

ANNUAL REPORT FORM

08-2017

1. Provide a general description of the process used to obtain foster parent input into your plan review/revision.

UFC staff ensures that foster parents are involved in the process of providing input into the plan. Prior to review/revision of the plan, UFC consults: a). The Foster Parent Advisory Council, b). Surveys foster parents requesting feedback, and c). Hosts several meetings whereby foster parents are invited to discuss the deficiencies identified and the recommended revisions to the plan. Foster parent involvement in UFC's planning process occurs on an on-going basis therefore, foster parents will continue to be invited to participate in the Foster Parent Law implementation process: serve on UFC's Advisory Committees; and receive frequent communication from the agency regarding issues and concerns.

2. Describe the way direct service staff were involved in plan development and review.

Direct service staff of UFC are involved in plan development and review in the following ways: a) members of the Quality Assurance Committee are utilized for evaluation of the processes utilized to develop the plan, track outcomes of the foster care program in its entirety, and production of surveys and aggregation of data collection tools; b) Direct services staff are surveyed to obtain their feedback on plan; c) Direct services staff are involved in meetings to discuss the deficiencies identified and the recommended revisions to the plan; d) UFC's Foster Care case managers/licensing staff who provide direct service are involved in the ongoing collection and documentation of program related input. This comprehensive process of utilizing direct service staff allows for the identification of areas requiring corrective action, and follow-up to ensure that corrective actions are successfully implemented and suggestions to better serve foster parents and children are incorporated into the plan.

3. List the needs/deficiencies identified in our 2017 comments and how they were addressed in this plan.

The following needs/deficiencies were identified in the 2017 comments and were addressed accordingly:

➤ **Be sure to identify signers as Foster Parents when applicable.**

Foster parents involved in the review process provide their signature along with their title of "foster parent" on the meeting attendance sheets. This process clearly substantiates their participation at meetings as well as their identity as signers/reviewers of the Plan.

➤ **Provide training re: the Foster Parent Hotline and the OIG in #16.**

UFC provides training to Foster parents regarding the Foster Parent Hotline and the OIG as detailed in #15 (Rights), not #16 (Responsibilities) of the plan. Foster parents are provided with training on what the Foster Parent Hotline is and how it is properly accessed. Foster Parents are provided with ongoing training on what the OIG is and its process. Included in this information is assurance to the foster parent that any report of misconduct by an agency staff person will be handled in a confidential manner as outlined in the Office of the Inspector General Investigations (OIG).

➤ **Provide training re: allegations against a foster parent and document it in #27(12).**

UFC provides training to Foster parents regarding allegations against them and a detailed description of this process is outlined in #12 (Rights). Foster parents are instructed during training of UFC's policy to report any suspected child abuse or neglect of children in the care of a foster parent and to inform the foster parent of such action. Foster parents are made aware during training that all inquiries regarding allegations of child abuse or neglect against a foster parent are addressed in a timely manner. UFC is always mindful of our commitment to treating foster parents with dignity and respect and ensuring that the best interest and safety of the child(ren) is fully protected.

4. Describe how your Foster Parent Law Grievance Procedure was developed or reviewed and approved by foster parents, and how foster parents are notified annually that it is available for their use.

Foster Parents were not only trained on UFC's Grievance Procedure, but their assistance and input was used when establishing the procedure. Grievance Procedure meetings were held, the foster parents reviewed the actual Grievance Procedure and approved the final draft. The final draft was distributed to each foster parent either when they picked up their monthly board payment or in person when the case manager conducted their monthly home visit. These foster parents that do not have children in their homes were mailed a copy of the Grievance Procedure.

Additional copies of the UFC's Grievance Procedure are available in the corridor of the UFC building and on our agency website; (www.ufcinc.org). The foster parents agreed to utilize members of the Foster Parent Advisory Council as advocates during the grievance process. Foster parents continue to be encouraged to utilize members of the council in assisting them in any grievance procedure. UFC continues to post the procedure in designate areas of the office.

5. List ALL rights narratives that were revised this year.

The following rights narratives were revised this year:

1. (# 2) The right to be provided standardized pre-service training and appropriate ongoing training to meet mutually assessed needs and improve the foster parent's skills.

Training is provided two times a year to foster parents on what the Foster Parent Hotline is and how it is properly accessed. Information and phone numbers are distributed to the foster parents so they may call in the event they have a complaint regarding agency performance or misconduct. Foster Parents are provided with ongoing training on what the OIG is and its process. Included in this information is assurance to the foster parent that any report of misconduct by an agency staff person will be handled in a confidential manner as outlined in the Office of the Inspector General Investigations (OIG).

Also available in the office are computers where Foster Parents can utilize online resources (www.prideonline.org) for additional training.

2. (#10) The right to be provided, in a timely and consistent manner, with any information a caseworker has regarding the child and the child's family which is pertinent to the care and needs of the child and to the making of a permanency plan for the child. Disclosure of information concerning a child's family shall be limited to that information which is essential for understanding the needs of and providing care to the child in order to protect the rights of the child's family. When a positive relationship exists between the foster parents and the child's family, the child's family may consent to disclosure of additional information.

It is UFC's goal to practice full disclosure and pass along all information as soon as caseworkers become aware of it and also to never knowingly withhold information.

3. (#15). The right to be informed of the Foster Parent Hotline established under this Act and all of the rights according to foster parents concerning reports of misconduct by Department employees, service providers, or contractors, confidential handling of those reports, and investigation by the Inspector General.

Foster parents are provided with training on what the Foster Parent Hotline is and how it is properly accessed.

Foster Parents are provided with ongoing training on what the OIG is and its process. Included in this information is assurance to the foster parent that any report of misconduct by an agency staff person will be handled in a confidential manner as outlined in the Office of the Inspector General Investigations (OIG).

6. List ALL responsibilities narratives that were revised this year.

1. (#12) The responsibility to know and, as necessary, to fulfill their responsibility to serve as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse/neglect under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act; and to know the child welfare agency's policy regarding allegations that foster parents have committed child abuse or neglect and applicable Administrative Rule and Procedures governing Investigations of such allegations.

Abuse can be prevented with knowledge, skills, supports, and teamwork. Abuse allegations cannot be prevented. It is important for our foster parents to have the necessary information about the agency's policy regarding abuse allegations against foster families. The foster parents are provided with ongoing training on the abuse allegations policy itself; the role of the foster parents in determining the policy; how abuse allegations against foster families are investigated; their rights, as well as training offered to foster parents and staff for abuse allegation prevention and intervention. Ongoing training is provided to staff and foster parents regarding the Child Abuse Hotline Procedure and Procedure 383, Licensing Enforcement and its purpose

2. (#16) The responsibility to share information through the child welfare team regarding the child's adjustment in their home with the subsequent care giver, whether the child's parent or another substitute care giver.

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All foster parents are provided with and trained on how to develop a LifeBook.

3. (#17) The responsibility to provide care and services which are respectful of and responsive to the child's cultural needs and are supportive of the relationship between the child and his/her own family; Recognize the increased importance of maintaining a child's cultural identity when the race or culture of the foster family differs from that of the foster child and take action to address these issues.

This is accomplished through full disclosure to the foster parent, with additional information shared regarding the child's ethnic and cultural background and now includes introducing and assisting each foster parent with helping a child in their home complete a LifeBook which will follow them throughout their journey in placement.

7. If no revisions were made, please explain why.

N/A

ANNUAL REPORT ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) List the names of the foster parents that had input into the plan.
- 2) Provide sign-off approval/endorsement from foster parents, including a clear statement of approval.

(See Attachment)