



www.risemagazine.org

LEADER'S GUIDE:

Eat, Play, Love by Anonymous
Visits helped me become a good mother.

TODAY WE'LL TALK ABOUT:

How you can plan your visits

INTRODUCTION

It's important that you plan for visits ahead of time. You'll want to pack a snack, toys, books and baby gear, and plan activities that you and your child enjoy doing together. The main thing is that you want to have a lot of positive back-and-forth with your child. Games like peek-a-boo or pattycake might engage a baby. Songs or simple games like red-light/green-light and mother-may-I may keep young children engaged with you. Older children might enjoy puzzles or board games, and talking about friends and school.

Having a basic routine for every visit will also help your visits go smoothly. Routines are very important to children. Children feel safe and behave best when they know what to expect. After you say hello, you may want to start every visit with a snack, then play, then read a book together to provide a calming time before the visit ends. You may want to sing a favorite song together at the beginning or end of each visit, or say goodbye each week by talking about what you'll do together the next week.

Let's read the writer's story and think about planning positive visits.

READ AND DISCUSS STORY

Let's take turns reading the story out loud. Who wants to start?

NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT THE STORY:

- What did the writer think her daughter needed from her during visits?
- What did the writer and her husband do to plan positive visits?
- What routine did the writer, her husband and Little Mama follow during visits?
- How do you think their activities helped them bond?
- How did the writer end visits and why did she say goodbye that way?

PERSONAL REFLECTION TIME

Let's look at the worksheet called "My Reflections." Take 5 or 10 minutes to write down your answers on the worksheet and then we'll share. (*Wait until most people are finished.*)

- Who wants to share their responses?

ENDING THE GROUP

Now turn to the "Visit Journal" worksheet. Take a few minutes to write down your goal for this week's visit. You can answer the "reflection" questions and fill in the checklist after your visit. Please do that at home.

Next week, we'll start by talking about your visits. I look forward to hearing from everyone about how you tried to reach your goals!

NEXT WEEK

Let's talk about how your visits went this week:

- Who tried to meet their goal? How did it go?
- Will someone share a moment they are proud of?
- Will someone talk about something they'd handle differently next time?

Thank you for sharing.

NAME:

DATE:

My Reflections: Eat, Play, Love by Anonymous

1. How do you plan visits with your children? What planning could you do?

2. What activities do you and your children enjoy doing together? What might you enjoy?

3. What is a basic routine that you could get into?

4. How do you—or how could you—say goodbye in a positive way?

NAME:

DATE:

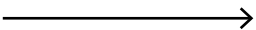
My Visit Journal – Eat, Play, Love

GOAL: Look over your children’s needs that you identified last week. What activities can you do this week to help you connect with your children? What’s a routine that could make visits more positive?

REFLECTION: What planning did you do before your visit? What impact did your planning have on the visits?

Did you follow the routine and do the activities you planned? How did it go?

What’s something you did during your visit that you feel proud of?

OVER 

NAME:

DATE:

My Visit Journal Checklist: Eat, Play, Love by Anonymous

Please use the checklist below to keep track of the steps you are taking to improve your visits. Use the “comments” section to make notes about your experiences.

Did I...	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend my visit	
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrive on time	
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan activities	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bring toys	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bring a snack	
<input type="checkbox"/> Greet my child’s foster parent	
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep anger/frustration out of my visit	
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus only on my child	
Did I respond to my child’s needs...	
<input type="checkbox"/> for me to be trustworthy	
<input type="checkbox"/> to follow a routine	
<input type="checkbox"/> to have fun together	
<input type="checkbox"/> to eat together	
<input type="checkbox"/> to feel safe with the foster parent	
<input type="checkbox"/> to talk about experiences in foster care	
<input type="checkbox"/> to say goodbye in a positive way	