

Thank you for submitting your questions to our open questions box! We strive to answer mentors' questions about DCS related subjects to help you be the best mentor you can be to your foster child. [Click Here to Ask a Question](#)

Questions are answered by DCS permanency & youth administration.

1. If my mentee's Biological parents have full jurisdiction of the kiddo, do I simply go to them for permission to go to events as well as scheduling?

Yes, if the parents have physical custody of the children they would be the individuals providing authorization for contact. I think this is where it is so important if possible for mentors to be part of the child's transition home. I think parents are grateful for mentors and having the mentor as part of the transition plan, will assist the child's adjustment to returning home.

2. How does respite work? How is it scheduled?

Respite requests and scheduling is unique to each child or youth. It may be thoughtfully planned out, due to a trip or activity the child would not be able to go to due to visitation, or therapy. It may also come up quickly due to issues in the home or the needs of a family in a Foster or Kinship living arrangement.

3. Can mentors engage with respite?

Generally yes. Arranging with the caregivers prior to the respite, and in this case the group home manager as to the activities the mentor and child/youth would be doing during respite would be best. The respite provider should be able to support activities with the mentor, as they would still hold the responsibility of any other appointments the child/youth would have. So if there is family visitation, therapy, or school activities scheduled during the respite period the respite provider would need to support those plans. I encourage speaking directly with the group home manager, not the daily staff, and sending the plans in an email as well including the DCS Specialist and GH staff. Emergency respite may be more difficult due to the situation which preempted the respite. But I would still encourage contact with the caregiver, and see what can be done to ensure the child/youth has contact with their mentor.