

TFCO-A

Treatment Foster Care Oregon for Adolescents

Foster Parent Training Manual For Foster Parent Trainers

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Using this Manual

Each section begins with the objectives and rationale for the topic. This manual includes background information for you, the leader, and information to be presented to the foster parents.

Print in normal font is background information for the leader.

Print in **bold** font is information to be presented to the foster parents.

Print in *italics* is instruction for the leader.

To make it easier for you to refer to the parent materials and to use the PowerPoint presentation, after the rationale for each section, the following are listed:

Page numbers in the parent notebook

Handouts to be distributed to foster parents

Corresponding PowerPoint slides

It is recommended that the parent notebook be distributed in a 3-ring binder and handouts be hole-punched so that parents can add them to the binder as you go along.

The PowerPoint presentation is set up to guide you through the material to be presented by visually displaying the key points of each section.

Introductions

Use this time to set up a warm and inviting atmosphere. Explain that even though there is a long agenda and a lot of material to cover, the meeting is informal and participants should feel free to interrupt with questions. Encourage them to make themselves comfortable, get up and move around if they need to, help themselves to refreshments, etc. Introduce yourself and give a brief summary of your personal experience and background. To help each other get acquainted and facilitate an informal atmosphere, introduce each of the foster parents and ask them to tell a little bit about themselves and why they are here and interested in being foster parents. Distribute and briefly review the agenda for the training.

Materials: PowerPoint slide 1-2.

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Overview of the TFCO Program
3. Background and Development of the TFCO Program
4. Role of TFCO Program Staff
5. Site-specific Information
6. Using the Program
7. House Rules
8. Noticing Behavior
9. Encouragement
10. Point and Level System
11. Putting it All Together
12. What to Expect

Overview of the TFCO Program

- Objectives:
1. Define the goal of the TFCO program.
 2. Identify the four main objectives of the program.
 3. Illustrate the differences between TFCO and standard foster care.

Rationale: Start off the session by clearly stating the goal of the TFCO program and identifying the program's main objectives. It will help to focus the group and establishes a base to build on throughout the training. It will help foster parents make the link between the "nuts and bolts" of the program and the bigger picture. This should enable them to implement the program more effectively. Illustrating how TFCO differs from standard foster care will clarify any misconceptions that may exist and provide everyone with the same understanding.

Materials: Parent Notebook, page 2
PowerPoint slides 3-6

As a society, we want to foster positive growth for youth. The goal of this program is to increase prosocial behavior and decrease problem behavior for youth with mental health and behavioral problems.

There are five main objectives of the TFCO program. As we work through the "nuts and bolts" of the program, you will see how the program has been designed to enable you to ...

- **Provide youth with close supervision**
- **Provide youth with fair and consistent limits and consequences**
- **Provide a supportive relationship with at least one mentoring adult**
- **Minimize youth's association with peers who may be a bad influence**
- **Increase youth's relationship and work skills**

If you have been a foster parent through other agencies or programs, you may see that we do things a little differently. The biggest differences between this program and others are:

- **TFCO places one youth with a family at a time.**
- **TFCO uses a team approach to treatment, with the foster parents as part of the team along with program staff.**
- **Foster parents in this program implement an individualized, structured program for each youth under the guidance of a Team Leader.**
- **Foster parents receive an enhanced level of support from program staff. Crisis intervention is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

- **Foster parents meet regularly with other foster parents and the Team Leader to support and learn from each other.**

We have found foster parents to be enthusiastic about these differences and the program in general. In a recent survey, TFCO program participants made these comments:

Use as many of the following quotes from the survey as you want to illustrate this point.

From Foster Parents

"In the last 4.5 years, the support we have received has been wonderful. We have been able to see positive changes in the foster children we invite into our home. Thank you and your staff for the opportunity to change the lives of children in a very positive way."

"I love the back-up when we have a problem."

"The method of treatment in the home in a stable environment together with the wonderful counselors and therapists is a model that works. Thank you for allowing us to be involved."

"I am very thankful for the continual support and quick response. Without it we would not at times (have) been able to hang on."

"It takes the pressure off, the program does the work."

From State Children and Families Services Staff

"Excellent program, very helpful."

"The children have made fabulous progress."

"This program, its staff, and its effect make it a jewel among residential treatment programs. I truly believe it is the best program in the state."

"I consider the OSLC work with families, including foster families, one of the most effective programs we can offer a family. They work as a team, provide incredible support for parents."

Background and Development

Objectives: 1. Give an overview of the research supporting the development of TFCO.
2. Review the research on the effectiveness of the program.

Rationale: Understanding the basic theory behind the development of the program will help foster parents use the program effectively. They will have a better understanding about why the program focuses on the elements it does. Knowing that the program was carefully developed and tested should provide a sense of validity toward the program. It is important for the foster parents to understand that they are working with a program that has demonstrated positive outcomes in previous settings.

Materials: Parent Notebook, pages 3-4
PowerPoint slides 7-17

It is not recommended that this background information be presented in detail. A detailed discussion is presented here for the trainer's benefit. A brief summary that can be presented to the participants follows the detailed description.

Detailed Background on the Development of TFCO

The TFCO model is based on Social Learning theory. Social Learning theory is simply a theory about how individuals learn to behave in social contexts. It describes how youth learn to use negative behaviors when interacting with adults and peers. A number of studies at the Oregon Social Learning Center and elsewhere studied how family interactions either contribute to or deter youth from habitually engaging in problem behavior. These studies included a series of observations in the homes of families with children, and by comparing the interactions in different families, scientists have been able to identify processes or interaction patterns that predict the development of negative behavior patterns in youth. Of course, each family is unique, and these patterns don't show up in all families. But, there are some consistent trends in these patterns that are important:

Stage 1. Some youth learn early on that by whining, yelling, ignoring, and refusing, they can get their parents to back off and their parents give up on making them mind. When this is repeated over and over again, youth don't learn to cooperate and mind. For other youth, emotional problems in the family dominate the parent-child interaction. These problems can be from the youth, the parent, or both. Negative interactions that are repeated set youth up for failure.

Stage 2. The youth goes to school and interacts with others in the same negative and coercive way. Other youth and adults start to avoid him. Because the youth is unpleasant to be around, the parent avoids the youth more and more and the youth is left to do as he pleases without learning necessary skills.

Stage 3. The youth starts to hang out with other youth who are like him—usually not very socially skilled and not well supervised. He may join with youth who may be getting into trouble and soon find himself in trouble.

Stage 4. Now, upon becoming independent from his family, the young adult hasn't learned the skills needed to enter the adult world of things like employment and relationships. He is at a loss as to how be successful in those areas.

This progression or path to negative behavior has been well studied and documented. This lack of skills can be due to many risk factors such as:

- Mental health problems
- Antisocial behavior
- Parental neglect and abuse

But most commonly, it's more than one thing. The good news is that research shows that interventions that help have common core factors.

Given this understanding of Social Learning theory, psychologists went on to study what kind of treatment is effective at interrupting this progression and getting troubled youth on a path leading to more positive outcomes. Many studies show that teaching parents to provide good supervision and consistent discipline can alter youths' negative patterns of behavior. Studies show that effective discipline methods used in the context of a supportive environment provide corrective experiences that teach youth cooperation and compliance skills.

It was the success of these studies that led to the development of the TFCO program in 1983. TFCO incorporates the strategies of the parent training programs that have been most effective: close supervision, clear and consistent limits or consequences, and a warm and supportive relationship with an adult. TFCO incorporates one other key strategy into the program—minimizing contact with other youth who have emotional and behavioral problems. Studies show that at a time when peers heavily influence each other, youth with behavioral and emotional problems are especially susceptible to negative influences, so, it is not a good idea to have them spending unsupervised time with youth who are likely to teach them new negative skills or reinforce the ones they have. That is why TFCO doesn't place youth in groups—it is too easy for them to learn new negative skills from each other.

The TFCO program attempts to surround the youth with positive role models and mentors. Youth are isolated from negative peers and taught the skills they missed earlier in their development that lead to prosocial interaction.

Evidence of Program Effectiveness

This program has been studied and tested for effectiveness. The TFCO model has been tested in seven studies of boys and girls with severe mental health and behavior problems in TFCO and in group care homes. The results of these studies consistently showed that TFCO youth:

- spent about one-third the number of days in psychiatric hospitals or locked facilities,
- had about half the number of arrests,
- spent less time with troubled friends and more time living with family (and had fewer runaways), and
- had higher rates of school attendance and homework completion

In addition,

- Randomized trials were conducted that focused on the unique needs of females.
- TFCO was designated as a best practice by the Surgeon General.
- TFCO has been implemented in over 40 sites in the U.S. and Sweden and in 19 sites in the U. K. since 2000.

The developers of this program are now testing it in other settings. TFCO is being used in foster homes with very young children and with youth who have low IQ functioning.

Brief Summary of Background to be Presented to Participants

This program is the result of years of research about how youth end up in trouble. Scientists spent a lot of time assessing, observing, and comparing families with youth who were having problems to families with youth who were not having problems. These observations showed some patterns that were very different in the two types of families. Of course, each family is unique, and these patterns don't show up in all families. But, some consistent trends in these patterns are important:

Stage 1. Some youth learn early on that by whining, yelling, ignoring, and refusing, they can get their parents to back off and their parents give up on making them mind. When this is repeated over and over again, youth don't learn to cooperate and mind. For other youth, emotional problems in the family dominate the parent-child interaction. These problems can be from the youth, the parent, or both. Negative interactions that are repeated set youth up for failure.

Stage 2. The youth goes to school and interacts with others in the same negative and coercive way. Other youth and adults start to avoid him. Because the youth is unpleasant to be around, the parent avoids him more and more, and the youth is left to do as he pleases without learning necessary skills.

Stage 3. The youth starts to hang out with kids who are like him—usually not very socially skilled and not well supervised. He may join with youth who may be getting into trouble and soon find himself in trouble.

Stage 4. Now, upon becoming independent from his family, the young adult hasn't learned the skills needed to enter the adult world of things like employment and relationships. He is at a loss as to how be successful in those areas.

After scientists understood what was happening, they studied various programs to see how to intervene and keep things from going so badly. They found that the most effective programs taught parents to supervise their youth closely, use clear and consistent discipline, engage in a warm and supportive relationship with them, and teach them relationship and work skills.

Those are the same things TFCO focuses on, plus one more. TFCO stresses the importance of limiting contact with other youth with behavior problems. At a time when peers heavily influence each other, youth with behavioral and emotional problems are especially susceptible to negative influences. So, it is not a good idea to have them hanging out unsupervised with youth who are likely to teach them new negative skills or reinforce the ones they have. That is why TFCO doesn't place youth in groups—it is too easy for them to learn new negative skills from each other.

The TFCO model has been tested in several studies of youth in TFCO and in group care homes. The results of these studies consistently showed that TFCO youth...

- had less than half the arrests of those in group care one year after placement,
- ran away or were expelled from TFCO homes less than youth in group homes,
- had fewer mental health problems than those in group care, and
- spent fewer days locked up in psychiatric hospitals or juvenile jails than those in group care in the 2 years after being in the program.

The developers of this program are now testing it in other settings. TFCO is being used in foster homes with very young children and with youth who have low IQ functioning.

Role of TFCO Program Staff

- Objectives:
1. Explain the role of the TFCO program staff.
 2. Describe the relationships between staff and foster parents.

Rationale: It is important for foster parents to understand the functions of the program staff; how they work with each other and with foster parents. Understanding who does what at this point in the training will make the examples and situations presented throughout the rest of the training more meaningful. Reviewing the roles of staff will also illustrate how much support is available in this program and let the foster parents know from the beginning that they can access help whenever they need to. It is important to stress that the foster parents are considered professional members of the treatment team.

Some roles may vary in function depending on the site and situation. For example, not all sites will include individual therapists for the youth in their programs. This explanation should be customized to depict the roles of the staff in your program.

Materials: Parent Notebook, pages 5-6.
PowerPoint slide 18.

Team Leader

Team Leaders are at the head of the treatment team and work with all members of the team, which includes the foster parents, referring agency staff, school personnel, therapists, and skills coaches. It is their job to incorporate all information from members of the team into the youth's treatment plan. They coordinate, supervise, and individualize the youth's treatment plan, and they oversee the activities of the other members of the treatment team.

The Team Leader is the main person with whom foster parents will interact. Since there are a number of people on the treatment team, it could easily get overwhelming for foster parents to give and receive information from all members of the treatment team. The Team Leader serves as the "clearing house" for information. This also ensures that information remains accurate. When you were a kid, you probably played the "telephone game" where information is repeated through a chain of people. As the information moved through more and more people it usually changed so that what was repeated at the end of the chain was not the same as it was at the beginning. With so many people involved in the treatment team, this same thing can happen, especially when the youth is involved in the chain.

It's easy to see how things can get mixed up if the Team Leader is not in the middle of things. You might have a parent trying to arrange the details of a

home visit directly with the youth and expect the youth to inform everyone. As often happens, the youth forgets and when the time comes for the home visit, the foster parent (and the rest of the treatment team) is unaware of the plan and not prepared, and everyone is confused about who needs to be where and when. Or, the same thing could happen if the skills coach arranged visits with the youth directly. If the youth doesn't follow through or gives the foster parent the wrong information, everyone is confused and the visit may not happen because of scheduling conflicts.

Team Leaders also act as consultants to foster parents. They consult with them weekly during group meetings and on the telephone as needed. They are available to foster parents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Team Leader is also the "bottom line" when decisions (often unpopular ones) need to be made about program changes, negative consequences, and other essential matters. The program is designed so that problems can be routed to the Team Leader, leaving the foster parent in a better position to encourage and support the youth.

Foster Parents

Foster parents are essential members of the treatment team. Their primary role is to implement the youth's program and encourage and support the youth. They are the eyes and ears of the program and maintain close communication with the Team Leader. Foster parents help Team Leaders identify target behaviors and formulate treatment plans.

Using the figure at the end of this section, briefly describe the roles of the other members of the treatment team, continuing to stress that the Team Leader is the leader of this team and director of the youth's treatment program.

Therapists

Depending on the situation, the youth may have a therapist and the youth's family may have a therapist. The role of the youth's therapist is to support the youth's adjustment. The youth therapist helps the youth practice the skills she needs to relate successfully to adults and peers. The therapist acts as the youth's advocate and support person. The therapist works closely with the Team Leader about the specifics of the treatment strategy. Likewise, the family therapist works with the youth's family to help them prepare for their youth's return home. The family therapist works with family members to use parenting strategies that are similar to those used in the foster home. The therapists work closely with the Team Leader to structure home visits for the youth and family. The Team Leader then works with the foster family to arrange the home visits.

Skills Coaches

Skills coaches help the youth get involved in appropriate activities in the community. They use these opportunities to teach and practice prosocial and problem solving skills with the youth.

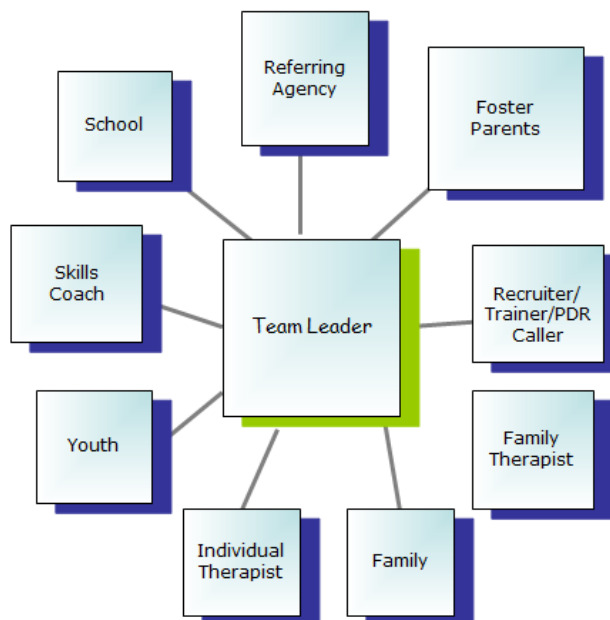
Example: Some youth who exhibit problem behaviors attract negative attention and suspicion to themselves when they enter a store or business because of their mannerisms. The way they walk, their style of dress, the way they look (or don't look) at others, or the way they speak may arouse suspicion by employees. A skills coach and youth may practice the skills needed to enter a store and ask for help without arousing suspicion. The youth may then go to a store and practice the skills with the skills coach ready to give feedback and reinforcement.

PDR Caller

The PDR caller telephones foster parents each weekday to go over a checklist of behaviors called the Parent Daily Report (PDR). The PDR caller communicates with the Team Leader about information the foster parent provided during the call. Later in this training, we will talk about the PDR in more detail.

Referring Agency

Depending on the situation, the referring agency may be the juvenile court, parole or probation, the local youth protection agency, or mental health, etc. The agency refers youth for placement and may require periodic updates on their progress. The Team Leader is responsible for interactions with the agency and for compliance with the agency's conditions.



Site Specific Information

- Objectives:
1. Give an overview of the types of youth served at this site.
 2. List the operating details specific to this site and agency.

Rationale: Since TFCO is administered in many sites and with various agencies, each application will need to be outlined accordingly. It will be helpful to give an overview of the background of the youth you will be placing with these foster parents. It helps to have that frame in mind as you work through the explanation of the program, and you can use examples more tailored to the population of youth you are placing. Even though the logistical details have probably been covered (or will be) elsewhere, it is good to spend a minute reviewing the ones that are most relevant to your situation. Often people have questions about the process or logistics and if you address them at this point, the participants will be less likely to be distracted by them as you work through the program.

Materials: Parent Notebook, page 7, is an Agreements page. You will need to distribute your site-specific information for parents to insert into their notebooks. Be sure to include an extra copy of any agreements parents may sign and return to you so they can refer to them in the future.

PowerPoint slide 19

Below are some topics that may be relevant for you to cover in this section. Examples of the agreements are provided in Appendix A.

- **Description.** A description of the type of youth that will be placed, including: what agency is referring them, the typical background (juvenile offenders, traumatized or abused, etc.), the age range, the average number of previous placements, etc. It is important to be realistic about the kinds of problems your youth have. Give some examples of the situations these youth have been in. It may seem awkward to focus on the severity of the problems these youth have, but it is much better at this point for foster parents to know as much as they can about what they are getting into rather than be surprised after a youth is placed in their home.
- **Matching.** Foster parents are often curious about how they will be matched with a youth. It is a good idea to give a brief explanation about the factors used in making this decision.
- **Certification process.** Review what needs to happen in the process and generally where they should be at this point. Are the participants where they need to be in the process? Are there any problems that you can help with?
- **Confidentiality.** It is important to stress that all information about these youth is confidential. The personal details of the youth that will be placed with them should not be shared with anyone. If people outside of the home (for example, school staff) need to know things about the youth's personal situation, the Team

Leader is responsible for that communication. The youth's right to privacy should be respected at all times. It is recommended that participants sign a confidentiality agreement, a sample of which is included in the notebook.

- **Foster Parent/TFCO Agreement.** At this time, it is a good idea to provide a copy of the agreement that the foster parent will be expected to sign. Even though you probably won't have them sign it until a youth is placed with them, it gives them a chance to read it ahead of time and ask questions.

Using the Program – Overview

Objectives: 1. Introduce the skills used to implement the program.
2. Reiterate the supportive role of the Team Leader.

Rationale: This is a transition point in the training from the theoretical background of the program to the specific strategies used in the program. The rest of the training will focus on various components of the program that, when used together, form a set of tools foster parents can use to be successful. At this point, it is important to reiterate that the Team Leader will be there to help them every step of the way. When presenting all of the strategies in the program, it can be overwhelming and foster parents might feel like there is too much to learn. It is important that they understand that the Team Leader will help them in the initial use of these strategies and support their long-term use.

Materials: Parent Notebook, page 8.
PowerPoint slide 20.

TFCO Strategies for Foster Parents

- **House Rules – Setting Up a Safe Environment**
- **Noticing Behavior**
- **Encouragement**
- **Point and Level System**

As we've discussed, the youth in this program come with all sorts of backgrounds and problems. They have not experienced "normal" life and consequently have not had opportunities to develop "normal" skills. The more "normal life experiences" they have, the more it facilitates appropriate development and catching up on skills they have missed learning. A key aspect of providing normal life experiences is providing stability. Disruption makes it difficult for a youth to progress, and as you can imagine, these youth have experienced many disruptions. The program we use in TFCO minimizes disruption and builds in stability, which helps to provide an environment where youth can have these normal life experiences.

TFCO uses a set of strategies that will help you manage your youth's behavior. So far, the behaviors most of these youth have learned put them at risk for more problems. Managing their problem behavior helps keep youth safe and gives them opportunities to develop more appropriate behavior and skills. Your Team Leader will help you learn to use each of these tools skillfully and will provide ongoing support for their use. These strategies are designed to compliment each other and to be used together. We will spend the remainder of the time focused on how to use each of these strategies.

House Rules

- Objectives:
1. Give rationale for using house rules.
 2. Use examples to illustrate common house rules.

Rationale: Before the youth is placed in the foster home, it is a good idea for the foster parents to think about what they want their "house rules" to be. Making the expectations clear immediately when the youth arrives will have several benefits. If the youth understands the basic rules from the very start, there will be less confusion and fewer opportunities for the youth to test limits. In addition, clear expectations about behavior can provide a sense of security and safety to a youth.

Materials: Parent Notebook, pages 9-11.
PowerPoint slides 21-23.

What are house rules and why should you have them?

House rules are a set of basic rules that help establish a safe environment and provide structure that makes people feel secure. Having a specified set of rules enables you to be clear with the youth about your expectations.

Basic Guidelines for House Rules

- **Be clear and specific.**
- **Keep the list short (a list of 5 rules is recommended), and include the most important things.**
- **Review the rules with the whole family.**
- **Post them where everyone can see them.**

What are some house rules that you would put on your list?

Write suggestions on the board. Use the examples to demonstrate how to be specific. For example, if someone suggested the rule "be nice," you could use that example to show how confusing it is to make house rules so vague. What is "being nice"? Probe to find out what the parent is really expecting. Maybe what they really expect is for family members to always say "please and thank you." Repeat this as needed for examples that aren't clear enough. It will be helpful to provide a rationale for each of the types of house rules.

There are four areas that we think are important to consider when you are making your house rules.

1. Privacy

It is a good idea to think about how you want to handle privacy in your home when you have foster youth. Since they have not grown up with you and have not been exposed to your household's level of respect for privacy, you need to let them know in advance what is acceptable and what is not. As we've talked about before, many of these youth have been victims of or exposed to inappropriate sexual behaviors. Consequently, they may have behaviors that are not appropriate or they may respond differently to things than your own children or you do. For example, you may have a young teenage girl placed in your home who has been sexually abused by adult males in her home. She may have learned to relate to adult males in an overtly sexual way. You would want to avoid any situations that would trigger that kind of behavior. Or, maybe your foster youth has been raised in a home with 10 people and one bathroom, and it seems quite normal to him to use the bathroom when others are present or with the door open. In your family, however, that would not be acceptable. Some suggestions for rules about privacy are:

- **Bathrooms and bedrooms are private—knock before entering.**
- **Other family member's bedrooms are off limits.**
- **Wear bathrobes outside of your bedroom.**

2. Food

It can be surprising when issues around food become a big deal. You may not think it is necessary to include rules on your list about food. Keep in mind that in your family you have grown up with each other, and you have an understanding that has developed over time about what is and isn't ok. Some of you will be fine with loose rules about what is and isn't available. But if you are the kind of person who would be upset if you had planned on using the leftovers from last night's meal in tonight's meal but found that your youth had eaten them for a snack after school, then you should think ahead about what you do and don't want to have happen. Some rules that foster parents have included on their lists before are:

- **Ask before snacking.**
- **Certain snacks (designate which ones) are available without permission.**
- **You can have snacks whenever you want (be clear about what is a "snack").**

3. Household Routines

Here is where you need to ask yourself some questions about what routines you feel are important for your household to function smoothly. You don't want to overwhelm your youth with a three-page list of things he needs to do everyday, but you do want to be clear about what is

important to you. Knowing what to do and expect right from the beginning will help the youth feel like a member of your household sooner. Some examples of things you might include are:

- **Laundry must be put in the hamper every day.**
- **Shower every day.**
- *Ask the group for more ideas. This is a good one to engage parents in, as parents can easily come up with ideas. They often already have some kind of routine in place in their household.*

4. No Roughhousing

As we've talked about before, most youth in this program come from very difficult situations. Often, they have grown up in an environment that includes inappropriate physical behavior, including physically violent behavior or sexual abuse or both. Often, youth in those situations have never learned to read cues about when enough is enough and don't know when to stop. For example, youth with normal experiences have learned what the acceptable limits are when they wrestle around with each other, and usually no one gets hurt. Youth in this program not only don't know what is acceptable, they have not learned to regulate themselves, and things can get out of control quickly. It is best to try to prevent youth from getting into situations where they may lose control. You can do this by including in your list of house rules things like:

- **No hurtful physical contact (hitting, kicking, etc.)**
- **No rough play (wrestling, play-fighting, etc.)**

Your Team Leader will help you come up with appropriate rules for you, your youth, and your other family members. You may have to add a rule or two as you and your youth get to know each other better. There may be basic issues you can't anticipate in advance.

When you sit down to make your list of house rules, it might help to think about having a guest. When you have visitors, you expect the household routines to be different and that you will adjust accordingly. Usually, having a guest means that you are more attentive to their needs, you get them things, you clean up after them, etc. You don't mind because they leave after a couple of days and things go back to normal. Having a foster youth is not like having a guest—they don't leave after a couple of days and give you an opportunity to put things back to normal. You have to include them as a normal part of your routines right from the start.

Taking the time to think about this before your youth comes will be time well spent. Your youth will come with a different set of values than you and your family have. You can help your youth fit in with your values better if you plan ahead.

Noticing Behavior

- Objectives:
1. Define what “noticing behavior” means.
 2. Outline an approach to noticing problem behavior.
 3. Introduce the PDR as a tracking mechanism.
 3. Illustrate how to notice positive (cooperative) behavior.

Rationale: Noticing behavior is the first step toward teaching parents to deal with problem behaviors more effectively and to encourage positive behaviors more consistently.

Teaching foster parents how to notice behavior will enable them to be more objective in how they see the youth behaving—both positively and negatively. They will learn to identify problems, describe problems, and use a system to notice the frequency of their occurrence. This will make it easier to give Team Leaders a complete picture of the problem and, consequently, enable foster parents and Team Leaders to plan an effective strategy for dealing with the problem.

The Parent Daily Report (PDR) is a tool used to help foster parents notice behavior. The PDR makes it possible to get repeated measures of the youth’s progress and problems so that adjustments can be made and the program can be tailored to each youth’s needs. It is an efficient way for foster parents to communicate with other members of the treatment team about the youth’s progress.

Likewise, it can be useful to help foster parents notice positive behavior. Noticing positive behavior will tune foster parents in to how often the youth is behaving appropriately and enable them to encourage the youth more. It is very easy for parents to focus only on their youth’s negative behavior. It is important to give parents tools to help them notice the positive behaviors, too.

Materials: Parent Notebook, pages 12-17.
PowerPoint slides 24-33.

Why is noticing behavior important?

Noticing how often and under what circumstances behaviors occur is the first step toward dealing with problem behaviors effectively and encouraging positive behaviors consistently. It is important to learn to do this objectively. It’s easy to get in the rut of only noticing the negative things youth do and even easier to notice the REALLY negative things they do. It is very natural, since these negative things leave such a big impression. Given that one of the goals of this program is to encourage positive behavior, it’s important not to get into the rut of being predominantly focused on the problems.

Pinpointing and Noticing Problem Behaviors: The Four-step Approach

One of the first things you will probably do with your Team Leader is to learn to objectively pinpoint problem behaviors. Learning to do this well in the very beginning helps you and your Team Leader figure out what problems to work on first and how to customize the treatment plan for the youth's needs. It helps to think of this as a four-step process.

1. Knowing when a behavior is a problem. The youth may have many problems and certainly some will be bigger challenges than others. You can't possibly work on all of the problems at once. How do you know which ones are really problems that need attention and which ones you can let go for a while? You can ask yourself these questions to determine when a problem is really a problem.

- Does it interfere with living in your family?
- Does it interfere with the youth's ability to learn something new?
- Does it interfere with the youth's performance in an area where the youth is already competent?

2. Describe the behavior. In order to give the Team Leader an accurate idea of what the problem is, you'll have to be able to describe it clearly. Be specific and focus on the action of the behavior, not how it makes you feel or what the outcome of the behavior is.

- When you are noticing a behavior, step back and watch. What do you see? What exactly is happening? When does it occur (time of day, with whom, where)?

3. Examine the circumstances around the behavior. Part of tracking behavior is noticing the circumstances in which the behavior occurs. If you are able to answer the following questions, you'll have a really good idea about the circumstances surrounding the problem, and you'll be able to start to figure out what to do about it.

- Where does the problem behavior occur?
- When does the problem behavior occur?
- With whom does the problem behavior occur?
- What triggered the problem behavior? What happened before the problem behavior?

4. How can we discourage the behavior? Going through the steps above allows you and your Team Leader to have a good idea about what the problem is and what the circumstances of the problem are. Now, you can start to change the things around the problem behavior that maintain it. Think about what you've learned about the problem behavior from the steps above and ask:

- **What can this youth do instead?**
- **How can you encourage this behavior?**
- **What limits can you set on the problem behavior?**

Walk through these steps with examples.

1. *Ask the foster parents for examples of a problem behavior they think they might encounter or have encountered with other youth. Encourage them to ask the questions from Step 1 to determine if it is a **problem** or not. Some examples might be....*

Defiance

Disrespect

Pushing, hitting

Not picking up room

Being loud, screaming

Poor hygiene

Tantrums

2. *Pick an example that is particularly vague—like disrespect. It is hard to define because it has so many interpretations and can include so many behaviors. What one parent may consider disrespect, another parent may not. Demonstrate how hard it would be for the Team Leader to get a clear idea of what the behavior is if it is described simply as "disrespect." Have the foster parents break it down into specific behaviors, what the youth does that they consider disrespectful (back talk, looks, etc.).*
3. *Ask the questions from Step 3. Some examples of when "disrespect" (back talk, looks, etc.) may occur are:*

when the youth is asked to do something

first thing in the morning

when there are other kids around

4. *Ask the questions in Step 4.*
 - *What might the youth do instead?*
 - *Just do what is asked without saying anything.*
 - *Respond with a neutral toned "ok" when asked to do something.*
 - *If the youth is too grumpy first thing in the morning, the youth could get up earlier and get fully awake before interacting with the rest of the family or stick to himself until he was fully awake.*
 - *How can you encourage the behavior?*
 - *Discuss with your Team Leader what an appropriate reward might be for when the youth responds in the way you want.*
 - *Verbally acknowledge each time your youth responds to a request, etc., without disrespectful behavior*

- *How can you set limits on the behavior?*
 - *Let the youth know that in this house we do what is asked without talking back or giving dirty looks. When you talk back and give us dirty looks, that it is not minding. Use the point and level system to give or take away point for minding and not minding.*

Work through more examples of problem behavior, as needed.

Using the Parent Daily Report (PDR)

Background information for the trainer:

Prior to the development of the PDR, live observations were the most valid way to collect data on parent and youth behaviors in the home. Observations are an expensive and intrusive way to collect information and are not a particularly effective way to study covert behaviors such as lying or stealing. In 1969, researchers compared observation data with data collected through PDR to determine whether the PDR could measure overt behaviors (hitting, arguing, etc.) as well as observations. The results of those studies showed that information collected through PDR was as reliable as observation data and PDR had the added bonus of measuring the covert behaviors.

Once it was established that the PDR was a reliable way to obtain information about a youth's behavior, it was further developed for use in treatment settings. It was used and tested in various treatment settings and was found to be a straightforward and efficient way to collect data based on the foster parent's observations of the youth. The PDR makes it possible to collect information over time on the youth's progress and problems so that the treatment plan can be tailored to meet specific needs. When reviewed weekly, it acts as a snapshot of the youth's adjustment for that week. The PDR is a vital part of the treatment program.

This background information about the development of the PDR is provided for you, the trainer, so you have a better understanding of how the PDR was developed.

A very important tool used in TFCO to track behavior is the Parent Daily Report, or PDR. Your PDR caller will call you every weekday. You are not asked how many times each behavior occurs, only whether it occur during the past 24 hours "yes" or "no." This information is then made available to your Team Leader and is used in several different ways.

One way the information is used is to catch problems early. It is always easier to deal with small problems rather than big ones. We want you to notice and report on a daily basis about the minor problem behaviors on the PDR so we can work on them while they are still minor. We have found that when you are asked every day about these behaviors you notice the minor problems earlier.

The PDR forms for all youth are brought each week to the case management meetings. The information on the PDR is often used as a starting point for case discussions. It enables the treatment team to see the progress and problems the youth is having and look at the youth's adjustment over time. The team is then better able to tailor the treatment plan to the youth's needs.

The PDR is also used to detect cycles or patterns of behavior problems. For example, it may be the foster parents' impression that the youth's behavior is worse after a home visit. The PDR can be used to monitor whether that impression is true or not. Or, maybe your youth is receiving medication. The

information from the PDR can be used to determine if the medication is affecting the youth's behavior.

Sometimes foster parents feel that the PDR is overly focused on negative behaviors and wonder why positive behaviors are not included on the list. While it might be helpful to go through a similar list of positive behaviors on a daily basis, it would take too much of your time every day. You will be providing regular information on the positive ways youth in your home behave through the point and level cards and system.

PDR Data Collected

Behaviors 12 – 18yrs. Interview

Animal cruelty

Arguing

Backtalking

Bedwetting

Competitiveness

Complaining

Daydreaming

Defiance

Depression/Sadness

Destructiveness

Drug & alcohol use

Encopresis

Fearfulness

Fighting

Interrupting

Irresponsibility

Irritability

Jealousy

Lying

Mean talk

Nervous/Jittery

Not minding

Pant wetting

Pouting

Runaway

School problems

Sexual behavior

Short att. Span

Skipping meals

Sleep problems

Sluggishness

Staying out

Stealing

Swearing

Teasing

Truancy

Worried

Other Data Fields

Daily Grade

Points Earned

Points Lost

Medication Admin.


Prosocial Target Bx

Points earned in PTB

Interviewer

Respondent

Notes: (by date)

 Resources Edit 123caller@yahoo.com Logout Contact us							
Client Name: G, Lady		Client ID: G001			Age: 14		
Placement ID:				Questionnaire: 12 to 18			
Behavior	Sun 09-Nov-2014	Mon 10-Nov-2014	Tue 11-Nov-2014	Wed 12-Nov-2014	Thu 13-Nov-2014	Fri 14-Nov-2014	Sat 15-Nov-2014
1. Animal Cruelty							
2. Arguing	2						
3. Backtalking							
4. Bedwetting							
5. Competitiveness							
6. Complaining	2						
7. Daydreaming							
8. Defiance	1						
9. Depression/Sadness							
10. Destructiveness							
11. Drug & alcohol use							
12. Encopresis							
13. Fearfulness							
14. Fighting							
15. Interrupting							
16. Irresponsibility							
17. Irritability	1						
18. Jealousy							
19. Lying							
20. Mean Talk							
21. Nervous/Jittery							
22. Not Minding	1						
23. Pant Wetting							
24. Pouting							
25. Runaway							

Noticing Cooperative Behavior

Just as it is good to notice problem behavior to get a better sense of exactly what and how big the problems are, it is also very important to notice cooperative behavior. It keeps foster parents from falling into the rut of thinking the youth only behaves in negative ways. It provides foster parents with an opportunity to encourage and support the youth, which is one of the main objectives of this program.

Use the underlined questions below to stimulate group discussion, then summarize with the information following each question.

Why is cooperation important?

Many of the youth in this program have not learned to cooperate, which puts them at greater risk for more problems. Peers, teachers, and other adults in the community generally better accept youth who know how to cooperate. Youth who are cooperative and accepted by others tend to...

- **Feel better about themselves**
- **Have confidence to try new things**
- **Be better prepared to meet new demands**

What exactly is cooperation?

Cooperation is a skill and you can teach it, but first we should agree on what it is. Generally, it is the same thing as minding. You can think about most problem behavior as not minding and most cooperative behavior as minding. For example, if one of your stated expectations is that the youth does what you ask the first time and right away, when the youth doesn't do those things, that is not minding or not cooperating. Likewise, if you expect the youth to be completely ready for school by 7:45 and the youth is ready, then that is minding or behaving cooperatively.

How long should it take for the youth to mind?

If you ask the youth to put the dishes in the dishwasher, how long should it take to cooperate or mind? If the youth responds to your request—the first time—within 10 to 15 seconds, that would be minding. If you had to ask more than once or it took longer, that would not be minding.

Ask the group what they think about that time frame. Sometimes people object to such a short time frame and think it isn't very reasonable. Demonstrate how long 15 seconds is through a role-play. Ask a parent to help you and to not comply with the request you will make. Ask the parent to do something (hand you a book, pick up a pencil, etc.) and wait for 15 seconds. Talk about how this really is a long time to be ignored and that

you would probably be getting angry with the youth by the end of that 15 seconds. This should help those who question whether 15 seconds is a reasonable amount of time.

How do you ask the youth to do something?

Most of the time we don't even think about how we ask our youth to do something. There are a few things we can do to increase the chance that our youth will cooperate.

- **Get their attention. Make eye contact and/or call their name before asking them to do something. If you aren't sure you have their attention, you won't really know if they heard you.**
- **Keep your voice calm.**
- **Be specific and clear.**
- **Limit the number of directions you give. They may forget some if you list too many things to do all at once.**
- **Follow through. Pay attention to whether or not the youth responds and act accordingly by either acknowledging a job well done or giving a consequence for not minding.**
- **When possible, don't ask them to do something when they are deeply engaged in something. It isn't always an option to wait, but when it really doesn't matter, let them finish what they are doing.**
- **Tell them what TO do (rather than what not to do).**

Instead of this. . .

Why can't you pick up after yourself?
Do you have to throw that there?
Do you call that bed made?
Pick up that room.
Use your manners.
Can't you see what a mess your room is?

Try this. . .

Please pick up your jacket.
Put your book in your room.
You forgot to pull up the sheet.
Put your tapes in the tape box.
Don't talk with food in your mouth.
Put your clothes away, please.

How often should you expect the youth to mind?

"Normal" youth who haven't had the kind of experiences youth in foster care have had mind about 70% of the time. That should give you an idea of what to expect and strive for with these youth. Expecting the youth to cooperate all of the time just isn't reasonable and will make everyone frustrated.

In the beginning, it may be helpful to notice how often the youth cooperates. The youth may be cooperating more than you think.

All of these noticing strategies are an important part of the program. You can't support or manage behavior effectively if you don't see it. These strategies will train you to see the important behaviors.

Encouragement

- Objectives:
1. Stress the importance of encouragement and positive reinforcement.
 2. Review strategies to encourage cooperation and support positive behavior.

Rationale: So far, the focus has been on identifying and noticing behavior. A significant key to success with this program is giving plenty of encouragement for cooperation and support for positive behavior. These kids often come with so many problems that it is easy for problems to be the only focus. It is important to give some strategies to parents that will help them support and encourage positive behavior. They need to see their role beyond managing behavior.

Materials: Parent Notebook, pages 18-20.
PowerPoint slides 34-40.

We've talked about how cooperation is a skill that can be taught. Encouragement is a very powerful way to teach cooperation and minding. It's easy to get so caught up in dealing with problems that we forget one of the most important parts of being a foster parent—supporting the youth and encouraging positive behavior. In fact, we recommend that you aim for a ratio of *at least* 5 to 1 of positive comments to corrective comments to the youth. More than that is even better! A ratio of 8 to 1 is a good goal to strive for. There are several ways you can build that level of support into your daily routine.

1. **See it!** You can't reinforce positive behavior if you don't see it. We get into such a habit of watching for problems that we can completely overlook the things youth are doing right. Most youth are behaving appropriately 70-80% of the time. For the youth in this program, it is typically less than that; but well over 50% of the time these youth are doing what they are supposed to be doing. Your job is to "catch them being good."
2. **Notice it! Reinforce it!** Let youth know when you see them behaving appropriately. Let them know when you notice them going out of their way to comply or be nice, etc. You can use words like "nice job, way to go, I appreciate that, etc." to let youth know you noticed. It may be hard at first to find the right words—youth react to different things. You can also use non-verbal cues to let the youth know you noticed. Sometimes just a look and a smile will do the trick, or a thumbs-up sign, or some other positive gesture. Even though they may act like they don't care, youth will notice your acknowledgement. Reinforcing

their positive behavior will increase the chance that they behave that way again.

- 3. Model it! Demonstrate the way you want the youth to behave by behaving that way yourself. Let's say you want to encourage the youth to say please and thank you. Be sure you always say please and thank you. Be conscious of your own behavior to see if you are acting as a role model for the youth.**
- 4. Be interested! Try to find some common interests with the youth. Look for things you might have in common or things you can do together and enjoy. Learn what the youth likes and doesn't like. See if you can determine what the youth's strengths are. Your interest tells the youth that she is important.**

Some people find it a little unnatural in the beginning to watch for opportunities to "catch them being good." It gets easier and more natural as you do it more. Sometimes foster parents tell us that the youth doesn't seem to care if they notice or not. It is true that some of these youth may not seem to respond to verbal reinforcement. In a little bit, we will talk about a way you can provide more tangible reinforcement through the point and level system. Whether the reinforcement is verbal or something more tangible, the important thing is to train yourself to notice appropriate behavior.

Here is a typical afternoon in the life of Joe Foster Parent.

You arrive at school to pick up the youth after stopping at the grocery store. You say "Hi, how was your day?" as he gets in the car. He grunts something that is barely audible but it sounds like "fine." When you get home, he takes a sack of groceries into the house with him, goes to his room with his backpack and coat and comes back to the kitchen. You tell him that you bought some really good apples and he is welcome to have one for a snack. As he gets the apples out of the grocery bag, he puts away a couple of items that were in the bag with the apples. He takes the apple to the table with him and starts in on his homework. You ask him about what homework he has and again he isn't too communicative. He seems grumpy and distant.

What would you do or say next?

Ask foster parents to tell you what they would do next. Some may suggest trying to get him to talk about why he is grumpy. Some may want to work on getting him to be more communicative. Some may be annoyed with him for not helping put away all of the groceries. If no one suggest these things, you can bring them into the conversation and ask if anyone feels these ways. Probably someone does.

If no one brings it up, make sure to direct the conversation on how foster parents have several opportunities in this scenario to reinforce positive behavior. He helped take

groceries in without being asked, he put his things in his room, he put away some groceries, and he started right in on his homework without being reminded. Ask the group how they could encourage those behaviors. If not suggested, include things like:

"Thanks for your help with the groceries, I really appreciate it."

"Nice job remembering that you are supposed to do your homework first."

"I really appreciate the way you put your things where they belong—that is very responsible."

Catch `Em Being Good

- **Be specific about what the youth did right.**
 - **Rather than just saying "Good job," say, "You put away all of the dishes, good job!"**
- **Praise each small step that contributes to achieving a larger goal.**
- **Find some part of the task that the youth did right and comment on that.**
 - **"Hey, you started your homework on time, good for you."**

Tips for Giving Praise

- **Don't require perfection before you praise.**
- **Use Positive facial expression and tone of voice.**
- **Praise soon after the positive behavior.**
- **When/Then: When the youth takes a step in the right direction, then he receives praise.**
- **Base praise on the youth's behavior.**
- **Avoid sarcasm or negative comments on the end of praise statements.**

Notice the Little Things

- **Like when the youth...**
 - **Said "please" or "thank you" or "excuse me"**
 - **Was on time for school**
 - **Was kind to your pets**
 - **Smiled**
 - **Volunteered to help**
 - **Made a kind statement**
 - **Covered mouth when coughing or sneezing**
 - **Finished homework or chore**

Reinforcing Appropriate Behavior

As a strategy, reinforcing appropriate behavior has many advantages:

- **It strengthens the bond between adult and youth.**
- **It increases the probability that the reinforced behavior will reoccur.**
- **It decreases (but does not eliminate) the probability that negative behavior will occur.**
- **It gives adults a tool for controlling how they focus their own attention, which can have positive effects on the overall emotional tone of the relationship.**

Recent studies have found that the amount of reinforcement parents use affects behavioral, affective, and social outcomes over and above what could be accounted for by discipline methods.

That means that you can make more progress by using *reinforcement + discipline* than you can with discipline alone. Strong behavior plans incorporate methods for implementing daily reinforcement and daily consequences for problem or negative behavior. Tangible reinforcers that are offered to and earned by the youth should also be incorporated in the plan when possible. Focusing on the positive involves both increasing the amount of reinforcement that parents are giving and varying the type of reinforcements offered.

Incentives

Activities

- Choose a special TV program
- Have first dibs on bathroom in morning for... (specified amount of time)
- Choose from a grab bag of small, wrapped items
- Have a friend over
- Make a craft project (work on it for 15 minutes a night with one parent; woodworking, weaving, etc.)
- Help cook or bake
- Rent a video
- Play Nintendo or other game
- Get a book or magazine
- Go swimming, go to wave pool
- Earn articles of clothing for self
- Take bottles back to store—keep or split refund
- Go ice or roller skating

Parent Time

- Play a 15-minute game with foster parent
- Take a walk with foster parent
- Be taken out to a movie
- Go out with foster parent for ice cream
- Bake (brownies) or cook (part of a meal) with foster parents
- Shop with foster parents
- Help cook or bake

Food

- Dried fruit as a snack
- Make popcorn in the evening
- Choose dinner one night
- Take a special lunch to school
- Homemade cookies, cake, pie, etc.
- Go out for pizza with family
- Gum
- Choose dessert for evening meal
- Bake (brownies) or cook (part of a meal) with foster parents

Point and Level System

- Objectives:
1. Present the rationale behind the point and level system.
 2. Present the benefits of using the point and level system.
 3. Give an overview of the three levels.
 4. Provide guidelines about using a point system economy.

Rationale: Numerous studies have shown that youth with severe behavior problems are less responsive to social approval and disapproval than youth without problems. Consequently, some of the usual mechanisms used by parents to shape youth behavior, such as praising, lecturing, or generating feelings of guilt, fail to have much impact on these youth. The studies also show that youth with severe behavior problems seem to learn as well as their "normal" counterparts when tangible rewards such as tokens, food, privileges, and money are used. This also seems to be true for correcting problems and disciplining these youth. The point and level system restructures the home environment so that problem youth consistently receive rewards for appropriate behavior and consequences for misbehavior. The system uses explicit reinforcement in the form of points to "buy" privileges, material things, and money. In this system the youth loses points for misbehavior. This system gradually suppresses the misbehavior and at the same time provides encouragement for taking steps in a positive direction. It helps these youth overcome skill deficits by systematically providing rewards for a behavior.

It will be helpful for foster parents to understand a little bit of the big picture behind the point and level system. It demonstrates the validity of the program and will help them implement the system with confidence.

In this lesson, you will give an overview of the levels and how the system works and provide an opportunity to practice using the system. It isn't important at this point for foster parents to have an in-depth understanding of how to use the system. Team Leaders will go over this in more detail with foster parents later.

Materials: Parent Notebook, pages 21-48.
PowerPoint slides 41-78.

Overview and Benefits of the Point and Level System

The Point and Level System is simply a daily behavior management program. The program specifies the daily activities and behaviors expected and assigns a number of points the youth can earn for satisfactory performance. The points are a concrete way for parents to teach appropriate skills, reinforce

desired behaviors or attitudes, and provide consequences for problem behavior.

Benefits of the point and level system are:

- **You and the youth are working with the same expectations and understandings.**
- **It builds in regular opportunities for you to support and encourage the youth.**
- **Consequences are built into the program.**
- **You can let the program do the work—you don't have to constantly decide what to do about behavior problems.**
- **It takes the power struggle out of situations.**
- **It deals with things as they occur instead of letting them build up.**
- **The system can be individualized to fit specific needs and situations.**
- **Team Leaders are always available to help.**

Some parents are uncomfortable with rewarding youth for what they are supposed to be doing – they expect that youth should behave appropriately without reward. This may be true for “normal” youth, but studies show that youth with severe problem behaviors respond better to tangible rewards than they do to general approval or disapproval. The studies indicate that the typical things parents do, like praising and lecturing, do not affect youth with severe behavior problems. They respond much better to tangible rewards and consequences.

In the point and level system, the tangible rewards and consequences are distributed through a system of points earned and lost. Youth earn points for cooperating and participating in everyday tasks—which is something that many of them have not learned to do yet. Throughout the day, they can earn points for expected activities and lose points for breaking rules, including small things such as not listening to an adult or having a surly attitude. The points earned are used to “buy” privileges.

We will show you how to give and take points effectively. With a point system economy you can be in the position of simply following the program that everyone agreed to. That position enables you to stay out of power struggles with the youth and present yourself as an advocate for the youth's success with the program.

The Levels

It usually takes 4 to 6 months for youth to move through the three levels in this system. As youth move through the levels, they are able to have less supervision and more privileges and rewards.

A school card, school days and non-school days behavior expectations, point cards, and privileges are available for all three levels in the foster parent notebook.

Level 1

Youth spend three weeks on Level 1. During Level 1, the youth settles into your home and you begin to build a relationship with her. To help the youth focus on you and your home, home visits are not allowed until after Level 1. This level is designed to provide the youth with very close supervision and immediate reinforcement. On Level 1...

- **The youth earns points for routine daily activities such as getting out of bed on time, getting ready for school on time, etc.**
- **Points earned one day are traded for privileges the following day.**
- **The privileges that can be bought with earned points are very basic and simple (a later bedtime, watching TV, radio in room, etc.).**
- **The youth is supervised AT ALL TIMES.**
- **It is not difficult for the youth to earn 100 points a day.**
- **The youth must accumulate a total of 2,100 points to move from Level 1 to Level 2.**

There may be situations when the youth earns so many points that they cannot all be spent. For example, the youth is on Level 1 and earns 180 points, but it takes only 140 points to buy privileges for the next day. Since these points cannot be used the next day, the foster parent can "bank" them for the youth. Foster parents have many creative ways to help youth use their extra points.

- **Some foster parents cash out youth right after they buy privileges:**
 - **pay a penny a point**
 - **give an M&M per point for all extra points**
- **Create a catalog of things the you can buy with extra points, such as:**
 - **a movie for Friday night**
 - **a special magazine**
 - **choosing dessert on Sunday**

Level 1 Description			
Behavior	Description	Time	Points
Up on Time	Out of Bed	6:30 am	10
Ready in the Morning	Shower, teeth brushed, hair combed, wear clean clothes, eat breakfast		10
Morning Clean Up	Bed made, dirty clothes put away, room neat, bath towel & wash rag put away, dishes in the sink		10
Go To School	Be on time & attend classes without tardiness		5
Carry School Card	Carry school card to class & have each teacher sign it		1/class*
Behavior in Class	Pay attention to tasks in class, cooperate with the teacher, and hand homework in on time		2/class*
School Card Bonus	All signatures, no overdue homework, no tardies & good behavior		10
Read & Study	50 min. of reading/writing each day (not including letter writing)		20
Chore	To be explained each day		10
Attitude & Maturity	Being helpful, taking criticism well, being pleasant, not pushing limits, not being moody, accepting "No"		15 am 15 pm
Volunteering	Volunteering to do extra tasks (Parents will decide on pts)		2 - 10
Extra Chore	Optional (must be approved by parent)		5 - 10
Bed on Time (last night)	If you CAN buy Basics If you CAN'T buy Basics	9:30 pm 8:30 pm	10

Level 1 Privileges		
Privilege	Description	Point Cost
Basics	Music in your room, 9:30 bedtime	50
Later Bedtime	10:00pm, 11:00pm on non-school days and holidays with permission	50
TV	Can watch TV after homework & chore are completed	25
Other	Foster parents will choose if applicable	50

School Day Level 1				
Name:		Date:		
		S M T W T H F S		
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
5	GO TO SCHOOL			
1/Class	CARRY SCHOOL CARD			
2/Class	BEHAVIOR IN CLASS			
10	SCHOOL CARD BONUS			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-10	EXTRA CHORE			

Non-School Day Level 1				
Name:		Date:		
		S M T W T H F S		
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-10	EXTRA CHORE			

Name:		SCHOOL CARD				Date:	
Class	Today's Assignment	Assignment Turned In	Overdue Homework	Tardy	Behavior Good/Poor	Initial	
1.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor		
2.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor		
3.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor		
4.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor		
5.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor		
6.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor		
7.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor		
8.		Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Good/Poor		

Level 1 Points & Privileges		
Name:		Date:
		S M T W T H F S
Privilege	Point Cost	Points Used
BASICS	50	
LATER BEDTIME	50	
TV	25	
OTHER	50	
Total points earned today		
Total cost of privileges for tomorrow		-
Leftover points		

Level 2

On Level 2, the youth's program will be individualized according to what has been learned about the youth during Level 1. Your Team Leader will help you identify specific behaviors to focus on, and you will have a better idea of the kinds of privileges that motivate the youth. It is during this level that the youth will change the most. Youth on this level are allowed to earn free time. During this time, the amount and quality of the privileges are increased as the youth's behavior and skills improve, giving the youth a chance to become increasingly responsible and confident. Youth typically stay on this level for 12 to 16 weeks. On Level 2...

- **Points earned in one week are used to buy privileges for the next week.**
- **On the average, youth earn 700 to 900 points per week.**
- **Youth learn to delay gratification, plan ahead, and work toward a goal.**
- **The amount and quality of privileges are increased (more TV time, allowance, and individualized rewards are now options).**
- **The youth can buy free time with friends (according to specific guidelines).**
- **The youth can move to Level 3 by buying bonds (costing 50 points). They are allowed to purchase one bond a week and it takes 12 bonds to move to Level 3.**
- **The youth can be demoted to Level 1 for low point days (earning less than 100). On Level 1 days, the youth is demoted to Level 1 privileges and has to earn at least 100 points to be reinstated to Level 2. Points earned during a Level 1 day do not count toward the week's total.**
- **The foster parent banks extra points and uses them toward things the youth may want.**

Level drop. Youth on Levels 2 and 3 can be dropped to Level 1 for the *following* day when their points drop below 100 on Level 2 or 120 on Level 3 for any given day. On the Level 1 day...

- **The youth is allowed only Level 1 basics.**
- **The youth has to earn at least 100 points to be reinstated to Level 2 or 120 points to be reinstated to Level 3 the following day.**
- **The points earned during Level 1 *do not* count toward the week's total for buying privileges that next week.**

Below is an example of how a demotion would work for a youth on Level 2:

On Wednesday Leroy got up on time, left his breakfast dishes on the table, argued about wearing a belt, and went to school. Later, he didn't bring home his school card, was quiet during dinner, completed his chore, and went to bed on time. He earned only 65 points on Wednesday and was put on Level 1 on Thursday.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
Points earned	100	100	100	65	100	100	100	565
Level	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	

For his behavior on Wednesday, Leroy was on Level 1 on Thursday. Because Thursday's points were earned while he was on Level 1, they cannot be added to the total he uses to buy Level 2 privileges.

Therefore, the total points earned for the week = 565.

Level Information

	Level 1	Level 2
Number of points to be earned (minimum)	100	100
Level of supervision	1:1 adult supervision	Some unsupervised time if approved in advance
Allowance	No	Yes
Points count toward buying privileges	Yes, points are used to buy privileges for the next day.	Yes, points add up and are used to buy one week's worth of privileges.
Points used to buy privileges	Yes	Yes

Level 2			
Name:			
BEHAVIOR	DESCRIPTION	TIME	POINTS
UP ON TIME	Out of bed		10
READY IN MORNING	Showered, teeth brushed, hair combed, dressed in clean clothes, and ate breakfast		10
MORNING CLEAN-UP	Bed made, dirty clothes put away, room neat, bath towel and wash cloth put away, and dishes in sink		10
GO TO SCHOOL	Attend school each day (All classes)		5
CARRY SCHOOL CARD	Carry school card to each class and get signature from each teacher		1/class*
BEHAVIOR IN CLASS	Positive behavior in class		2/class*
SCHOOL CARD BONUS	Signatures on card, homework turned in, on time & good behavior for each class		10
READ AND STUDY	50 minutes reading/writing each day (not including letter writing)		20
CHORE	To be explained each day		10
ATTITUDE/MATURITY	Being helpful, taking feedback maturely, being pleasant, accepting no without pushing limits, etc.		15 A.M. 15 P.M.
VOLUNTEERING	Volunteering to do extra tasks (Foster Parent will decide on points)		2 – 10
EXTRA CHORE	Optional (Must be approved by Foster Parents)		5 – 50
BED ON TIME	IF you CAN buy BASICS IF you CAN'T buy BASICS	9:30 pm 8:30 pm	10

Level 2 Privileges		
Name:		
PRIVILEGE	DESCRIPTION	POINT COST
BASICS	Use of telephone for 15 minutes daily, radio in your room. 9:30 P.M. bedtime	350
TV	TV after homework and/or chore are completed	100
LATER BEDTIME	10:00 P.M. bedtime 11:00 P.M. bedtime on non-school days and holidays with permission	100
ACTIVITY TIME	With <u>prior planning, permission and approval</u> , you may plan to go skating, swimming, to a movie, school activity, etc. If you are late or not where you are supposed to be, you will lose 1 point per minute.	½ point per minute
EXTRA PHONE TIME	One 20-minute call (not long distance).	25
BONDS	You can buy one bond per week. You need 12 bonds to move to Level III.	50 points
ALLOWANCE	\$10.00 per week. All purchases must have receipts and you must show your money to your foster parents. Money spent at school in pop / candy machines must have Team Lead approval.	200
OTHER	Foster parents will choose if applicable	50

School Day Level 2				
Name:		Date:		
S M T W T H F S				
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
5	GO TO SCHOOL			
1/Class	CARRY SCHOOL CARD			
2/Class	BEHAVIOR IN CLASS			
10	SCHOOL CARD BONUS			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-50	EXTRA CHORE			

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS:

Non-School Day Level 2				
Name:		Date:		
S M T W T H F S				
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-50	EXTRA CHORE			

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS:

Level 2 Points & Privileges		
Name:		Week of:
Date	On L2 Points total	
Total points on Level 2		
Point Cost	Privilege	Points Used
350	Basics	
100	TV	
100	Later Bedtime	
½ pt per min	Activity Time	
25	Extra Phone Time	
50	Bond	
50	Other	
200	Allowance	
Total L2 points		
Total cost of privileges		-
Leftover points		
Total bonds		

Level 3

Level 3 can be considered a maintenance phase. The Team Leader and foster parents use their discretion to customize the program. The youth no longer has to buy privileges. As long as the youth earns a minimum number of points, the privileges are earned automatically. The youth is allowed more free time, an increased allowance, and a higher quality of privileges in this level. On Level 3. . .

- **The youth must earn 120 points a day to remain on Level 3.**
- **The youth is required to maintain a budget book that tracks income and expenses.**
- **Basic privileges no longer have to be earned.**
- **Activities must be approved in advance.**
- **More serious violations can result in demotion to Level 1.**
- **Youth no longer use points to buy privileges; therefore, foster parents no longer bank extra unused points.**

Level Information

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Number of points to be earned (minimum)	100	100	120
Level of supervision	1:1 adult supervision	Some unsupervised time if approved in advance	Some unsupervised time if approved in advance
Allowance	No	Yes	Yes
Points count toward buying privileges	Yes, points are used to buy privileges for the next day.	Yes, points add up and are used to buy one week's worth of privileges.	No, on level 3 you automatically have the privileges.

Level 3			
Name:			
BEHAVIOR	DESCRIPTION	TIME	POINTS
UP ON TIME	Out of bed		10
READY IN MORNING	Showered, teeth brushed, hair combed, dressed in clean clothes, and ate breakfast		10
MORNING CLEAN-UP	Bed made, dirty clothes put away, room neat, bath towel and wash cloth put away, and dishes in sink		10
GO TO SCHOOL	Attend school each day (All classes)		5
CARRY SCHOOL CARD	Carry school card to each class and get signature from each teacher		1/class*
BEHAVIOR IN CLASS	Positive behavior in class		2/class*
SCHOOL CARD BONUS	Signatures on card, homework turned in, on time & good behavior for each class		10
READ AND STUDY	50 minutes reading/writing each day (not including letter writing)		20
CHORE	To be explained each day		10
ATTITUDE/MATURITY	Being helpful, taking feedback maturely, being pleasant, accepting no without pushing limits, etc.		15 A.M. 15 P.M.
VOLUNTEERING	Volunteering to do extra tasks (Foster Parent will decide on points)		2 – 10
EXTRA CHORE	Optional (Must be approved by Foster Parents)		5 – 50
BED ON TIME	IF you CAN buy BASICS IF you CAN'T buy BASICS	9:30 pm 8:30 pm	10
Allowance	<p>\$15.00 per week when on level all week. \$7.50 if on Level 1 once in the week and no allowance if on Level 1 more than once in the week.</p> <p>All purchases must have receipts and you must show your money to your foster parents.</p> <p>Money spent at school in pop / candy machines must have Team Lead approval</p>		

*All privileges are earned for the following day when 120 points are earned in a day.

School Day Level 3				
Name:		Date:		
S M T W T H F S				
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
5	GO TO SCHOOL			
1/Class	CARRY SCHOOL CARD			
2/Class	BEHAVIOR IN CLASS			
10	SCHOOL CARD BONUS			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-50	EXTRA CHORE			

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS:

Non-School Day Level 3				
Name:		Date:		
S M T W T H F S				
POINTS	THINGS TO DO TO EARN POINTS	BONUS	TAKEN	TOTAL
10	BED ON TIME (last night)			
10	UP ON TIME			
10	READY IN MORNING			
10	MORNING CLEANUP			
20	READ AND STUDY			
10	CHORE			
15 A.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
15 P.M.	ATTITUDE/MATURITY			
2-10	VOLUNTEERING			
5-50	EXTRA CHORE			

TOTAL: _____

COMMENTS:

Level 3 Privileges	
Name:	
PRIVILEGE	DESCRIPTION
BASICS	Use of telephone for 15 minutes daily, radio in your room. 9:30 P.M. bedtime
TV	TV after homework and/or chore are completed
LATER BEDTIME	10:00 P.M. bedtime 11:00 P.M. bedtime on non-school days and holidays with permission
ACTIVITY TIME	With <u>prior planning, permission and approval</u> , you may plan to go skating, swimming, to a movie, school activity, etc. If you are late or not where you are supposed to be, you will lose 1 point per minute.
EXTRA PHONE TIME	One 20-minute call (not long distance)
ALLOWANCE	\$15.00 per week when on level all week. \$7.50 if on Level 1 once in the week and no allowance if on Level 1 more than once in the week. All purchases must have receipts and you must show your money to your foster parents. Money spent at school in pop / candy machines must have Team Lead approval.

Level 3 Points & Privileges			
Name:		Today's Date:	
Day of Week	Date	Total Points	Level
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
S M T W T H F S			
This week's allowance earned			\$

Using a Point System Economy

For the point system to work, it must be balanced and realistic. It should be set up so that youth feel successful even when they don't earn all of the possible points. If used correctly, it can be motivating. It can help youth get used to receiving both positive and negative feedback on their behavior.

Assigning Point Values

Your Team Leader will help you learn to assign point values in a way that maximizes the effect. Generally, full point values are awarded for doing an adequate (but not exceptional) job, and partial points are given for doing only part of a job. You are encouraged to award extra points if you observe youth acting in an especially positive way, handling a difficult situation well, or going above and beyond the call of duty when completing a task. Typically, youth can earn up to 150 points each day, including options to work for additional points. Youth should be able to lose 10 to 20 points a day without having privileges seriously curtailed.

The following activity will give parents a sense of assigning point values and help them understand that there is flexibility in the system. Present one (or both, depending on time and interest) of the following examples. Have the parents work in small groups of 2-4 to assign point values for the day using the School Days Level 1 chart. Have each group talk about how they did and what they came up with. Present the following point values as an illustration of a reasonable way to assign points for the day. Emphasize that there isn't a right or wrong answer and that the number of points given and taken will vary by family and youth. The Team Leader will work with parents in more detail to use the system effectively.

Example 1: Scott

Scott is 14 and has been in your home for one week. He is pleasant and has been doing a nice job adjusting to your family. Scott likes to please and has been working hard to do what you have asked him in a timely manner and seems willing to volunteer without being prompted.

This morning Scott got up 10 minutes late, dressed, made his bed, and showered. He came to breakfast cheerfully but seemed a bit scattered. After Scott left for school you noticed that he forgot to grab a school card and that the bathroom was messy. His towel and washcloth were left out and he didn't pick up his night clothes. Scott called from school and asked for help because he forgot to take his school card. He had already made a school card on his own for that day and you reassured him that you would talk to the school and give your OK for them to use his home-made card. Scott has seven classes at school. Scott came home from school, put his things away and reported that he was tired. His school card was signed, indicating he attended all his classes with no problems. He did his homework and helped you with dinner. He was a little grumpy before dinner with the other children, but turned things around quickly and went to bed on time.

Behavior	Points	Bonus / Taken	Total
Up on Time	10	-5	5
Ready in Morning	10	+3 for coming to breakfast cheerfully -2 for forgetting his school card	11
Morning Clean Up	10	-4 for messy bathroom	6
Go to School	5		5
Carry School Card	1/class		7
Behavior in Class	2/class		5
School Card Bonus	10		14
Read and Study	20		20
Chore	10		10
Attitude/Maturity	15 AM 15 PM	+2 for calling about the school card +5 for maturity and good decision to call +5 for doing things after school even though he didn't feel well -4 for being grumpy +6 for turning things around and ending the day positively	22 22
Volunteering	2-10		0
Extra Chore	5-10		0
Bed on Time	10		10

Daily Total = 137

Example 2: Sue

Sue is 15 and today she was up on time. She was ready on time, but she did not eat any breakfast. Her bed was made, her clothes were put away, but she left her towel on the floor in the bathroom. She attended all seven of her classes and got teacher signatures for all of her classes. She was tardy for one class and in another class her teacher said she fell asleep and slept through most of the class. After school, you asked her to vacuum, which she did with no problems. There were no attitude problems, she conversed with the family at dinner in a pleasant manner. She worked on homework for about 1.5 hours after dinner and then offered to read stories to your 6 year old. She went to bed on time.

Behavior	Points	Bonus / Taken	Total
Up on Time	10		10
Ready in Morning	10	-1 for skipping breakfast	9
Morning Clean Up	10	-1 for towel on floor	9
Go to School	5		5
Carry School Card	1/class		7
Behavior in Class	2/class	-5 for inappropriate behavior	0
School Card Bonus	10	-12 for tardy and sleeping	2
Read and Study	20	+10 for extra half hour	30
Chore	10		10
Attitude/Maturity	15 AM	+5 for getting card signed even though there were problems -3 for being tardy (lack of maturity)	17
	15 PM	+7 for pleasant evening and extra homework time	22
Volunteering	2-10		10
Extra Chore	5-10	None assigned	0
Bed on Time	10		10

Total for day = 141

Giving and Taking Points

Your Team Leader will help you learn how to use this system in a way that is both firm and fair. This isn't something that just happens overnight. It takes practice and skill to reach a good balance between firm and fair. When giving points, the youth should feel successful. Once you get in the habit of noticing the appropriate things the youth is doing, and if you stick to the program, giving points is pretty straightforward.

It can be harder to learn to take points away in an effective manner. You want to take away points in a neutral or compassionate manner so that the youth's feelings of failure or discouragement don't get in the way of future progress. Sometimes parents become invested in the youth's success to the point where they personalize the youth's behavior and wonder "how could he do this to me?" Parents in that situation might be tempted to take away too many points. Or maybe you are the kind of parent who likes to avoid conflict so you overlook minor infractions and don't take away enough points. When you do this, you may find that the minor infraction occurs more often and annoys you more. Your Team Leader can help you find the balance you need to effectively give and take points.

It is important to remain in control of your own emotional reactions and to respond to the youth in a systematic manner. If you are feeling irritable you may be tempted to lecture or yell about a recurring problem rather than matter-of-factly take away points. It is important to refrain from lecturing or arguing with the youth about problem behavior and losing points. Not only do we know that these youth are not particularly impacted by lectures, engaging in an argument is likely to get very emotional, and we know that is not an effective time to solve problems.

Studies show a pattern of behavior in highly emotional situations that looks like the figure below. Probably everyone in this room has experienced this pattern of behavior at one time or another.

Draw the curve on the board or refer to the PowerPoint slide to walk through the pattern of behavior in the figure. Use an example to help illustrate the behaviors.

Parent asks youth to turn off TV and do homework.

Youth is engaged in the TV program and ignores parent.

Parent is annoyed and repeats the request.

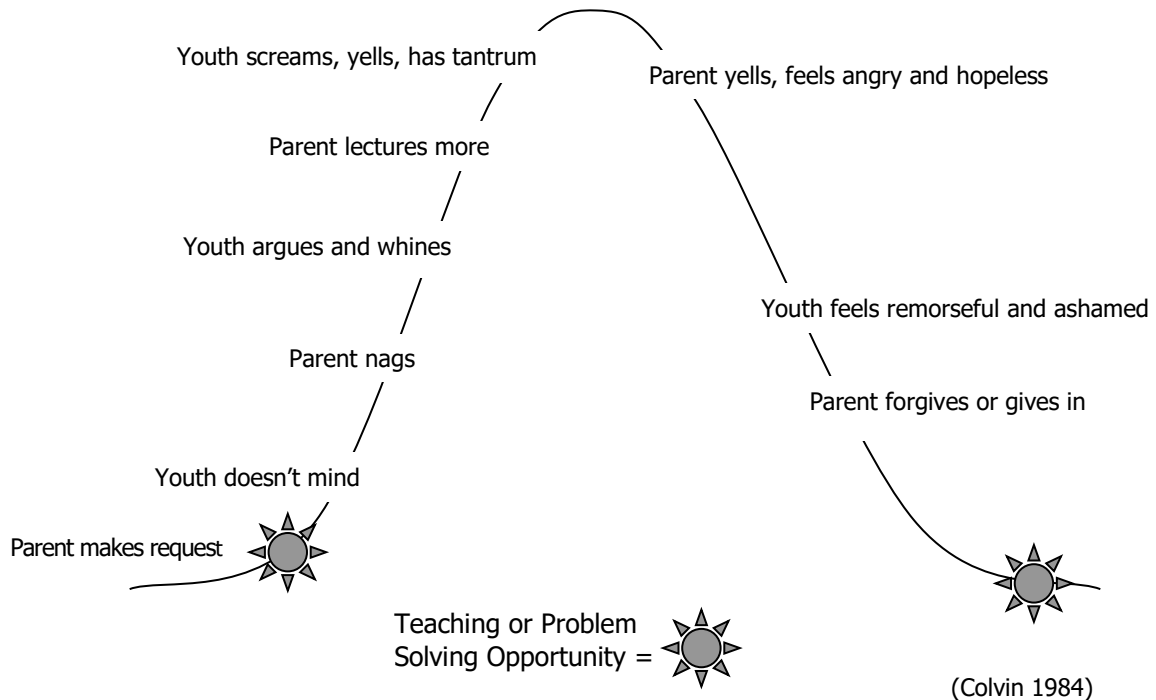
Youth argues that he is in the middle of the program, it will be over in 20 minutes and he will do homework then.

Parent lectures youth about obeying and not talking back.

Youth screams and yells ... parent is unreasonable, what is the big deal, it's only 20 minutes, I said I would do it then, parent is so mean, etc., and storms off toward bedroom.

Parent is really angry now and yells back ... I'm the boss, you do as I say, you are in big trouble now, etc.

Youth feels bad and withdraws, parent feels bad and second guesses self about not waiting until the program was done...



Problems as Teaching Opportunities

When youth misbehave, the parent has an opportunity to use that misbehavior to teach a better way to behave. At first it can be a challenge to see problems as opportunities, but over time it gets easier. Learning to see problems as opportunities helps you stay motivated to deal with problems.

If you are focused on problems as opportunities, you will want to do everything you can to make the most out of that opportunity. Studies show that very little learning takes place during periods of high emotion. Consequently, it is not a good idea to try to discuss and reason through a problem when the situation has escalated to the behaviors on the rise, the peak, and the fall of this curve. The high emotional level gets in the way.

Use the figure to point out parts of the curve.

If you want to use misbehavior as an opportunity to teach a better behavior, it makes sense to focus your efforts on times that are not so emotional. As you can see on the curve, there are two times in a conflict that are good teaching opportunities. Before a problem escalates into an angry conflict or power struggle and after an intense situation has returned to normal are effective times to strive for change. The point and level system will help you make the most out of these opportunities and avoid becoming involved in an

angry conflict. Your Team Leader will coach you on how to simply take the points away for misbehavior and disengage in further discussion.

As an example, let's say the youth has trouble being ready for school on time. On this particular morning she races out from her bedroom, late again. When you tell her that she will lose points for not being ready, she starts yelling about how it is not fair because it is not her fault her alarm didn't go off. You have a few options here.

- 1. You can sympathize with her and try to problem solve how she could make sure her alarm goes off in the future.**
- 2. You can talk to her about how it is her responsibility to be ready on time and she needs to meet her responsibilities better.**
- 3. You can choose to simply say "oh" or "huh" and then turn to do something else.**

Option #1: Now is not the time to solve this problem. The youth is already angry and late. Later, when you review points for the day you could talk about things she could do to keep from losing points again for this.

Option #2: Bad idea! You are moving up the left side of the curve with this one. It is not likely she will simply accept what you say and move on. She is probably going to continue arguing with you and things will keep escalating.

Option #3: Your best choice. Your attention would just reinforce her behavior and pull you into a power struggle. Doing nothing now and later talking about what things she could do to keep from losing points again is the best way to maximize this opportunity to teach a new behavior.

Getting Started and Staying on Top of It

You'll need to be ready to use the point and level system as soon as the youth comes home with you. To make sure that everyone understands how the system works, a meeting will be arranged with your Team Leader, the youth, and you before you take the youth home. At this meeting, your Team Leader will go over in detail how the system works. You and the youth will have an opportunity to ask questions so that by the time you leave the meeting you all have the same understanding about how the system works. This meeting really helps to get everybody off to a good start. Since you and the youth both hear the same information, there should be less opportunity for disagreement about how it works. As with anything new, once you go home and start using the system you will come up with questions. You or the youth can call your Team Leader at any time to get help with this.

Each evening, one or both parents spend a little time with the youth reviewing the day. The focus during this time should be on the positive aspects of the youth's day and on strategies that will help the youth avoid losing points the next day. It helps to frame this conversation like a sandwich. Start off by noting something positive that happened that day,

sandwich in what the youth lost points for, and top it off with more positive comments about either the day or plans for the next day. When everyone's schedules get busy, you can find yourself pressed for time. It is important not to skip this time together. Not only do these kids need the daily encouragement, it can help avoid carrying problems into the next day and starting everyone's day off badly.

Beyond the Basics with the Point and Level System

As we have discussed, rewards and consequences are an everyday part of the point and level system. There will be times, however, when the youth will need incentives or consequences in addition to those built into the system. These will only be used under the direction of your Team Leader.

There may be times when the youth makes a big step toward an important behavior change. Your Team Leader may decide it will be beneficial for the youth to receive a special reward for this big step. It is the Team Leader's job to know when that is an appropriate thing to do. You may be asked for ideas about what kinds of things would be a special incentive to the youth, but you don't have to worry about when, what, or how to use these special incentives.

Likewise, there may be times when the youth's misbehavior warrants an additional consequence outside of those built into the point and level system. Again, it would be the Team Leader's decision about when, what, or how to use additional consequences. In this situation, your Team Leader may give the youth an additional work chore. Maybe you will be asked for ideas about chores to give the youth, or you might be asked to report on the youth's progress with the chore, but your involvement will be limited and guided by your Team Leader.

Distribute the Incentives handout as examples of incentives parents might use.

Putting it All Together – Making it Work

- Objective: 1. Review the material covered.
 2. Reiterate the central role of the Team Leader.
- Rationale: A quick review of what has been covered will help tie things together. Wrap up the overview with the main points. An analogy may be a good way to accomplish this. You want parents to feel confident that, with help from the Team Leader, they can do this program.
- Materials: Parent Notebook, page 49.
 PowerPoint slide 79.

We've talked about several ways this program can help you to help the kids succeed. You can think of it as getting all the right tools together in order to tackle a big job. You came here today with some things already in your toolbox:

- **Interest**
- **Life experiences**
- **Compassion**
- **Curiosity**

Today, we learned about:

- **House Rules**
- **Tracking Behavior**
- **Encouragement and Reinforcement**
- **Point and Level System**

Foster parents tell us that you'll also want to add:

- **Patience**
- **A sense of humor**
- **A willingness to meet a challenge**
- **An ability to learn new things about yourself**
- **Acceptance**
- **A sense of adventure**

What to Expect

- Objectives:
1. Give parents time to share what they are looking forward to.
 2. Give parents time to express concerns.
 3. Present the common pitfalls.
 4. Present the common rewards.

Rationale: You have covered a lot of information in this overview that will likely bring new questions and concerns to the minds of the foster parents. This would be a good time to talk about their concerns and answer any questions they may have. You can end the session on a positive note by refocusing on why they wanted to be foster parents in the first place and help them to reconfirm their commitment. The video of current foster parents talking about the rewards of being a foster parent can be used to wind up on a positive note.

Materials: Video
Parent Notebook, page 49.

As we wrap up today, you must have a lot of questions. At this point, you shouldn't worry too much about the nuts and bolts of doing the point and level system, etc. Your Team Leader will go over that again in detail with you when you get your youth.

What other kinds of questions or concerns do you have at this time?

What things are you excited about?

Each youth is unique, so there is no way to describe how things are going to go for you and the youth placed in your home. We've talked a lot about the problems and challenges of being foster parents, but we haven't talked a lot about the rewards of being foster parents. Rather than have me stand here and list what some rewards might be, let's take a look at what some current foster parents have to say on this topic.

