** Child Preparation Guideline to the Goals**

*(All of the following goals are ongoing throughout the process of Child Preparation)*

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| **Goal** | **Suggested Activities** |
| **Give The Child A Voice*** Who am I?
 | * Plan activities that allow Child Preparation worker to listen and show interest in what child/youth has to say: Listen for misconceptions, untruths, self-blame, denial or fantasy
	+ **About the past**: Life Map, Sibling Memories, Writing Letters, Silhouette, The Me Nobody Knows, Get to Know Me Chain, Pieces of Me, Masks Parts I & II, (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
	+ **About the present:** People Who Care About Me, All in the Family, The Me Nobody Knows, Feelings Heart, Get to Know Me Chain (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success” Also use any “All About Me types of activities)
	+ **About the future:** Oh the Places You’ll Go, Yellow Brick Road, Dream A Little Dream, Adoption Interview, Masks Parts I & II (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
		- **For very young children**:
* Use some of the same exercises as noted above, but do them with the current family. Have discussions with the family about how important this information will be to the child in terms of identity formation. Talk with them about ways they can share information with the child about the past and about adoption. Provide videos, books etc. that will help them understand that children need and deserve factual information several times over as they grow up, in ways that are developmentally appropriate.
* With the family, work on the lifebook, adding information, pictures, or exercises for future use with the child. The family may need help viewing the birth family in a positive way and understanding how their attitudes toward the birth family can have a huge impact on their child’s self-identity.
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| **Answer the Questions****Honor the Past**What happened to me? | * Obtain birth statistics and information
* Gather any and all information available about the birth family.
* Gather any pictures of persons in child/youth’s past
* Plan activities to explore child/youth’s past.
	+ **Birth**: What A Day, On the Day That You Were Born, Mapquest: Where Have I Been? Pieces of Me(Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
	+ **Birth family Information:** Share information with the child/youth by using pictures, explanations, descriptions, anecdotal stories and whatever else is available.
	+ **Placement history:** Timeline, Oh the Places I’ve Been, Connecting the Missing Pieces, Sands of Time and Place, The Walk of Life, Feelings Heart, Loss History Chart (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
		- **For very young children**:
* Either work with the family to include the factual information (birth statistics etc.) in the lifebook, or encourage them to do this portion of the lifebook for the child. Allowing the family to add to the lifebook gives them a sense of entitlement (it’s their child) and the realization that they are preparing to meet their child’s future needs. Review their work at the next visit.
* The Child Preparation worker and/or the family can complete some of the exercises noted above for inclusion in the lifebook. There should be discussion about why this information will be important to the child as he/she gets older. Give the family some guidelines about how and when to answer the child’s questions. Provide or suggest reading materials or videos that illustrate issues adopted children may have—even those adopted at birth or a very young age.
* Suggest books or games that parents can use to talk to their children about adoption.
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| **Make the Connections**Where am I going?How will I get there? | : * Plan activities to explore past relationships
* **Identify all past relationships:**
* Interview caseworkers, foster parents and others who may have information about people the child/youth has known.)
* All in the Family, People Who Care About Me, Sibling Memories, Safety Nets, Get to Know Me Chain, Feelings Heart (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
* **Help child/youth examine strengths, weaknesses and quality of the relationships, his/her role in the relationship, what he/she learned about self and relationships in general, how and why the relationship ended:** All in the Family, Connecting the Missing Pieces, Family Ties, Thanks, for Being Part of Me**,** Pieces of Me, Feelings Heart, Sibling Memories, Timeline, Sands of Time and Place, People Who Care About Me, Family Collages, Oh, the Places I’ve Been (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
* **Identify potential permanent connections:**
* Work closely with the team, (especially county caseworker) to plan and make these connections.
* Prepare child/youth for re-introduction of past relationships: Writing Letters, Safety Net, Oh, the Places You’ll Go, Guess the Sound, Dream a Little Dream. (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
* Also may review previously done activities to talk about expectations of future relationships with persons from the child/youth’s past.
* **Explore potential new connections:**
* Consult with CSR worker if there is one, or suggest a referral that unit of service
* Consult with Independent Living worker if there is one
* Safety Net, Yellow Brick Road, Adoption Interview (adapted for use with children/youth with other permanency goals), Dream a Little Dream, Don’t Puzzle Me, Oh, the Places You’ll Go (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
	+ - **For very young children**:
	+ It is important to include information about past connections in the lifebook. Certainly this would include information about birth family members, and also perhaps former foster families. This will continue the work with the family about the role the birth family will play in the child’s life, whether there is contact with those persons or not. It also allows the future opportunity for the child to put together the pieces of his/her life, that is, who was involved and when.
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| **Look to the Future**When will I know I belong? | * Plan next steps for child/youth and team members. Next steps would include follow through on objectives agreed upon by child/youth and team. It would include such things as obtaining an address of an identified connection, arranging for a meeting between child/youth and connections or professionals, gathering information the child/.youth has asked for, child/youth’s recruitment ideas etc.
* Plan activities to help child/youth feel a sense of belonging in an identified permanency resource.
* T-Shirt Success, Thanks for Being Part of Me, Mapquest: Where Am I Going?, Family Collage, People Who Care About Me, Sands of Time and Place, Walk of Life, Family Connections, Safety Net, Yellow Brick Road (Samples of possible activities from “Recipes for Success”)
* Plan for how the current caretakers/ facility workers can continue the ongoing work. The child/youth continues to work through the core issues of adoption throughout his/her lifetime.
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