

THE WHOS "TAKE-AWAY" PACKET

It is important for adults to understand their motivation for doing something because motivation gives energy and direction to the plan. Think about why you are pursuing this path to provide foster/adoption/kinship care for a child.

**Describe the child you have dreamed of:**

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**Describe what behaviors you expect:**

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**Why are you going through this process to become (a) foster/adoptive/kinship parent(s)?**

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**Name some "bad" motivators in wanting to pursue foster/adoption/kinship care.**

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Most adults who make a commitment to permanency for a child expect to get something out of the process. They have expectations about how things will go, what children will be like, and how they will be as parents. Some expectations in foster/adoption/kinship are more realistic than others.

**Name some expectations that you think are “realistic”.**

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**Name some expectations that you think are “unrealistic”.**

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Reflection:

**How do your expectations and motivations measure up? Are they realistic?**

**Will they sustain through difficult times?**

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The first few weeks to months are known as the “honeymoon phase”. The children are usually on their “best” behavior during this phase while they get to know you, your family, and your daily routines as well as the “rules” of the house. Most parents adjust their expectations of themselves and their children down within the first few weeks and months after placement, but their motivations remain strong and provide the energy to keep going through hard times.

**How would you react to a child who has just had a visit with his/her birth family and is now talking back to you and/or being defiant?**

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**If you are aware a child in your home has experienced neglect, what types of behavior would you expect the child to exhibit? What can you do to help the child?**

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**If you are aware the child in your home has been exposed to drug /alcohol addiction, what types of behaviors would you expect the child exhibit? What can you do to help the child?**

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**If you are aware a child in your home has experienced abuse of any kind, what types of behavior would you expect the child to exhibit? What can you do to help the child?**

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Parents often think about changes in the child(ren), how he or she will grow, learn, and more. Less often do parents think about how the children will change the parents. The addition of a foster/adoptive/kinship care child to your family will affect you in many ways.

**How will your identity change? (who or what you are known as)**

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**How will your life be better through foster/adoption/kinship?**

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**If things do not go as well as you hope, how would you feel?**

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**What would be the most difficult for you to accept/deal with and cause you the most stress?**

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**What are some of your strengths regarding parenting?**

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**What are some of your weaknesses regarding parenting?**

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**Ask someone close to you if they agree or disagree with your strengths and weaknesses and if they have anything to add to either.**

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**How will your strengths and weaknesses impact your parenting?**

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## FAMILY TRAITS

What words describe your family?

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What words do you think people outside of your family use to describe your family?

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\*\*\*Some examples include close, madhouse, stubborn, hard-working, strong-willed, honest, slick, tough, ambitious, etc. and their opposites.

How might your family identity change after foster/adoption/kinship?

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Do you expect the children entering your home to pick up family traits?

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Complete this activity with your spouse and/or current children as well as every new child entering your home. It will help by providing information on family life.

**For fun I like to do these things:**

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**Here are some activities that I do not like to do:**

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**These manners are most important in our family:**

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**I like when people treat me:**

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**I do not like it when people treat me:**

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**In our family we tend to** a) do our own thing.

b) do most things together.

**What are some activities that you like to do alone?**

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**What are some activities that you like to do with other people?**

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**What are some activities that you hope the child would like to do?**

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## FAMILY RULES

What are the rules in your family?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

What is the punishment for breaking a rule?

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Create your house rules and review it with each child. Ask the child to add rules (within reason) for the parent to follow as well). For example: if the child(ren) is not allowed to have electronics at the dinner table or during “family time” then this rule should apply to the parent(s) as well.

If the child is old enough to sign, both the child(ren) and parent(s) need to sign in agreement/acknowledgement of the family rules.

**PARENTING AND DISCIPLINE** training can assist you in completing this activity!

## FAMILY VALUES

**What are my/our values?**

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**What could happen to me/us if our child(ren) does not accept our values?**

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**What could happen to the child(ren) if they do not accept or live up to my/our values?**

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**Do I/we see foster/adoption/kinship as a resource for me/us, or do I/we see it as resource for a child who needs a safe home? Does this affect my/our expectations of how the child(ren) will behave or what they will become in the future?**

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**What do/will I/we get out of raising children? Do I/we have a preference between boys or girls? Why?**

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**Do I/we feel my/our life is satisfying, or am I/we dependent on the children for my/our fulfillment? Do I/we expect the kids to become a “me” that I/we never became?**

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**Do I/we find it hard to accept or love someone who chooses to be different from me/us?**

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**EXTENTEND FAMILY AND FRIENDS RELATIONSHIPS**

**How would you respond if your parents or sibling refused to buy your foster/adopted/kinship care child a holiday present?**

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**How would you respond if your friend no longer asked your family to come to their house or attend usual events together?**

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**How would you respond if your sibling/uncle/aunt told the child not to call him/her "aunt/uncle"?**

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**How would you respond if you were talking to your grandparent about a problem you are having with the child and they said, "Don't come crying to me; I told you not to take on other people's troubles."?**

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Use this sheet to write down the name of extended family members and friends. Includes only those that you have an active relationship (see or talk to often). Next to each name indicate whether or not they

- (1) Will approve and support the foster/adoption/kinship care.
- (2) Will not care one way or another.
- (3) Will have reservations but may be silent.
- (4) Will be against it openly.

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**Which of your extended family members and friends are extra special to you or the children? Why are they important?**

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**Did you have conflict with any members of your extended family and friends within the past year? If so, why?**

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## RESOURCES

Family

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Friends

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County Children and Youth

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Foster Care Agency

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Community Resources

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Other

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