

Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

Series: 800: Performance and Quality Improvement
Policy Name: Exit Interviews for Children in Licensed Care
Policy Number: 806
Origination Date: 02/02/2009 **Revised:** Board Meeting of 12/13/2018
Regulation: 65C-28.017, F.A.C.

Referenced Documents:

800-806 x 1, Exit Interview for Children Ages 5-17 Form
800-806 x 2, Case Manager Review of the Foster Parent Performance Form

Policy

It is the policy of Big Bend Community Based Care, Inc. (BBCBC), to interview all children upon their exit from a foster home, shelter home, or facility to obtain the child's perspective concerning the safety and quality of care provided, to identify problem areas, and to introduce needed improvements as necessary.

Procedure

This procedure applies to all children up to 18 years of age who are exiting a foster home, shelter home, or facility after more than thirty (30) days of residence or who are leaving the foster care system. This includes children who runaway after more than thirty (30) days of residence and who, upon return, are moved to a different placement.

A. General Responsibilities.

1. It is the expected standard that an Exit Interview will be completed with all children exiting a licensed placement within five (5) days of the child's exit using the most recent Exit Interview form.
2. Exit Interviews are to be conducted by Dependency Case Managers.
3. Dependency Case Managers will make an immediate report to the Florida Abuse Hotline if the child alleges abuse, neglect or any maltreatment during an exit interview.
4. Case Management and Foster Home Management Partners may use the CoBRIS Exit Interview module to internally track their timely completion of Exit Interviews.
5. Exit Interviews submitted on an incorrect or outdated form will be returned to the DCM and/or DCM Supervisor for correction.

B. Dependency Case Manager Responsibilities.

1. In conducting Exit Interviews for children between 5 and 18 years of age, the DCM will:
 - a. Complete any Exit Interview with all children exiting a licensed placement within five (5) days of the child's exit using the most recent Exit Interview Form.

Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

- b.** Conduct the interview in a neutral location preferably away from the placement being exited. It must take place in a setting where the child feels comfortable and where the conversation can be considered private.
- c.** Explain the purpose of the interview to the child.
- d.** Tell the child that the information that they provide will be shared with the foster parent or facility, but will not identify the child as the source of the information (Exit Interview information is considered anonymous, not confidential).
- e.** Read the questions and record the child's answers verbatim. The DCM must be careful not to influence the child's responses. An audio tape of the interview may be made with the child's consent in order to facilitate a complete transcription of the child's responses.
- f.** Record the child's responses in sufficient detail to capture the child's perception (within the context of the child's age and individual circumstances). Examples: responses regarding bedtimes, chores, privileges, etc.
- g.** Record additional observations about the child's physical appearance and emotional state (positive or negative) that seem appropriate in the context of the interview (#32 on the Exit Interview Form).
- h.** For children who are reluctant to respond or are unresponsive to the Exit Interview questions when initially interviewed, the DCM will:
 - i.** Encourage the child to respond, but will defer the interview if it appears to be in the best interest of the child and document the date and time of the interview attempt on the form.
 - ii.** Reschedule the interview and make a second attempt to interview the child, documenting the date and time of the second attempt on the form.
 - iii.** If after the second interview attempt, the child remains unresponsive to the Exit Interview questions, the DCM will assure that the attempts to interview the child are documented on the Exit Interview form. Documentation will include the dates, times, and circumstances involved in the attempt.
- i.** Complete all sections of the Exit Interview form, including the reason for the child's move, referral needs, actions taken regarding the child's responses, and the child's outlook about the move (It is not necessary to complete the Licensing Agency Review section. It will be completed by Foster Home Management or DCF licensing staff).
- j.** Review and sign the completed Exit Interview Forms.
- k.** Forward the completed forms to the DCM Supervisor for review.
- l.** Place the original Exit Interview Form(s), signed by the DCM and the DCM Supervisor, into the child's case file.
- m.** Submit a copy of the Exit Interview form to the designated Quality Assurance Specialist for Circuit 2 or Fourteen 14.

Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

2. For children younger than 5, the DCM will:
 - a. Complete the Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance.
 - b. Review and sign the completed form.
 - c. Forward the completed form to the DCM Supervisor for review.
 - d. Place the original form, signed by the DCM and the DCM Supervisor, into the child's case file.
 - e. Submit a copy of the Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance to the designated Quality Assurance Specialist for Circuit 2 or 14.
3. In conducting Exit Interviews for children with medical or mental health conditions that prevent them from understanding and/or responding to the Exit Interview questions, the DCM will:
 - a. Complete the Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance in place of an exit interview form.
 - b. Document the child's medical or mental health condition that prevents participating in an Exit Interview on the Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance.
 - c. Review and sign the completed form.
 - d. Forward the completed form to the DCM Supervisor for review.
 - e. Place the original form, signed by the DCM and the DCM Supervisor, into the child's case file.
 - f. Submit a copy of the Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance to the designated Quality Assurance Specialist for Circuit 2 or 14.

C. Dependency Case Manager Supervisor Responsibilities. The Dependency Case Manager Supervisor will:

1. Review the Exit Interview or Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance whichever is appropriate for timeliness. All Exit Interviews or Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance must be completed within five (5) days of the child's exit from the home. If not completed timely, document the reason and initial next to the Date of Interview field at the top of the form.
2. Review the Exit Interview packet and assure that the most recent form was used for the child.
3. All sections and questions have been completed.
4. Determine and document appropriate follow-up action needed or taken in the designated sections of the Forms, if applicable.
5. Sign and date the completed Exit Interview or Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance Form.

Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

6. Assure that Exit Interview or Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance Forms are completed, signed and submitted to the BBCBC Quality Assurance Specialist within ten (10) days of the child's exit from the home or facility.
7. Assure that Exit Interview or Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance Forms is included in case files while performing regular Supervisor Reviews.

D. Submission of Exit Interview Forms to BBCBC.

1. All Exit Interview and/or Caregiver Review Forms must be submitted to the designated QAS within ten (10) days of the child's exit from the home or facility.
2. Forms may be submitted by fax or email.
3. The QAS will provide copies of all Exit Interview or Case Manager Review of the Caregivers' Performance Forms to designated Intake Placement staff (email list exitinterviews@bigbendcbc.org) and the applicable foster home Licensing Agency.

E. Follow-Up on Exit Interviews with Negative Responses or Concern. If a child reports issues relating to the quality of care, the DCM will:

1. Consult with the DCM Supervisor regarding needed follow-up actions.
2. Document the issue, the consultation with the DCM Supervisor and actions taken to address the issue on the Exit Interview.
3. Submit the completed Exit Interview Form to the designated BBCBC Quality Assurance Specialist.

F. Contracted Licensing Agency Responsibilities.

1. Contracted Licensing Agencies will maintain a copy of all Exit Interviews completed within the foster home's Licensing File.
2. When a child provides a negative response or indicates a quality of care concern on an Exit Interview, the Contracted Licensing Agency will:
 - a. Address all concerns or complaints registered by a child during an Exit Interview.
 - b. Review the concern or complaint with the foster parent(s) maintaining the anonymity of the source.
 - c. If necessary, gather further information regarding the home or facility by:
 - i. Interviewing other DCM staff who have visited the home/facility within the past twelve (12) months to obtain additional information and their professional impressions regarding the concern.
 - ii. Interviewing other children, either those currently in the home or facility or others who have exited the home or facility within the past six (6) months.

Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

- iii. Interviewing other relevant sources, such as teachers, therapists, guardians ad litem, etc.
- d. Initiate and ensure compliance with a corrective action or safety plan when appropriate.
- e. Provide a written response regarding the concern to BBCBC's Quality Assurance Specialist within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the Exit Interview. The response must:
 - i. Address follow-up actions taken in response to the concern.
 - ii. Include a copy of any safety plan established in response to the concern.
 - iii. Document the Agency's plan to assure that corrective action or safety plans are implemented and maintained.
 - iv. Document the Agency's plan to prevent similar incidents in other licensed homes in the future.

G. Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement.

1. When a child indicates during an Exit Interview that the quality of care in a home or facility may need improvement, the BBCBC QAS will collaborate with the DCM, DCM Supervisor and/or Program Manager, Placement Staff and the Licensing Agency to assure appropriate follow-up actions.
2. Based upon the seriousness of the issues raised by the child and the findings determined in follow-up, additional actions may include:
 - a. Requiring a Corrective Action Plan from the Licensing Agency to address the concern within the specified home and the Agency's plan for preventing other similar occurrences among their other licensed homes.
 - b. Restricting the number and/or type of children who may be placed in the home or facility.
 - c. Discontinuing placements with the home or facility until the concerns are addressed.
 - d. Monitoring to ensure compliance with approved Corrective Action Plans.
 - e. Recommending revocation of a foster home license for the following:
 - i. An abuse report is verified for any individual within the home;
 - ii. Conditions are met for a disqualifying offense; and/or
 - iii. The terms of a corrective action plan are not met and maintained.
3. The QAS will disseminate written responses from Licensing Agencies and/or Corrective Action Plans to:
 - a. The Placement Director for the foster home's placement file; and

Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

- b. The Case Manager for the child's file.

H. Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting.

1. Child exit interviews will be collected, and the data analyzed and reported by BBCBC's QAS. QAS responsibilities include:
 - a. Entering all Child Exit Interview data into the CoBRIS system within two (2) business days of receipt.
 - b. Aggregating data monthly and reporting same to the QM Director.
 - c. Aggregating, analyzing and reporting data to be shared with stakeholders on a quarterly basis.
2. The data regarding Exit Interviews will be disseminated to the Management Team at least quarterly.