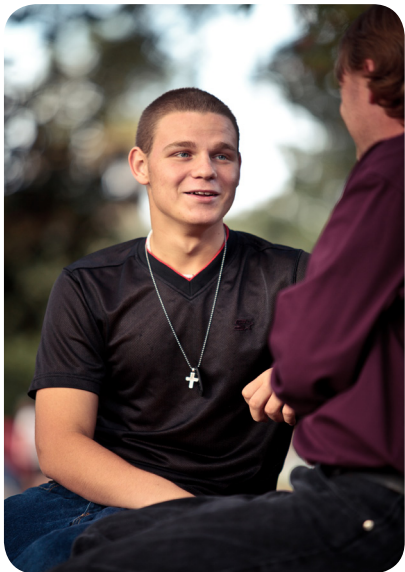


HOW CAN WE HAVE A GOOD MEETING?

- 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.



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PARTNERSHIP FOR
**STRONG
FAMILIES**

ICEBREAKER MEETING



THE FIRST MEETING BETWEEN
BIRTH PARENTS
AND PARTNER FAMILIES

WHAT IS AN ICEBREAKER MEETING?

- The purpose of the meeting is to share information that is necessary and helpful for the child to make a smooth transition into the new placement.
- An icebreaker meeting provides an opportunity for birth parents and Partner Families to meet each other and talk about the needs of the child. The birth parents and Partner Families 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 Family Care Counselor facilitates the meeting, which lasts about 30-40 minutes.



WHAT IS MY ROLE?

BIRTH PARENTS

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

PARTNER FAMILIES

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

FAMILY CARE COUNSELOR

- 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.

WHY IS AN ICEBREAKER MEETING HELPFUL?

- When birth parents and Partner Families have contact with each other, the child will:
 - Adjust more easily in the Partner Family's home.
 - Better maintain the bond with his or her birth parents.
 - Perform better in school.

Contact with Partner Families helps birth parents feel better about their child's safety and well-being and allows them the opportunity to share important information about their child with the Partner Family.

Please contact your child's Family Care Counselor if you have any questions.

Family Care Counselor

Office Phone

Cell Phone