

Child & Family Services (CFS) System Navigation Toolkit

Helpful Tips For Case Worker Interactions

In case no one has told you lately, we are here to remind you that you are an amazing parent and you are doing the best you can. Never forget that **YOU MATTER!**

NOTE:

Our toolkits have been reviewed by volunteer lawyers and co-developed with input from parents who have lived experience with the child welfare system. The contents of this booklet are meant to be informational only and do not contain any legal advice. If you have a legal problem, please consult a lawyer.

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You may not like your caseworker, and interactions with them may be triggering BUT...

Your caseworkers has the most influence on the outcome of your file.

- Think before you call, email, or text your caseworker
- If something has upset you, take a pause before responding and sending a message.
- If possible, have a friend or professional support review emails before sending them
- Ensure you have friends or supports you can vent to or share challenges you may be having.
- Avoid using profanities (swearing).
- Avoid sending multiple emails or calling repeatedly.
- Try and include your concerns in one email, follow-up at least after 48 hours if you haven't received a response.
- Ask for clarification if you are unclear about your goals and case plan.

REMEMBER:EVERYTHING YOU SAY OR DO IS BEING ASSESSED AND DOCUMENTED.

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We know it can be hard to stay calm while worrying about the possibility of losing your child(ren) forever BUT ...

It's important to TRY YOUR BEST to have a good working relationship with your caseworker.

- Always confirm upcoming appointments and meetings.
- If you can't attend a meeting or appointment, try and give as much notice as possible.
- Come prepared for meetings with an agenda of things to review, and send a follow-up email with a summary of what was discussed
- Try and always attend meetings with your support network, and have someone taking notes for follow-up.
- Ensure that your worker knows that you understand and acknowledge CS safety concerns.
- Ensure you are sharing what you are learning in treatment, counselling, parenting programs etc.

DON'T FORGET TO DOCUMENT EACH INTERACTION YOU HAVE WITH OUR CASEWORKER. (IN-PERSON, PHONE, OR VIRTUAL)

If you require legal advice or advocacy support, please email **info@familyadvocacysupportcentre.ca** and we would be happy to assist with a referral.