

## Talking Points for RFA Program Staff

**This is meant as a suggested guide for RFA Program Staff to support conversations with Resource Parents. You should use your own style in talking with your Resource Parents and the conversation should be natural and organic.**

### **1. Thank Resource Parents for their service to children/teens thus far.**

*"Mrs. Roberts, I'd like to thank you and your husband for being Resource Parents for the past three years. You've done a great job caring for the kids in your home."*

*"Mr. Johnson, we appreciate that you are able to care for your nephew. It's always best if teens can be with extended family if they can't live safely with their parents."*

### **2. Check on how the family is doing with the Covid 19 impact on their daily life, routines, finances, etc.**

*"I know that things are chaotic right now with school out, job changes, etc. How are you managing? What's been the most difficult things you've had to deal with? What have been the "surprises"?"*

\*\*Ask about each member of the family individually.

### **3. Determine what needs the family may have.**

*"Is there anything that you need for yourself or the children/teens right now?" We're all in this together and there are a variety of resources available right now in our city/neighborhood, county, community, etc. such as food, financial resources, household supplies, infant items and others*

Suggestions:

- provide up to date information about Covid 19, prevention strategies, community resources
- offer resources such as food banks, free breakfast/lunch from schools, etc.
- suggest that the family uses "free shopping and delivery" services
- share websites that offer fun, inexpensive home or outdoor activities for the children, school lessons. Many counties have set up resource websites that cover needs such as financial, MH, school resources, self-care, etc (Note: Have this information handy before you call.)
- discuss the use of social media (email, Facetime, House party, texting, etc.) to help children maintain contact with family and friends.
- encourage them to connect with other foster parents/relative caregivers or connect them!
- give information on other community resources that may support the family such as churches and local Family Resource Centers

### **4. Discuss the ongoing need for family placement resources.**

*"As you know, the work of our agency continues despite the Covid 19 virus. We are still having to bring infants, children and teens into care and provide a family placement for them. In addition, there are youth that have completed their therapeutic programs and need to step into a family. Consequently, the children and teens' need for resource parents persists."*

### **5. Inquire about the family's willingness to accept new placements.**

*"We are checking in with all of our resource parents to determine their availability to accept a child/teen for placement. Can we count on you?"*

*If they are willing to take another placement, ask if the Resource Parents anticipate any new needs such as bedding, clothes etc. Work with the family to ensure they would have everything they need. Problem solve with the family where the needed items are available to lessen the stress for the family.*

**6. Share strategies that the agency is taking to protect resource families and the children.**

*“We have heard concerns expressed by some Resource Families regarding the health of children and teens needing placement. We are taking the following steps to protect you, your family and our children and teens:*

- a. When possible, parents/caregivers of the child/teens will be questioned regarding their physical health and recent travel history*
- b. Children and teens can be provided any medical care needed from a pediatrician or doctor as usual.*

*Please contact me should you have additional questions or concerns.”*

**7. Answer any questions or concerns the Resource Parent may have**

Suggestions:

- a. Take your time to address their questions and concerns
- b. No question is stupid or trite
- c. If you don't know the answer for certain, state that and get the answer and get back to the family asap.
- d. Encourage the family to contact you should they think of something.

**8. Close the conversation by again thanking the resource parents and encouraging them to contact you should they have questions or need anything.**

*“Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. Again, we appreciate you being a resource parent and caring for the children/teens. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you or the kids need anything or if you have a question. Please take care of yourselves!” We are here for you and We are ALL in this TOGETHER!*