

## **Children's Benefit**

Studies have shown that when there is contact between the foster family and the birth family, children have more stable placements, are more successful in school, experience better emotional development and, as a result, return home sooner.

## **Birth Parent's Benefit**

Birth parents begin to build a relationship with the foster family and feel more at ease about their child's placement, safety and well being.

## **Tips for an effective meeting:**

Be on time and focus on the needs of the child. Respect the feelings, ideas, opinions and cultural differences of others. Recognize the importance each person has in the life of the child. Keep what is shared confidential.

**The Children, Youth and Families Department  
Taos County Protective Services**

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## **Ice Breakers**

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**The first meeting  
between birth  
parents and  
foster care  
providers**

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**Your ice breaker  
meeting will be on**

\_\_\_\_\_

**At:**

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### **What is an 'ice breaker'?**

An ice breaker is the initial meeting between the birth parent and the foster care provider.

This meeting provides the opportunity for birth parents to share information about their child with the foster family. This also allows the birth parent to meet the family who will be caring for their child.

The meeting will last about 30 minutes and will take place at the CYFD office. The meeting will be facilitated by a neutral party and will take place early in the case.

### **Birth Parent's Role:**

Share information about your child. Including medical or allergy information, hobbies, bedtime routines, health or school concerns, etc.

Provide important personal items for your child. This can include favorite toys, blankets, pictures, etc.

### **Facilitator's Role:**

Coordinate the meeting and ensure the safety and comfort of all participants.

Keep the discussion focused on the needs of the child.

Ensure the participants of their role in the meeting and what is being discussed.

### **Foster Care Provider's Role:**

Talk about why you became a foster care provider and some basic rules in your home.

Ask questions that will help in understanding the child's needs such as cultural or religious traditions.

Ask for specific information such as medical conditions, school requirements, routines, personal habits, etc.