

**The Kinship & Foster Family Network of Manitoba**  
*Collecting the Voices of Kinship & Foster Parents*

# Focus on Family Connections

**2022/2023**  
**Focus Forums**



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# Focus on Family Connections

A Kinship and Foster Care providers perspectives on a child in care transitioning from one caring home to another caring home.



At the Kinship & Foster Family Network, we work to empower kinship and foster parents to be respected and valued as members of a child in care's professional team.

Facilitating Focus Forums is one approach we use to collect the voices of kinship and foster care providers and distribute information on topics of concern.

Discussions were on the current changes occurring and changes coming for transitions within Child and Family Services system. Forum questions were focused on how kinship and foster (K/F) care providers see their roles in our changing system. Do they see themselves engaged and supportive with these changes and what can they offer a child's family to create successful transitions?

The Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children, youth, and families is federal legislation that establishes national standards for the welfare of Indigenous children. This Act will bring about changes within the Child Welfare System. Kinship and Foster Care providers across Manitoba need an understanding of potential changes from the Act.

In Manitoba, the Peguis governing body is the first to develop their legislation under Bill C-92. Other communities are in the process of developing their legislation. The difference is the new legislation enacted will be designed to serve their specific communities.

The focus is to return children to family and community. Decisions made by the agency and their governing body are based on the best interests of the child.

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# Overview

**The Morning Section** of the forum facilitated discussions and the sharing of thoughts around five Introductory Topics.

During this section, conversations were transcribed by a staff member to collect as accurately as possible participant discussions, their shared individual and unique history with providing K/F care.

Participants provided their perceptions about possible impacts on K/F care from the Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis youth and their families, and possible impacts upon K/F beliefs about their role. How beliefs about the value of K/F care providers have impacted transitions were also discussed.

Comments found in this report were made by participants from the three groups involved and appear in bullet form. No identification was recorded regarding speakers following KFFNM confidentiality policy.

**The Afternoon Section** of the forum explored participants' responses to four questions.

The first two questions were designed to collect participant responses about sharing information between care providers during transitions.

The third question was designed to collect participant understanding of what skills they think are needed for kinship or foster care successful transitions between care providers.

The fourth question asked participants for their suggestions on how the larger system they work within could improve connections between a kinship and foster care provider and new care providers to strengthen the process of transitions.

Focus on Family Connections Forums were provided in three communities.

**Thompson**

**Steinbach**

**Winnipeg**

**34** Kinship and Foster Care providers attended the full day event.

Participants responded to forum



THE STEINBACH GROUP

# Introductory Topics

1. Individual perspectives from providing foster care during transitions.
2. Current information regarding The Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children, youth and families.
3. Possible implications with providing Kinship or Foster care.
4. How can the Principle of Addition support transitions?
5. What could family to family transitions look like?

**During the morning a KFFNM staff member wrote down conversations to reflect what was being said.**

Participant comments are shown in bullets under each **Introductory Topic** heading.

*I still talk to Grandma...advice about boy...for him to think, "I'm a good boy. I'm lucky Grandma is here". I never cut the connection with my previous foster kids. They know I'm still there.*

The morning opening sessions were filled with conversations coming from the **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS** presented. Several participants talked about how they think transitions from their home could best work. It was notable that discussions were focused on how best transitions from a care home to natural family could work for all involved.

## What has been your history with providing kinship or foster care during transitions?

- "You have to support the bio family with visitation and what they need and the transition. Increase the hours, add more time the following week, etc."
- "It's always good to talk about a transition plan at the beginning or at a yearly review."
- "I didn't really like how one girl transitioned out. The social worker went to the school. The social worker

said," Well, we are going to transition this child to such and such a place", because she was smoking, doing drugs, etc. We only get a couple weeks to prepare. Then the place is ready. They don't even want to tell us where she is going."

*"It's always good to talk about a transition plan at the beginning or at a yearly review."*

## Current Information regarding the Act

- "But would that interest be lessened if they have questions? Where did I come from? What if they were told openly about their bio families? Then it's not such a hidden aspect of life."
- "It used to be, "Don't talk to the family", Maybe it is not that way now. I don't see how

the foster parents are the bad guys. Say, "They're taking my child". I don't see that."

- "My agency has a Family Enhancement program. The program is looking at kids who've never been home (community), but know family.

*"We always had our doors open for parents-Come in, have lunch, whatever-as long as they are safe-It's their community, heritage, whatever, but it has to be safe."*

*“You have to support the bio family with visitation and what they need and the transition. Increase the hours, add more time the following week, etc. Then overnight and then if it’s not too much, more time with overnight visits and*

## Possible Foster Care Implications.

- “What if kids have never had that connection with their community?”
- “We need more Bill C-92 information.”
- “My Foster Child. Mom lives in town...Mom is always welcome in my house... I tell her, but no...We are more than willing to work with families, but we are looked at as the bad people.”
- “There should be training. Training on how to receive their children. I would like to be involved. I’d like to meet the parents first. Have that connection...safety perspective.”
- “It’s not fair. She’s being set up to fail. It’s so frustrating. There is money going out to me, but can we give some to the parents? There are some people clawing their way out of some really deep holes. “
- “They need help. The family needs supports. How can she (bio mom) do that alone?”
- “They need to see both the bio parents and the foster parents. The people that they’ve called Mom and Dad for their whole life. They have to have that connection. Have to see that they are friends. I think there is such a divide between bio parents and foster parents and I think we need to fix that. I really do.”

*“I would have Mom live in the back yard... Watch how we go through our day and I’m also family. Worked on comfortable*

## Principle of Addition

- “Reconciliation between foster parents and bio parents. I didn’t take your child. Some are good foster parents and some are crappy ones. “
- “For me, too, to know it’s safe-have that connection. Mom can pick up the phone to me.”
- “For 6 months, there should be some back and forth. We’re adults. Children don’t have a say. Rip them away -strangers. Need to remember these little people.”
- “The best relationships -the agency stepped back and let the bio parents and I do our stuff.”
- “Everybody is working for the kids. Changed since I first started-at first, I did a lot of connecting. Fostering has changed. “
- “We are all here for one purpose-that child- so why would you tell me I can’t help them-help the Mom?”
- “All the parents should be the ones working together.”

## What Could Transitions Look Like?

- “There is a lack of education on both sides. It seems like CFS is in the middle and the bio family is on one side and the foster parents on another.”
- “Both sides need to come together. We all need to support each other up, not down.”
- “They are the legal guardians(agency) and what gets me is that they don’t know these children at all.”
- “We are never included. I’ve had eight workers in a year, but they are the ones making the decisions.”
- “The mentality-well, this person is bad. They shouldn’t have their children, but we shouldn’t think like that. My kids had their grandparents help out. Why can’t the foster parents say, “Well, we’ll help out”; like the grandparents did for my kids.”
- “Can we please just be connected to the families?” Can we have safety. “

# Focus Forum Questions

1. What questions do you think a bio-parent, family member or community member might ask about their child who has been living for some time in your kinship/foster home?
2. What information about a child, who has lived for some time in your kinship/foster home, do you think is important for you to pass on to a bio-parent, family member or community member?

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Pages 8 to 9 provide all post-it note responses provided to questions.

While some conclusions can be drawn from some of the forum responses, it should be recognized the casual manner in which these forums are conducted requires caution with arriving at broad conclusions. What we have provided for the reader is based upon grouping by type, then group comparisons, and finally contrasting of groups.

Appendixes provide the complete Post-It responses provided by participants for the reader's consideration. We have been strict to not change written responses to accommodate grammar or spelling corrections as we wanted to collect accurate voices of the participants.

The first part of the afternoon session, participants were asked to respond to two **Focus Forum Questions**. Questions were posed in the same order for each forum. Each participant was provided with several sticky notes and asked to write down their responses to the questions then post their responses under each question which were taped to a wall. Participants were allowed confidentiality with their answers to questions.

**Question 1 received 137 responses.**

**Question 2 received 108 responses.**

**Forum question are grouped by type of response for both question 1 and 2.**

There were found to be 11 group types across all responses. Determining group type was based on common words or phrases found within the responses.

Both questions are similar in nature. The difference is that participants are to consider what important care provider information a **new care provider might seek** and then what a kinship or foster provider considers is **important information to provide** to a new care provider.

**Grouped types are compared with the total number of responses for a question (1 or 2) and presented as a percentage of the total number of responses for that question.**

Percentages of grouped types indicates the degree of importance participants decided to give a particular response within a question.

**Difference between the percentages of one group type is considered between the two questions.**

Considers difference between participant expectations of what information might be asked by a new care provider and what information they think is important to provide.

The greater the disconnection between expected information and intended information to share might indicate challenges with communication during transitions.

| Question #1                     |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1. About Health/Well being      | 30% |
| 2. About Foster Family          | 11% |
| 3. About Parenting              | 15% |
| 4. About the Future             | 4%  |
| 5. About Culture/Language       | 4%  |
| 6. About School/Activities      | 12% |
| 7. About Child Development      | 6%  |
| 8. About Medical                | 7%  |
| 9. About Natural Family         | 10% |
| 10. About Presenting Behaviours | 1%  |
| 11. About Resources             | 0%  |

## Considerations

The information shared by participants should be recognized as collected at one time with insufficient time for participants to carefully reflect on the questions being asked.

The responses provided should be seen as, somewhat impulsive in nature and with further reflection responses might be different.

Participants provided a total of **236** responses for both questions suggesting considerable thought was given to

| Question #2                     |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1. About Health/Well being      | 24% |
| 2. About Foster Family          | 0%  |
| 3. About Parenting              | 21% |
| 4. About the Future             | 2%  |
| 5. About Culture/Language       | 5%  |
| 6. About School/Activities      | 11% |
| 7. About Child Development      | 0%  |
| 8. About Medical                | 21% |
| 9. About Natural Family         | 11% |
| 10. About Presenting Behaviours | 10% |
| 11. About Resources             | 5%  |

## Question 1&2 Post-It Responses

**About Child Health/Well Being** type of answers are the highest percentage for both questions suggesting participants thought such information should be provided by them and concurrently information a new care provider would want to know.

**About Foster Family** information about either the kinship or foster family presents as responding to missing gaps of information between the families.

Interestingly, there were no clear responses about the kinship or foster family seen as important to pass on to a new care giver.

**About Parenting** percentage differences are related to differences in total number of responses for the question.

There is little variance found with responses as they consistently refer to parenting routines, steps and approaches.

**About Future** responses are based upon what contact or connection between kinship/foster and new caregiver might be possible.

A theme through each forum was participants strongly advocated for interconnection and overlapping support for the benefit of all involved.

**About Culture/Language** responses were a small percentage of the overall. The responses reflected a desire to be supportive for the new care provider needs.

**About School/Activities** were clear responses with similar percentages for both questions.

The responses were similar in nature. The focus is primarily on accomplishments.

When considering information to pass on to a new care provider a few responses suggested kinship or foster information should advise on what supports a child might benefit from.

**About Child Development** information when participants considered what might be asked by a new care giver focused on developmental milestones and social connections.

When participants considered what they should pass on to a new care giver no clear responses fit the group type.

Defining this group type presented a few challenges as several responses grouped under Health/Well Being could be interpreted as involving aspects of child development.

**About Medical** responses were clear and related to safety of the child.

A high percentage, 21%, of medical responses related to what participants thought was important to pass on.

This was a conversational theme which was also apparent in the morning discussion for the three focus groups.

The consistent connection with safety concerns was the unknown in the transitioning and the loss of past kinship or foster care giver established control over safety concerns.

**About Natural Family** responses indicate lack of knowledge about a child's family and plans regarding working toward reunification.

**Presenting Behaviours** of a child responses equaled 1% of all question 1 responses.

Participants did not consider a new care giver would be concerned to ask questions about child behaviour.

When participants considered what information they should pass on to a new care the response percentage is slightly higher: 10% of all responses provided.

Considering the, often identified, high level of challenging behaviours child in care present this type of

# Focus Forum Questions

3. What skills do kinship/foster parents need to create a successful parent to parent knowledge transfer?
4. From a kinship/foster perspective what system suggestions do you have which can strengthen family connections?

Questions 3 & 4 followed the same pattern for discussion and collecting responses. Participants were asked to respond to the last two **Focus Forum Questions**. Each participant was provided with several sticky notes and asked to write down their responses to the questions then post them under the question taped to a wall.

**Question 3 received 88 responses.**

**Question 4 received 65 responses.**

**Type grouping for common words or phrases resulted in different group types for the questions.**

Responses reflect what participants consider is their responsibility in creating a successful transition from their care to another care provider. The four group types which resulted from responses present as strongly connected and overlapping in nature. The consistent theme from all participant responses shows an openness and willingness to work beside natural family or community members to return children home.

**Grouped type responses between questions overlap and indicate common themes between K/F skills need and system suggestions.**

Responses reflect a disconnection participants feel exists between the CFS system and them. Consistent themes which appear throughout the responses, regardless of their grouping type were improving communication for everyone involved and recognizing the value of including K/F care providers early in the transition process and throughout the process.

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Pages 10 to 11 provide all post-it note responses provided to questions.

| Question #3   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. About K/F skills to support care giver during transition       | 24% |
| 2. About child information to support transition to care giver    | 25% |
| 3. About parenting information to transfer to care giver          | 45% |
| 4. About resource information to support transition to care giver | 6%  |

## Considerations

Discussion, comments and responses from participants stated their clear support for reunification of children in their care to their natural families.

Participants identified steps they have taken to facilitate healthy and strong transitions, for any type of transition, often became challenging due lack of support, guidance,

| Question #4                     |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Parent to Parent Connections | 26% |
| 2. Child Well Being             | 24% |
| 3. Team Involvement             | 38% |
| 4. Resources                    | 12% |

## Question 3 Post-It Responses

**About K/F skills to support care giver during transition** provides insight into the compassion and empathy which K/F participants think they could bring to the work of transitioning children.

**About child information to support transition to care giver** enhances prior information presented with the questions 1 and 2.

Identifies particular information about a child and a desire to create a successful transition.

**About parenting information to transfer to care giver** responses provide further insight into K/F skills needed, child information and parenting suggestions.

Several of the responses appear as parenting suggestions which might require clarification as to the what, why, when and where of parenting steps and approach to support successful transition with the information exchange.

The responses offer a wide range of specific aspects of parenting information to share and suggest participants are mindful that effectively sharing parent to parent information will be beneficial for both the child and the parent.

**About resource information to support transition to care giver** responses were few and were suggestions about how K/F care providers could

## Question 4 Responses

**About parent to parent connections** the strong theme presented through all the comments is that the participants value working collaboratively to support reunification.

Collaborative work is identified as side-by side connection, communication, and support which takes place prior to the actual transition. The kinship or foster care provider working with the new care provider is supporting them to receive the child into their care.

**About Child Well Being** participants identify the importance of a child in care being involved with or being aware of the plan for their future.

**Team Involvement** received the majority of the notes. Challenges with communication stands out as a concern. This is identified as a concern for participants

prior to placement and throughout the process of reunification.

Information provided to better understand a child's background, being involved with the care plan, clear communication, and honesty appear as important themes presented.

Respect for one another is one of the responses provided and appears to capture what kinship and foster care providers feel is missing for themselves as a resource.

**About Resources** offers several suggestions from participants which they think can support the transition process.

# Appendix A

## Question #1

What questions do you think a bio parent, family member or community member might ask about their child who has been living for some time in your kinship/foster home?

### About Child Health/ Well Being

1. Do they have their own rooms?
2. What do you like to eat?
3. What food do they like?
4. Do they have a special item they can't live without?
5. Will he/she love me because he/she wasn't living with me?
6. What food do they like?
7. Do you have pets?
8. Who are their friends?
9. What are their fears?
10. What makes them happy or sad?
11. Do you cook? What sort of food do you like?
12. Have you been ok?
13. Where do you sleep?
14. They would want to know how their kids are.
15. Are they ok?
16. What do they eat?
17. Is she eating well?
18. What are the child's favorites/preferences? (Food, tv shows, friends, activities)
19. Who does my child sleep with? Does child have own bed?
20. Is my child being treated right, are they loved?
21. Is my child nervous, excited, worried, etc.
22. How's my daughter doing?
23. How is the child coping with living with the new family?
24. Does the child miss us?
25. Is the child happy?
26. Is my child eating good?
27. Is she or he happy?
28. How is my child eating? Sleeping? Happy? Sad? Asking for us?
29. Are they still connected to their friends?
30. Are they healthy?
31. What food they like to eat?
32. Favorite foods?
33. Is my child safe
34. If their child is safe
35. About them in general likes and dislikes
36. How are they adapting
37. Are they happy
38. How are my children doing
39. How are their children doing
40. Questions about relationships
41. To know if they are happy

### About Foster Family

1. How many people are there in your house?
2. Who all lives in the home?
3. Where do you sleep?
4. Are you spending enough outdoor time, than playing games?
5. Do you have other children? Foster? Bio?
6. How do you/will you show love to my child?
7. How does your family spend time together?
8. What are your beliefs and values?
9. Are you accepting of my beliefs and values?
10. How is the foster family? Is everything ok in the household?
11. Who all lives there?
12. Age of members in the household?
13. Are you bringing food supplies?
14. Who else lives in home?
15. Do you have any Must Have expectations?

### About Parenting

1. What is their bedtime routine?
2. What is bedtime routine?
3. Are they obeying your house rules?
4. What do you do at home?
5. How many people are there in your house?
6. Sorry for special needs to come to our home.
7. It hurts inside. Why they're born with syndrome.
8. It's needs and manage to treat them with love and care.
9. Is she good?
10. How do you parent/discipline?
11. What is the child's schedule/routine like?
12. What do they do with child?
13. Routine
14. Does she listen to you?
15. What time does the kid go to bed?
16. What time does he wake up?
17. What time they go to bed?
18. What they want to do at home to keep them busy?
19. What are their routines? Computer time, playtime, daytime, bedtime.
20. Taken care of being treated properly

### About the future

1. How long do we stay here?
2. Can I call you if I need to?
3. Can child still see/call you?
4. How can we keep in touch?
5. Can we still be in contact?

### About Culture/community/Language

1. What cultural things have they done?
2. Do you practice religion?
3. What language can they speak?
4. Are you providing culture teachings to child?
5. Do they know about their culture

### About School/Activities

1. Are they in school?
2. When do they go to school? Which school?
3. What things do they like ie: sports, etc
4. Do they like the woods/outdoors?
5. Where do you go on holidays?
6. Do you go to school? Do you like it? What's your favorite subject?
7. How's my child doing in school?
8. What activities do you guys do for fun?
9. Are they in school?
10. How is school? Which school?
11. Does she go to school?
12. What places does the child go out to?
13. What school are they doing?
14. Are they doing well in school?
15. If they like sports
16. How does he like school?
17. What grade are they in

### Child Development

1. What size clothes/shoes do they wear?
2. Do I need to sleep in the same room?
3. When did they walk/talk?
4. Whose their friends
5. What milestones has my child hit?
6. Size of clothing
7. Has there been a change that we need to know?

### Medical

1. What are they allergic to?
2. Why does he/she need meds?
3. Drs. Office, etc.
4. Have you been sick?
5. Medications
6. Medical status and any medications to take.
7. Allergies?
8. When the last time he had a dental checkup/Dr. checkup.
9. Medication?
10. Their health

### About Natural Family

1. What did your parents do?
2. The parents never come see their kids in my place. To ask how they're doing or even to go home visit for the weekend.
3. Why our parents can't keep us?
4. Is my child allowed to phone siblings ,Aunt, Uncle, Grandparents?
5. Does the child ask questions about his biological family?
6. Do you talk to them about me?
7. Do they want to see us?
8. Do they want to call us?
9. What do they know about mom and family
10. Are they with siblings
11. Do they have visits with family
12. Do they ask about me at all
13. Do they love me at all
14. How are they coping being away from family

### Presenting Behaviour

1. What are their strengths—what do they struggle with

### Resources

# Appendix A

## Question #2

What information about a child, who has lived for some time in your kinship/foster home, do you think is important for you to pass on to a bio parent, family member or community member?

### About Child Health/Well Being

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Food preferences/dislikes.   | hockey.   |
| 2. Important relationships that the child has formed.   | 14. Pictures of events kept for the child.  |
| 3. How the child has developed in life.   | 15. New skills they learn.  |
| 4. What can I do to make the child feel most comfortable?   | 16. Special interest in sports.   |
| 5. Do they have any fears or major trauma I should know?  | 17. Things that the kids like to do that will help them to relax and productive to her/him self.      |
| 6. Size of clothing   | 18. Favorite activity to do.  |
| 7. Who are their friends.   | 19. Whose their friend  |
| 8. What kind of food do they like.  | 20. How they are doing with regular changes ie: puberty, transitions into schools and keeping friends |
| 9. What are their fears.  | 21. Likes and Dislikes  |
| 10. What do they love.  | 22. What will and can benefit the child going forward   |
| 11. Any pets or special things do they like.  | 23. Accomplishments they have achieved  |
| 12. Yes, to make sure they meet there needs and what they like. To make sure they are happy when they visit |   |
| 13. Landmark achievements, e.g. has stopped bed wetting, played in school soccer and                        |   |

### About Foster Family

### About Parenting

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Parenting plan/ strategies that you've used  | 9. Open up your arms daily for them to walk past/present.   |
| 2. Triggers and how to avoid and manage behaviors.  | 10. Make sure they eat first, before leaving.   |
| 3. Your children love to sing so we encourage them to learn more songs and sing while listening at church, at school, at home.  | 11. To make sure she cleans her room.   |
| 4. They love play dates and being with people, so we bring them to birthday parties and we invite children to come over on special occasions and we encourage them to bring their friends for play dates. | 12. To have a shower. To do chores. To listen.  |
| 5. What kind of discipline do you have.   | 13. Daily routine.  |
| 6. What are things that upset he/she and how do you calm he/she?  | 14. How is our home run.  |
| 7. Bed wets/wears a good night.   | 15. Making sure they follow their sleeping pattern.   |
| 8. Eating in a calm, quiet environment  | 16. Time to go to bed, time they woke up and be ready for school  |
|   | 17. Bedtime routines  |
|   | 18. Morning time routine  |
|   | 19. Sharing the house routine to school and at home: Time they go to bed., Time they woke up and be ready to school, What they can able to do independently and things that they need help from adults. |

### About the Future

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Contact (phone calls, face time, etc.) | 2. Are you open to joining our family in our |
|---|--|

### About Culture/community/Language

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. What can I do culturally for your child? | 3. Spirituality needs/wants          |
| 2. What language do you speak?              | 4. Does he/she use/speak a preferred |

### About School/Activities

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. To make sure their in school.                             | 7. Subjects that the child needs more help with. |
| 2. Education/school plans.                                   | 8. Achievements at school and community.         |
| 3. How the child is doing in school.                         | 9. What they need help with in school            |
| 4. School/educational needs                                  | 10. School information                           |
| 5. How are they in school.                                   | 11. How are they doing in school                 |
| 6. Is there anything you feel I need to let the school know? |  |

### Child Development

### Medical

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Medical appointment information on; school, how child is doing. | 14. Type of food they are not supposed to eat or allergic to.                       |
| 2. Upcoming medical appointment.                                   | 15. Medical information. Like if they had allergy or medications they need to take. |
| 3. If child updated on immunization.                               | 16. Medical and health information  |
| 4. Any new allergies or medication given.                          | 17. Health info   |
| 5. Medical history stuff.  | 18. Medical/behavioural concerns  |
| 6. Health needs (immunizations, etc.)                              | 19. Health information  |
| 7. Medications/ allergies  | 20. How are they doing, health and safety   |
| 8. Medical info  |   |
| 9. Needles up to date.   |   |
| 10. Any extra medical people involved.                             |   |
| 11. Are there any meds being taken?                                |   |
| 12. Making sure they take there meds if are on them.               |   |
| 13. Medical condition  |   |

### About Natural Family

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Any family in this (our) city?  | she have?   |
| 2. I don't see why not: bio parent should know, only at times they will ask.   | 7. When are visits? Are they with both Mom and Dad?                                 |
| 3. It's difficult when both parents are deceased, no one there, just us foster parents. They only ask to call us Mom or grannie. | 8. Do you have a photo of family for he/she to bring with them?                     |
| 4. Or one parent is alive and not check on their children, it's hard.  | 9. Would you like face time visits if you are unable to meet in person, if allowed? |
| 5. All we have is our own love and care, so then how much we care and love them.   | 10. Interested to meet family members.  |
| 6. How many family members does he/  | 11. Their desire to live with bio family  |

### Presenting Behaviour

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. How the child expresses himself; love, anger, shyness.  | doing at school and do they get along with everyone at home. |
| 2. I would tell the parent everything my foster child has done and how he is doing from the first day he comes to my home. | 5. Behaviour of the child                                    |
| 3. Like he was very hyper and now he is much calmer.   | 6. Shy/has own rhythm  |
| 4. The foster workers are the only ones that come to ask about kids' behavior and  | 7. 20 sec. child in a 1 second world                         |
|  | 8. Never assumes responsibility for actions                  |
|  | 9. Likes to keep thing's, doesn't like to throw things out   |
|  | 10. About personal strengths—problems                        |

### Resources

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Extra curricular                         | 3. Do we attend church.        |
| 2. Extracurricular activities and interests | 4. Is my child going swimming? |

## Appendix B

### Question #3

What skills do kinship/foster parents need to create a successful parent to parent knowledge transfer?

#### About K/F skills to support care giver during transition

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Empathy.                                  | 11. Love and care without prejudice and love some more. | 21. Ask what they did that day                       |
| 2. Always keeping an open mind.              | 12. Open minded.  | 22. Empathy  |
| 3. Respect for all he/she family members     | 13. Patience  | 23. Honesty  |
| 4. Openness to be approachable.              | 14. Empathetic  | 24. Patience   |
| 5. Consider both sides of a story.           | 15. Open line of communication                          | 25. Respect for each other                           |
| 6. Not be judgmental.                        | 16. Patience  | 26. Show affection and reliable                      |
| 7. Make allowances for mistakes made by all. | 17. Wisdom  | 27. Curiosity, independence and personal development |
| 8. To be patient                             | 18. To have patience                                    | 28. Respect that not everyone has the same opinions  |
| 9. To be wise                                | 19. To show love  | 29. Love and trust                                   |
| 10. Non-judgmental.                          | 20. Be patient.   |  |

#### About child information to support transition to care giver

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. I let her hang up her family pictures.                                      | 8. Tell them to do chores at home.   | 14. See the ability                       |
| 2. She's quite.  | 9. Try to give them what they want.  | 15. Anticipate the child's needs          |
| 3. Prioritize what's in the child's best interest.                             | 10. My child is very afraid of the dark at night so I make sure he have a night light. | 16. Positive reinforcement                |
| 4. Transition together at speed that meets child's needs!                      | 11. He likes to have a bath before bed.  | 17. Think 4 or 5 steps ahead of the child |
| 5. Exchange on how he/she did on home visit, to make it better the next visit. | 12. Recognize the importance of children getting enough sleep                          | 18. Nurturing                             |
| 6. Be patient with them if she doesn't want to be open to you.                 | 13. Importance of recognizing children have different love languages                   | 19. Communication                         |
| 7. Sign them up for activities at school.                                      |  | 20. Show constant support                 |
|  |  | 21. Fierce advocate                       |

#### About parenting information to transfer to care giver

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Good communication skills.   | 11. Prioritize what's in the child's best interest.                             | 23. Pick them at school cause they get bullied.                   |
| 2. Organizing- put everything in its proper place.  | 12. Transition together at speed that meets child's needs!                      | 24. Documentation   |
| 3. Labeling cupboards, drawers, hanging walls, shoe racks.  | 13. How to do timeouts.   | 25. Listening to each other                                       |
| 4. Food preparation, clearing table, washing hands, ingredients, cutting fruits and vegetables, proper use of knives and any cutting equipment. | 14. To journal; note about daily.   | 26. My skill is to teach my foster child how to pray every night. |
| 5. Hygiene, cleanliness, washing hands, brushing teeth, combing hair, bath, washing clothes.  | 15. Bedtime routine, chores routine   | 27. Write in journal  |
| 6. Be consistent  | 16. Be patient  | 28. Day planner   |
| 7. Create routine   | 17. Ask what they did that day.   | 29. Rewards stamp   |
| 8. Mindful.   | 18. Phone the school to check on how he is doing.                               | 30. Alarm clock   |
| 9. Stay connected.  | 19. Exchange on how he/she did on home visit, to make it better the next visit. | 31. Night-time family chat  |
| 10. Always keep child/youth at the forefront of all decisions.  | 20. Take them there hockey practice   | 32. Reminder of plans for the weekend                             |
|   | 21. Put them on the bus   | 33. Be structural and keep to plan                                |
|   | 22. Make there in the bus   |   |

#### About resource information to support transition to care giver

## Appendix B

### Question #4

From a kinship/foster perspective what system suggestions do you have which can strengthen family connections?

#### About Care Provider to Care Provider Connections

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. More family visits or the family to visit the foster kid.   | 6. Where are the families.  | and bio.  |
| 2. Maybe go for family trips. Go shopping together.  | 7. To come up with a day for foster parent and bio parent to have a visit together with child to create a bond? | 13. Contacts to siblings/family members               |
| 3. Have a campout in the summer.   | 8. Family visits  | 14. Better connection with the child and the parents. |
| 4. The organizing team should encourage parent to parent get together for fun or just to hang out with one another.  | 9. Asking the worker if the child is allowed phone calls, sleepovers, visiting time, face time.                 | 15. Set date for family get together.                 |
| 5. Maybe allow us to connect with prior family or foster homes to give us a better understanding of their lives prior to us. So we can be better armed with what may of worked prior to us to help with transitions. | 10. Visit   | 16. Communications about the child's family           |
|  | 11. When can I go sleep at mom's?   | 17. Info on siblings                                  |
|  | 12. Keep lines of communication open between foster parent  | 18. Keep the network open                             |
|  |   | 19. To keep in contact                                |
|  |   | 20. To work collaboratively to future success         |

#### About Child Well Being

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. What parents are alive does the child have siblings                       | relationship. Maybe this looks like allowing texting and photo exchange between them?  | 10. To have regular visits so that they get to know them, not just the foster parents. |
| 2. What are plans for child.   | When can I go sleep at mom's?  | 11. Priority for the child's emotional development when planning placements.           |
| 3. Import to connect the parent with their kids that are in the foster care. | 7. Allow transitions into home to take place at child's pace!                          | 12. Dieting according to Canada's food guide.  |
| 4. Need to know about parents where abouts for kids wondering?               | 8. Allow children to be a part of conversations. To be aware of plan and future goals. |  |
| 5. Allow bio parents/family and foster parents to be in                      | 9. Better connection with the child and the parents.                                   |  |

#### About Team Involvement

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. Respect for one another.  | sleepovers, visiting time, facetime.  | 17. Purpose for meetings.  |
| 2. Fostering agencies should provide more information regards the child's history (family)   | 9. Allow bio parents/family and foster parents to be in relationship. Maybe this looks like allowing texting and photo exchange between them? | 18. Set date for family get together.  |
| 3. Disclosed the reason of the child being in care.  | 10. Share more information about the plan for child's future. Is there family we can connect with?  | 19. Plan and arrange transfer from my home to bio parents or the community.  |
| 4. The system needs to give the foster parent more info when the child is placed, Medication, Illness, Grade, Any other sibling been moved from one place to another, Why he/her removed | 11. When to go home.  | 20. Clear Communication with the social worker about the time of home visitation that will fit with each others schedule.                      |
| 5. Give the foster parents more say in things where our child's needs are and trust our judgements over family connections.  | 12. Foster parents need access to more family history/trauma.   | 21. Before the kids were transferred to my home: I need to know the kids backgrounds and the cause of the kids was taken away from the parents |
| 6. Quit making a division between foster parents and bio parents.  | 13. Honesty with child/foster parent  | 22. Medical background   |
| 7. Be more forthcoming with info.  | 14. Feedback from social worker on report/journal submitted to them.  | 23. Whose members of the family that was connected with the kids.  |
| 8. Asking the worker if the child is allowed phone calls,  | 15. Less paperwork and more interconnection between social worker and caregiver.  | 24. Want the system to provide resources for both child and parents.   |
|  | 16. Clear communication, developing good relationship, organizing family visits.  |  |

#### About Resources

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1. How can we promote healthy connections for all parties.          | men's day, mukluks making.                 | 7. Give bio-family more supports 'respite' if kids went home like foster care does                              |
| 2. Want the system to provide resources for both child and parents. | 4. Therapy                                 | 8. More family support workshops, accessible therapy, allocated 'respite funds' for families—addiction support, |
| 3. Family Enhancement-skirt making, snowshoe making,                | 5. Helping teach culture                   |   |
|   | 6. If possible therapy with foster parents |   |

## Appendix C

| Question #1              |            |             | Question #2              |           |             |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Answers which are about: | #          | %           | Answers which are about: | #         | %           |
| Health/ Well being       | 41         | 30%         | Health/ Well being       | 23        | 24%         |
| Foster Family            | 15         | 11%         | Foster Family            | 0         | 0%          |
| Parenting                | 20         | 15%         | Parenting                | 20        | 21%         |
| Future                   | 5          | 4%          | Future                   | 2         | 2%          |
| Culture/ Language        | 5          | 4%          | Culture\ Language        | 5         | 5%          |
| School/ Activities       | 17         | 12%         | School/ Activities       | 11        | 11%         |
| Child Development        | 9          | 6%          | Child Development        | 0         | 0/          |
| Medical                  | 10         | 7%          | Medical                  | 20        | 21%         |
| Natural Family           | 14         | 10%         | Natural Family           | 11        | 11%         |
| Presenting Behaviours    | 1          | 1%          | Presenting Behaviours    | 10        | 10          |
| Resources                | 0          | 0%          | Resources                | 6         | 5%          |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>137</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>Total</b>             | <b>97</b> | <b>100%</b> |

| Question #3   |           |             |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| Answers which are about:                              | #         | %           |
| K/F skills to support care giver during transition    | 29        | 33%         |
| Child information to support transition to care giver | 21        | 24%         |
| Parenting information to transfer to care giver       | 33        | 37%         |
| Resource information to support transition            | 5         | 6%          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>88</b> | <b>100%</b> |

| Question #4                                |           |             |
|--|-----------|-------------|
| Answers which are about:                   | #         | %           |
| Care Provider to Care Provider Connections | 20        | 31%         |
| Child Well Being                           | 12        | 18%         |
| Team Involvement                           | 24        | 37%         |
| Resources                                  | 9         | 14%         |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>65</b> | <b>100%</b> |



The board and staff of The Kinship and Foster Family Network of Manitoba would like to thank all kinship and foster care providers for the incredible work they do.

We want to acknowledge the strength involved with kinship or foster parents using their voice to offer system improvements suggestions or identify concerns they experience for meeting their care provider responsibilities. They work within an extremely complex system with multiple levels of accountability.

Your engagement in these forums reinforced for us the commitment kinship and foster care providers have with supporting families and their children. From all the participants in the three forums you said children should be returned, when safety is assured, to their families. You recognized the temporary role you may play in a child's life. You also clearly stated your concerns centered around the safety and well being of the children in your care.

You identified what was beneath your concerns was the lack of communication from agencies and not being included in the planning reunification steps. We heard your thoughts that not engaging the knowledge of the care provider in the reunification process created needless challenges and not in a child's best interest.

We acknowledge the wisdom and generosity of all of those who participated in the forums that allowed for the creation of this report. We appreciated the time you took out of your extraordinarily busy lives to share with us. It is not an easy experience to examine these issues that can be very emotional, but the information you share is critical.

**Thank you**

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