

Foster Caregiver Support Workers

Practice Guideline

Support Workers are volunteer Foster Parents who have been specially trained to assist other Foster Caregivers with:

- Quality of Care Review
- Family Care Home Investigations
- Dispute Resolution for Caregivers

Support Workers also help Foster Parents find answers to many questions. This informal assistance can often bring a quick and simple resolution to a situation before it requires a more formal approach.

A Support Worker

- is not a professional counsellor?
- does not normally speak for, or advocate for the Foster Parent. A Support Worker assists the Foster Parent to prepare and speak for themselves.
- does not make decisions for the Foster Parent.
- does not give legal advice.
- keeps information from the Foster Parent confidential, however:
If a legal situation arises, the Support Worker may be called to testify in court. (Only the lawyer-client relationship is protected with respect to maintaining confidentiality in court).
- has a legal obligation to report suspicions of abuse and neglect.
- has no role in determining the validity of a Foster Parent's claims, and no decision-making authority with respect to outcome, and remains non-judgmental.

Qualifications needed to become a Support Worker

1. An open Family Care Home Agreement with MCFD for a minimum of two years.
Support Workers who leave fostering may continue in the role, provided they meet all other requirements.
2. Established credibility with foster families and with MCFD staff
3. An understanding and respect for the accepted concepts of confidentiality and a willingness to sign an oath of confidentiality
4. A good understanding of MCFD policies and procedures and their application

5. Ability to support an Indigenous perspective
6. Good oral and written communication skills
7. Ability to maintain a nonjudgmental, unbiased, objective attitude
8. Good interpersonal skills
9. Willing to be a committed member of the Support Worker Team for a minimum of two years
10. Committed to participate in ongoing training opportunities
11. Knowledgeable about the resources in their community, and those offered by Okanagan Foster Parents Association and BCFPA

Support Worker Application

Foster Parents who have taken *Support Worker Training* may apply to the Foster Parent Coordinator in their area for approval to become a Support Worker.

Every approved Support Worker must sign a Letter of Expectation that includes:

- Commitment to training
- Confidentiality
- Objectivity
- Professional Conduct

Support Worker Resignations

Support Workers who wish to resign shall provide written notice to the Foster Parent Coordinator responsible for their Support Worker Team.

LETTER OF EXPECTATIONS

As a Foster Parent Support Worker and as a member of the Support Worker Team

I agree to:

1. Sign an Oath of Confidentiality
2. Maintain a nonjudgmental, nonbiased, objective attitude
3. Be a committed member of the Support Worker Team
4. Be committed to participate in ongoing training
5. Maintain the skills and knowledge required of a Support Worker
6. Always conduct myself professionally
7. Store all documentation in a secure manner

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Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____