

Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) Discharge Planning Procedures

A youth's transition from TFC to a family setting should be structured, ensuring both the youth and receiving family are adequately prepared. Service providers are involved and know their roles before and after the placement change. Of course, every youth and family is different, so adapt as needed, but this is the general protocol:

1. Assessment of Youth's Readiness

- Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the youth's emotional, psychological, and behavioral stability.
- Assess the youth's coping skills, resilience, and ability to manage daily life.
- Ensure the youth has support networks in place, including mentors, therapists, and community resources.
- Review the youth's educational and healthcare needs, ensuring continuity of services.

2. Evaluation of Family Readiness

- Assess the family's understanding of the youth's needs, trauma history, and behavioral patterns.
- Ensure the family has adequate financial, emotional, and social support.
- Conduct home visits to evaluate the living environment and ensure safety.
- Provide training and counseling on trauma-informed care, conflict resolution, and parenting strategies.
- Ensure the family receiving the youth has a relationship with the TFC resource parent and knows how and when they can contact them.

3. Transition Planning (planning should start at 3 months and be evaluated at the 45-day meetings)

- Develop a gradual transition plan, including overnight visits, weekend stays, and extended stays if appropriate prior to the placement change.
- Establish clear expectations for both the youth and family regarding roles, responsibilities, and boundaries. Establish clear expectations for involved support, including the department caseworker, the TFC Resource Parents, the TFC Case Manager and others if involved.
- Ensure the youth has access to mental health support during the transition.
- Create a communication plan for ongoing check-ins with the team around the youth.

4. Legal & Administrative Steps

- Confirm all legal documentation is in place, including custody agreements and guardianship paperwork.
- Coordinate with the team around the youth, legal representatives, schools, healthcare providers, and social services to ensure continuity of care.

5. Post-Transition Support & Monitoring

- Schedule regular follow-ups with the youth and family to assess adjustment.
- Provide access to peer support groups, counseling, and emergency assistance.
- Maintain an open line of communication for ongoing guidance and intervention if needed.