



VT-FUTRES
Fostering Understanding To
Reach Educational Success

Educate Local Communities Toolkit

Sample Speech to School Staff

SCHOOL STAFF PRESENTATION

Good Morning. My name is name and I am the Resource Coordinator with Family Services in town. I am here today to speak to you about Foster Care and Educational Stability. The Face of Foster care is changing and we are working with extended family more of the time. However, we still need foster parents and respite providers in the towns where the children in need are residing. Research tells us that children who change schools when they come into foster care lose 4-6 months of academic progress while they are acclimating to their new environment and surroundings. High school students are much less likely, in fact half as likely, to graduate when they change their educational placement when they enter foster care.

When their foster care placement cannot be in their hometown it's still really important for them to stay in their home school. The law that governs children in foster care, the Fostering Connections Act from 2008 requires child welfare agencies to pay close attention to this issue. In Vermont, a Memorandum of Understanding between the agency of Education and DCF allows DCF workers to request permission to keep children in their home schools.

If you have worked with DCF in maintaining a home school placement, it may have been frustrating and confusing, and you may have felt that you did not have a clear understanding of all of the issues. Traumatized children need additional support to maintain good social emotional health. This is why even if a child cannot remain in their home town, whenever possible, we want them to maintain their relationships and remain at their home school.

We need all kinds of resources to meet children's needs. We need people who are willing to transport to and from school, to provide respite services – day and overnight, and we need foster parents licensed, ready and willing to take the kids that are from their towns and help them maintain as much familiarity in their daily routine as possible. This can also include





VT-FUTRES
Fostering Understanding To
Reach Educational Success

Educate Local Communities Toolkit

thinking about the children's friends and the children's friends' parents. Keeping kids local helps mitigate the trauma that they experience when they leave their families. They are better able to develop the coping skills necessary to manage the disruptions in their life, and their educational outcomes are impacted in a very positive way. Familiar surroundings and familiar faces are very important for the most vulnerable children we serve.

You are the ones who know the members of your community. You know the families in need and you know the families that would be in a position to offer support. When a child in your school is in need, help us connect them to their natural support network. I am asking you today to reach out to your friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers, and have a conversation with them about the need for support in their community.

I have packets of information, brochures, bookmarks, and business cards that I can leave with you today. Please share this information and give me a call if you would like to know more.

