	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES	**Chapter 8:** Out-of-Home Services	**Effective Date:** July 1, 2016
	Section 16: Resource Parent(s) Role	**Version:** 4

POLICY

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will require the resource parent(s) to:

1. Participate in supporting the Case Plan (SF2956) goals;
2. Participate in supporting Concurrent Planning for permanency. See separate policy, 5.15 Concurrent Planning;
3. Provide a positive and nurturing environment for the child;
4. Provide for the child's basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, and shelter). See separate policy, 16.1 Clothing, Personal Items, and Permitted Per Diem Expenses;
5. Maintain discretion when sharing information regarding the child and the child's family;
6. Encourage and support the maximum amount of interaction between the parent, guardian, or custodian and the child, with consideration given to:
   a. The child's comfort level;
   b. Safety concerns; and
   c. The needs of the child.

7. Refrain from speaking negatively about any member of the child's family or other persons with whom the child has a significant relationship;
8. Provide a safe and nurturing atmosphere for the child to express feelings about his or her situation (e.g., feelings regarding the initial separation, abuse or neglect suffered, reunification (if applicable), visitation, etc.);
9. Maintain a neutral attitude when discussing visitation or other parent, guardian, or custodian interaction with the child;
10. Participate as a member of the Child and Family Team (CFT). See separate policy, 5.7 Family Team Meetings;
11. Participate in court hearings when notified;
12. Keep the child's Medical Passport (DCS Pamphlet 036) current with the child's most recent health care information. See separate policy, 8.27 Maintaining Health Records – Medical Passport;
13. Encourage all youth age 14 and older to attend scheduled court hearings;
14. Use the "Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard" when determining whether a child should participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities; and
15. **[NEW]** Provide notification to DCS when there is a change in household members. See separate policies, 12.12 Foster Family Home Capacity and 13.9 Conducting Background Checks for Foster Family Home Licensing for additional guidance.

    [NEW] Note: A foster family home may not provide overnight or regular and continuous care and supervision to a child who is the subject of a power of attorney while providing care to a child placed in the home by DCS or probation, without an exception.

DCS will ensure that a child placed in out-of-home care has an opportunity to complete a Lifebook. DCS will assist in this process by providing the child and/or resource parent(s) with

any pertinent family history and pictures, if available, of the child, the child's family, and any other places and/or significant individuals that are important to the child.

Code References

N/A

PROCEDURE

Regarding the resource parent(s) role, the Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Review and discuss the above policy statement with the resource parent(s); and
2. Provide the resource parent(s) with one copy of the Resource Parent Role Acknowledgement (SF54642) form and place the original signed signature page in the case file.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. Case Plan (SF2956) – Available in MaGIK
2. Visitation Plan- Available in MaGIK
3. Resource Parent Role Acknowledgement (SF54642)

RELATED INFORMATION

Supporting the Child's Positive Identification with His or Her Family of Origin

One of the most important resource parent roles is to support the child's positive identification and positive relationship with the child's family of origin. This is true regardless of the amount of parent, guardian, or custodian interaction and involvement prescribed by the Case Plan (SF2956) and Visitation Plan. A child identifying with his or her family is very important regardless of the permanency goal. The relationship between the child and his or her family has a long-term effect on the child's self-esteem and future emotional well-being. See separate policy, 8.11 Parental Interaction and Involvement for a detailed matrix that describes the levels of interaction between children and their parent, guardian, or custodian, and the corresponding levels of involvement that the parent, guardian, or custodian will have in their child's life.

Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks

Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks come pre-packaged and can be ordered by contacting the Adoption Program Manager. The FCM may also contact his or her Regional Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) Specialist to place an order for Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks. The Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks will be mailed to the FCM in the DCS local office.

> **Note:** The use of **pre-packaged** Lifebooks and/or Adoption Workbooks is not mandatory. The FCM, therapist, family member or foster parent may create a unique Lifebook and/or Adoption Workbook for a child using a photo album, scrapbook materials, or any creative idea that would be most meaningful for that child.

DCS currently has the following types of pre-packaged Lifebooks and Adoption Workbooks (described by Adoption World Publishing)[1]:

My Adoption Workbook

My Adoption Workbook is a kid-friendly workbook that guides the social worker and child through the adoption process. This workbook provides a sensitive, but forthright explanation of separation, followed by hands-on activities to help prepare a child for change and work through the process.

Nothing raises a child's anxiety more than the unknown. ***My Adoption Workbook*** carefully guides the child and social worker through the entire process from separation to post-adoption. Exercises are designed to reduce the fears and to promote a healthy child-to-parent relationship. Special emphasis is given to helping the child:

- Explore fears or fantasies;
- Work through abuse, trust and love issues;
- Build self-esteem;
- Handle new situations; and
- Adjust to change.

The One & Only Me

The One & Only Me is a book that helps foster, adoptive, and other troubled children connect to their current situation, as well as, their beginnings. This book creates a living history for children dealing with a chaotic past.

The Real Me

The Real Me teen Lifebook is a tool to use when working with teens. The teenage years are a challenge even in the best situations. For teens in foster care or living in a group setting, the uncertainties about the future can cause additional stress and worry. The chapter *What My Future Holds* provides a framework that youth can use to process the many issues they face. It also prompts them to gather the necessary documentation for job hunting.

Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard

A caregiver must use the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard when determining whether to allow a child in foster care, under the responsibility of the state, to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, social, and cultural activities. The Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard is characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain a child's health, safety, and best interests, while at the same time, encouraging the child's emotional and developmental growth.

[1] Adoption World Publishing (2014)