

Circle of Support Meeting

Quality Parenting Initiative – Minnesota

Significant stress and confusion occurs for children and youth when they experience separation from their primary caregiver(s) due to out of home placement. At the earliest stages of out of home placement, there is often a lack of connection/relationship established between the birth and the foster family. The Circle of Support meeting is meant to address these early stage difficulties for children/youth and their families.

Goals of the Circle of Support meeting:

- Share important information about the child/youth.
- Begin the birth and foster family relationship and give opportunity to share expectations.

Recommendations:

- Occurs within the first 2 weeks of a child/youth's placement in a foster home. The meeting is brief; typically, 30-45 minutes in a neutral location. This meeting is ideally held in person. However, Skype or another format may be used if distance is a barrier to its occurrence.
- All individuals are informed of the purpose of this meeting before it begins. This includes the birth family, foster parents, caregivers, social workers, caseworkers, coordinators, older children.
- The focus is on caring for the child/youth; therefore, questions or discussion around case planning, reunification or reasons for out of home placement are saved for later.

The Circle of Support Meeting Agenda:

A simple agenda should include an outline that allows for the sharing of information, keep the meeting on track, and help to manage time. An agenda will also help provide consistency in meetings and ensure the meeting is informal, comfortable, and non-threatening. The agenda should include the following types of activities:

- Introductions (go around the table and introduce themselves and their role)
- Share goals of the meeting
- Foster parents share information about themselves and their home
- Birth parent shares information about the child
- The child has an opportunity to ask questions or contribute information important to them.
- The social worker/caseworker shares guidelines around visitation and helps coordinate next steps for visit or other contact



The Circle of Support Meeting is based on the QPI-MN value: Birth families, relatives and foster parents connect and create mutually healthy relationships to care for children and youth.

Circle of Support Meeting Agenda Template

Welcome to the Circle of Support Meeting. We are grateful for your participation and look forward to sharing information that will support the child(ren)/youth's development. Our meeting today will be between 30-45 minutes. It's common to feel nervous when meeting new people in this type of situation; please know we want you to be as comfortable as possible. A few expectations for this meeting are: conversations stay focused on information that will help care for the child/youth, discussions about case planning will be saved for a later time and it's okay to ask for a break if needed. A copy of this agenda will be provided to everyone here today and shared with important individuals working with the child/youth or family, such as guardian ad litem.

Date _____

Introductions / Who is present

Name	Role

Goals of meeting

- Share important information about the child/youth.
- Beginning stages of the birth and foster family relationship; opportunity to share expectations.

Information shared by foster parent

Information shared by birth parent about the child

Child questions or important information

Information shared by the social worker / caseworker

Next steps



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