



Achieving More Together / Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd

Achieving More Together / Cyflawni Mwy Gyda'n Gilydd

The NAS Post Adoption Training and Development Framework

- These materials have been developed for the National Adoption Service for adoptive families
- Their purpose is to provide a learning and development resource for adopters post placement
- These tools can be used by groups or by individuals.
- There is lots of information in the notes below each slide so it is important to read these too as they provide much more information, and some useful ideas for more reading.

What's this about?

By the end of this session we hope you will have

- Thought about where you can go to ask questions
- Better understand the adoption process
- Have had an opportunity to think about the needs of children who are adopted and how that might be reflected in their behaviour.
- Considered what adoption means for you all as a wider family

New Families

- When people choose to become adoptive parents, other family members find themselves becoming aunts, uncles, grandparents and cousins.
- It's a big change for everyone, and it's ok to have lots of questions. In fact for the child, if you understand them better that's really helpful!

Get Involved

► Tips from www.gransnet.com include

"Treat them like any other grandchild"

"Take time to get used to the idea You might have mixed feelings – that's ok."

"Find out as much as you can"

"Learn what language is ok these days"

"Think about how to answer questions from well meaning friends"

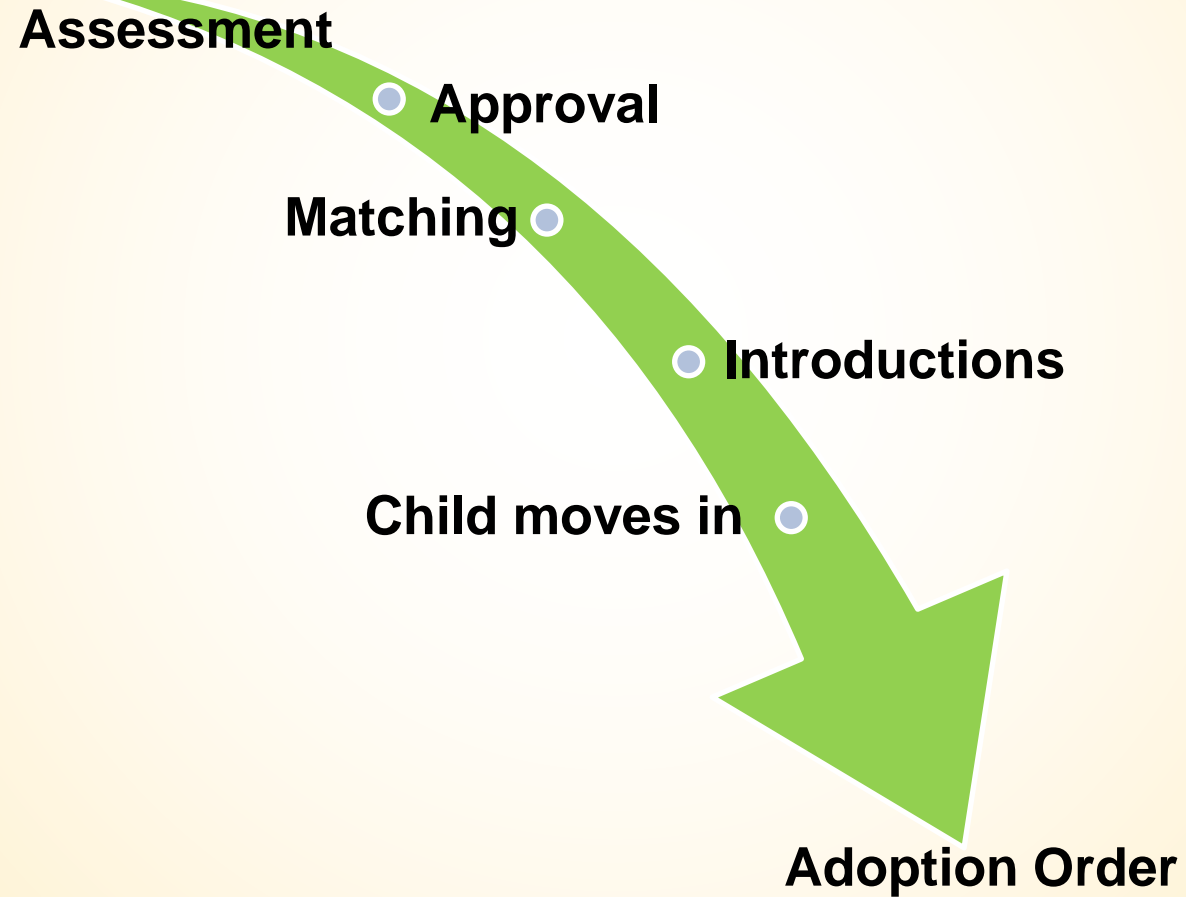
Helping things to go well

- Research shows that outcomes are best for a child who has
 - The benefit from a family they can identify with and feel safe
 - This will empower them to feel confident and have self esteem
 - They also will benefit from relationships within the wider family and relatives play a huge part in this
 - The child will also benefit from opportunities to develop interests and realise their talents
 - This in turn will help them to grow as an individual and eventually develop positive values and be socially competent

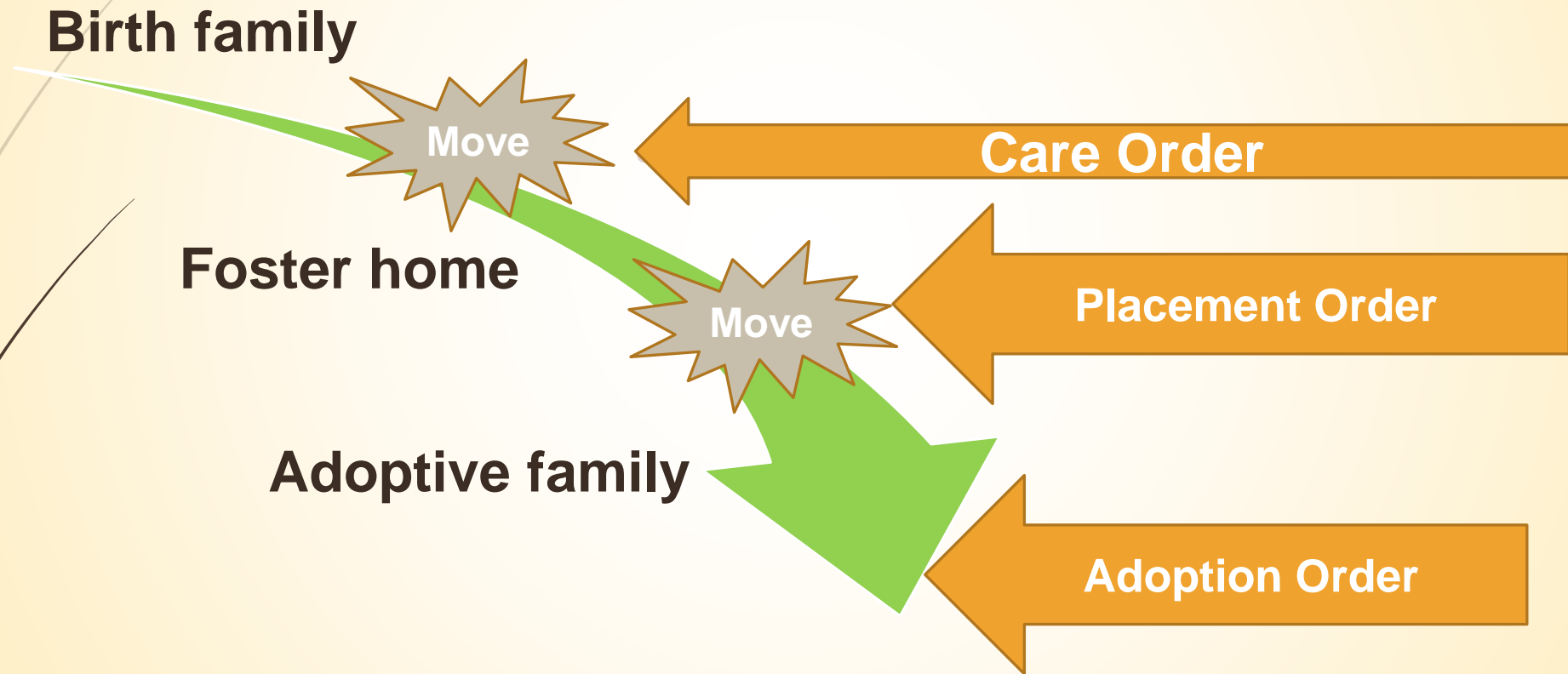
It is ok to ask...

- It should be ok to meet the social worker who is working with the adoptive parents and ask them questions directly.
- Ask the adoption agency whether they run groups, information sessions or training for extended family members.
- Look on-line for information and forums that seem helpful to you.

The Adopter's Journey



The Child's Journey



In the child's shoes

Can you put yourself into the shoes of the child.....

- How do you imagine they felt when they came to live with their foster carers?
- How might they have felt when they had contact with their birth families?
- How might they be feeling when they move to their adoptive family?

Roles and Responsibilities

- ▶ While the child goes through the legal pathway to adoption lots of people get involved- this can be confusing.
- ▶ Do you know who these people are and what they do?
 - The child's social worker
 - The IRO
 - The family finder
 - The assessing social worker
 - The adoption panel

Do you know
what all
these people
do?

The child's lived experience

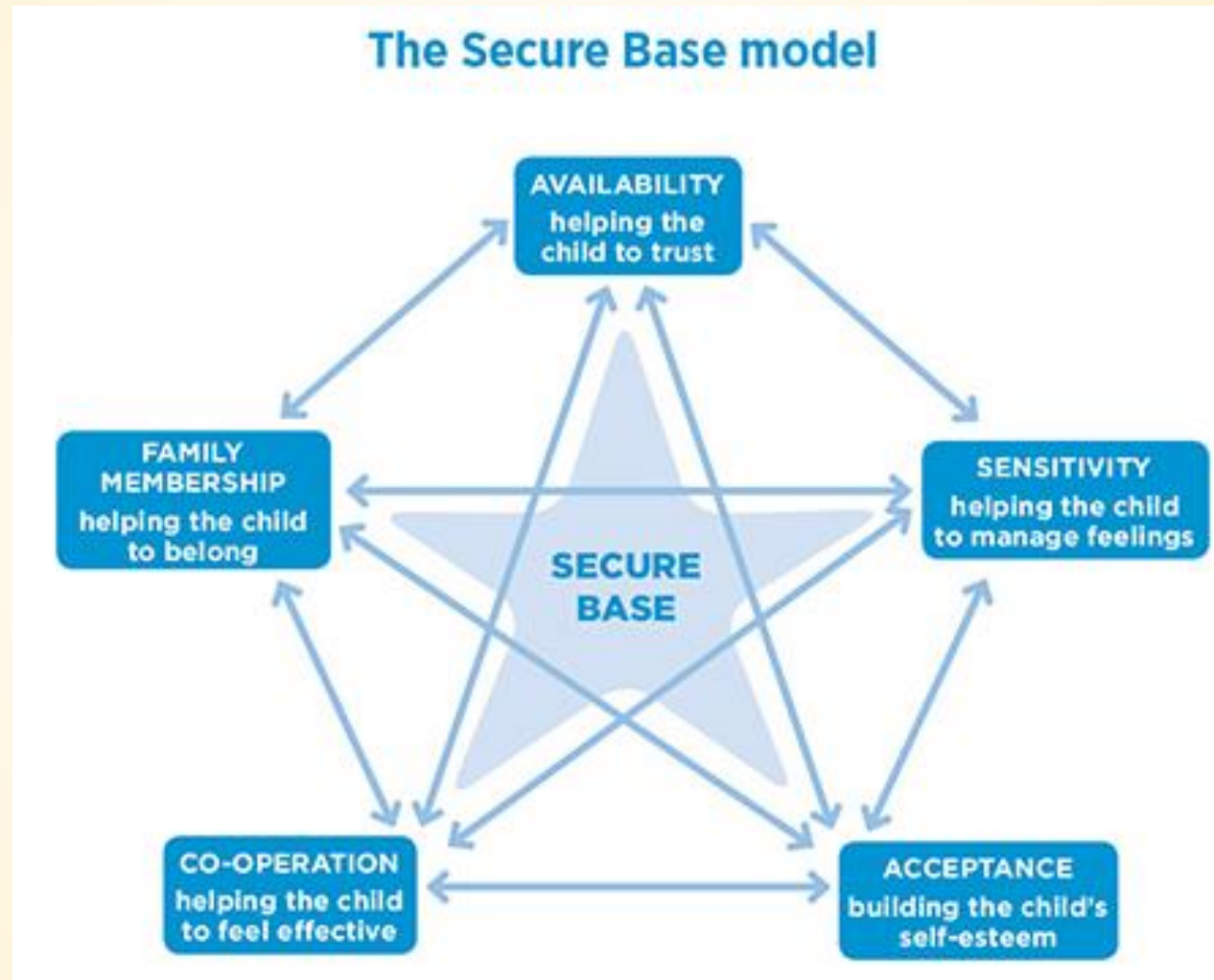
- ▶ Children who move to adoptive families have often had poor early experiences that have involved neglect and abuse.
- ▶ Without evidence that these things had happened, or were likely to happen, the local authority wouldn't have obtained a Placement Order
- ▶ Thinking about these things as you come to make friends and love your adopted grandchild, niece nephew etc can lead to lots of different feelings and lots of questions.
- ▶ Parenting children with such difficult pasts can be complex and challenging at times so it's helpful if you know a little bit too.

The impact of the early years

Think about the impact on a baby...

- When he/she cries out and gets an immediate response from carer
- When they gets a response some of the time
- When he/she gets very little response
- When a baby gets a response that is abusive and makes them afraid

The needs of an adopted child



Key Messages

- This child may need a different parenting approach than you are used to
- They have lacked the early experience of having an adult help them to regulate their stress
- Attachment theory helps us to understand this
- They need to learn new ways of behaving that don't involve them feeling overwhelmed.
- Relatives/Significant others in the network can be really helpful to the adoptive parents and also the child themselves
- Good outcomes are associated with a child having a wider support network

Discussion

- “I was ready to welcome this little girl into the family, just as I’ve welcomed all my other grandchildren but my son didn’t give me a chance. She’d moved in before I met her and I don’t think we ever got off on the right foot after that. She saw me as someone intruding instead of someone belonging”
- “I was hurt when Jonathan said I wasn’t his real grandma, but when my son explained about him I could see that I wasn’t as hurt as he had been.”
- “I dreaded my Mum coming round. She goes over the top and I was afraid she’d cluck all over them or ask them things or expect them to come and sit on her lap.”
- “I’ve got an old Nan and a new Gran but I don’t know how to fit them together”
- “I think you can learn to be an adoptive grandparent but it’s not the same as when I had my two children and their nannas were there from the beginning- right there in the hospital and it just grew from that. If your adult children adopt a baby it could be the same but not if they come older. You have to fit in more with what they need. I’ve been upset when there have been real problems but you can’t interfere. You’ve got to be there for them but you mustn’t expect too much.”
- “We got all the grandchildren together and worked out how to make the twins feel they belonged.”

What does all this mean for the children?

- From what you know – what were things like for the child when they lived with their birth parents?
- Try and think about how the child will have felt.
- What was it like from the (child's perspective) to be moved from this home?
- If it's easier to think about a case study we have included one below



So what can I do...?

- ▶ Have a look at the Brighter Futures animation produced by the support organisation Open Nest – it's a good starting point for thinking about what adoptive parents find helpful and unhelpful from those around them.
- ▶ Look at the Resources page on the website

www.theopennest.co.uk

Key Message

- “Children all need to be treated equally, but differently, from non adopted children”

- 
- 
- This course is part of a series developed by the National Adoption Service to support adopters after approval.
 - These can be accessed at the National Adoption Service website.
 - Please talk to your adoption support team for further information