

Foster Care Flashcard

Things to Remember When Supporting Students Experiencing Foster Care

We can feel unheard and unseen.



School is a safe space.



We are not irreversibly broken.



Ask, don't assume.



Bio families still matter.



Consistent contact is crucial.



Be involved in our response plans.



Trust takes time.



This card was created by Aly Leonard with input from her peers based on their experiences in foster care.



TIP: Ask about their interests and goals. It could reassure them that they matter. Foster youth have faced a lot of rejection in their lives, which can result in disengagement, or acting out for attention.



TIP: Engage them in the learning environment no matter how long they have been in your classroom. Despite transferring schools more than their non-foster peers, school provides structure and stability.



TIP: Establishing an authentic relationship helps to accommodate their trauma history. A common assumption is that because of the trauma foster youth have gone through, they are irreversibly broken and their actions cannot be mitigated by traditional discipline.



TIP: Meet the child where they are at and ask if you do not know. Ask if you have to, but do not assume. Not every school's curriculum is the same, just like every child's learning style is different.



TIP: Be aware of anything you say regarding their family status. Not every child taken from their home wanted to leave, and while some biological families are not involved, others are working towards reunification.



TIP: Become a consistent person in their life by role modeling healthy communication and boundaries. Foster youth have a huge disadvantage in gaining social capital. Making consistent contact with adults crucial.



TIP: Get involved in their response plans. Be an adult advocate on their team. Youth spend more time at school than at home, so it's beneficial to be involved by advocating for what is and isn't appropriate in their response plan.



TIP: Show up by engaging continually, knowing it will take time. Trust is built over time by being there and collaborating with the child and their supports to establish a stable environment.