When A Foster Placement Ends

When a placement ends, it’s always emotional for foster families.

• If the placement ends because of a disruption, there are even more mixed emotions. Foster parents

 can feel guilty, relieved, and emotionally exhausted and often struggle with a sense of inadequacy.

• If children have been in a stable placement for quite a while, the home experiences a significant loss

 when they leave.

• Sometimes placements end abruptly and without warning – this can be very shocking for families.

• Even when a family feels accepting and prepared, it’s quite emotional.

As Team Leader, what can you do when children leave the foster home?

• View Walking A Family Through A Disruption, a tutorial found in the FFM Portal, to learn and find

 insight.

• Rally your team to pray for the family, especially if you know beforehand that a transition is coming.

• Bring a plant or flowers a day or two after the placement ends to acknowledge the loss and the foster

 family’s labor of love.

• Offer to bring a meal.

• Offer to pray with the foster parent(s) if appropriate (as Team Leader, or you and the Care Team).

• In the week after transition, write an encouraging card or note.

• Call a week or two after the placement ends to see how the foster family is doing.

 What to do when the foster placement moves to adoption?

• When the date of transition is known, inform the team that the placement will be changing and that

 their serving time is coming to an end. Select a final serving date and stick to it.

• Find out any final needs of the foster family and communicate to the Care Team.

• Suggest each volunteer find a way to encourage the family by writing a notecard, taking a plant or a

 small token of remembrance to their last visit to serve.

• Possibly organize a time of group prayer with the family to celebrate the adoption and the volunteers

 who served the foster family (dessert?).

• Inquire if anyone will continue to serve the family on their own or if they would like to join another Care

 Team. Communicate your findings to your Church Champion.

What’s next?

• Looking ahead, what are the foster family’s plans?

 1. Immediately reopening for a new placement

 2. Short break before reopening their home

 3. Long break and then reopening

 4. No longer fostering

• If the answer is 1 or 2, ask if the Care Team wants to continue with this family. If so, inform the

 foster family and your Church Champion.

• If the answer is 3 or 4, find out who on your team would like to continue serving on a Care Team

 and inform your Church Champion. They can then continue to serve with a different foster family.