



How can we have a good meeting?

- Arrive on time.
- Focus on the child's needs and how you can work together to meet them.
- Respect the feelings, opinions, cultural differences, and ideas of others.
- Recognize the important role that each person has in the life of the child.
- Keep what is said in the meeting private.



ICEBREAKER MEETING

*The First Meeting Between Birth
Parents and Foster Parents*



What is an icebreaker meeting?

An icebreaker meeting provides an opportunity for birth parents or other relative caregivers to meet each other and talk about the needs of the child. The birth parents and foster parents are able to share information about themselves and their family routines and traditions.

Icebreaker meetings are most effective when they occur early in a child's placement, preferably within the first week. The child's social worker facilitates the meeting, which lasts about 30-40 minutes. It is usually held at the social worker's office.



Why is an icebreaker meeting helpful?

When birth parents and foster parents have contact with each other, the child will:

- Adjust more easily in the foster family
- Better maintain the bond with his or her birth parents
- Do better in school.

Contact with foster parents helps birth parents feel better about their child's safety and well being and allows them the opportunity to share important background information about their child with the foster family.

What is my role?

Birth Parents

- Share information about your child with the foster parents including bedtime or daily routines, favorite toys and foods, hobbies, likes and dislikes, important medical information, etc.
- Bring important personal items for your child, such as pictures, favorite toys, clothes, and other special things.

Foster Parents

- Ask for specific information about the child from the birth parents such as routines, favorite things, and medical needs.
- Ask questions about cultural traditions and other information that will help you care for the child.
- Talk about why you are a foster parent and your desire to help reunite the birth family.

Social Worker

- Facilitate the meeting.
- Make sure the participants understand why the meeting is being held and prepare them for what will be discussed.
- Keep the discussion focused on the child's needs.
- Ensure that the participants feel safe and comfortable.

Please contact your child's social worker if you have questions.

