

# The Impact of Fostering on Birth Children

## Syllabus

### Introduction

---

Expert – Charley Joyce, LICSW, counselor, foster care consultant, and supervising social worker in the foster care and adoption field.

This course covers how foster care affects the children of foster parents, through all stages of placement.

### The Pre-Placement Stage

---

Before a child arrives, foster parents can get so busy with preparation and meetings that their birth children begin to feel left out, insecure, and may begin to have second thoughts about the family's decision to provide foster care.

The case study family is introduced.

### Pre-Placement Issues

---

An interactive exercise helps viewers understand the challenges faced by the case study family.

### Reducing Pre-Placement Problems

---

Offers six suggestions for reducing pre-placement problems:

- Parent-child communication should be two-way
- Keep children involved in the process
- Request a meeting between birth children and the social worker
- Allow all participants, including the children, to assess the situation
- Review notes and handouts from pre-service trainings
- Review the family assessment questionnaire
- Identify the safety boundaries in the home

### Entering Placement

---

Adding a foster child to the family redefines family roles and interactions and everyone in the family will react in his or her own way to all of the changes.

## **When Issues Arise**

---

In the case study family, the foster child has been in the home for four months. The honeymoon period is over for them.

## **The Family Weighs In**

---

Each member of the family shares his or her feelings and concerns at this point in the placement.

## **The Placement: What's Going On?**

---

An interactive exercise helps viewers understand what is happening in the case study family.

## **What Can Be Done During Placement**

---

Suggestions for coping with placement problems:

- Realize things will be different
- Problem solve at team meetings or permanency planning meetings
- Join support groups
- Problem solve with professional help
- Speak up
- Use respite care
- Consider using family therapy
- Have private check-ins with each child in the home

## **The Post-Placement Stage**

---

Each member of the foster family shares how they feel about their experience fostering, and thinks about what they learned.

## **Exercise on Placement Impacts and Challenges**

---

An interactive exercise helps viewers understand the potential impact of fostering on a birth family.

## **Closing**

---

Summary of key points and reminder to print handouts.