DFS

- Mission Statement

Protecting children from abuse and neglect by partnering with our community to build safe, nurturing and stable families, to support family preservation when possible, to provide permanent families for those children who cannot safely return home and to ensure the well-being of children in our care.

Other Important Links /Useful Information

- East Valley Peer Parent Services
  (702) 631-7098
  www.eastvalleyfamilyservices.org

- Foster Parent Champions
  (702)455-XXXXX
  www.qpinevada.org



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All you need to know about **Comfort Calls** and **Ice Breakers** as a Foster Parent



Comfort Call

What is a comfort call?
Whenever a child is removed from his/her home, both the parent and child experience significant trauma and loss. In order to establish a positive working relationship between the parent and caregiver it is critical to focus on strategies and actions which are targeted at building relationships based on trust and open communication.

When will this take place?
The comfort call will take place within 3 days of the child being placed

How/Where will it take place?
The call will take place via phone or by video chat

What should I as the parent expect during the comfort call?

- Initiates and promotes immediate communication between the caregiver and parents
- Builds trust between the assigned worker and parent
- Sets the stage for ongoing focus on the child's care
- Reinforces that the parent is the expert on the child
- Minimizes trauma of separation for both parent and child
- Reinforces commitment in maintain connections and contact
- Sets in motion the working relationship with the agency, trust with assigned worker and then sets the stage for caseworkers who follow
- Provides a smooth transition into the foster home by allowing foster parents to ask specific information about the home environment and routine of the child.
- Arrange for Ice Breaker meeting

What's an ICE BREAKER?

The Ice Breaker meeting is a child-focused meeting held shortly after a child is placed in out of home care. The meeting is held with the parent, foster parent, child (if appropriate) and the caseworker.

What is the purpose of the Ice Breaker?

- To provide an opportunity and setting for the caregivers and parents to meet.
- To begin establishing communication and a relationship between the parent and caregiver.
- To share information that will help the caregiver support the child in care.
- To reduce parents' anxiety about their child's placement and well-being.
- To reinforce the parents' role as parents and establish caregiver as a part of the team, working to support the child and reunify the family.
- To reassure the child that their parents and caregivers are working together to provide for their care and to give the child permission to adjust positively to their placement while maintaining their relationship with their parents.



Ice Breaker continued…

What should I be prepared to discuss, at the level you are comfortable?

- Speak positively about your child but realistic about what is needed on a daily basis to care for them.
- How is the child doing thus far
- Daily routine of your home
- Your parenting style
- How long you have been a foster parent
- Who lives in the home, pets.
- Discuss any upcoming vacations or plans
- Other – Cultural or religious practices or customs.
- Discussion about visitation and how to best communicate
- Remember to be sensitive to the fact that this parent has to deal with the fact that someone else is caring for their child.