

Curriculum Overview

The following is a summary of each unit contained in the Treatment Foster Care Parent Training. The summary is in the form of critical questions that you can expect to be able to answer at the conclusion of each unit.

Unit 1: Introduction to Treatment Foster Care

- What are the purposes, goals, and expectations of the training?
- What is the history and purpose of treatment foster care?
- What are the core elements of treatment foster care and where does it fit in the continuum of services for troubled children?
- How does treatment foster care differ from traditional or regular foster care?
- What do we mean by “permanency planning” and what are some strategies to help facilitate permanency?
- What are some of the realities and challenges of being a treatment parent?

Unit 2: Professional Parenting

- What does it mean to be a “professional parent”? What are the key behaviors and characteristics of professional treatment parents?
- What exactly is my role and responsibilities as a treatment foster parent?
- Who are the typical members of the treatment team and what are their roles?
- Why is it important to develop partnerships with treatment team members, especially with the child’s family?
- What are the key elements to understand about prudent parenting, supervision levels, and advocating for children in care?
- What are the supports available to treatment parents within the organization, treatment team and the community?

Unit 3: Trauma and Child Development

- What are the age-related milestones during typical child and adolescent development?
- What are the basic ways that Adverse Childhood Experiences, Social Determinants of Health and Institutional Racism and Transgenerational Trauma affect the families and children served in TFC programs?
- How can traumatic experiences affect a children’s development?
- What are some elements of positive brain development and the impact of trauma on a child’s developing brain?
- How does the Regulate – Relate – Reason model provide help for dysregulated children?
- What are the positive aspects of teaching and relationship building through TFC Discipline Practices?

- What are the regulations on prohibited practices including the use of physical and other forms of corporal punishment?
- How do we use a Family Sexual Safety Contract as a tool for child and family safety?
- What are the legal obligations and program expectations of treatment parents as mandated reporters of child abuse?

Unit 4: Understanding Childhood Mental Health and Diagnosis

- What are the four common types of neuro-developmental disorders that affect children?
- What are the most common psychiatric diagnoses of children served in TFC programs?
- What are some parenting strategies I can use to work with children with these common psychiatric disorders?
- What effects can separation, loss and grief have on the relationships between children, their families and treatment parents?
- What relationship building tools and strategies can I use to help children in various stages of the grief cycle?
- How can I use “co-regulation” in helping a dysregulated child regain emotional control?
- How do self-soothing and relaxation techniques benefit children in care?
- What is a treatment parent’s role in the use and monitoring of medications?

Unit 5: Developing Healthy Relationships

- How do the Principles of Trauma Informed Care aid in understanding the process of building relationships with children in care?
- What are the stages of developing relationships and important areas of engagement and challenge in each stage?
- What are several ways that I can begin to build healthy attachments with children placed in my home?
- How can I build connections with my child’s family and strengthen their family connection?
- What are some ways for treatment parents to join with children through understanding their family’s culture?
- What are the benefits of “catching kids being good” and using descriptive praise to promote positive behavior?
- What are “Social Rewards” and how do I use them to promote learning and relationships building with children?

Unit 6: Therapeutic Communication

- What is therapeutic communication and how does it differ from typical parental responses to a child?
- How can I communicate in a way that builds relationships?
- How can I listen so that children will talk? What is active listening?
- How can I communicate in a way that helps children manage their feelings, behavior and solve problems?
- How can I use non-verbal communication effectively with children?
- How can connecting and listening with empathy help build more open communication with children?
- What are the components to therapeutic communication?

Unit 7: Understanding and Changing Behavior

- Why do children behave that way, and what is the connection between behavior and needs?
- How can I use Applied Behavior Analysis and a Functional Behavior Assessment in determining behavioral goals and developing strategies to teach children more positive, appropriate behaviors?
- How can using rewards effectively promote positive behavior and build parent-child relationships?
- What are the stages of the Conflict-Crisis Cycle and my role in reducing a child's stress level to promote regulation and relationship?
- What are the reasons and situations for using a variety of interventions to support behavior change?
- How can I manage my own feelings during difficult interactions with children?

Unit 8: Skill Teaching

- What are Executive Function Skills and why are they important?
- What if a child is able but not willing to behave appropriately?
- How do I know when and what to teach? Is there a criterion for deciding?
- What is the connection between brain development and learning?
- Why is it important to learn and focus on my child's personal strengths?
- What does skill teaching look like? Are there steps I can follow to teach a child new skills or replacement behaviors?

Unit 9: Conflict Resolution

- What kinds of conflict might I experience as a treatment parent?
- What are some myths and truths about managing conflict?
- Can conflict be healthy and constructive?
- What is a conflict cycle and how do parents and children provoke and escalate each other's conflict cycles?
- What approaches can I use in responding to conflicts?
- Is there a technique or steps that I can follow to resolve conflict?
- What are the key elements of preparing for a conflict resolution meeting?

Unit 10: Understanding & Managing Crisis

- What is crisis? What does crisis look like in treatment foster care?
- How do children and adults view crisis differently?
- What are the main objectives for a treatment parent in response to a crisis?
- Why are safety and awareness key elements during a crisis situation?
- How can my understanding of the Conflict Cycle and Crisis Stages help me manage my response to children in crisis?
- What are some early prevention techniques that I can use to prevent a crisis?
- How can I help turn a crisis into a learning opportunity?
- What are the benefits of using consequences as a teaching tool?