

Infants and Toddlers Need a Hand When They Move



**ADAPTED FROM MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AND MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH JOINT POLICY STATEMENT ON ATTACHMENT IN INFANCY AND BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION- MAKING FOR INFANTS/TODDLERS IN FOSTER CARE*

Transportation for Supervised Visitation or Move from One Home to Another

Suggested items to have in the car:

- Soothing music, blankets, infant wipes, finger foods
- Familiar toys/books

Move from One Home to Another

These guidelines are relevant for the following situations:

- When the infant or toddler transfers from:
 - Biological home to foster home
 - Foster home to foster home
 - Foster home to parent's home
 - Foster home to adoptive home
- When the infant or toddler goes on a daylong or overnight visit with the biological parent or prospective adoptive parent.

Infants

• Health

- Is the infant on any medications or special formulas? If so, have caregiver provide remaining supplies to worker.

• Feeding

- What does the infant drink? Infant should be fed whatever he has been getting.
- Identify any food or formula allergies or sensitivities. What type and brand of formula is used?
- Is the mother breastfeeding the infant? Is there a way for her to continue breastfeeding by expressing milk and

visiting often? If not, how will the transition be made to formula?

- What is a typical feeding schedule?
- When was the infant last fed?
- How does the infant cue when she is hungry? e.g, cry, root, fidget.
- How does the infant like to be held when being fed?
- What type of bottle/nipple does the infant use/prefer?
- Infant should have same bottle/nipple for feeding at new home.
- If the infant is eating solid food – what is the solid food eating schedule?
- What are the infant's favorite foods?
- Are there allergies/sensitivities to solid food?

• Sleep

- What is the infant's typical sleep schedule?
- Describe the length, frequency, and time of naps taken during the day.
- Describe nighttime sleep patterns.
- When did the infant last nap?
- How does the infant usually get to sleep?
- Does the caregiver assist the infant to sleep or is the infant left alone? How long does he sleep at night before needing to be fed?
- Describe the routine used, does it include: pacifier, music, bottle, rocking, swaying, swing, other?
- Where does the infant usually sleep?
- Crib, bassinet, Pack-n-Play, with caregiver (educate new caregiver about Safe Sleep). If infant has slept with caregiver, consider that she/he may have difficulty adjusting to sleeping alone and will need extra soothing.

• **Eliminating**

- Ask about typical voiding patterns for the infant to determine if any changes occur after shift in domicile.

• **Calming Needs**

- What are the infant's nicknames?
- When and why does the infant usually cry?
- Does the infant have any specific fears?
- Identify specific soothing techniques, for example: rocking, swaddling, pacifier, swinging, music.
- Some infants are adverse to certain types of stimuli like swinging, music, lights, etc. so be sure to identify the infant's likes/dislikes.
- Ensure that the favorite pacifier, toy, stuffed animal, blanket or rattle goes with the infant to the new home.
- Ask the caregiver to lend a shirt or pillow case to accompany the infant, so that the caregiver's smell is present for infant in the new home.
- Ask about detergents and soaps used in order to try to keep some familiar smells, if possible.

Toddlers

• Health

- Is the toddler on any medications? If so, ensure that the medication is taken to the new setting and follow up with the physician.
- Ask if the toddler is on any special formula or medications related to food intake, such as:
 - Acid reflux medication
 - Prescription formula
 - Lactose free milk

• Feeding/Eating

- What does the toddler drink?
- Ask if the toddler is on high-calorie formula to help with weight gain. Whole milk – any lactose intolerance or milk allergy?
- Whenever possible, resist switching the type of milk the toddler was drinking (i.e., breast milk, formula, vitamin D milk) to reduce stomach upset.
- Describe the feeding schedule for the toddler.
- When and what did the toddler last eat?
- How does the toddler cue when she is hungry? Can she tell you?
- What type of cup does the toddler use/prefer?
- Some toddlers still drink from bottle; continue this until attachment with new caregiver is established.
- Solid food:
 - Identify the toddler's favorite foods.
 - Ask about allergies/sensitivities to solid food.

• Sleep

- What is the toddler's sleep schedule?
- Does the toddler take naps and if so for how long?
- When did the toddler last sleep?
- Where does the toddler sleep, for example: crib, toddler bed, with caregiver?
- How does the toddler usually get to sleep for nap and at night, for example:
 - Music, bottle, rocking, swaying, pacifier?
 - Door open/closed, night light, no light?

• Eliminating

- Ask about the toddler's typical bowel patterns so that any changes in typical patterns in the new placement can be identified.
- Is the toddler toilet trained and if so, how is he usually helped to use the toilet? (i.e., fully self-sufficient, needs help with clothes, uses a portable potty, afraid of toilets?)

• Calming Needs

- What nicknames is the toddler called?
- When does the toddler typically cry and for what reasons?
- Does the toddler have any specific fears?
- Identify specific techniques used to soothe the toddler, such as rocking, swinging, music.

- Some toddlers may still use pacifier –continue pacifier use until placement is well established, to help with self-regulation and comfort needs.
- What words does the toddler use for hunger, mommy/daddy, hurt, tired, etc. and how are they pronounced?
- Ensure that a favorite pacifier/toy/stuffed animal/blanket comes to the new home.
- Whenever possible, try to have a picture of the caregiver for the toddler to bring to the new home.

Developed by B. Davidson and J. Ribaldo, 2008



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