



## Do's and Don'ts for CPS Placements

Becoming a foster parent or kinship placement for a child is a valuable and deeply rewarding but sometimes confusing experience. There seem to be rules and procedures for everything. Below are some basic tips for becoming more informed and how to better understand the process.

**DO: Become foster care licensed.** It's not about the money; you need the help. An agency and licensing worker are an important resources for the family.

**DO: Get to know the child's attorney.** These are the child's representative in court. The attorney will visit the child and they need your day to day knowledge to best represent the child.

**DO: Join a support group.** There are excellent support groups offered by licensing agencies and non-profit organizations.

**DO: Enlist family:** Many demands will be placed on you don't be afraid to ask your family for help. The child needs you in your best health.

**DO: Attend court hearings.** You may not want to be involved in the court process but what happens in court impacts the child so you should be informed. If you can't go follow up with CPS.

**DO: Provide information for court hearings.** The placement has the best information about the child and the judge needs it to make good decisions for the child. You can give it to CPS and the child's attorney.

**DO: Participate in FCRB:** These reports are given to the court. You may participate by phone, in person or submit a written statement.

**DO: Give the court your address so you receive the court Minute Entries.** Your address will be listed as confidential on the Minute Entry. The Minute Entry will contain a brief explanation of what happened in court and when the next hearing is set.



**DON'T: Talk about the case around the children.** This includes talking about going home even when the case plan is family reunification because no one can promise the child that will be the outcome. If you have questions about what to say ask the case manager or the child's therapist.

**DON'T: Arrive at court late.** It may seem that the court is always running late but it never fails that the one time you are late; the court isn't. You don't want to waste a trip or have the child miss a hearing.

**DON'T: Expect to spend a lot of time with the attorneys at court.** Most of the attorneys have several hearings. Juvenile court hearings are often scheduled for several to happen at the same time and are called on a first come, first served basis. If there is something that needs to be discussed before the hearing call or email prior to the hearing because you likely won't have time at court.

**DON'T: Be careless about what you say or email to persons involved in the case.** Any information you provide to the case manager or the attorneys is part of the record and if requested will be given to the case parties and maybe the Judge. You don't have a confidential privilege with CPS or any attorney that isn't your attorney.

**DON'T: Allow contact with the parent that hasn't been approved by CPS.** If you are supervising visits with parents keep the CPS case manager informed of the schedule via email. If a parent stops by unannounced or if you see them in the community inform the parent that you can't allow them to see the children and report it to the case manager. If you and the parent live nearby or attend the same church make sure the case manager and GAL are aware of it.

**DON'T: Interfere with the parent's visits.** In most cases, the CPS case manager is legally required to offer the parents visits and must report to the court on their efforts. Visits are one of the most difficult issues in the case because of transportation problems, scheduling and the child reactions. The placements role is to support and assist in parental visits until the court determines that it is not in the child's best interests or the parent's rights are terminated.

**DON'T: Try to handle everything on your own.** These are complicated issues and you need help. If you don't know how to answer the child's questions ask for a therapist or a Family Support Partner to help you.

**\*\*Child can be represented by a Guardian ad Litem, and attorney or a Court Appoint Special Advocate.**