IT MATTERS: Collaborating and Partnering with Foster Families for Future Success

October 3, 2019

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Statistics & Research:

Let’s Reflect...

Notes:
The Five “R’s”:

1. **Relationships**: Needed to make children feel safe and secure, meet their physical and social emotional needs, allowing them to explore their environments with confidence and the support of caring adults.

2. **Responsive Interactions**: The “how” of interacting with very young children, by reading the child’s verbal and nonverbal cues to understand the child’s experience and intent. Back and forth (serve and return) exchanges between a child and caregiver.

3. **Respect**: Treating even the youngest infants as valuable individuals whose efforts to communicate preferences and needs are important. Makes children feel valued, safe and secure, allowing them to focus their attention on exploration and learning.

4. **Routines**: Predictable sequences of events that happen every day in the same way. Helps build brain connections that support memory and organizational skills.

5. **Repetition**: The more an experience is repeated, the stronger the brain connection related to that experience. Supports development of cognition, language, physical skills and social-emotional abilities.

Notes:

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

**Impact of Stress on Social-Emotional Development:**

When I am stressed, those around me are impacted by (participants to fill in own experiences)
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

When children experience stress, they are more likely to (participants can add their own specific examples)
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________.
Strategies to Support Foster Families.

1. Use intentional reflection.
2. Create a safe atmosphere.
3. Establish rapport while supporting parent-child relationship.
4. Increase meaningful interactions within everyday routines and activities.
5. Look at the big picture. Teaming matters.
6. Educate caregiver on upcoming milestones and appropriate child development.
7. Make the caregiver feel special.
8. Provide opportunities to observe, ask questions, and listen.

Notes:
Theory of Change

- Stronger relationships between the foster parents and child
- Create a positive impact for each foster family’s uniqueness
- Decreasing foster parent’s stress and traumatic experiences for the child
- Reduce behavioral challenges, and
- Improve verbal and non-verbal communication between the child and the foster parent

Foster parents....

- Learn to develop experiences that are family-centered
- Improve happiness and safeness when relating to the child
- Emerge in reflection about their experiences with young children
- Develop stronger empathy towards the young child
- Learn to listen with love and respect to each child’s individuality
- Use kindness as a model to foster relationships