

CHILD WELFARE TRAINING CONSORTIUM

Adoptions Field Activity Guide

2012



CWtC

The materials for the **Child Welfare Pre-Service Training** curriculum were produced by Florida International University for the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families, Office of Family Safety.

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The materials for the **Child Welfare Pre-Service Training** curriculum were formatted and edited by the Child Welfare Training Consortium at the University of South Florida.

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Adoptions Field Activity Guide

Introduction

The **Adoption Counselor's Field Guide** is a component of the **Integrated Child Welfare Pre-Service training**. The activities are broken down into Phase I and Phase II. Phase I activities may be completed prior to the post test. Phase II activities may be completed while you are working your protected case loads.

The Integrated Child Welfare Pre-Service training consists of the following components:

- Classroom training
- On-Line courses
- Field Activities
- FSFN courses

Field training is your introduction to child protection work in the field. During these sessions you will apply many of the concepts learned during the classroom training to the actual job. The field experience is a chance for you to:

- observe, question, and practice doing the work
- implement program specific tasks within the job environment.
- implement "best practice" tasks and decisions that support Florida Statute and ASFA requirements.
- practice job tasks while learning the specific protocol of the unit/agency of employment.
- increasing your knowledge of CFSR/QPS/Peer Review Tools
- use actual procedures/paperwork related to actual cases.
- observe quality samples of program specific work products

All of the field activities are designed to bridge the knowledge, skills and tasks taught in the classroom with the situational application in the field. The activities will require you to shadow, interview, document, and review a wide variety of job related tasks. All of the activities can stand alone and each activity is designed for job skill application and Performance Based

Assessment preparation.

The classroom and on-line training experience helps introduce you to the basic competencies of child protection and your job responsibilities. Using various supervised, agency-specific field activities is intended to help illustrate and augment the specific content in addition to providing you with a forum in which you can observe, question and practice on-the-job application of these concepts.

Field activities include opportunities for you to shadow or be mentored by experienced certified staff and may take place in the agency unit or in the field, provided that you are accompanied by and under the direct and constant supervision of a Certified Child Protection Professional at all times. These activities allow you to shadow/observe all major functions of your specific job responsibilities and practice all tasks related to your shadowing experiences utilizing actual case files.

While you are attending the classroom training and completing the Phase I field activities you are not permitted to:

- carry a caseload,
- be assigned responsibility for any cases,
- conduct any unaccompanied or unsupervised home visits,
- perform any unsupervised home studies or interviews of children or adults,
- be ultimately responsible for any assessment of risk, or
- otherwise have primary responsibility for any investigation, child, family or case.

These requirements remain in effect until you have successfully completed the pre-service training, including having passed the post-test.

In order to meet your need for a variety of opportunities in the practical application of concepts learned in pre-service training, you may be assigned as a “secondary” worker (Investigator, Case Manager or Licensing Counselor) in FSFN. However, this is limited to no more than four (4) active cases during your pre-service training, and is for the sole purpose of performing and

practicing newly-learned skills while accompanied and supervised at all times by a Child Protection Professional.

While you may be assigned as “secondary” worker, you do not in any way bear ultimate responsibility for any aspect of the case. Every piece of casework you complete must be reviewed and approved by either the primary worker on the case, the supervisor of the primary worker on the case or other Child Protection Professional, prior to the piece of casework being included and saved in the active case file or FSFN case record.

Your Role in Completing the Field Activities

Prior to each OJT shadowing experience, you must use the QPS cites in the self-instructional materials to locate and study the statute, code, and best practice relevant to the tasks that will be performed by the Child Protection Professional being shadowed.

You will document shadowing & practice activities in the Field Guide and must collect and utilize agency forms in relation to the specific on the job training experience. In addition:

- date and summarize shadowing experiences
- write questions to ask during daily debriefing sessions
- retain and use written mentor/supervisor feedback to implement continuous improvement

Plan your activities and follow your plan. It will take time and effort on your part to complete these activities successfully. Be proactive in getting feedback, asking questions, and completing the work. It is important for you to follow these guidelines as you shadow:

- Your supervisor/Other Child Protection Professional is in charge of all interactions. Do only what you are specifically asked to do while you are in the field.
- Always be respectful and courteous of the families with which you come in contact. Many people may have lifestyles, cultures, and beliefs different than your own. Remember that your job is to ensure child safety, well-being and

permanence.

- Feel free to ask your supervisor/Child Protection Professional questions, but do it at appropriate times. Never interrupt an interaction with a family, child, or other person.
- Do not judge or second guess the decisions made or work done by the individual you are shadowing. You will be taught a lot of skills and knowledge in the classroom, but there are many ways counselors personalize their approach while still working within the bounds of law.
- Use this time seriously and efficiently. Much of your success will depend on what you put into your field experience.
- While you are in the field, you are to behave as if on the job; this means to start on time and put in a full day's work.

Your supervisor/other Child Protection Professionals will meet with you or will talk with you on a regular basis throughout the training, and will periodically evaluate your work in order to give you feedback and assistance. You should contact your supervisor/other Child Protection Professional whenever you need help.

How to Use this Guide

The **Phase I** activities in the **Field Guide** provide activities that will help orient you to your job, create readiness to learn by acquainting you with the nature and scope of the job, the mission, values, and philosophy of the agency, the community with which the agency must interact, and the families the agency serves. It also provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities associated with your job and links you to federal and state requirements, quality tasks, and curriculum materials related to job tasks.

The **Phase II** activities of the **Field Guide** are to be used on your training caseloads. These activities provide the opportunity for you to use the information gained in the classroom training to complete the actual region/circuit/agency tools, paperwork and processes that guide effective practice, while under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional.

The activities may be completed out of order and the completion of some of the tasks (i.e. documentation) are repeated for the simple reason that practice makes for perfection.

Activity	Completed	
Phase I	Adoption Case Manager	Child Protection Professional/Supervisor
Agency Protocols and Procedures		
Case Receipt		
Case Review: Pre-Contact Information Gathering		
Staffings		
Initial Contact/Interviewing		
Judicial Paperwork (Termination of Parental Rights)		
Judicial Process (Termination of Parental Rights)		
Florida Adoption Exchange		
Missing Children		
Licensing Concerns		
Florida Adoption Reunion Registry		

Agency Protocol and Procedures

Obtain and review policies and procedures essential for all staff. This includes, but is not limited to:

Human resources

Personnel standards/working hours/on call/dress code

Agency training schedule

Working hours

Safety/contacting law enforcement

Confidentiality of records/records storage

Professionalism/ethical conduct

Facility accessibility

Loss prevention

Emergency procedures

Accessing office equipment

Computer access/confidentiality

Car seat usage/safety

Other policies

The completion of this activity will provide you with information on the following topics:

- The overall functioning of the agency.
- Any written unit or agency policy regarding worker safety.
- Information on how to contact human resources; services provided.
- The agency policies on working hours, dress code, on call requirements.
- The specific agency training schedule and expectations.
- Specific actions to take to assure your safety and necessary actions to take when your safety is jeopardized.
- Explain the unit policy on contacting law enforcement to accompany you on a home visit.
- Where case files are stored; how to access the case files; restrictions to removing case files from the office.
- Professional expectations; ethical conduct; how to report; what happens if you are investigated
- Accessing the building; after hour procedures; locking office
- How to report lost/stolen equipment
- Emergency procedures; preparation for hurricanes, flood, etc.
- Assignment of office equipment; responsibilities; usage limitations/requirements
- Computer confidentiality
- How to effectively use car seats
- Use of agency vehicles; practices to follow when transporting children
- Copy/information of Agency Human Resources Guide

Case Receipt

Identify the agency specific case assignment process for your agency.

The activity will assist you in understanding:

- How cases are received in your agency.
- How cases are assigned to your unit.
- How cases are assigned to you.
- How cases are transferred within your agency.
- FSFN assignment/notifications of case assignments.
- How you are notified of new case assignments.
- How you are notified of additional/supplemental intakes on your existing caseload.

Case Review: Pre-Contact Information Gathering

When receiving cases, it is important to review the case file thoroughly to have a full understanding of the child's background information, and current situation.

As the adoptions child protection professional it is your responsibility to review all documents in the case file and update any required missing information as needed.

You are responsible for knowing the entire history of the case and may have to testify to events that occurred prior to being assigned the case.

QPS #6, 14, 33-35, 58-67, 67, 68

Case Review - Gather and review pertinent information from the case pertaining to:

- Contacts/Interviews
- Paperwork/documentation
 - Inquiry regarding child's Native/Alaskan American Heritage
 - Court orders in file
 - Master Trust Account initiated in FSFN (if court order places child out-of-home and there is an established need)
 - Federal maximization documentation in file (FSFN)
 - Child data
 - ✓ birth certificate/birth verification
 - ✓ Recent photo of child in case file & Child Resource Record (CRR)
 - ✓ Fingerprints – out-of-home only
 - ✓ Up to date health records
 - ✓ Social security card
 - ✓ Up-to-date school/educational (IEP if needed)
 - Process followed for reporting Missing Children (if needed)
 - Diligent search efforts/results:
 - ✓ All efforts to identify, contact and interview parents, relatives/non-relatives documented
 - ✓ All parents identified; FSFN "Diligent Search for Parent" documented
 - ✓ Possible placements identified (relative/non-relative)
 - ✓ Affidavit of diligent search in file

Case Review:

**Pre-Contact Information
Gathering**

Continued

- ☐ Initial and Ongoing Assessment
 - Prior intakes/investigations and PI file information
 - Initial family assessment
 - FSFN Safety plan implemented (when needed)
 - Ongoing family assessment
 - Ongoing Safety assessment
 - Needs Assessment (Child Well-Being)
 - ✓ Educational
 - ✓ Physical Health
 - ✓ Dental health
 - ✓ Mental/Behavioral
 - Informed Consent for use of psychotropic medications
 - Court order in file for child use of psychotropic medications
 - Assess youth age 13-15 in out-of-home care for Pre-Independent Living
 - Independent Living Plan completed and discussed with youth 16, but not yet age 18
- ☐ Placement Activities
 - Placed with siblings (if appropriate)
 - Compliance with ICPC
- ☐ Case Planning Activities
 - Case plan addresses needs identified in the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment (CBHA)
 - Case plan amended to reflect most recent goal per court order in file

Staffings

When a case is referred for adoption a case staffing is held.

The case staffing is a meeting attended by adoption licensed care, Protective Investigators, Case Management staff and several other professionals familiar with the child and life circumstances.

The goal of the staffing is to determine if adoption is the best option for the child and if legal grounds exist which justify the termination of parental rights.

Quarterly Case Staffings are conducted at minimum every 3 months to assess the needs of a child waiting to be adopted.

QPS #48

In this activity, determine:

- How a case enters adoption care ARS (Adoption and Related Service)
- Necessary advance preparation for the staffing
- The individuals who attended the staffing and their roles
- The paperwork/documents needed
- The process for completing the staffing paperwork
- How to assess needs of the child(ren)

Observe behaviorally specific examples of:

- Greeting and Introductions
- Explanation of purpose
- Maintaining objectivity
- Inclusion of all participants
- Open-ended questions
- Active listening skills

Initial Contact/Interviewing

Initial contact with a child and a prospective adoptive family who are involved in your cases must be completed and involve mandated actions on your part.

You must understand the basic concepts and obtain skills necessary to interview children, prospective adoptive parents, and adoptive parents.

Interviewing is an important skill that must be developed effectively in order to successfully fulfill job responsibilities.

CM QPS #48, 52, 57, 59

As you observe interviews look for demonstration of these skills. Place a check by each skill you observe.

Core Conditions

- Genuineness/Authenticity
- Respect
- Empathy

Exploring Skills

- Active Listening
- Attending Behaviors
- Reflecting
- Encouraging
- Allowing Silence

Focusing Skills

- Reframing
- Clarifying
- Questioning:
 - o Open-ended Questions
 - o Closed-ended Questions
 - o Indirect Questions
 - o Solution-focused Questions
 - o Summarization

Directing Skills

- Give Options or Suggestions
- Give Advice, Support, or Direction
- Provide Effective Feedback

Judicial Paperwork Termination of Parental Rights

The petition for termination of parental rights is the legal document filed in court and is the basis of the court proceedings. The petition contains three parts:

1. Case history
2. Statement of grounds and allegations
3. Statement that the child is suitable for adoption

The Child Protection Professional begins termination of parental rights proceedings working with the Children's Legal Services attorney

QPS 40, 41

Observe a Child Protection Professional conduct the following casework activities:

- Assist Children's Legal Services in preparing and presenting the case and obtaining witnesses.
- File a notice of intent to pursue termination of parental rights
- File a termination of parental rights petition within 90 days from the date the court is notified of the intent to pursue TPR.
- Identify the expert/lay witnesses that are involved with the case.

Judicial Process

Termination of Parental Rights

Prior to adoption every case must go through the legal process for termination of parental rights.

Advisory Hearing: Held within 14 days of the date of the filing of termination of parental rights petition.

Pretrial Status Conference: Held not less than 10 days before the adjudicatory hearing.

Adjudicatory Hearing: Held within 45 days after the advisory hearing.

Disposition Hearing: Held within 30 days of the date of the adjudicatory hearing. The judge either orders TPR or rejects the petition for TPR.

Observe a Child Protection Professional at an Advisory Hearing, Pretrial Status Conference, Adjudicatory Hearing and Disposition Hearing. You should observe as many court/legal proceedings as possible during your field experience. Pay specific attention to the following:

- The type of legal proceeding you attended
- Advanced preparation that the Adoption Case Manager conducted
- The paperwork/documents that were prepared
- The significance of the legal proceeding
- The individuals who attended and the roles
- Decisions that were made
- Determine the next step

Florida Adoption Exchange

Florida law requires that the Florida Adoption Exchange, a statewide system for linking families with adoptable children be notified of every child in the custody of DCF whose parental rights have been terminated.

This must occur within 30 days of termination of parental rights.

QPS #42

With the assistance of a Child Protection Professional access and review the Florida Adoptions Exchange. During shadowing observe a Child Protection Professional register a child and families for the Florida Adoption Exchange and determine:

- Purpose of the Adoption Exchange
- The type of information contained in the data base
- The process for registering children and families for the Florida Adoption Exchange
- The process for registering children posted to your agency's/department's web page on the internet

Missing Children

Missing child means a person under the age of 18 years, whose location has not been determined and who has been or will be reported as missing to a law enforcement agency. There is uniform policy for ensuring that prompt and comprehensive actions are taken when children are missing for any reason.

Certain steps must be taken to prevent runaway, locate missing children, prevent further incidents and provide needed services.

In your agency obtain and review The Missing Children Guide that was created by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Central Office Child Location Staff in collaboration with DCF local Child Location Staff, Community-Based Care (CBC) providers and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE).

Determine:

- The purpose of this guide
- The steps to take if a child's whereabouts on your caseload is unknown (runaway, abducted or absconded)
 - Include all personnel contacts and contact information
- Access Florida Safe Families Network – Missing Child Report (MCR)
- Examine all documentation steps in FSFN

Observe a Child Protection Professional follow and complete tasks for a child who is missing on a case.

- Obtain hard copies of all documents in FSFN and complete the documents including case notes
- Review your completed information with the Child Protection Professional.
- Once approved, under the guidance of the Child Protection Professional input information in FSFN.

Licensing Concerns

Statewide guidelines must be followed on all child care and foster care Licensure institutional reports.

Licensing Concerns

- Review the statewide policy and procedure with a Child Protection Professional.
- Determine your lead agency contact information.
- Understand the steps that you must perform when a licensing concern takes place.
- Review the FSFN screens and documents that must be completed when you have a licensing concern.
- If possible observe the process and steps involved in an ongoing investigation of a foster home or residential treatment center licensing concern.

Florida Adoption Reunion Registry

The purpose of the Florida Adoption Reunion Registry is to reunite adult adopted persons with members of their family without either party having to take court action. Individuals from families separated by adoption may be reunited should each party seek that reunion.

With the assistance of a Child Protection Professional access and review the Florida Adoption Registry. Observe a Child Protection Professional register children and families for the Florida Adoption Reunion Registry and determine:

- Purpose of the Reunion Registry
- The individuals that you must advise about the registry
- The type of information found on the data base
- The process for registering children and families on the registry

QPS # 42, 43

Phase II	Adoptions Case Manager	Child Protection Professional/Supervisor
Assessment: Part I: Child Study Part II: Adoptive (Unified) Home Study		
General Meetings to prepare potential Adoptive Parents		
Case Planning		
Judicial Review Social Study/Case Plan update		
Judicial Review Hearings		
Securing Placements (Pre-Placement)		
Placement		
Interstate Adoptions - Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children		
Final Home Evaluation		
Adoption Finalization		
Post Placement Supervision		
Case Closure		
Child Deaths		

Assessment: Part I Child Study

The child study must be completed within 90 days of the date the child is accepted into the adoption unit, or by the date that the TPR petition is filed with the court, whichever occurs first.

The study must include current/projected/future needs of the child based on information regarding the child and the birth family's medical and social history. Information from evaluations/CBHA must be attached and referenced. All social and medical history information must be provided to the adoptive parents prior to or at the time of the adoption placement. The study of the child, with identifying information removed, is part of the written background information provided to the adopting family.

QPS# 4-5, 7, 9, 12, 42, 43

Review a completed documented child study found in an adoption case file. Examine the documented information regarding the 12 areas that must be included in a child study:

- Identify the components of a Child Study and the information contained in each component.

Observe an adoption case manager/supervisor conduct a child study. Determine:

- Where the child study took place
- The individual/s that were interviewed to obtain information for the child study
- The types of question that were asked
- The sources that were used to obtain the information required by the child study
- Length of time to complete a child study

Draft a Child Study

- Access a hard copy of a Child Study.
- Review the information needed in the assessment.
- Observe the Adoption Case Manager gathering information for the Child Study.
- Draft the child study based on your observation of the interaction.
- Review your documentation with your supervisor/Child Protection Professional.

Assessment: Part II

The Adoptive Home Study (Unified Home Study)

A written report (Unified Home study) must be prepared for each family who is seeking to adopt.

The home study must address the criteria considered in the adoptive home application, identifying residence, demographics, contacts, and background screening information.

A social study involving careful observation, screening and evaluation must be made of the child and adoptive applicants prior to the placement of the child. The aim of this evaluation is to select families who are able to meet the physical, emotional, social, educational and financial needs of a child, while safeguarding the child from further loss and separation from primary caretakers.

QPS #42

Review a completed Unified Home Study and examine the documented information found in the home study.

Determine:

- when the Adoptive Home Study (Unified home Study) is completed
- sources used to obtain the required information
- if the information contained is found/recorded anywhere else in the file
- parties to the case that receive copies of the completed Unified Home Study

Observe a Child Protection Professional conduct an Adoptive Home Study. During the observation pay close attention to the types of questions asked and other resources used to obtain the following information:

Draft an (Adoptive) Unified Home Study

- Access the Unified Home Study in FSFN.
- Review the information needed in the assessment.
- Observe a child protection professional gathering information for the Unified Home Study.
- Draft the actual assessment document (unified home study) based on your observation of the interaction.
- Review your documentation with your Supervisor or Child Protection Professional.

General Meetings to Prepare Potential Adoptive Parents

The prospective adoptive parents' initial inquiry, written or verbal, must receive a written response or a telephone call within seven (7) working days.

Prospective adoptive parents who indicate an interest in adopting special needs children must successfully complete the approved adoptive parent training program.

An application to adopt must be made on form CF-FSP 5071, PDF 08/2008, Adoptive Home Application.

You are responsible for encouraging families who inquire about adoption to attend a regularly scheduled orientation session to learn more about the process and the special-needs children who are available.

A meeting must be scheduled within 30 days after an inquiry is made with the agency.

QPS #43

Observe a Child Protection Professional with a potential adoptive parent encouraging and arranging for the parent to attend an Orientation meeting.

During the observation of the orientation meeting focus on these topics:

- Eligibility Requirements
- The types of children available for adoption
- The resources available to the children in adoptive placements
- The approved adoptive parent training for your agency such as MAPP, PRIDE, etc...
- Gain a clear understanding of the approved adoptive parent training through the observed explanation and overview.

Case Planning

A case plan is a services plan jointly developed with the family delineating specific interventions aimed at addressing the contributing factors and underlying conditions that lead to maltreatment.

The case plan must be developed with the family; signed by the parents and CM; contain tasks to be performed by the family and CM; be documented in the case file; address the child's permanency goal and be filed and approved by the court, if court involved.

When a case is accepted for adoption the case plan must be amended to reflect a permanency goal of adoption.

QPS #21, 22, 24

Review a completed case plan with a goal of adoption and examine the documented information.

Determine:

- when the case plan with the goal of adoption is completed
- sources used to obtain the required information
- if the information contained in the case plan is found/recorded anywhere else in the file
- the parties to the case that receive copies of the completed case plan

Observe an Adoptive Case Manager conduct a case plan conference with a permanency goal of adoption. During the observation of the conference determine:

- the types of questions asked
- other resources used to obtain information

Draft a case plan:

- Access a case plan in FSFN.
- Review the information needed in the case plan.
- Observe an Adoption Case Manager gathering information for the case plan.
- Draft the actual case plan based on your observation of the interaction.
- Review your documentation with an Adoption Case Manager.
- Once a hard copy is approved, document the case plan with the goal of adoption in FSFN under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional.

Judicial Review Social Study/Case Plan Update

The JRSS/CPU is an assessment document used to explain to the court the degree of progress made toward the permanency goal and the tasks/objectives of the case plan.

Prior to every Judicial Review hearing you must complete the social study report and submit it to the court and all parties.

QPS #7, 69

Review a completed Judicial Review Social Study/Case Plan Update in FSFN and examine the documented information.

Determine:

- when the JRSS/CPU is completed
- sources used to obtain the information required by the JRSS/CPU
- if the information contained in the JRSS/CPU is found/recorded anywhere else in the file
- parties to the case that receive copies of the completed case plan
- timeframes for submitting the JRSS/CPU to the courts.

Observe a Child Protection Professional conduct a home visit with potential adoptive parents. During the observation of the home visit note the types of questions asked and other resources the Child Protection Professional used to assess the health, safety, and permanency for the child(ren).

- Access the Judicial Review Social Study Report/Case Plan Update (JRSS/CPU) in FSFN.
- Review the factors included in the assessment.
- Observe the Child Protection Professional gathering the required information with the potential adoptive parents.
- Draft the actual assessment document based on your observation of the interaction and using previous records/case notes found in the case file.
- Review your documentation with the Child Protection Professional.
- Once the hard copy of the assessment is approved document the JRSS/CPU in FSFN under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional.

Judicial Review Hearings

The court reviews the status of the child and holds a hearing at least every 6 months until the child reaches permanency status.

If a child is placed in the custody of the department or licensed child - placing agency for the purpose of adoptive placement, judicial reviews must be held at least every 6 months until the adoption is finalized.

QPS #69

Review a completed Judicial Review Social Study/Case Plan Update prior to attending a Judicial Review hearing

- Examine the documented information found in JRSS/CPU and case file
- Review and discuss the case with the Child Protection Professional to establish a clear understanding of what will take place in court.

Observe a Judicial Review hearing and focus on:

- Advanced preparation that the Child Protection Professional conducted
- The paperwork/documents that were prepared
- The significance of the legal proceeding
- The individuals who attended and the roles
- Decisions that were made
- Determine the next step

Prepare and present a Judicial Review Social Study/Case Plan Update on one or your assigned cases under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional.

Securing Placements

Pre-Placement

In the pre-placement phase, you will work to “link” a specific child and a prospective adoptive family that could best meet the needs of the child.

During the pre-placement phase, both children and parents must be prepared for the adoption and changes that will come as a result.

Proper preparation of both children and potential parents will help avoid a placement from disrupting prior to finalization.

QPS #42

Observe a Child Protection Professional conducting pre-placement tasks and activities on an adoptions case. Determine the strategies used during the pre-placement activities

- Locating potential parents
- Preparing the child for adoption
- Preparing potential parents for adoption
- Presenting information to family and child for possible introduction
- Arranging visits between child and prospective parents

Observe the Child Protection Professional addressing the Lifebook with the child(ren).

- Discuss the purpose and the need of the Lifebook in an adoption child’s life with the Child Protection Professional following the observation.

Review and discuss the five pre-placement tasks and activities with the Child Protection Professional.

Placement

Placement happens when the child moves from a licensed home into the new prospective adoptive family's home.

Many children are adopted by their licensed parents, known as foster parent conversions. When this happens, no physical move is necessary as the child lives in the home where he/she is to be adopted.

The process is: (a) Selection of the family; (b) Presentation of the information to the family regarding the child and to the child regarding the family; (c) First meeting; (d) Get acquainted period and pre-placement visits; and (e) Day of placement.

The decision on final placement is based on the child's readiness and the cues given by the child to the Case Manager that he/she is ready to move into the new home.

QPS #7, 43, 54, 58, 66

Review key points with a Child Protection Professional to gain a clear understanding of a suitable adoptive placement.

Discuss:

- How will you know when the child is ready for placement?
- Are the parents ready for the child to move into their home?
- Does the child want to go? If not, do you still place the child?

Observe a Child Protection Professional conduct placement tasks. Throughout the placement process observe the listed placement tasks and activities:

- Assessing parent readiness for placement
- Assessing child readiness for placement
- Preparing parents for potential problems that may occur after placement
- Setting up and celebrating placement day

Determine each step and task the Child Protection Professional conducted to complete the required activities and apply the steps and tasks to one of your assigned cases under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional.

Interstate Adoptions – Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children

Unless the parent placing a minor for adoption files an affidavit that the parent chooses to place the minor outside the state, giving the reasons for that placement, or the minor is to be placed with a relative or with a stepparent, or the minor is special needs an adoption entity may not take or send a minor out of the state for the purpose of placement for adoption.

If an adoption entity chooses to do this they must file a petition for declaratory statement for prior approval of fees and costs.

When applicable, the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children will be used in placing children outside the state for adoption.

QPS #38, 39

Complete the following tasks for an ICPC under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional.

- Identify the ICPC Specialist for your agency/area.
- Determine where to locate ICPC Packet in your agency.
- Identify all the necessary forms required for the ICPC packet.
- Using the District ICPC transmittal Form determine all the documents that need completed on the form.
 - Requesting a Home Study
 - Submitting a Home Study
 - Placement Confirmation/Changes/terminations
 - Requesting a quarterly progress report
 - Submitting a quarterly progress report
 - Requesting or submitting additional information to other states
- Review a case in which an ICPC has been completed through case closure.
- Review the FSFN case notes to determine all parties involved and their roles.
- Draft** a request for placement in another state and courtesy supervision to take place using all appropriate documents in the ICPC packet.
- Complete case note documentation.
- Review the information with the child protection professional for approval.

Final Home Evaluation

At the end of the post placement supervisory period, the Case Manager and Supervisor must make a final assessment of the placement.

Before the final adoption hearing or within 90 days after the adoption petition is filed with the court, whichever occurs first, a final home evaluation must be conducted.

A written report must be prepared including the findings of the evaluation, and a recommendation on the granting of the adoption petition.

Observe a Child Protection Professional conduct a **final home evaluation** and review a final home evaluation written report

Determine and understand:

- Contents of a final home evaluation
- Reason for recommendations i.e., filing the adoption petition, or recommending the case to remain open longer.
- Outcome of the discussion between the Supervisor and Adoption Case Manager
- Next steps involved

Discuss with the Child Protection Professional the strategies and techniques to incorporate when a disrupted placement occurs:

You should understand how to:

- Tell when a disruption is imminent
- Take actions to resolve the problems
- Assess when it is best to move a child
- Offer help to the family
- Complete a disruption summary

Initiate procedures for abuse investigations on adoptive parents, if appropriate.

Review the FSFN documentation associated with an adoption disruption.

Adoption Finalization

If it is decided that finalization is appropriate, the consent to adoption is signed and the process of finalization is set in motion

A final judgment for adoption is issued when the court decides adoption is in the best interest of the child, parental rights have been terminated, and the period for filing an appeal has expired.

Petition

Observe a Child Protection Professional:

- Review case and prepare any other necessary paperwork prior to hearing.
- Assist the Children's Legal Services attorney preparing the final petition for Adoption.

Hearing

Observe the Child Protection Professional at the hearing for adoption finalization. Note:

- Advanced preparation conducted by the Child Protection Professional
- The paperwork/documents prepared
- The significance of the legal proceeding
- The individuals who attended and the roles
- Decisions that were made
- Determine the next step

Assist in the preparation of the final petition for Adoption on one of your assigned cases and present the petition at the scheduled hearing under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional.

Post Placement Services

Services must be provided until the finalization of an adoption. This period must be no less than 90 days from the date the child was placed in the physical custody of the adoptive parent.

The first home visit must be made within one week after placement.

There must be a minimum of three supervisory visits in placements which are non-problematic.

For placements which do not proceed smoothly, additional and more frequent contacts are necessary.

The adoptive child or children must be contacted a minimum of once every calendar month until adoption finalization.

The entire family must be seen together at least once during the post-placement supervision

Observe a Child Protection Professional post placement visits on adoption cases.

- Review key discussion points that must occur during the post placement supervision phase:
- Supervisory visits with the family: Where? When? How often? Why?
- Providing post placement supervision services: provision of ongoing services, remedial services, crisis intervention, or community resources to access. Are they determined to be needed? If so which ones? Why? How will they be implemented?

Complete a post placement visit on one of your assigned cases under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional.

Case Closure

A case can only be closed if an adoption finalization order has been received by the court legalizing the adoption

The case must be closed out in the FSFN system data base.

The case file must also be prepared for closure.

The supervisor must approve closure on all cases.

Observe as many closed adoption case files in your agency as possible.

- Examine the completed paperwork in a closed adoption case file.

Determine how to initiate the case closure page in FSFN. Under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional, input the following on an adoption case ready for closure:

- Basic information
- Closing Information
- Closure Status
- Closure Summary
- Closure Denial Message (if needed)

Under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional complete the following closure activities in FSFN and discuss steps involved:

- Submit a case evaluation or case note (as appropriate) to supervisor for approval
- Close case goals as appropriate
- Update/End legal status as appropriate
- Close all placement/living arrangements/removals
- Complete final case notes
- Notify family, G.A.L. and service providers as necessary

Under the guidance of a Child Protection Professional prepare the paper case file for closure.

- Determine where the closed file is maintained

Child Death Cases

Any employee of DCF, the contracted service providers or sheriffs' offices who has knowledge of a child's death and who has reasonable cause to suspect that the child died as a result of abuse, neglect or abandonment must immediately report the death to the Florida Abuse Hotline and follow all Child death procedures according to Chapter 39 Florida Statutes and the Florida Administrative Codes .

Child Death Cases

- ☐ Review the sections of Chapter 39 Florida Statutes and the Florida Administrative Codes that pertain to Child Deaths.
- ☐ Discuss the procedures and protocol in your agency with a Child Protection Professional.
 - Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist (CFPS)
 - Notifications
 - Timeframes
 - Difference between a limited and comprehensive review
- ☐ Determine the agency specific process that occurs when a child under the agency's care dies.
- ☐ Determine FSFN screens and documentation that must be completed.