

DAY
Eight

Day *Eight* At-a-Glance

| Section | Time | Materials | Activities |
|---|--------------------|--|---|
| Review, Ice Breaker and Introduction to Day 8 | 30 Minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT 8.1-8.3 • Participant Guide | |
| Supporting Your Family in Fostering | 45 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT 8.4-8.8 • Participant Guide • Handout: Foster VC Kids Resource Guide | |
| Panel | 1 hour, 15 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT 8.9 • PG | |
| Wrap-up/Final Questions | 30 Minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPT 8.10-.11 • Certificates of Completion Presented • Evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations • CFAI • Certificates of Completion |

About Day Eight

Overview

Day Eight of *21st Century Caregiving: Foster VC Kids Resource Family Training* will focus on supporting your family during foster care, a review of resources available to you, and a panel discussion. Today's class is the last class and will focus final considerations to make before becoming a Resource Family. During today's session you will be providing families with information to support them while they adjust to their new roles, as well as other resources available to them to assist with self-care and quality caregivers. We will end today's session with a panel that will include a birth parent, Resource Family, and youth. They will share their stories with participants to give a real life voice to what they've been learning, as well as help them understand what makes good partnership within the foster care system.

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Provide information to support families in transitioning to fostering family role.
- ✓ Understand compassion fatigue and self-care
- ✓ Understand Foster VC Kids resources to support families in the mission of high quality care giving
- ✓ Understand the various experiences and perspectives in the foster care system
- ✓ Identify skills that will make for a high quality Resource Family who partners with birth families to meet the needs of children in their care.
- ✓ Make the decision to move forward in submitting and application and becoming a Resource Family.

Trainer Preparation

In addition to the Trainer's Guide, Participants' Guides, Homework Notebook and PowerPoint Slides, Day Eight will require the trainer to locate and prepare the following supplemental materials:

Evaluation Form:

- See appendix for the evaluation form to be completed by the participant.

Attendance Form:

- Attendance Record

Handouts:

- Foster VC Kids Resource Guide found in Appendix
- CFAI

Resources

How Does Providing Foster Care Affect Children in Your Home?

<http://adoption.about.com/od/marriage/a/How-Does-Providing-Foster-Care-Affect-Children-In-Your-Home.htm>

This short article provides information the impact of fostering on children in the home.

Strong Foster Families Work to Keep Relationships Strong

<http://adoption.about.com/od/fosterparenttraining/a/Learn-How-To-Be-A-Strong-Foster-Family-In-Four-Weeks.htm>

This 4 week curriculum supports families in being strong foster families. Resource Families can sign up for weekly email training.

Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Curriculum Resource for Parents (2010)

<http://www.nctsnet.org/products/caring-for-children-who-have-experienced-trauma>

This training from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network is designed to help Resource Families understand the link between trauma and their children's often baffling behavior, feelings, and attitudes. It gives Resource Families practical tools to help their children move forward from their traumatic pasts, to recognize and reduce the impact of their children's traumas on themselves, and to seek useful support from others.

The Joyful Heart Foundation

<http://www.joyfulheartfoundation.org/learn/vicarious-trauma>

This organization provides information, resource and training on vicarious trauma.

Review, Ice Breaker and Introduction to Day Eight

Materials

PPT 8.1-8.3

Participant Guide



30 Minutes

Presentation –Review

- **Review** *Day Seven of training. Briefly cover the following:*
- ▶ Last week focused on education rights and responsibilities within the foster care system.
- ▶ We heard about the importance of school stability on children in foster care, as well as educational resources available to children and families.
- ▶ We also discussed the different transitions that take place within the foster care system. We learned about best practices related to supporting children during transitions.
- ▶ We learned managing the range of emotions during transitions, as well as grief and loss for all involved.
- ▶ We also discussed the significance of unplanned transitions, or disruptions, and the impact of those on children.

ASK

Based on what you learned this last week:

? What excites you most?

? What worries you most?

? Have you identified any new deal-breakers?

- **Review** *Day Seven Homework.*



PowerPoint Presentation – Day Eight Learning Objectives (SLIDES 8.1-8.3)



21st Century Foster Parenting :
Foster VC Kids Professional Foster Parent Training
Day 8

SLIDE 8.1

PowerPoint Title Slide: *21st Century Caregiving: Foster VC Kids Resource Family Training (Day 8)*

SLIDE 8.2

PowerPoint Slide: Day Eight Learning Objectives

Day Eight Learning Objectives

- Provide information to support families in transitioning to the fostering family role.
- Understand compassion fatigue and the importance of self-care.
- Understand Foster VC Kids resources to support you in in the mission of high-quality caregiving.
- Understand the various experiences and perspectives within the foster care system.
- Identify skills that will make for a high quality foster parent who partners with birth families.
- Make the decision to move forward in becoming a foster parent!

- ▶ The learning objectives for Day Eight of the *21st Century Caregiving: Foster VC Kids Resource Family Training* include the following:
 - ▶ Provide information to support families in transitioning to fostering family role.
 - ▶ Understand compassion fatigue and self-care
 - ▶ Understand Foster VC Kids resources to support families in the mission of high quality care giving
 - ▶ Understand the various experiences and prospective in the foster care system
 - ▶ Identify skills that will make for a high quality Resource Family who partners with birth families to meet the needs of children in their care.
 - ▶ Make the decision to move forward in submitting and application and becoming a Resource Family.



TRANSITION

- ▶ We are going to start today with an Ice Breaker activity.



Ice Breaker Activity – Our Own Transition



15 minutes

INTRODUCE the Activity

- *Post Slide 8.3 as you introduce this activity.*

During this activity, we are going to take a look at our journey in training and our transition to the role of Resource Families.

PURPOSE of Activity

- *Prepare for the day of training.*
- *Allow participants to reflect on their personal journey through Resource Family training.*
- *Allow participants to discuss their feelings about their transition to the role of Resource Families.*
- *To serve as a "parallel process" for transitioning children.*

DIRECTIONS for Activity

Say:

- ▶ Today is the last day of your training. Let me start by saying that I hope you are feeling more ready that you were 8 sessions ago to become a Resource Family. It is important to remember that, like most things, much of your learning will come from being a Resource Family, connecting with the Foster VC Kids teams, and seeking support from other Resource Families. We are going to spend just a little time reflecting on some of the changes you might have noticed about yourselves since starting the training

Ask:

- ? **Would anyone like to share information about the change they have experienced since the first day of class?**
- ? **What you have learned about others?**

? What you have learned about yourself?



- ❖ **Discuss** answers.
- ❖ **Using the flipchart**, ask the group to think of some of the **resources they have identified** that will help them through this transition.

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Each other.
- ❖ Trainer.
- ❖ My own family.
- ❖ The child.
- ❖ Biological Parents and family.
- ❖ The professional team
- ❖ Other Resource Families
- ❖ Medical professionals and counselors.

Ask:

? **What tools will you bring with you as you move into your next phase of your Resource Family journey?**

- **Discuss** answers.

Ask:

? **What losses do you feel today?**

? **What makes you happy today?**

Ask:

? **How can you use what I did in this activity with children?**

Sample Responses:

- ❖ You talked to us about the transition and shared your

feelings, stories and thoughts.

- ❖ You allowed us to share our feelings, stories and thoughts.
- ❖ You encouraged us to keep in touch and reminded us that you still care and are still a support even though this phase of our journey is over.
- ❖ You reminded us of the tools we have learned and the resources we have identified.



TRANSITION (Introduction to Today's Topic)

- ▶ Today's topics will help us answer some final questions you may have about becoming a resource parent.
- ▶ We will discuss managing the stress that fostering may present in your family, as well as resources available to you as a Resource Family. We will end by hearing a panel discussion about the fostering experience.



PowerPoint Presentation – (SLIDES 8.4-8.8) Supporting Your Family Through the Fostering Journey



45 Minutes

SLIDE 8.4

PowerPoint Slide: Supporting Your Family Through the Fostering Journey

- ▶ Just as bringing home a new baby causes the household to go through a process of adjustment, so does the fostering experience.

Ask:

? What do you think some of these adjustments might be?

Sample Responses

- ❖ Other children already in the home feeling jealous or

Supporting Your Family Through the Fostering Journey

Just as bringing home a new baby causes the household to go through a process of adjustment, so does the fostering experience.

Open communication about changes and the impact of those changes will be very important.

Attending networking groups and seeking support from fostering peers is a great way to talk through these adjustments.

Have a plan to maintain one-on-one time with any children in the home, as well as your partner/spouse/co-parent.

Remember what you have learned about trauma and try your best not to take things personally.

Remembering small successes and why you decided to become a fostering family will help during the tough times!



- resentful of a new child in the home.
 - ❖ Fear over the impact of foster children's trauma and behaviors on children.
 - ❖ Strain on the marriage due to new children in the home.
 - ❖ Development of a new routine.
 - ❖ Disagreement over discipline
 - ❖ Anxiety of family members related to lack of knowledge about fostering or working with birth families.
 - ❖ Extended family and friends not understanding why you have decided to foster.
 - ❖ Difficulties related to learning to partner and work with the team.
 - ❖ Experience is different than I had imagined.
- ▶ Open communication about changes and how those changes are impacting all member of the family will be critical. It will be important that everyone feels committed to fostering even if there is fear, anxiety or confusion about the process.
 - ▶ Attending networking groups and seeking support from other Resource Families can offer you guidance on whether the stress is typical to the adjustment process or if your family is truly struggling with the fostering experience.
 - ▶ Remember what you have learned about trauma and how it impacts children's abilities to relate and be part of your family. Taking things personally will surely burn you out!
 - ▶ You will likely want to consider how you will continue to provide individual attention to children in the home when fostering, as well as spending time maintaining your marriage and/or other important relationships. We will talk about some resources available to help you do this.
 - ▶ It will be critical to remember small successes a Resource Family, as well as regular reminders as to why you felt called to this in the first place.
 - ▶ Staying grounded in the bigger mission and reasons you want to help can help you through the tough times.



SLIDE 8.5

PowerPoint Slide: Compassion Fatigue

- ❖ Now that you are almost a licensed Resource Family, it is important that you remember that caring for yourself will be one of your keys to success.
- ❖ Just as flight attendants remind parents to put their oxygen masks on before securing the masks of the children they are traveling with, we want to remind you to secure your oxygen mask on a daily basis!
- ❖ Empathy is what will make you a high quality Resource Family who can understand and connect with children who have experienced trauma; it is also something that opens us up to the pain of others, which can be emotionally draining.
- ❖ Being exposed to symptoms of traumatize children can impact you as a Resource Family.
- ❖ With a consistent plan of self care, the impact of this can be minimized. A lack of consistent self-care, however, can lead to compassion fatigue or secondary traumatic stress that may require you to seek additional support.

Ask:

? What do you think compassion fatigue means?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Burn out
- ❖ Secondary Traumatic Stress
- ❖ Exhaustion from helping other
- ▶ **Compassion fatigue** is when the stress of parenting affects your own mental and physical health, and impairs our ability to parent effectively.
- ▶ Warning Signs may include:
 - ✓ Mental and physical exhaustion.
 - ✓ Using alcohol, food, or other substances to combat stress and comfort yourself

- ✓ Disturbed sleep
 - ✓ Feeling numb and distanced from life.
 - ✓ Feeling less satisfied by word
 - ✓ Moodiness, Irritability
 - ✓ Physical complaints- headaches, stomachaches
- ▶ A more severe form of this is called **Secondary Traumatic Stress** and it is when your own symptoms mimic those of someone that has been through a traumatic event
- ▶ Warning Signs may include:
- ✓ Intrusive images
 - ✓ Nervousness or jumpiness
 - ✓ Difficulty concentrating or taking in information
 - ✓ Nightmares, insomnia
 - ✓ Emotional numbing
 - ✓ Changes in your worldview (how you see and feel about your world)
 - ✓ Feelings of hopelessness and/or helplessness
 - ✓ Anger
 - ✓ Feeling disconnected from loved ones
 - ✓ Avoidance of the child or further exposure of the trauma
 - ✓ Overly reactive, maybe even punitive, when the child acts out or expresses symptoms of trauma.
 - ✓ If you have experienced your own trauma, the child's trauma may be serving as a trauma reminder for you.
- ▶ It is important to remember that any one or two of these warning signs are normal signs of stress. If these things represent a significant change in how you've been feeling and functioning or if any of these interfere with your ability to work and parent, you will want to seek help and support.
- ▶ Having a few of these on a regular basis means you may be on the path to fatigue or secondary trauma.

Self-Care Basics

- Self-care is not rocket science but it does take a commitment to practicing in order to be effective!
- Some things to consider incorporating into your day to day practice include:
 - Get enough sleep
 - Eat well
 - Be physically active
 - Use alcohol in moderation or not at all
 - Take regular breaks from stressful activities
 - Laugh every day
 - Express yourself
 - Let someone else take care of you

Self-care is a priority and necessity - not a luxury - in the work that we do.

KEEP CALM AND PRACTICE SELF-CARE

SLIDE 8.6**PowerPoint Slide: Self-Care Basics**

- ▶ You will want to create a daily, weekly, and monthly plan for self-care.
- ▶ Self-care is not rocket science but it does take a commitment to practicing.
- ▶ Some tips include:
 - ▶ Get enough sleep.
 - ▶ Eat well.
 - ▶ Be physically active.
 - ▶ Use alcohol in moderation or not at all.
 - ▶ Take regular breaks from stressful activities.
 - ▶ Laugh every day.
 - ▶ Express yourself.
 - ▶ Let someone else take care of you

Creating Your Self-Care Plan

- The goal of your self-care plan should be to help you maintain a balance between work, rest, relaxation, and between your commitments to others and to yourself.
- Include activities that you do purely for fun!
- Include regular stress management practices such as physical activity, meditation, prayer, reading, etc.
- Include mental, physical and emotional self-care activities.
- Your plan should be realistic, healthy, and socially appropriate.
- Put your plan in writing to hold yourself accountable to following through!

KEEP CALM AND PRACTICE SELF-CARE

SLIDE 8.7**PowerPoint Slide: Creating Your Self Care Plan**

- ▶ The goal should be to help you maintain a balance between work and relaxation, and between your commitments to others and to yourself.
- ▶ It should include activities that you do purely for fun!
- ▶ It should also include a regular stress management approach, such as physical activity, meditation, prayer, reading, etc.
- ▶ You should develop a plan for daily self-care, as well as weekly and monthly plans.
- ▶ Use a planner or other tool to document your plan for self-care practices. This will help hold yourself accountable to

following through.

Ask:

? What are some things you think you might do to ensure you are caring for yourself?

Sample Responses:

- ❖ Exercise
- ❖ Date Night
- ❖ Dancing
- ❖ Reading
- ❖ Spend time with friends
- ❖ Be outdoors
- ❖ Church or other faith related activities
- ❖ Prayer
- ❖ Meditation
- ❖ Muscle Relaxation and Deep Breathing



SLIDE 8.8

PowerPoint Slide: Foster VC Kids Resources

- ▶ Although many in the community think that there are few resources out there for Resource Families, that is just not accurate.
- ▶ The Foster VC Kids team recognizes that you can't and shouldn't foster alone.
- ▶ You need access to a range of support so that you can provide the highest quality care to the children in your home.
- ▶ This may include networking group, therapeutic services, additional training, seeking respite care, and utilizing community resources to meet the needs of children in your home.

- ▶ Part of your self-care plan should include using these resources. They are there for a reason!



DISTRIBUTE Handout

- *Distribute **Foster VC Kids Caregiver Resource Guide***
- *Briefly review the categories of resources available to caregivers. These include:*
 - *Access to local partners to secure basic needs goods such as clothes, beds, baby supplies.*
 - *Linkage to nonprofit partners who fund for extracurricular activities and other normalcy activities.*
 - *Child care and educational resources*
 - *Respite Care program*
 - *Additional Resource Family Training*
 - *In-home support program*
 - *Accessing Mental health and other services*
 - *Networking Groups*



PowerPoint Presentation – (SLIDE 8.8) Foster VC Kids Panel

Foster VC Kids Panel

SLIDE 8.9

PowerPoint Slide: Foster VC Kids Panel



- ▶ We are now going to hear from a panel that includes a birth parent that had past involvement in the child welfare system, a youth who has been through the system, and a Resource Family

who has worked in the system for a few years.

- ▶ Introduce the Panel briefly.
- ▶ Possible Panel Discussion prompts:
 - ▶ Tell us how you came to be involved in the foster care system and how long your involvement was/is.
 - ▶ What was your life like before foster care?
 - ▶ What was the hardest part about becoming a part of the system?
 - ▶ What was your first month and year like in foster care?
 - ▶ What did you wish had happened differently?
 - ▶ What are you glad happened as part of your involvement in foster care?
 - ▶ What surprised you the most about the system?
 - ▶ What makes a quality Resource Family?
 - ▶ *(Birth parent and youth)* What would have good partnership looked like for you in the foster care system?
 - ▶ *(Youth)* What kinds of things did your Resource Family do that were very helpful? What things were less helpful?
 - ▶ *(Birth Parent)* What do want Resource Families to know about the birth family experience?
 - ▶ *(Youth)* What do you want Resource Families to know about the trauma you experienced, how it manifested, and how to help?
 - ▶ *(Resource Family)* What keeps you going as a Resource Family?
 - ▶ How have you changed since being part of the foster care system?
- ✓ ***Facilitator should follow the direction of the panel and offer prompts as needed. With about 15 minutes left, allow the group to ask questions.***
- ✓ ***Ensure that questions are focused on how the group of***

prospective Resource Families can become high quality Resource Families. Redirect questions related to case issues, etc to discuss broader partnership concepts.

- ✓ ***Close panel by thanking panelists.***

Ask:

? As you listened to the panel, did anything surprise you?

- ***Elicit responses.***



SUMMARIZE

- Today we talked about managing the stress that comes along with expanding your family and becoming part of the Foster VC Kids team.
- We also heard from our panel about their experiences in the foster care system. It is the hope of Foster VC Kids that this helped bring some new insight into how the system impacts all involved.

PowerPoint Slide: Where are your skills now?



- ***Post Slide 8.10 as you introduce this activity***
- ***Participants are going to re-take the CFAI to examine any changes in their strengths and needs at the end of the training. These self-assessments will be discussed with you when you receive your approval and new home visit***
- ***Distribute CFAI forms.***
- ***Have participants complete and collect at the end of class.***



TRANSITION

- ▶ Now let's wrap up for today.

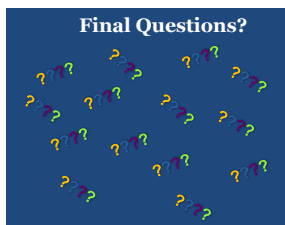
Wrap-up

Materials

PPT 8.10-8.11
Evaluations



15 Minutes



Presentation – Wrap-Up

Slide 8.11

PowerPoint Slide: Final Questions

- ▶ ***Process the work day with the participants.***

Ask:

- ? **What did you learn from today's session?**
- ? **How will you integrate these new skills into your plan to become a Resource Family?**
- ? **What did you experience today that would not be useful to you as a Resource Family?**
- ? **Are there any final questions you have about moving forward?**
 - ***Elicit responses and briefly discuss.***
 - ***Post Slide 8.12: End of Session.***
 - ***Present certificates of completion.***
 - ***Encourage them to continue to move forward in the process and thank them for their commitment thus far.***

EVALUATIONS

If evaluations are being used they should be distributed and completed.