

# Support Strengthens Us All

## I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR CAREGIVERS



Clark County  
Family Services

### Caregivers

1. Because the caseworker only visits your home once a month, it is crucial to **keep them updated weekly or every two weeks by email** with key developments regarding the child(ren) in your care:
  - \* share both positive and negative news - growth, challenges, health changes, behavioral shifts, achievements, etc.
  - \* updates help the caseworker stay informed and support you more effectively
  - \* consistent communications builds trust, helps prevent surprises and ensures the child's needs are addressed promptly.
2. **Provide a safe, stable and nurturing home environment** that meets the emotional, social, medical, educational, and physical needs of children and teens.
3. **Bridge the gap between children and their birth families** by finding appropriate ways to support family ties for the benefit of the child or teen. Even when children will not be reunified, acknowledge and support the range of feelings - both positive and negative - they may have about their birth family. When you meet a child's parents, is very meaningful to a child.
4. **Introduce yourselves to the birth family members, staff, and others involved** when you attend a meeting, visits, or a court hearing. Putting a name to a face goes a long way to build the relationship. When conflicts occur, share concerns and propose possible solutions as quickly as possible.
5. **When you meet new case workers, ask about the best way to contact them (phone or email), and tell them how and when it is best to contact you.** Ask, too, for their supervisor's contact information. When you call or email a child's worker or another staff member, include a detailed summary of the information you wish to share or your specific need. Let them know if the situation is urgent and the best way to contact you.
6. **Participate in all meetings and court hearings regarding the children in your care.** If you can't be there in person, make plans to attend meetings virtually or by telephone or for court hearings, send your observations and recommendations in writing.
7. **Be an advocate.** Persistently and respectfully speak up for any services that the child or you need to be successful. Don't be afraid to share your thoughts while at the same time listening to the perspectives of other team members.
8. **Remind yourself that no parent is perfect.** Ask for help, know your limits, and accept that it is OK to say "no" or "I don't know".
9. **Set home visits and appointments when you are meeting with the caseworker in person.** Schedule in advance for the next month during your monthly home visit.
10. **Give Grace to staff.** They are likely juggling multiple children, teens and families at any given time.

# Support Strengthens Us All

## I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR MY TEAM



Clark County  
Family Services

### Caregivers

1. **Welcome new foster, adoptive and kinship families** to our team! Help them learn the ropes, understand their role, interpret the lingo and provide positive energy! Normalize that things may get tough and to not be afraid to reach out for support.
2. **Offer a shoulder of support!** Be willing to listen, offering hope and encouragement when a fellow caregiver is experiencing a stressful time or a difficult situation with a child. Share your experiences and how you got through a rough patch successfully.
3. **Build your village!** Meet and greet other foster, kin and adoptive parents at events such as “Back to School”, holiday gift events, trainings. Share emails and phone numbers so you can stay in contact.
4. **Share info on resources, supports and services with other caregivers...especially the free ones!** You may have experiences with a need for a child that they haven’t. Provide as much information to the caregiver as possible such as address, contact person, open times, etc.
5. **Host sibling visits with brothers and sisters that live in separate foster/adoptive/kinship homes.** This will mean the world to the kids!! Taking turns with the siblings’ caregiver means a break for you! Also, getting to know their caregivers will help with information-sharing about the children and their family.
6. **Create the “Buddy System” with other caregivers.** Swap books, articles and advice! Let other caregivers know about trainings, support groups and events for caregivers. Plan to meet up!
7. **Help caregivers prepare for new experiences** such as going to court, meeting birth parents and their first home visit. Your familiarity will be incredibly useful to first time caregivers.
8. **Pitch in when a new caregiver needs help in an urgent situation!** Help with transportation, provide babysitting, lend a stroller or bicycle. We all know emergencies come in all forms and it’s good to know that somebody is there to lend a hand!
9. **Be patient with each other!** Being a parent is hard...being a foster, adoptive or kinship parent can be harder at times. Sometimes that means we may be short or impatient with each other...give grace! We all need it from time to time!