



How to Explain a Foster Home Change to a Child (1-Page Practical Guide)

Telling a child that they will no longer be allowed to stay at a foster home is a delicate and sensitive situation. It's important to approach the conversation with care and compassion. Here are some tips for handling the conversation:

1. **Choose the Right Time and Place:** Make sure the setting is private, calm, and free from distractions, where the child feels safe and comfortable.
2. **Be Honest yet Gentle:** Use age-appropriate language, and be honest without being harsh. Avoid blaming or making the child feel responsible for the situation.
3. **Provide Reassurance:** Let the child know that it's not their fault, and remind them that the people involved (social workers, foster parents, etc.) care about their well-being and are working to make sure they have the best future possible.
4. **Explain Why (in Simple Terms):** Depending on the child's age, explain the situation briefly and in a way they can understand. For example, "The people here are going to be moving, and we need to find a new place for you to live, but we will make sure it's a safe and caring place."
5. **Offer Support:** Reassure them that they won't be alone in this. Let them know there are adults who are there to help and support them throughout this transition. You can also let them know that they can always express how they feel about it.
6. **Acknowledge Their Feelings:** Understand that this news may upset the child, and allow them to express any emotions or questions they have. Be patient and listen without interrupting.
7. **Offer Stability and Consistency:** Make sure they know that even though things are changing, there are adults around them who care and are working to find a new home where they will be supported and loved.

Example conversation: *"I want to talk to you about something important. The people you're living with right now are moving, and so, you won't be able to stay here anymore. I know this might make you feel sad or confused, but please know this isn't your fault. We're going to find a safe and loving place for you to live, and we will make sure you have the help and support you need during this time. It's okay to feel however you feel about it, and you can talk to me or anyone here if you have any questions."*

The goal is to create a sense of safety and hope, even in a difficult moment.