

## "Concepts of Separation and Attachment"

**Instructions:** Read the scenario on page 2 of this handout assigned to your group by the trainer, then answer the following questions as they relate to the scenario. You should develop the answers through dialogue in your small group. You will have 10 minutes to complete the questions.

1. How does the scenario relate to the Separation Experience activity just completed?

2. List the feelings the child might be experiencing.



### **Scenario A**

- A five-year old child asks the Child Welfare Professional in the car on the way to a pre-placement visit whether the new family has a bathroom at their house.

### **Scenario B**

- A seven-year old encounters a pork chop and spinach for the first time at a table set with strange looking silverware and napkins. Spinach for the child may evoke a similar degree of discomfort as pig entrails would to an adult. The mother tells you that you have to eat it and assures you it's good for you.

### **Scenario C**

- The child remembers when he hurt his knee, his grandmother had some special medicine to make it better. The medicine is at his house. What is going to happen if he hurts his knee again? He may not realize that antibiotic ointment is common to most medicine cabinets.

### **Scenario D**

- Rules change. Basic expectations for behavior may be very different from one family to another. This is especially true if a child is placed in a foster family of a different ethnic or cultural heritage. "Culture shock," often experienced by adults who travel to foreign lands with different mores and norms, is a common experience for children in substitute care.

### **Scenario E**

- The child in placement may wonder what will happen to his family while he is gone. The child may imagine them dead, or moved away, perhaps having forgotten him. He may despair of ever seeing them again.

### **Scenario F**

- The child is frightened by his own anger. He knows he may be punished for resisting and for being angry. When he acts out, he is disciplined. The child may feel that his angry feelings must be kept inside if he is to survive in his new home. The unexpressed anger may emerge in negative behaviors outside the home or in subversive and passive-aggressive ways.

### **Scenario G**

- Foster children typically feel "odd, out of place, different." If they don't understand what is acceptable in their new culture, they may behave differently, increasing the breach in social relationships. This affects social interactions and self-esteem.