Meeting 5 Handouts

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2. Definitions - Discipline and Punishment
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4. Discipline Methods Worksheet
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10. Shared Parenting and Alliance Building: Benefits to the Children, Foster Parents and Parents of Children in Foster Care
11. The Importance of Birth Parents to Children in Foster Care
12. Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
13. Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA) and Amendment of 1996 (IEPA)
# Meeting 5: Helping Children Learn To Manage Behaviors

**Agenda**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>(15 minutes)</td>
<td>E-1. INTRODUCTION TO MEETING 5</td>
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<td>♦ Welcome Back</td>
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<td>♦ Mutual selection issues</td>
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<td>♦ Bridge from Meeting 4</td>
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<td>♦ Meeting 5 agenda</td>
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<td>(30 minutes)</td>
<td>E-2. THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENTS IN HELPING CHILDREN EXPRESS FEELINGS AND MANAGE BEHAVIORS</td>
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<td>♦ The difference between discipline and punishment</td>
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<td>(30 minutes)</td>
<td>E-3. HELPING CHILDREN MANAGE CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS</td>
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<td>♦ Discipline techniques that assure safety</td>
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<td>(10 minutes)</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
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<td>(15 minutes)</td>
<td>E-4. THE POWER OF POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT</td>
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<td>(60 minutes)</td>
<td>E-5. HELPING CHILDREN MANAGE CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS</td>
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<td>♦ Examples of situations requiring special discipline skills</td>
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<td>(20 minutes)</td>
<td>E-6. SUMMARY OF MEETING 5 AND PREVIEW OF MEETING 6</td>
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<td>♦ Summary of Meeting 5</td>
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<td>♦ Preview of Meeting 6</td>
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<td>♦ Next step in the mutual assessment process</td>
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<td>♦ A Partnership in Parenting Experience</td>
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ROADWORK

- Read Handout 7 – Arizona Discipline Rules and Policy
- Read Handout 8 – Side Effects of Physical Punishment
- Read Handout 11 – Shared Parenting and Alliance Building: Benefits to the Children, Foster Parents and Parents of Children in Foster Care
- Read Handout 12 – The Importance of Birth Parents to Children in Foster Care
- Read Handout 13 – Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
- Read Handout 14 – Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) & Amendment of 1996 (IEPA)
- Complete your Strengths/Needs Worksheet. (Handout 10)
Definitions – Discipline and Punishment

♦ Punishment is a behavior designed to stop a behavior. Punishment is derived from the Latin, *punire*, which is associated with causing pain.

♦ Discipline is defined as “training intended to produce a specified character or pattern of behavior.” The word discipline is derived from the Latin, *discere*, which means to learn. (Source: *The American Heritage Dictionary*)

♦ Discipline of children who have been physically abused, neglected, emotionally maltreated or sexually abused should teach the following:
  - To understand feelings and needs;
  - To understand the connection between feelings and behaviors;
  - To learn healthy ways to get needs met (problem solve);
  - To feel good about their relationships with adults and other children;
  - To feel good about themselves (lovable, capable, responsible and worthwhile).
Discipline Techniques to Help Children and Youth Manage Their Behaviors

Please use this handout to take notes as the methods are discussed. As you think about the method, write down behaviors that could be managed using the ideas presented.

1. **Be a Role Model**
   One of the most effective methods of learning is imitation. Role modeling is an effective method of teaching social behaviors. Think of some things you have learned to do by watching others. Can you think of some social situations, such as your first formal dining experience, where you may have taken cues on how to behave based on what others were doing?

2. **Provide the Child with Time Out**
   Time out is an effective behavioral way to let children know that what they are doing they cannot continue to do. Some people will ask, “How can you help a young child, learn to do things when their language is limited and it is difficult to reason with them?” Time out can be effectively used to stop a young child’s behavior. It lets the child know what is right and what not to do. Time out also provides the child with an opportunity to get back in control. Think of ways you as an adult have learned to take time out when you are angry or are having an emotional reaction.

3. **Provide Positive Reinforcers and Privileges**
   One of the best ways to get a behavior to continue is to reward it. Immediate positive feedback usually causes the person to continue or repeat the behavior that is being reinforced. Both the cycle of attachment and the positive interaction cycle depend on positive interventions and positive response. The process is simple. Would you continue to smile or make eye contact with someone who did not smile back or look at you? We all tend to continue behavior when it is reinforced.
4. **Take Away Privileges**

Children need to be able to make the connections between actions, responsibilities and rights. Often privileges are earned based on responsible behavior. We let children use the telephone and expect that they will be considerate of the privilege and others’ needs. If the rule is that no call be longer than 20 minutes, and the child continues to extend calls beyond that time limit, taking away the privilege of using the phone for 24 hours may be an effective way to change the behavior. Children learn the connections between behavior and consequences when their lost privileges are tied to the behavior they need to change. When the loss of privilege does not relate to the behavior, the child is more likely to feel punished and resentful.

5. **Provide Natural and Logical Consequences**

Consequences that are natural, ones likely to occur if no intervention is taken, become life’s lessons. Unfortunately, some natural consequences are really learning by the school of hard knocks, such as when toys left outside are stolen. When we want to prevent life’s blows to children or need to protect their health and safety, we often provide logical consequences rather than natural consequences. What are some natural consequences from which you have learned?

6. **Ignore the Behavior**

Some behaviors need attention or reinforcement to continue. Sometimes children will act up or out just to get a parent’s attention. If a child is using a behavior to gain control or get your attention, an effective response can be to withhold attention.

7. **Ensure that Restitution Occurs**

Sometimes the best way to learn what to do right is by practicing the right way. If children are held accountable for their behavior, they are more likely to be responsible.
8. **Hold Family Meetings**  
Often the best way to resolve an issue is to get all the parties together and discuss what is happening and what are logical solutions. By holding family meetings, parents show their children that they are an important part of the family and that their feelings count. Also, family meetings help children learn to talk about their concerns.

9. **Develop Behavioral Charts**  
Behavioral charts can help assist parents to determine when behaviors occur and what causes them. By tracking behaviors, parents can determine when to use positive reinforcement to increase the learning or performance of the desired behaviors.

10. **Grandma’s Rule or This for That**  
Grandma’s Rule or This for That teaches both the expected order of behaviors and a logical way to earn privileges. For example, children must finish their homework before they can watch television.

11. **Help the Child Understand Feelings**  
Many children will not relate the way they are feeling to the way they are acting. When parents can help the child connect emotions and behaviors, an important first step toward changing behaviors has been made. Several communication methods such as paraphrasing, reflecting, active listening and “I” messages can be very useful.

Paraphrasing is restating what was said with minor variations in the words and in a similar tone. For example, child says, “I wish my mom could help me with my homework.” You paraphrase and respond, “You wish your mom were around to help you.”

Reflecting is restating the content (beliefs, opinions, event and facts) with focus on the emotion and feelings behind the words. For example, child looks sad and says in a soft voice, “I wish my mom could help me with my homework.” You
reflect by saying, “It sounds like you miss your mom, especially when you have a big job to do.”

Active listening is listening with understanding and then clarifying the statement and responding to the feelings. For example, child says “You’re not my mom, I don’t have to do what you say!” You respond, “You are right, I am not your mother and you really wish you were able to be with her.

“I” message is responding in the first person: “I feel worried and upset when I don’t know where you are.”

12. **Replace Negative Time with Positive Time**
   It is very difficult to stop behavior. Substituting something positive and healthy for something negative and destructive is a key to being able to change a behavior.

13. **Provide Alternatives for Destructive Acting-Out Behaviors**
   Emotions carry a great deal of energy. Children will need some place to put that energy. Parents can help them to find positive ways to express their feelings.

14. **Make a Plan for Change with a Child**
   Learning how to make a plan for change only comes with practice. Plans usually start with a goal. If you can help a child understand the need for change and then develop a goal, you will be moving in the right direction. Think of a time you had a goal and what helped you to achieve it. Did you have small, reasonable steps? Were there lots of options to get you where you were going? What kind of reinforcers or rewards did you get along the way?
15. **Make a Plan for Change with the Child and a Professional**  
Adoptive parents and foster parents have many resources available to them. You can call on the child welfare worker, a clinical social worker, psychologist, counselor and many other professionals. Be ready to reach out for the help that you and the child need.

16. **Other effective discipline techniques**
Discipline Methods Worksheet

1. The child's behavior might mean the child is feeling:

   because:

2. As the parent, I am feeling:

   because:

3. The child's behavior needs to change to:

   because:

4. Discipline methods that might be harmful to the child or may not teach healthy ways of getting needs met (methods that would not help the child problem solve appropriate ways of getting needs met; feel good about relationships with adults and other children; or have a positive self-concept to feel lovable, capable, worthwhile and responsible) would be:

5. Discipline methods that would help the child express needs and get needs met (methods that would help the child problem solve appropriate ways of getting needs met; feel good about relationships with adults and other children; or have a positive self-concept to feel lovable, capable, worthwhile and responsible) would be:
Case Examples - Discipline

Jenny

Foster Family: Jim and Marvie Nelson have been foster parents for two years. They have a 12-year-old daughter, Sandra, a 10-year-old son, Jeff, and a beloved and very old family dog, “Rusty.”

Child: Jenny, from Meeting 2, is six years old. She has been living with the Nelsons for two months. Jenny is bilingual and grew up in a home where Spanish was spoken.

Reason for Foster Care: Jenny is in care because of physical abuse. Jenny had a broken leg, multiple bruises and burns when she came into foster care. Her mother’s boyfriend is accused of the abuse. Jenny’s mother is originally from Mexico is bilingual but is more comfortable speaking Spanish. Spanish is spoken in the home. Her mother is overwhelmed and frustrated and says she cannot handle Jenny by herself. She says she loves Jenny. Jenny’s mother is living with her boyfriend who threatens and sometimes hits her also.

Strengths: Jenny is attending school at grade level and is good about taking care of herself. She follows most of the family’s rules and sometimes offers to help with chores such as setting the table or cleaning up. She is bilingual.

Behavior: Jenny frequently disobeys deliberately; does not want to be touched, is afraid of stairs, bathtubs, strangers, and screams whenever she sees someone with a cigarette. Recently she has begun hitting the family dog, mostly when she thinks no one is watching. She has also begun using profanity, especially in front of friends of Sandra and Jeff. She yelled, “suck my dick” at Mrs. Nelson yesterday.
Case Examples - Discipline

Jeryce

Foster Family: Mark and Melanie Carnell have been foster parents for four years. Their children are grown and live away from home.

Child: Jeryce is an 11-year-old girl who has been with the Carnell’s for four months.

Reason for Foster Care: Jeryce entered foster care as a result of neglect and sexual abuse. Jeryce’s father and mother are separated, but continue to spend time together, especially to use drugs. Jeryce has been mostly on her own throughout her childhood because her parents are usually high on drugs. Several older adolescents in the neighborhood who do drugs with her parents have sexually abused Jeryce on several occasions. The sexual abuse involved forced oral sex and intercourse.

Strengths: Jeryce is an intelligent girl, but her grades have slipped dramatically during the past two years, and she has begun skipping school since she came into foster care. Jeryce is African American and is living in a white foster home in a working class, white neighborhood. Although Jeryce has experienced some terrible racial slurs, she has begun talking with her foster family about ways she can handle the situation in the neighborhood.

Behavior: Jeryce has begun dressing more provocatively and spends a lot of time at the foster family’s church flirting with older boys. Mrs. Carnell has heard from another mother from the church that Jeryce is talking very explicitly about sex with the other young people of the church. Jeryce has also been caught lying on several occasions and for no apparent reason. It is almost as though she doesn’t recognize the truth. Jeryce cries herself to sleep almost every night. She explains that she is afraid of the dark. During the past two weeks Jeryce has also begun masturbating in front of Mr. and Mrs. Carnell by sitting on the floor and rhythmically rocking on a pillow when they watch television together.
Case Examples - Discipline

Jason

Foster Family: John and Carol Plowman have been foster parents for six years. Their two children are attending college in a community about three hours from their home. They come home a couple of weekends every semester.

Child: Jason is 15 and has been with the Plowman’s for 12 months.

Reason for Foster Care: Jason entered foster care because of physical abuse by his father, who is now in prison for drug-related charges. Jason has not seen his mother since shortly after his sister, Hope, was born.

Strengths: Jason gets along well with his classmates, although he has no close friends. Jason does well in school and is affectionate in the family. He is very close with his sister and feels responsible for her. During the year Jason has lived with the Plowman’s, he has become more comfortable talking about tough problems. He recently disclosed to his foster mother that he is gay. Jason says that he has known that he is gay for as long as he can remember. He says he is not sexually active and that no one else knows he is gay. Although Jason has become very sad at times during the past six months, he has been able to talk about his feelings, especially about his father and mother.

Behavior: During the past two weeks Jason has become “moody,” swinging from being very happy to becoming angry and sarcastic with both Mr. and Mrs. Plowman. He has begun spending time with a group of three girls, whom the Plowman’s have only met once. Last night Jason came in past curfew, laughing, stumbling and smelling of marijuana.
# Choosing Discipline Strategies to Keep a Child Safe

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<tr>
<th>Reason for Placement Stage of Development</th>
<th>Case Example and Behavior</th>
<th>What are possible effective discipline strategies</th>
<th>In what ways would this discipline strategy keep this child safe?</th>
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<td>Neglect/Infants and Toddlers</td>
<td><strong>Group 1: Joey</strong> is in care because of neglect. He is one year of age. His mother is 17 and was also neglected. She cannot provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care and supervision for Joey. Joey was born prenatally exposed to Meth. His mother took off with her boyfriend when Joey was 9 months old. Joey’s mother returned two weeks ago. Joey is not interested in anything or anyone; looks sad; is just learning to stand; cries a lot and is not easily comforted by being held or fed. <strong>Joey has recently begun moving from uncontrolled crying into full body rages, during which time he hits his head on hard surfaces.</strong></td>
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<td>Reason for Placement/Stage of Development</td>
<td>Case Example and Behavior</td>
<td>What are possible effective discipline strategies</td>
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| Neglect/ School Age                      | **Group 2: Hope** is 9 years old and is placed with her 15 year old brother, Jason. Their father, who physically abused Jason, is now in prison for drug-related charges. Jason and Hope have been in foster care for seven months. They have not seen their mother since shortly after Hope was born.  

Hope is in the 4th grade and is doing well. She loves to read. She is a “tomboy” and is more comfortable playing soccer or baseball with boys on the playground, but she does not have any close friends. She gets upset easily and gets into fistfights with kids on the playground. She is resistant toward her foster mother and still looks to Jason for nurturing and guidance.  

*Hope became very angry at Jason because he would not take her with him to the movies and yelled, “Fuck You” then hit him in the nose, blackening both of his eyes.* |                                                                                        |                                                      |
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| Neglect and Medical Neglect/Adolescent   | **Group 3: Karen** is 16 and has been in foster care several times during her life due to neglect and medical neglect. Her mother has recurrent problems with drugs and alcohol. Karen has been in this foster home for three months; this is the second time she has lived here. Karen has Fetal Alcohol Effect. She also has a heart murmur. Karen is about three years behind her grade level in school and has been diagnosed with dyslexia, a reading disorder. Karen has two friends from her foster parents' church, who are two years younger than she is. Karen has a big smile when she is happy and she loves to dress up. Most of the time Karen is very quiet and wants to stay in her room by herself. She looks forward to Sundays when her mother is invited to eat dinner with the foster family.  

*Karen went out with some new friends last night and she came home with alcohol on her breath, stumbling and speaking incoherently.* | | |
DISCIPLINE PRACTICES RULES AND POLICY

Arizona Administrative Code R6-5-5833
Behavior Management; Discipline; Prohibitions

A. A foster parent shall set limits and rules for children in care. The foster parent shall tell the children about the foster parent’s expectations regarding child behavior, including forbidden conduct, and the foster parent’s methods for disciplining children who violate expectations, limitations, and rules.
1. A foster parent shall use discipline which is reasonable, developmentally appropriate, related to the infraction, and consistent with any guidelines in the child’s case plan.
2. A foster parent shall use disciplinary methods which help a foster child to build self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem.
3. A foster parent shall communicate rules, consequences, and disciplinary methods to a foster child in a manner appropriate to the child’s age, developmental capacity, and ability to understand.
4. A foster parent shall explain the foster parent’s limits, rules, and expectations to any placing agency or person that places a child with the foster parent.

B. A foster parent shall not delegate the responsibility for imposing discipline on a foster child to any person other than an adult assigned responsibility for the foster child, as prescribed in R6-5-5831(C), and made known to the child. If a foster parent delegates supervisory responsibility to another person, the foster parent shall instruct the person in the foster home limits, rules, and expectations, disciplinary methods specific to the foster child, and the limitations prescribed in this Article.

C. A foster parent shall not punish or maltreat a foster child, and shall not allow any other person to do so. As used in this Section, “punishment or maltreatment” include, but are not limited to, the following actions:
1. Any type or threat of physical hitting or striking inflicted in any manner upon the body;
2. Verbal abuse, including arbitrary threats of removal from the foster home;
3. Disparaging remarks about a foster child or a foster child’s birth family members or significant persons;
4. Deprivation of meals, clothing, bedding, shelter, or sleep;
5. Denial of visitation or communication with a foster child’s birth family members and significant persons when such denial is inconsistent with the foster child’s case plan;
6. Cruel, severe, depraved, or humiliating actions;
7. Locking a foster child in a room or confined area inside or outside of the foster home; and
8. Requiring a foster child to remain silent or be isolated for time periods that are not developmentally appropriate.
D. A foster parent shall not use mechanical restraints.
E. A foster parent shall not use physical restraint unless:
   1. Permission to use physical restraint is specified in the child’s case plan; and
   2. The foster parent has been trained in the proper use of the physical restraint to be used with a particular foster child.

*From Family Foster Parent Licensing Requirements*
ARIZONA DIVISION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES - DISCIPLINE POLICY
Exhibit 44 of DCYF Children’s Services Manual

A. SCOPE OF POLICY

Most children in the foster care program have experienced patterns of inappropriate punishment, abuse and/or violence in their families. Therefore, issues related to punishment often are confusing for the child. For foster children punishment is often connected to a wide variety of issues such as attention, power, revenge, control, loss of self-esteem, and pain-love.

This policy is clarification of the Agency's position on Discipline and point 9, of the Agency-Foster Home Agreement (FC-006). It should be read before signing the Agency-Foster home Agreement prior to becoming licensed and when relicensed.

B. PUNISHMENT vs. DISCIPLINE

Punishment implies the threat or use of power and/or fear to change inappropriate behavior. Punishment relies on external forces.

Discipline is a teaching process through which the child learns to develop and maintain the self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem, and orderly conduct necessary to assume responsibilities, make daily living decisions, and live according to accepted levels of social behavior.

C. POLICY

Children in foster care are to be disciplined, not punished. Discipline techniques help a child develop and maintain self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem and orderly conduct.

The purpose of discipline is to educate. Children are able to learn from their mistakes in a safe environment. Therefore, foster parents shall:

1. Develop rules that set the limits of acceptable behavior in the family. These rules will be clearly explained and applied based on the child's past experiences, personality and age as appropriate to each child in the family.

2. Develop fair, reasonable, age- or developmentally appropriate and consistent consequences, related to the offense, for implementing these rules. These consequences will also be communicated to each child.

3. Share with the team members any concerns or difficulties about disciplining a foster child, so constructive ideas and/or plans can be agreed upon.
D. ACCEPTABLE DISCIPLINE METHODS

Discipline should be communicated in such a way as to help the child develop self-control and assume responsibility for his or her own behavior. Individual children will respond to different methods based on age, personality and life experiences. Suggested methods which might be used are:

1. **Natural Consequences**: allowing the child to experience the results of his or her behavior by not intervening. If Susie forgets her softball glove, she will be unable to try out for the team.

2. **Logical Consequences**: imposing consequences which are as directly related as possible to the inappropriate behavior. If Johnnie broke the window, he can do extra chores to earn the money to pay for the new window.

3. **Encouragement/Praise**: identifying specific behaviors and strengths that encourage the child to develop and increase self-esteem. "That model car looks great! I like the color you chose. You did a job you can be proud of!"

4. **Positive Communication**: using language in positive terms to describe what you want, rather than what you don't want. "Walk around the pool" rather than "Stop that running!"

5. **Active Listening**: listening with understanding and then clarifying the statement and responding to the feelings. "It sounds like your teacher really scolded you in class and you must have felt really embarrassed by that."

6. **"I" Message**: communicating by phrasing in the first person. "I feel worried and upset when I don't know where my children are."

7. **Incentives/Rewards/Motivation**: providing short term incentives that help the child focus on desired behavior. If the child completes all the chores on his "job list" this week, he can go out for an ice cream cone on Saturday. (The younger the child, the shorter the period of time before an incentive or reward should be given.)

8. **Contracting**: negotiating with the child to create a written mutual agreement that provides incentives to help the child focus on a desired behavior. This is particularly appropriate with older children. If Tom passes all his subjects with at least a "C" grade, then he will have more time for recreation next semester.

9. **Redirecting**: substituting an acceptable behavior for an unacceptable one. "Carol, you can't play with Bob's stereo, but let's go find your crayons and some paper, so that you can make a picture."
10. **Role Modeling**: showing by example the behavior the parent wants from the child. If one shows respect for the child's property and privacy, the child will learn to respect the property and privacy of others.

11. **Time-out**: removing the child from the situation (usually 1 or 2 minutes for each year of the child's age). A specific chair or place in the room should be identified for the child as the "time-out" place.

12. **Removing Privileges**: losing a privilege which is related to the unacceptable behavior. The loss should be of short-term duration. Losing the use of the phone, time with friends, TV time, etc. could be used depending on what is important to the particular child.
Side Effects of Physical Punishment

Many parents, at some time, have felt that physical punishment (smacking, swatting, hitting, spanking, or depriving a child of food) is the only effective way to make a child stop a bad behavior.

Many parents have seen that physical punishment can be effective because:

✧ It immediately stops the behavior, at least for a while, by getting the child's attention.

✧ It makes the parents feel better because they are angry and, therefore, have a way to express their anger. The child knows they are angry.

✧ The spanking is just one small part of discipline and is received by the child in a context of a close, loving relationship with parents. *

✧ Many parents were raised with physical punishment and turned out to be healthy, happy and productive people.

Therefore, what is the problem with physical punishment? For children who have been sexually abused, physically abused or neglected, here are the side effects of physical punishment:

✧ Children who have been physically abused usually respond to physical punishment in one of the following ways:**

  ▪ They are so used to being physically and emotionally hurt that they don’t “feel” the pain. Therefore, they have to be hit or spanked harder and harder to feel any effects.

  ▪ They may find pleasure, or relief in getting the spanking, because it’s the only way they have learned to get attention.

✧ Physical punishment takes away the golden opportunity parents have to help a child feel remorse for an unkind or objectionable action, thus robbing the child of an opportunity for moral development.

Therefore, they will work hard to get their new parents to show attention the same way that their birth families showed attention.

✧ Physical punishment models aggressive behavior. It teaches children that the method a bigger person can use to stop the behavior of a smaller person is to use physical force. We don’t often see an adult use physical discipline with a child bigger than the adult. Likewise, we don’t often see a
smaller child hitting a bigger child. The following example demonstrates how a parent can teach a child to use physical force:

- A tired mother is in a grocery store or doctor’s office with her two children who are fighting. They start hitting each other. The mother finally turns around and hits her children, telling them to stop hitting each other. Certainly, she got them to stop hitting — at least for a while. But what did she also teach them? That you get people to do what you want by hitting them.

- Physical punishment teaches children what not to do instead of what to do.

- Physical punishment hurts children, and children who need foster care already have been hurt enough.

For children who have been abused, spanking or smacking can be terribly damaging. And sometimes, of course, a child’s foster parents will not know for certain that a child has been physically or sexually abused until the child’s behavior in the foster home so indicates.

Therefore, using alternatives to physical punishment has two important benefits. First, it minimizes the risk of additional hurt to a child. Second, it helps break the intergenerational cycle of physical abuse.
**Strengths/Needs Worksheet - After Meeting 5**

In the left column are the 12 Criteria for Mutual Selection. They are the twelve basic things you need to be able to do by the end of the PS-MAPP program. Mutual means that you and the agency will assess your willingness and ability to be successful resource families. In the strengths and needs columns please write at least three strengths and needs you have already identified. As a reminder for you, pages 3 and 4 list the abilities developed in the learning activities for Meeting 5. Review them as you think about your strengths and needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for Mutual Selection</th>
<th>Family strengths which will help us accomplish this ability</th>
<th>Family needs to be met in order to grow in our ability to do the task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Know your own family.</td>
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<td>2. Communicate effectively.</td>
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<td>3. Know the children.</td>
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<td>4. Build strengths; meet needs.</td>
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<td>5. Work in partnership.</td>
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<td>6. Be loss and attachment experts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criteria for Mutual Selection</td>
<td>Family <em>strengths</em> which will help us accomplish this ability</td>
<td>Family <em>needs</em> to be met in order to grow in our ability to do the task</td>
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<td>7. Manage behaviors.</td>
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<td>10. Assure health and safety.</td>
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<td>11. Assess impact.</td>
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<td>12. Make an informed decision.</td>
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Abilities Developed During Meeting 5

Following are the abilities developed or enhanced during Meeting 5 of the PS-MAPP program.

PS-MAPP Meeting 5 Abilities

By participating in this meeting, prospective foster parents and adoptive parents should be able to:

♦ Describe personal or family strengths and needs related to the 12 Criteria for Successful Fostering and Adopting.
♦ Identify behaviors children and youth may need help managing.
♦ Understand both the Licensing Rule and DES Policy regarding discipline.
♦ Understand why physical punishment is prohibited.
♦ Describe behaviors that are dangerous or harmful to children, youth and family members.
♦ Describe the unique role of foster parent in helping children and youth manage their behaviors.
♦ Explain the difference between the parental interventions of punishment and discipline.
♦ Explain how behaviors are indicators of underlying needs.
♦ Explain behavior management as a way of getting needs met.
♦ Describe parental interventions that help children and youth manage their own behaviors.
♦ Select parental interventions that will help children and youth manage their own behaviors.
♦ Describe personal emotional reactions that may create challenges for selecting effective parental interventions.
♦ Help children and youth manage their behaviors.
♦ In a case example, create parental interventions that help a child or youth manage own behavior and get needs met.
♦ Choose discipline strategies that assure a child’s safety.
♦ Explain how discipline can assure a child’s safety.
♦ In case examples, choose specific discipline techniques to help assure a child’s safety.
♦ Make an informed decision about attending Meeting 6.
Shared Parenting and Alliance Building: Benefits to the Children, Foster Parents and Parents of Children in Foster Care

Benefits to the child in foster care: When foster parents and the agency work to build constructive partnerships with birth families, the child may receive the following benefits:

1. The child will have more of a feeling of connectedness.
2. The child will not feel or actually be cut off from both immediate needs as well as the less tangible needs that birth parents can offer.
3. The child will not feel torn between adults.
4. If the child has the security that adults are acting together in his or her best interests, the child is free to be a child (the child will not have to worry about taking care of himself or herself, self-parenting).
5. If the child has the security that adults are acting together in his or her best interests, the child is free to resume normal development, which has probably been interrupted by the confusion that led to the child’s placement; this confusion may have included the child having to take on roles a child normally would not take on, which interferes with a child’s development.
6. Children will be better able to manage and tolerate multiple-adult relationships if they perceive the adults in their life as working together, rather than being in conflict. When adults are in conflict, a child may become, for instance, detached or can tend not to venture out for relationships or can have conflicting relationships.
7. When children have contact with birth parents, they are better able to work through some of the painful feelings they have from the separation that resulted from placement into care. Though the short-term effect of seeing birth parents may be that the child is upset, the long-term effects are generally beneficial.
8. When children are able to work through emotions by seeing birth parents, their behavior is likely to improve.
9. If children are able to see birth parents and express their feelings, they are less likely to misdirect their painful or angry feelings toward foster parents.
10. Regular birth parent visits strongly increase the chances of reunification.
11. Regular contact with birth parents helps the child see how much progress they are making toward bringing the child home.

12. Even when birth parents do not follow through by coming to visits or by coming to visits in a nurturing way, these experiences help children to come to recognize and understand their parents’ limitations, which can emotionally ease the child’s passage from foster care to adoption or independent living.

Benefits to the Foster Parents: When foster parents and the agency work to build constructive partnerships with birth families, the foster parents may receive the following benefits:

1. By building partnerships with birth parents, foster parents become more an active part of the professional child welfare team.

2. If foster parents build a partnership with the birth parents, they are not limited to receiving all of their information about the child through the caseworker.

3. If foster parents build a partnership with the birth parents, they get their own firsthand experience of what they can directly ask the birth parents for and what the birth parents want from them.

4. Through partnership, foster parents can be a more direct contributor in the shared parenting role. For example, a foster mother might confide to a birth father that the birth father’s daughter said she believed he hates her. This first hand testimony could have much more of a direct impact on the father than if the foster mother told it to the worker who in turn told it to the father. Also in such a case, the father is hearing things from both the caseworker and the foster parent. Hearing from several people can be more motivating and seem more real than hearing from only one. The foster parent’s involvement might be the added ingredient that motivates the father to make a serious effort at helping his daughter know that he does not hate her.

5. A foster parent’s first hand experience of working with birth parents may result in the foster parent feeling reassurance that the birth parents are working to try to care for their child.

6. Working in partnership with birth parents increases the foster parents' chances of developing genuine empathy for the birth parents, which will increase the foster parents' commitment in supporting teamwork. First hand experience may give the foster parent a clearer understanding and empathy for how difficult it is for the birth parents to change their lives or to achieve goals. When a foster parent recognizes this, foster parents may see a birth parent’s efforts in a new light; by more clearly seeing a birth parent’s obstacles, foster parents will better appreciate how the birth parent’s efforts may be more significant and heart-felt than they first appeared.
7. When the child knows the foster parents are working with his or her birth parents, the foster parents are offering the child the security that adults are acting together in his or her best interests.

8. By working in partnership, foster parents will have the satisfaction of knowing they are supporting the child's sense of security. If the child has the security that adults are acting together in his or her best interests, the child is free to resume normal development, which has probably been interrupted by the confusion that led to the child's placement.

9. Greater contact with birth parents helps foster parents from becoming overly attached to the child because they are better able to see when a child and his or her parents belong together.

10. When foster parents work in partnership with birth parents, the foster parents can better support the agency in assessing what birth parents can or cannot do.

11. When foster parents are willing to work in partnership with birth parents, birth parents will sometimes tell valuable things to the foster parents that they would not tell the caseworker. Such information can add critical pieces to the puzzle's picture of how best to help the birth family and the child.

12. Foster parents and birth parents can share information in how best to care for the child. Obviously, the birth parents have critical parenting needs, or their child would not be in care. Nonetheless, we would be counterproductively stereotyping to assume the birth parents are simply "bad parents." The birth parents have lived with the child over enough time to know the child's daily routine and many useful details about the child. If the birth parents were to mention that the child loves to go to a local park to look at the ducks, the foster parents have learned about an activity that can give the child a sense of comfortable continuity by taking the child to a place he or she loved before so many changes began happening in his or her life. A foster mother may say to a birth mother that she is having trouble getting the child to do his homework after school. The birth parent may say she always gave the boy an hour after school to do fun things, like watch television or read comic books. The foster mother would say that the boy has never come straight home from school to begin doing homework, and she might adjust when she expects him to do his homework, allowing him to stay with his familiar pattern.

13. Foster parents can be extremely valuable by providing a model of parenting that the birth parents can see first hand and learn from.
14. When birth parents and foster parents communicate, they can normalize confusing things for one another. For example, a foster father may take a child to a mall when the child is in the process of having his level of Ritalin reduced. At the mall, the child begins screaming hysterically. Finally, the foster father simply picks the child up and tucks him under his arm and carries him out of the mall as matter-of-factly as a mailman carrying a parcel. Once outside the mall and away from people, the foster father felt less stressfully conspicuous in working to calm the child. If the foster parent told the birth parents about this episode, several good things could result. For one, the foster parent would be sharing a parenting technique that the birth parents might use with the child. But the birth parents might share that the child has behaved similarly many times at stores and malls. By sharing this information, both the birth parents and foster parents would see that the child’s behavior has been part of a pattern over time. They would both see that the child has acted the same way with other people. Both sets of parents might feel somewhat relieved upon learning this, that they personally were not doing something “bad” or “stupid” that made the child behave in that way. Both sets of parents might be able to accept that the experience of needing to manage the child’s tantrums in public is simply going to be a normal part of parenting the child. Although the foster parent may not be managing the child’s tantrums much more successfully than did the birth parents, there is comfort in two adults coming together with the same issue to deal with and collaborate in solving.

Benefits to parents of children in foster care: When foster parents and the agency work to build constructive partnerships with birth families, the birth parents may receive the following benefits:

1. With partnership, birth parents remain empowered to be a child’s parent, rather than feeling and/or being pushed to the side.

2. When birth parents having more contact with the child and more participation through partnership, the parents will not forget how difficult parenting is. The more contact they have with their child, the better they are able to measure their own ability and interest in parenting and the reunification of their family.

3. Birth parents, through partnership, are treated as contributing adults in the child’s life, which encourages the birth parents to expand and modify what they can contribute for the child.

4. Partnership gives birth parents a greater ability to know what is expected of them and to ask clearly what they expect of team members.

5. Through partnership, birth parents are included in decision-making.
6. Through partnership, birth parents are more directly supported in planning how to change in a way that will lead to the reunification of their family.

7. Partnership allows birth parents to be participatory in a process which has great bearing on their own circumstances.

8. Partnership includes parents in a way that makes it likely for them to be a part of significant events in their child’s life, whether it is to be at the child’s birthday or at the child’s school for an independent educational program meeting.

9. When the agency and foster parents work in partnership with birth parents, they are not isolating the birth parents. Unification and isolation are opposites: how can a goal of reunification efficiently be achieved if the agency and foster parents isolate the birth parents?

10. Partnership provides birth parents with a process for achieving greater well-being for their child.

11. Partnership provides birth parents with a process for their achieving success in parenting.
The Importance of Birth Parents to Children in Foster Care

It is critically important that children in foster care have contact with their birth parents, for the following reasons:

1. The separation process causes children to have many painful feelings (anger, guilt, sadness, frustration, etc.). Sometimes these feelings are “acted out.” Contact with the birth parents helps children get out some of their feelings, so it should be expected that children will seem more upset before, during or after a visit with their birth parents. “The short-term disadvantage of the child being upset by the visit is outweighed by the long-term benefit.”

2. If children are allowed to have contact and express all their upset feelings, then they will be less likely to take out or “displace” these feelings on the foster parents. They will be able to develop a positive relationship with the foster parents. A good attachment to their foster parents will help them with other relationships.

3. Regular contact with birth parents gives the child several important messages: (1) the child can see that the parents care enough to visit, and the child can see that all the adults — birth parents, foster parents and social worker — are working together; (2) children can see for themselves how much progress their parents are making toward getting them home. Research in the child welfare field consistently indicates that regular visits between children and birth parents is the strongest indicator of family reunification. In some ways, children can sense what this research has demonstrated. If their parents don’t show up for visits, and don’t follow through with plans, it helps the child to be able to see their limitations better.

4. Contact also is helpful for the parents. Just as the child may fantasize about “ideal” parents, the parents may forget how difficult parenting is. Regular contact with their child helps them measure their own ability and interest in parenting and family reunification.

5. Contact between children and birth parents helps foster parents, too. It keeps them from becoming overly attached to the child, because they can see that this child and the child’s parents belong together. Foster parents, by getting to know the birth parents, can better understand the child’s behavior.
6. Contact between the birth parents and child also helps the social worker. Because visits are the primary indicator of family reunification, visits are the main tool used by the social worker to assess: (1) how responsible and consistent the parent is; (2) the quality of the relationship between the parent and the child; (3) how much the birth parent is learning from the appropriate parenting skills modeled by the foster parent; and (4) how much progress is being made toward the case plan goal.

7. One of the most important benefits is that regular contact helps all the adults — birth parents, foster parents, and social worker — practice partnership in assuring permanence for children.
Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)*

**Purpose**


Congress recognized that a large number of American Indian families had been torn apart by the often unwarranted removal of the children by non-tribal public and private agencies. (25 U.S.C. §1901(4)). These children were placed in foster or adoptive homes that were non-Indian, affecting the children's cultural upbringing (25 U.S.C. §1901(4)). The Indian Child Welfare Act establishes minimum federal standards for the removal of American Indian children and the placement of these children in foster or adoptive homes. It also provides funds to tribes for the operation of child and family services programs (25 U.S.C. §1902).

**Jurisdiction**

1. Unless jurisdiction is otherwise vested in a state by federal law, the act gives the tribe exclusive jurisdiction over any American Indian child who resides or is domiciled within the reservation (25 U.S.C. § (a)).

2. If the child is a ward of the tribal court, that court has exclusive jurisdiction over the child regardless of the residence or domicile (25 U.S.C. §1911(a)).

3. In the absence of good cause to the contrary or the objection of either parent, a state court must transfer any foster care or termination of parental rights proceeding concerning an Indian child not domiciled or residing within the reservation of the Indian child’s tribe to the jurisdiction of the tribe (25 U.S.C. §1911(b)).

4. The child’s tribe and custodian may intervene at any point in a state court proceeding when that proceeding addresses either foster care placement or termination of parental rights (25 U.S.C. §1911(c)).

5. All judicial proceedings, public acts and records of an American Indian tribe which are applicable to American Indian child custody proceedings must be given full faith and credit (25 U.S.C. §1911(d)).

*Developed by National Association of Foster Care Reviewers and published in Heather Craig-Oldsen, Foundation Training for New Foster Care Reviewers, Atlanta, GA 1998 through funding from Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children’s Bureau.*
Definitions:

**Indian**
Any person who is a member of an Indian tribe, or who is an Alaska native and member of a regional corporation as defined in 1606 of title 43 (25 U.S.C. §1903(3)).

**Indian Child**
Any unmarried person who is under age 18 and is either: (a) a member of an Indian tribe or (b) eligible for membership in an Indian tribe and the biological child of a member of an Indian tribe (25 U.S.C. §1903(4)).

Custody Proceedings Covered by the Act

The Act applies to:

1. **Involuntary foster care placement** (voluntary placement is covered separately).
   
   In order to remove an American Indian child from the home, there needs to be “clear and convincing evidence” that the continued custody of the child by the parents or Indian custodian is likely to result in serious emotional or physical damage to the child (25 U.S.C. §1912(e)). The act applies not only to the initial foster care placement, but also to all subsequent placements unless the child is being returned either to the parents or the Indian custodian from which the child originally was taken (28 U.S.C. §1961(b)).

2. **Termination of parental rights.**
   
   In order to terminate parental rights there must be a showing that the continued custody of the child by the parent or Indian custodian is likely to result in serious emotional or physical damage to the child. This finding must be supported by evidence beyond a reasonable doubt (25 U.S.C. §1912(f)).

3. **Pre-adoptive and adoptive placements.**
   
   Pre-adoptive placement is the “temporary placement of an Indian child in a foster home or institution after the termination of parental rights, but prior to or in lieu of adoptive placement” (25 U.S.C. §1903(iii)). The purpose of a pre-adoption proceeding is to insure that all placements are subject to the protections afforded by the act, and that the act’s adoptive placement preferences cannot be avoided by labeling an Indian child as not-adoptable (Bureau of Indian Affairs Report 1984 (67)). Adoptive placement is the permanent placement of an American Indian child, which includes any action resulting in a final decree of adoption (25 U.S.C. §1903(iv)).

Criteria for Placements
The Indian Child Welfare Act describes the criteria that must be met when placing a child in foster care or pre-adoptive care initially and when reviewing the child’s placement. The child must be placed in a setting that will meet any special needs that child may have and will also be the least restrictive setting which most approximates a family. The foster or pre-adoptive home must be within a reasonable proximity to the child’s natural home. Preference shall be given, in the absence of good cause to the contrary, to a placement with (i) a member of the Indian child’s extended family, (ii) a foster home licensed, approved, or specified by the Indian child’s tribe, (iii) an Indian foster home licensed or approved by an authorized non-Indian licensing authority or (iv) an institution for children approved by an Indian tribe or operated by an Indian organization which has a program suitable to meet the Indian child’s needs (25 U.S.C. §1915(b)).

When placing an American Indian child in an adoptive placement, preference shall be given, in the absence of good cause to the contrary, to a placement with (1) a member of the child’s extended family, (2) other members of the Indian child’s tribe or (3) other Indian families (25 U.S.C.§1915(a)).
Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA) and Amendment of 1996 (IEPA)

The Howard Metzenbaum Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 (MEPA), 42 U.S.C.A. §5115a, prohibits denial or delay of placement for foster care or adoption by any agency that receives federal funds because of the child’s or foster/adoptive parent’s race, color or national origin. The law was intended to:

♦ Decrease the time children wait to be adopted.

♦ Prevent discrimination in the placement of children on the basis of race, color or national origin.

♦ Prevent discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin when selecting foster and adoptive placements.

♦ Facilitate the development of a diverse pool of foster and adoptive families.

In August of 1996 Congress amended MEPA in order to strengthen its nondiscriminatory provisions and to provide stiff penalties for violation of the act. The anti-discrimination provisions of MEPA now state that any public or private agency or entity that receives federal assistance cannot:

♦ *Deny to any person the opportunity to become an adoptive or foster parent* on the basis of the race, color or national origin of the adoptive or foster parent or the race, color or national origin of the child involved in the foster or adoptive placement; and

♦ *Delay or deny the placement of a child for adoption or into foster care* on the basis of the race, color or national origin of the adoptive or foster parent or the race, color, or national origin of the child involved in the foster care or adoptive placement.

MEPA was enacted to encourage trans-racial placements of children when appropriate same-race placements are not available. The act specifically permits the consideration of a child’s cultural, ethnic or racial background and the ability of a potential foster parent to meet the child’s related needs as one of many factors to consider in determining the best interests of a child. The Department of Health and Human Services published Policy Guidance in the Federal Register on April 25, 1995, to be used as guidelines for compliance by agencies. An updated Policy Guidance related to the amendment was made available in June 1997.
Non-compliance with this act is a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C.A. §2000d et seq. Any person who believes that she or he has been a victim of a violation of the act has a right to bring an action for relief in the appropriate U.S. District Court. Any entity found in violation of the law will lose considerable federal matching funds. MEPA does not affect the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, 25 U.S.C. 1901 et seq. (42 U.S.C.A. §5115a(f)