



# Nurturing Child and Youth Connections

## In-Service Training

### Course Description

Connections and relationships are important for everyone. Research shows how connections support a child's safety and well-being. Legislation recognizes the importance of these connections. As a caregiver you can help the children and youth in your care to maintain and build connections with the people who are important to them. In this module you will explore through reflection and large group discussion:

- The importance of connections for the wellbeing of children and youth.
- Your role in helping the child or youth in your care to build relationships.
- Strategies to help you in your role.

### Learning Objectives

After you've finished this module, you will be able to:

- Explain how a family might feel about having their child or youth in care.
- Describe how lifelong connections are important for child and youth wellness.
- Build respectful relationships with the people who are important to the children and youth in your care.
- Explain the roles of the caregiver support team in nurturing child and youth connections.
- Meet challenges you may experience when nurturing child and youth connections.

### Key Messages

- A critical part of the caregiver role is to nurture relationships and connections with the important people in the children/youth's lives
- These connections are important to identity and self-esteem and the overall well-being of the child/ youth
- The positive relationships they develop with the child/youth's connections will make their roles easier and contribute to safety
- Remember it is worth it; caregivers are part of building the parents back up again.

### Guided Discussion Questions

1. What information about a child or youth do you need in order to make a decision about their "fit" in your home? What other information would you want before accepting a new placement to better prepare for their transition into your home?
2. What are some things you can do to support the child or youth both when they come into your home and also when it comes time to leave? Do you do anything special to acknowledge a child or youth's time with your family? How do you support your family members when a child or youth leaves?

## Resources

**Resource one:** A Safe Place, (n.d.). Why women stay in abusive relationships. Accessed February 6th, 2018, retrieved from:

Link: <http://asafeplace.website/education/whywomen-stay/>

**Resource two:** Foster and Adoptive Family Services Blog (August 13, 2013). Foster care lies: The demonization of birth parents. Retrieved from:

Link: <http://foster-adoptivekinship-family-services-nj.org/foster-care-lies-birth-parents/>

**Resource three:** Royal College of Psychiatrists (2018). Parental mental illness: The impact on children and adolescents: Information for parents, caregivers, and anyone who works with young people. Retrieved from:

Link: [http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyoungpeople/parents\\_carers/parentalmentalillness.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyoungpeople/parents_carers/parentalmentalillness.aspx)

**Resource four:** Government of Canada (2016) Family Violence: How big is the problem in Canada? Retrieved from:

Link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/publichealth/services/health-promotion/stop-family-violence/problem-canada.html>

**Resource five:** Chateaufort, D., Turcotte, D., Drapeau, S. (2017) The relationship between foster care families and birth families in a child welfare context: The determining factors. Retrieved from:

Link: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/cfs.12385>

**Resource six:** Creating a Family. (2022). Ten Tips for Supporting Relationships with Birth Parents in Foster Care. Retrieved from:

Link: <https://creatingafamily.org/foster-care/ten-tips-for-supporting-relationships-with-birthparents-in-fostercare/#:~:text=%20Ten%20Tips%20for%20Supporting%20Relationships%20with%20Birth,a nd%20the%20child%20to%20participate%20in...%20More%20>