



S.T.A.N.D. With Me: Guidelines for Helping Children in Foster Care

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As you try to help children in care make steps toward healthy adjustments,
remember these five factors and the child's perspective as it relates to each one.

S *Safety:*
Physical and emotional well-being

T *Trauma:* Physiological reaction to direct
or perceived threat that overwhelms the body/mind

A *Attachment:* The quality of relationships
and ability to form and maintain connections

N *Neurobiology:* The interplay between brain structure,
nervous system functioning, environment, and behavior

D *Development:*
Biological and emotional changes over time





If children had the words, they might ask you these questions—or ask you to consider them yourself. As you try to help children in care make steps toward healthy adjustments, **remember these five factors and the child’s perspective as it relates to each one.**

Safety: Physical and emotional well-being

- How are we going to keep me safe in my body and my feelings?
- Are there people who help me feel safer? (primary caregiver, siblings, extended family, foster parent, child care provider)
- What things help me feel safer? (routines, blankie, pacifier, music, and so on)
- What can people tell me so I feel safer? (where am I going, are people coming to visit, are more changes coming?)

Trauma: Physiological reaction to direct or perceived threat that overwhelms the body/mind

- I’ve had really scary things happen. How can people tell that I still remember and it still upsets me?
- What might remind me of the scary things that I saw/experienced? (things I see, things I hear, things I smell, touch, or taste)
- How old was I when bad things happened? Did I have words?
- Could I run away? Who could I/did I run to?
- How can people help me with what I’ve seen and experienced?

Attachment: The quality of relationships and ability to form and maintain connections

- How will my relationship with others be changed by out-of-home placement?
- How can you tell if I miss the other people who’ve cared for me?
- How many times have I been separated from them and how did it happen?
- Do I let others get close to me, care for me or comfort me?
- How will the way adults were taken care of change the way they take care of me?

Neurobiology: The interplay between brain structure, nervous system functioning, environment, and behavior

- How might people notice if I am upset? Do I get loud, angry, quiet, sleepy, hyper?
- What helps me feel calm? What helps me get to sleep?
- Do I feel the same about light, dark, sound, heat, or clutter as other kids my age?

Development: Biological and emotional changes over time

- How old am I? Do I do things like other kids my age? (eat, sleep, walk, potty)
- How do I play with other kids? Other adults?
- What do I need to support my development?

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