

Maintaining the Child's Connections

Preservice

Learner Guide

October 2022 Version 1.0



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Learning Objectives

- Summarize the **importance of relationships** to children in care
- Identify the **C.A.R.E. guide** as Ohio's recommended best practice in co-parenting and reunification efforts
- Discuss how to **support relationships** with other important people, including siblings

The Importance of Relationships

Relationships support development and lead to **better outcomes** for children in care.

By Ohio rule, it is the **child's right** to have relationships with caring adults, and you have the **responsibility to support** these relationships.

Just like the plant needed its roots to survive, a child needs to **keep connection with their roots** to be healthy.



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Notes:

Connections with Parents

Benefits of maintaining the connection with the primary parents while the child is in your temporary care:

- Prevents a child from **feeling they must pick** between their parents and you
- Reduces the trauma of placement
- Allows the child to see firsthand the efforts the parents are making

How can maintaining connections with primary parents be helpful to the youth during their **transition out of care**?



Open Adoption Defined:



The **Ohio C.A.R.E. guide** (Co-Parenting and Reunification Efforts) will assist you in **partnering with the family**.

There are three phases of the guide:

1. **Pre-CARE** assesses your comfort level with partnering with the primary family

What is your **current comfort level**?

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Notes:

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2. **CARE** phase includes initial and ongoing contact with the primary parents.

Comfort Connection:

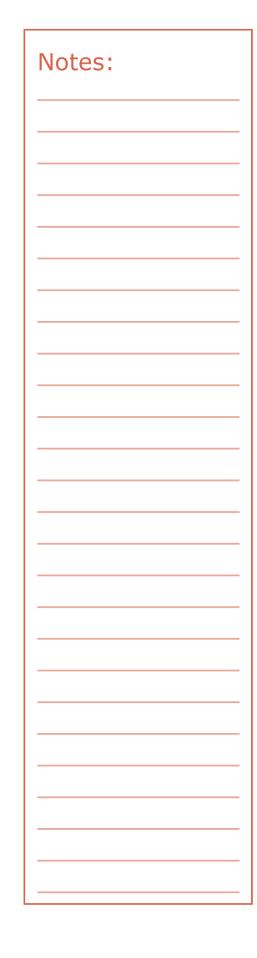
What worries might the primary parents have about their child at this time? What information could you provide to help ease their worries?

All About Me:

What might you want to ask the primary parents about the child to help you better provide care?

Visitations:

How might you support children as they process complex feelings related to visits?



Other ways to keep the child and primary family connected:

3. **Post-CARE** includes being an ongoing source of support and information to the primary family.

Connections with Siblings and Other Important People

Important: Let the child in your home identify who the important people in their life are and how they want to maintain contact.

It can be **healing** for a child to be with a sibling who has a shared experience. Consider taking a sibling group.

What are ways to **keep siblings connected** if they cannot be placed together?

Reflection: How will you commit to keeping siblings connected? What impact might this have on your family when there are multiple siblings placed in different homes?



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Notes:

Keeping **important adults in the child's life** are essential to the child's growth and ability to thrive.

Supportive peers can help children feel a sense of belonging, learn social norms, and improve well-being.

What are ways to keep children connected to important adults and peers?



Reflection: What is your willingness to keep a child connected to the activities and people important to them?

Application

Write down the 2-3 activities or ideas you think are the most creative ways to maintain relationships.

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Notes:

Resources

Tips for Helping Children and Teens before and After Visits <u>https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-</u> <u>dynamics/adoption-and-foster-care/Pages/Tips-for-Helping-Children-and-</u> <u>Teens-Before-and-After-Visitation.aspx</u>

Partnering with Birth Parents to Benefit Children

http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/resourceparentspartneringwithbirthparents.pd f

Foster Parent Guide for Maintaining Connections Ohio C.A.R.E Resource Tool