to feel loyal to the caregiver.

The caseworker should fully assess the reasons for the child's distress and, if appropriate, revise the family time schedule accordingly.

- If the child becomes upset during family time due to feelings of separation and loss, the frequency of family time should be increased rather than decreased.
- If the child is anxious because he is not comfortable with the caregiver, increasing contact, perhaps with caseworker involvement to ease the discomfort, is useful.
- If loyalty conflicts contribute to the child's distress, the case worker can reassure her that it is O.K. to care for both her family and her resource family.
- If the child appears to be fearful and reluctant to have family time with the parent, the worker should encourage the child to talk about his fears, and reassure the child that the worker will insure his safety. Family time should be supervised and monitored.

Please Note: The material referenced in this handout was purchased by MidSOUTH from IHS (Source Separation and Placement in Child Protective Services/153) 1988 Institute for Human Services. May be reproduced solely for use in training sessions. It has been amended to add current language of Family Time, caregiver, and Resource Parent. This does not alter the substance.

Purchasing With IV-E Funds**Items that can be purchased with IV-E funds**

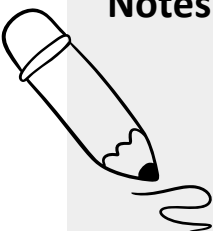
- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter
- Costs associated with supervision
- School Supplies
- Child's personal incidentals
- Liability insurance for child
- Reasonable travel expenses to the child's home for Family Time



DHS needs to ensure that all other conditions are fulfilled for children who would be income eligible for IV-E. There is a window of opportunity for establishing this eligibility.

Once a child's eligibility is established, they may or may not be eligible for IV-E maintenance payments, depending on a number of factors.

However, **if the initial window of opportunity is not realized, the child will be ineligible for IV-E payments for the entire stay in out-of-home care.** In addition, it may have an effect on whether the child will qualify for subsidized adoption.

Notes:

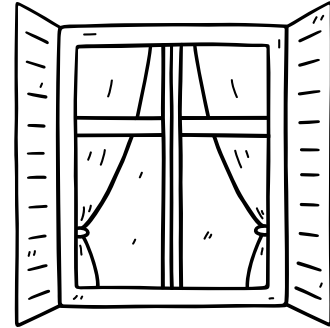
IV-E WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

The Department of Health and Human Services must ensure that all other conditions are fulfilled for children who would be **income-eligible for IV-E (deprivation)**.

There is a **window of opportunity** for establishing this eligibility.

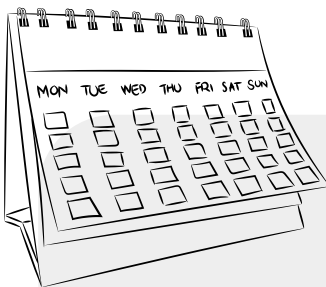
Once a child's income eligibility (deprivation) is established, they may or may not be eligible for IV-E maintenance payments, depending on several factors.

However, if the window of opportunity is not realized, the child will be ineligible for IV-E payments for the entire stay in out-of-home care.



In addition, it may affect whether the child will qualify for subsidized adoption if adoption is the eventual permanency option.

- The child must have been **removed** from their primary caregiver.
- The first order removing the child from parental custody must include **"Contrary to the Welfare"** language.
- The Court must rule on whether the agency made **reasonable efforts to prevent removal** (60 days).
- Deprivation (Eligibility Unit DCFS)



NOTES

Tamela Boyers – Questions for Further Assessment

Read over the information in Tamela's case scenario one more time. Here are a couple of areas that should spark your interest and suggest that further assessment is indicated.

Tamela is two years behind in school. Angelina left when Tamela was in the 6th grade. Tamela failed that year and had to repeat it. While she passed 6th grade the following year (when she was 12), she failed the 7th grade because of excessive absences. She is currently in the 8th grade. Mostly, she is shy and quiet.

However, there was an incident where a classmate called her "a freak" and a "moron." This escalated into a loud shouting match in the hall, with both girls threatening to hurt the other. Due to the difference in age between her and her classmates, Tamela has few friends at school. She makes mostly Cs and the occasional D. She has one area where she excels: art class. She has an extensive portfolio. She passed the 8th grade but, again, had many absences.

- What are some of the things you might do or people you might contact to assess Tamela's educational needs?
- Have you formed any opinions about Tamela's intellectual functioning just from reading the scenario? If so, what are they?

Physically, Tamela is a very thin teenager. She frequently complains of stomach pains, especially when facing stressful events. She began her menstrual cycle at the age of 14.5. She has not had a medical evaluation of her reported pain. Her mother thinks it is only an attempt to gain attention.

- How important is it to have Tamela see a doctor about this pain?
- How will you ensure that the Health Specialist knows about this so that it can be addressed in the Comprehensive Health Assessment?
- Have you formed any opinions about Tamela's physical health just from reading the scenario? If so, what are they?

CLUSTERING CANS SCORES UNDER THE UMBRELLA

NOTES AND AH-HA_s



[illegible]

Components of a S.M.A.R.T Family Case Plan

A Family Case Plan begins with a family-centered assessment using the FAST/CANS instrument. This involves:

- Creating a partnership with the family and their support network to develop a plan.
- Discovering and incorporating the family's objectives toward the goals of safety for the children and empowerment of the family's strengths.
- Identifying:
 - **Goals:** A broad statement of the general direction or desired result of work with clients. Goals should be achievable. The federal permanency goals in Arkansas are already set in the Division Information Management System Pick list. (Pick-list CHRIS)
 - **History Needs:** These describe a lack of some critical knowledge, skill, or resource (identified by 2 or 3 in CANS/FAST). At least one must address the reason the case is opened. The needs you address in the family case plan should be those that cause (or caused) concerns for the child or youth's safety.

To address these identified needs/strengths or objectives, the worker will write a behavioral objective(s) that specifies what a person in the case will be doing differently and/or better to ensure child safety and how it will be measured. These are concrete, measurable, and observable behaviors designed to reach a goal. Each objective then has a set of activities that explain who will be doing what.

S Specific (clear and concrete to all parties)
M Measurable (reflects a change in behavior)
A Attainable (small doable steps)
R Realistic (Is this realistic for the client?)
T Time-Limited (include dates in the plan)



The objective should describe what the client will do differently when change occurs. The criteria should identify a positive (+) behavior rather than a negative behavior. The objectives should address how child/youth safety will be ensured.

Tasks: Necessary activities to achieve a stated objective. Tasks define the steps and the order of the steps needed to reach an objective.

- Establishes who is responsible for each step*
- Defines when the activity is to take place
- Establishes where the activity will take place

**Tasks should be divided equally between DCFS, family members, and the family's support network.*

Harm & Worry Statements

Currently, FSWs must search the investigation contacts and the free-standing Data Collection System (DCS) to find the harm and worry statements that need to be in the family case plan that is completed in the Division Information Management System.

Based on the situation that resulted in Tamela entering out-of-home care, the harm and worry statements are as follows:

Reasons for Agency Involvement:



Ernest Boyers

HISTORY: Harm and/or Worry Statements: DCFS and Tamela are worried that Mr. Boyers will violate the no-contact order and make contact with Tamela. (**Note:** Details of the maltreatment and the harm statement (s) would be captured in the Reason for Agency Involvement field.)



Esther Boyers

HISTORY: Harm and/or Worry Statement: DCFS and Tamela are worried that if Mrs. Boyers continues not to believe that her husband molested Tamela, she will not be able to protect Tamela from being molested again.

Worry Statement: DCFS is worried that if the inter-partner violence between Mr. and Mrs. Boyers continues, it could cause Tamela to suffer from anxiety and depression.



Tamela Boyers

HISTORY: Harm and /or Worry Statements: DCFS and Tamela are worried about Tamela being sexually abused by her father, Ernest, if she remains in her parents' care. DCFS and Tamela are also worried that Mrs. Boyers is unable to provide a safe living environment for Tamela because she doesn't believe Tamela's allegations of sexual abuse towards Mr. Boyers. Tamela also revealed a history of domestic violence between her parents.

IF THE PRIMARY GOAL CANNOT BE ACHIEVED:

Harm and/or Worry Statements: Tamela, Esther, and Shirley are worried that if Tamela cannot return to Esther's home, she will grow up in foster care without a permanent family.

Family Case Plan Worksheet

Identified Client:

CANS/FAST Identified Need or Strength:

Objective:

History:

In order to address this identified Need/Strength:

Service

Responsibility

Due Date -
Time Frame

Status

Status Date

Services Pick List

Services: This is a pick list of services. If there is a service that you need and it is not in the list, the suggestion is to set it out in the text section above as part of the objective or task.

Acute CRT	Day Care Services	ILP (After Care Services)
Acute Psychiatric Hospital	Day Treatment	ILP (Residential)
Adoption (Photo Listing)	DDS Services	ILP Sponsor
Adoption (Post-Legal Subsidy)	DDS Services – ICF-MR	Incarceration
Adoption (Web Site)	DDS Specialized Community	Independent Living Assessment
Adoption Assessment Update	DDA Supportive Living	Independent Living Skills
Adoption Disclosure	Dentist	Independent Living Subsidies
Adoption Exchange	Diag. and Eval.	Independent Living-Education &
Adoption Home Studies	Domestic Violence Education	In-home Nursing LPN
Adoption Legal Packet	Drivers License	In-Home Nursing RN
Adoption Preparation	Drug Assessments	Interdisciplinary Meeting
Adoption Recruitment (Child Specific)	Drug Screening	Intensive Family Services
Adoption Registration	DYS After Care	Interpreter Services
Adoption Selection	Education Funding	Legal Services
Adoption Services	Education Services (Non-Residential)	Life Skills Training
Adoption Subsidy	Education Services (Residential)	Literacy
Adoption Subsidy Packet	Educational Advocacy	Maternity Services (Non-Maternity Services (Residential)
Adoption Summary	Educational Assessment	Mediation Services
Adoption Summary Update	Emergency Shelter for Children	Medical Services
Adoptive Home	Employment Services	Mental Health Crisis Response
Advocacy	EPSDT	Mental Health Services
Alcohol testing	Extracurricular Activity	Mentoring Services
Alcohol Treatment (Inpatient)	Family Planning	Nurturing the Families of
Alcohol Treatment (Outpatient)	FFSS (Foster Family Support	Nutrition Services
Alternative School	Fictive Kin Foster Family Home	OB/GYN
Anger Management	Food Assistance	Occupational Therapy
Behavior Management	Foster Family Home	Ophthalmologist
Bus Pass	Gas Card	Optometrist
Cash Assistant	General Practitioner	Parent Aids
Child Care Services	Hair Follicle Testing	Parent/Child Interaction Therapy
Clothing Assistance	Health Department Services	Parenting Education (Group)
Comprehensive Health	Home Studies	Parenting Education (In-Home)
Comprehensive Residential	Homemaker Services	Parenting Skills
Counseling (Family)	Hospital (Inpatient)	Paternity/DNA Testing
Counseling (Group)	Hospital (Outpatient)	Physical Exam
Counseling (Individual)	Housing	Physical Therapy
Counseling (In-Home)	Human Development Center	Podiatrist
Crisis Intervention	Human Services Worker - ICPC	Pre-Adoptive Home

Services Pick List

Services: This is a pick list of services. If there is a service that you need and it is not in the list, the suggestion is to set it out in the text section above as part of the objective or task.

Private Agency Foster Family	Supervised Visitation
Provisional (Fictive Kin)	Support Groups
Provisional(Relative)	Temporary Family Placement
Psychiatrist	Therapeutic Day Care
Psychological Evaluations	Therapeutic Foster Care
Psychologist	Therapy (Family)
Public Guardianship	Therapy (Group)
Recreational Programs	Therapy (Individual)
Recreational Therapy	Transportation
Reintegration	Tutoring
Relative Foster Family Home	Visitation
Relative Guardianship	Vocational Skills
Residential Care Only	Vocational/Technical
Residential Treatment Care	(Residential)
Respite Care/Temporary Care	Youth Services/Serious Offender
Sex Offender Treatment	Program
(Inpatient)	
Sex Offender Treatment	
(Outpatient)	
Sexual Abuse Treatment	
Sexual Abuse Treatment	
Sexual Issues Treatment	
Sexual Offender Assessment	
Sexual Offender Victim Group	
Socialization Skills	
Special Medical Needs Care	
Speech Therapy	
SRPCRT	
SRP – Outpatient Therapy	
SRP – Residential Treatment	
SRP – Diag & Asmt	
SRP – Therapeutic Foster Care	
Sub-Acute CRT	
Sub-Acute Psychiatric Hospital	
Substance Abuse Counseling	
Substance Abuse Treatment	
Substance Abuse Treatment	
(Outpatient)	

Notes

MADE MY DAY

**TRANSITIONAL LIFE PLAN TEAM MEETING
GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING**

- **Work with the youth to identify invitees and assist the youth in sending out personal invitations.**
- **Send a Transitional Life Plan and Agreement copy with the CFS-590 Family Team Meeting notice.**
- **Send an explanatory letter or note along with the Invitation to the Family Team Meeting and a copy of the Transitional Life Plan, and include information relevant to the invitee.**
 - Share the general time frame with potential invitees.
 - Explain that this is a planning meeting and may take a while.
 - Inform the invitee that the planning meeting will be Youth-Centered.
 - Prepare the participants:
 - to introduce themselves,
 - to say something positive about the youth, and
 - to say something about how long they have known/worked with the youth.
- **Follow up with the invitees with letters, emails, and telephone calls.**
- **Plan for meeting details.**
 - Arrange for meeting space (consider someplace other than the DCFS office, if possible).
 - Plan for drinks and snacks.
 - Have enough paper and writing utensils for everyone present.
 - Provide name badges or name tents.
 - Use address labels for name badges.
 - Use card stock for name tents.
- **Address transportation needs and childcare arrangements.**
- **Identify who can take notes (this could be someone involved in the meeting or a co-worker).**
- **Prepare to facilitate the meeting.**
 - Thoroughly review the case file and make notes for your own use.
 - Review meeting facilitation pointers if needed.
 - Set up a pre-meeting conference with a supervisor.
 - Identify desired outcomes.
 - Brainstorm strategies to address potential barriers within the meeting, e.g., “negative” people and known conflicts among participants.
 - Set up a pre-meeting conference with Transitional Services Coordinator.
 - Set up a room so that invitees can see one another (consider youth at the head of the table).

**TRANSITIONAL LIFE PLAN TEAM MEETING
GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING**

- **Prepare materials.**
 - Agenda, plus copies of any important materials/documents.
 - Sign-in sheet (important if many people are invited and if people will be coming and going).
 - Ground rules or Guidelines (either posted or copies).
- **Prepare the youth.**
 - Work with the youth to understand the process and structure of the meeting.
 - Give them a Transitional Life Plan and Agreement to draft what they would like to address.
 - Encourage youth to prioritize areas and items to be discussed.
 - Work with them to identify strategies to tackle “difficult” or “sticky” areas.
 - Determine how much the youth understands about permanence.
 - Be prepared to discuss permanence (broadly defined).
 - Concentrate on connections and belongingness.
 - Remember to continually address permanence at naturally occurring opportunities – don’t relegate discussion of permanence to a “staffing” or formal Family Team Meeting situation.

**TRANSITIONAL LIFE PLAN TEAM MEETING
GUIDELINES FOR STRUCTURING**

- **Welcome (Set the tone) and Introduction**
 - Thank everyone for coming
 - Clear statement of the purpose of the meeting
 - Youth-centered approach
 - Positive statement about youth
 - Request youth to identify people in the room, and then each person can introduce themselves (have name tents)
 - Each person should be ready to make a positive statement regarding the youth
 - Orientation to the meeting location, if needed
 - Review the process (or flow) of the meeting
 - Guidelines for the discussion
- **Information Gathering and Sharing**
 - Brainstorming begins
 - Maintain focus on the present and near future(1-3-6 months)
 - Maintain a positive tone of the meeting
 - Ensure that topics are discussed thoroughly
- **Documenting the Plan**
 - Capture the information from the brainstorming into the categories of the Transitional Life Plan and Agreement
 - Notes on topics that need to be addressed further in future meetings
 - Maintain focus on the present and near future (1-3-6) months
 - Remember that the plan is subject to change
 - Agree on tasks and timeframes
- **Closing the Meeting**
 - Review the specifics of the plan (Who, What, When, Where, How)
 - Discuss follow-up details(who will check in with whom about progress)
 - Meeting planner and/or Life Plan with own tasks
 - Distribution of the plan
 - Collect feedback from those present about the meeting
 - Thank everyone for coming
- **Monitoring and Follow-up**
 - Set up mechanism and time table to check in with team members to follow-up
 - Immediately document team meeting results

Adapted from Handbook for Family Team Conferencing Prepared by: The Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group, Montgomery, AL, 2001

Tips for Writing Effective Court Reports

- Write using easily understood language and a readable format.
- Be organized- Provide an organized report.
- Focus on specific facts of the case – including a brief history of the facts leading to the child’s removal.
- Discuss the family’s involvement, progress, and compliance, including information about family time.
- Document the things the family has accomplished and any areas where there have been problems.
- Provide the court with a permanency plan for the child – you do not want the court to provide you with one.
- Focus on safety, permanency, and the child’s best interests.
- Make clear and concise recommendations to the court.
- The report as a whole should support the chosen permanency plan.
- Consult with your attorneys to write a report that matches a proposed court order.
- Provide the court with the proposed order that you want.
- Use spell check.
- Remember that the document needs to address the ”R’s and P’s.”
 - **Reasonable Efforts to Prevent Removal,**
 - **Reasonable Efforts to Reunite, and**
 - **Reasonable Efforts to Achieve Permanency.**



A Poorly Written Court Report

Child Welfare Background and Reason for Intervention: This is a sexual abuse case. The dad molested his daughter, so she is not safe in the home.

Child(ren) Situation (physical, emotional, educational, psychosocial, including current health, safety needs, and current placement, including Independent Living if appropriate): Tamela has done well in out-of-home care. She has no mental health concerns. She is placed with her maternal grandmother and sees her mother a few times a week. She doesn't have any ongoing health problems. During the routine eye exam, they determined a need for glasses.

Child(ren) Adjustment in Each Placement and Progress in each school during Review Period: This section is not applicable, she was only in school a month after removal. She stayed in the same school. One class during summer school no reports received.

Parental Current Living Situation (financial, physical, and mental/emotional): The parents are still at the same place, at their home in Pine Bluff. Esther is unemployed and Ernest still works at the same place.

Parent's Progress on Adjudication Order/Court Order/Treatment Plan/Efforts to Correct Conditions: The parents have not complied with court-ordered services.

Family Time (Between Child (ren) and Parents, Relatives, Siblings, etc. and Results): No family time with Ernest. Ms. Boyers has family time with Tamela a few times per week, the visits are ok. Tamela and Angelina have regular visits at their grandmother's house.

Permanency Plan (include Independent Living information if appropriate): DCFS is recommending Tamela remain in out-of-home care.

Additional Information (location of siblings, services offered, etc.): Angelina lives with her dad and stepmother. Counseling services are going to be offered to her.

Questions to Consider

- How significant are the changes Ms. Boyers has made?
- How significant are the changes Mr. Boyers has made?
 - What areas still need work?
- How likely is it that DCFS will be able to recommend to the court at the review hearing that Tamela be sent home to her mother and/or father?
 - Does the Division have to wait for the Permanency Hearing to recommend returning to the caregiver?
- If reunification is recommended, how will you prepare Tamela to return with her mother?
 - How will you prepare Ms. Boyers?
- What will you do to prepare the grandmother for separation?
- What can Shirley Owens do to prepare Tamela for reunification?
- Once Tamela returns home, should you keep a protective service case open?
 - How will you know when it can be closed?
- If the recommendation is for Tamela to remain in care, how will you prepare her?
 - How will you prepare Ms. Boyers?
- If Tamela remains in care, when will you start the process of terminating the caregivers' parental rights?

**Let's Pretend:
Scene One****Several Months Later**

It is July 2017. Tamela has been in the same provisional placement with her grandmother since April 2017. She has developed a strong bond and attachment to her grandmother.

Tamela's school performance is improving, specifically in Math and English. In June, she participated in an art contest at the local library. Currently, she is attending summer school at Waston Chapel Junior High School.

Her Comprehensive Health Assessment (CHA) was completed, and the psychological evaluation found no underlying mental health issues. It confirmed that Tamela functions within her age range.

Ms. Boyers' counseling attendance has been sporadic. Mr. Boyer refuses to attend counseling as he maintains his innocence. After two months, the counselor recommended family counseling. Ms. Boyers and Tamela attended weekly for three weeks. Ms. Boyer didn't feel they were accomplishing anything, so she stopped attending.

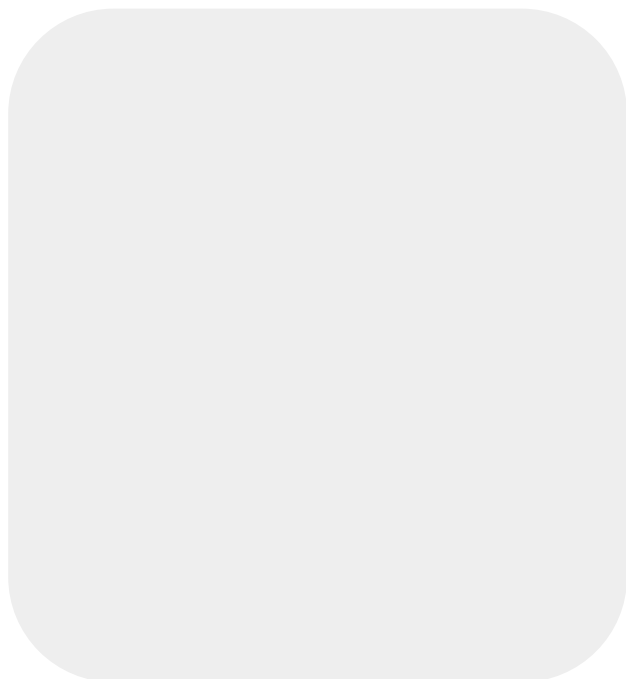
The counselor recommended marital counseling to address the domestic violence between Mr. and Ms. Boyers. They both refused.

Ms. Boyers still has family time with Tamela three times a week at Shirley's house. Their relationship is cordial but strained because Tamela feels her mother does not trust and believe her. Ms. Boyers appears happy with the supervised family time. She does not desire to have unsupervised or extended family time with Tamela.

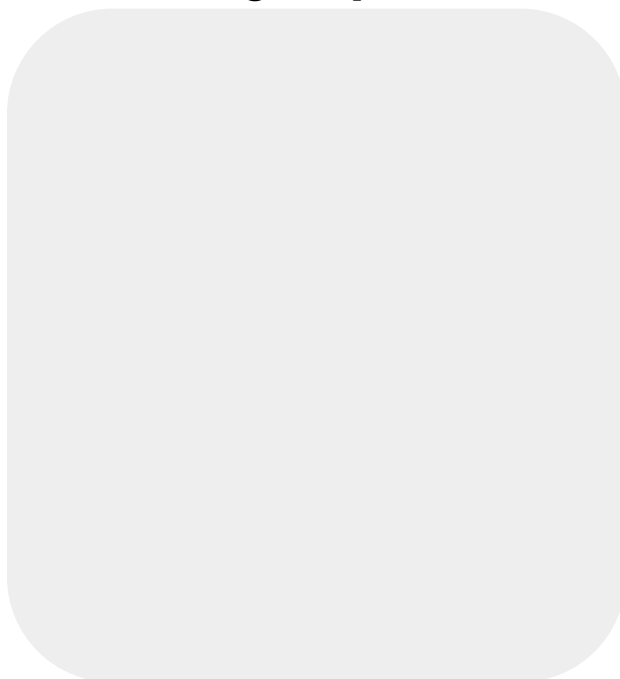
The grandmother, Shirley Owens, completed the requirements to become a kinship home. Ms. Owens is committed to Tamela and willing to keep her as long as needed. She wants what is best for Tamela.

Ms. Owens schedules family time and vacations, so Tamela and Angelina can spend time together. The girls have a special bond and really enjoy being together.

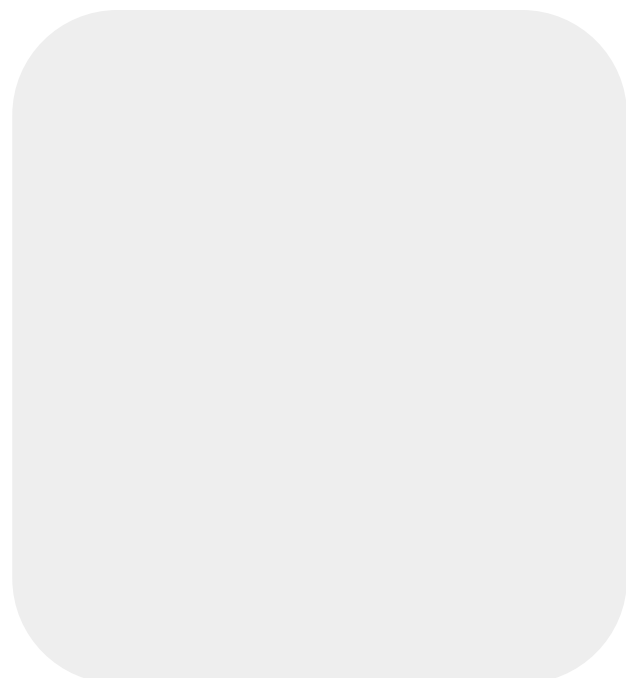
Ah-Ha!



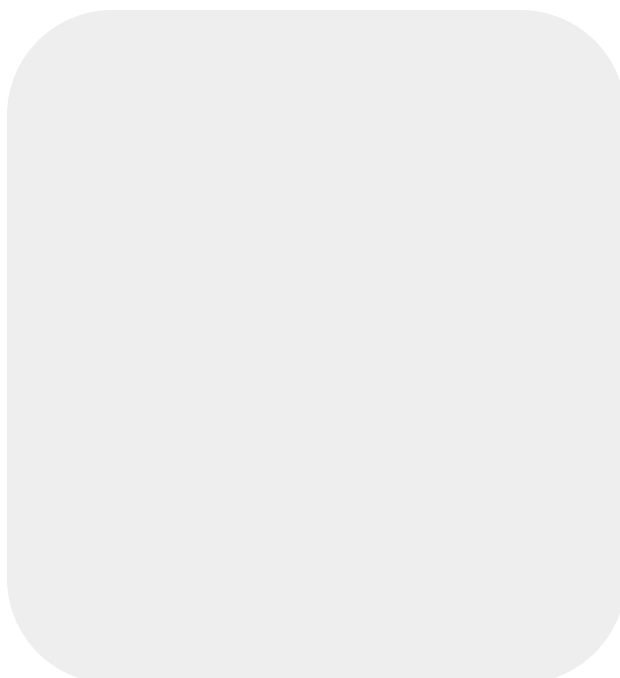
I might try that ...



That sounds challenging ...



That won't work in our court ...



TIPS FOR TESTIFYING IN COURT

- Preparation is essential to good testimony.
- Review your record.
- You may take handwritten or typed notes to the stand to help you remember dates, times, and details.
- Respond to the witness oath or affirmation clearly and affirmatively.
- Listen carefully to each question. Do not make assumptions. If you do not understand a question, ask for clarification.
- Wait until the entire question is presented before answering.
- Answer aloud. It is difficult to write down a nod or other gesture.
- Answer directly and clearly, at a normal rate of speed, so that everyone can hear and understand your words. Try to avoid work-related jargon or slang.
- When asked a question, pause, think about the question, and think about your answer before you start talking. Limit answers to the question asked.
- Keep answers short and to the point.
- Answer in factual terms and keep opinion statements to a minimum.
- Be specific and descriptive.
 - Describe the observations that caused you to conclude that the house was not only “dirty” but also “unsanitary.”
 - Identify safety threats and complicating factors that resulted in court action and specifically identify any goals or steps in the Family Case Plan that the caregivers have failed to complete.
- If your testimony is interrupted for any reason, stop talking. This is especially true when it is interrupted by a question from the judge or an objection.
- Avoid phrases such as “I think,” “I believe,” or “I am not sure, but”. They make you appear unsure of your testimony.
- Tell the truth. If you do not know the answer to a question, say so!
- If during your testimony something causes you to remember the answer to a question whose answer you could not recall before, then say so.
 - If you inadvertently answer a question incorrectly, clear it up right away.

Rules for Direct Examination & Cross Examination

RULES FOR DIRECT EXAMINATION



- **When the OCC attorney is questioning you, freely give details on the subject you are being questioned about.**
 - Do not make the attorney drag the details out of you.
- **Stay on the subject asked;** do not jump to other issues.
 - Let the attorney ask you about those.
- **Avoid hearsay answers.** If you doubt whether your answer will be hearsay, ask your attorneys before the hearing.
 - If you cannot do that, don't repeat what someone told you unless asked.
- **If the other attorney says "Objection" while you are testifying, STOP.**
 - Wait until the court rules on whether the objection is overruled (in which case you'll answer the question) or sustained (in which case you won't answer the question).

RULES FOR CROSS-EXAMINATION

- **Listen to the questions.** You cannot answer a question if you are unsure what was asked.
- **Be sure you understand the question before you answer.**
 - If you do not understand the question, tell the court or ask for it to be rephrased.
 - Keep asking until you understand the question.
- **If possible, answer the question with just a "yes" or "no" answer.**
 - Do not nod your head for "yes" or "no."
- **Do not explain.** Also, do not elaborate. If your answers need to be explained, the OCC attorney will ask you to do so when they question you again.
- **Take your time.** You are not required to answer as quickly as the question is asked.
- **Keep your cool.** You are a professional; act appropriately. If you lose your cool, you may say something or act in a way that hurts the case.
- **If the OCC attorney says "Objection" while you are testifying, STOP.**
 - Do not answer the question until the court rules on whether the objection is overruled (in which case you'll answer the question) or sustained (in which case you won't answer the question).

COURTROOM TIPS

- Always be on time for court
- Stand whenever the judge enters the courtroom and remain standing until the judge says you may be seated.
- Always address the court as “Your Honor.”
- While in the courtroom, sit quietly when the court is in session.
 - Do not chat or whisper with friends, clients, or other caseworkers.
- Once a hearing or trial starts, keep all movement to a minimum.
- Always pay careful attention to courtroom proceedings.
 - Do not look bored or uninterested.
- Avoid reading books and newspapers in the courtroom.
- No weapons, food, drink, or gum chewing in the court building.
- Turn your cell phones off.
- Avoid facial expressions, noises, or outbursts distracting or disrespectful to other court participants.
- Do not do anything that would affect your credibility as a witness.
- Present a professional image.
- Follow your agency’s dress code.

Notes:

WRITING AND PROOFREADING TIPS

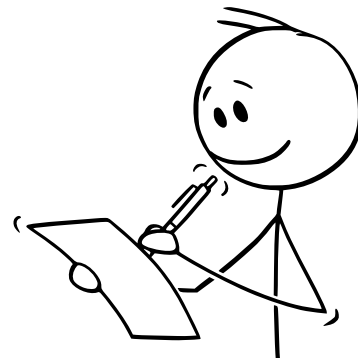
Writing Tips

- **Support your choices.** Be sure you have enough detailed information to support the pick lists you have chosen or conclusions you have made in other documents such as court reports or affidavits.
 - For example, rather than just saying the house was dirty, describe precisely what you saw that led you to that conclusion.
- **Draw a picture with words.** Use as many concrete details as possible to put your reader at the scene with you.
 - “Show, don’t tell.”
 - Let the facts or details do all the talking – not your opinion.
- **Put yourself in their shoes.** Look for anything that might be confusing for them and clarify your writing if necessary.

Proofreading Tips

- **Read out loud.**
 - Take the time to read what you’ve written out loud. This will help you catch mistakes you might otherwise miss.
- **If a spell-check software or application is available, use it.**

Notes:



Notes

[illegible]

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