

Preparation of the Caregivers for Family Visits

Caregivers are important partners along with the child welfare worker and the family in visiting. It is the worker's role to convey this to them and to help them prepare for and be involved in visiting. Some key points to consider and things one can do when preparing the caregivers for family visits are:

- Assisting the caregivers to identify the optimum schedule for the visits to occur.
- Discussing the benefits of family visits to the child and its impact on reunification of the child with their biological family of origin.
- Providing information to the caregiver about what behaviors they might expect from the child before and after the family visits, why these behaviors may occur and **how to handle the varying reactions of the child**.
- Assisting the caregiver to develop special before-visit activities with the children and to identify what types of support the children may need in the time before the visit.
- Encourage the caregiver to work with the child on identifying what activities the child may want to do with the parent during the visit.
- Assessing the caregiver's receptiveness to working closely with the birth parent in shared parenting activities and address any concerns or questions they may have.
- Encouraging the caregiver to create a "Happy Pack" filled with special things that have happened for the child or things that the child is excited to share with the parents since the last visit. Examples include:
 - A favorite book
 - A note the captures something cute or funny that the child has shared
 - A picture the child drew or colored
 - A note from the child's teacher or an assignment the child is proud of
 - A letter the child has written to the parent