



# Understanding Primary Families

**OCWTP  
FOSTER CARE, KINSHIP CARE, AND  
ADOPTION PRESERVICE TRAINING**

# You will be able to:

- ✓ Discuss common reactions to loss the primary parents may experience when their children are in out-of-home care
- ✓ Discuss the advantages to the child when there is positive interaction between primary parents and caregivers or adoptive parents
- ✓ Discuss ways caregivers or adoptive parents can involve the primary parents in decisions regarding the care of his or her child
- ✓ Explain of importance of maintaining strong sibling connections

# Interaction



**Encourage positive attitude**

**Encourage involvement**

**Facilitate visitation**

**Coach or mentor primary parents**

A 3D-rendered sign is mounted on a grey brick wall. The sign has a silver-colored metal frame with four corner brackets. Inside the frame is a white rectangular panel. At the top of this panel is a dark grey horizontal bar with three small, dark circular fasteners. The text "Choose an option..." is centered on the white panel in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. The bottom-left corner of the white panel is slightly folded over, revealing a thin layer of paper underneath.

**Choose an  
option...**



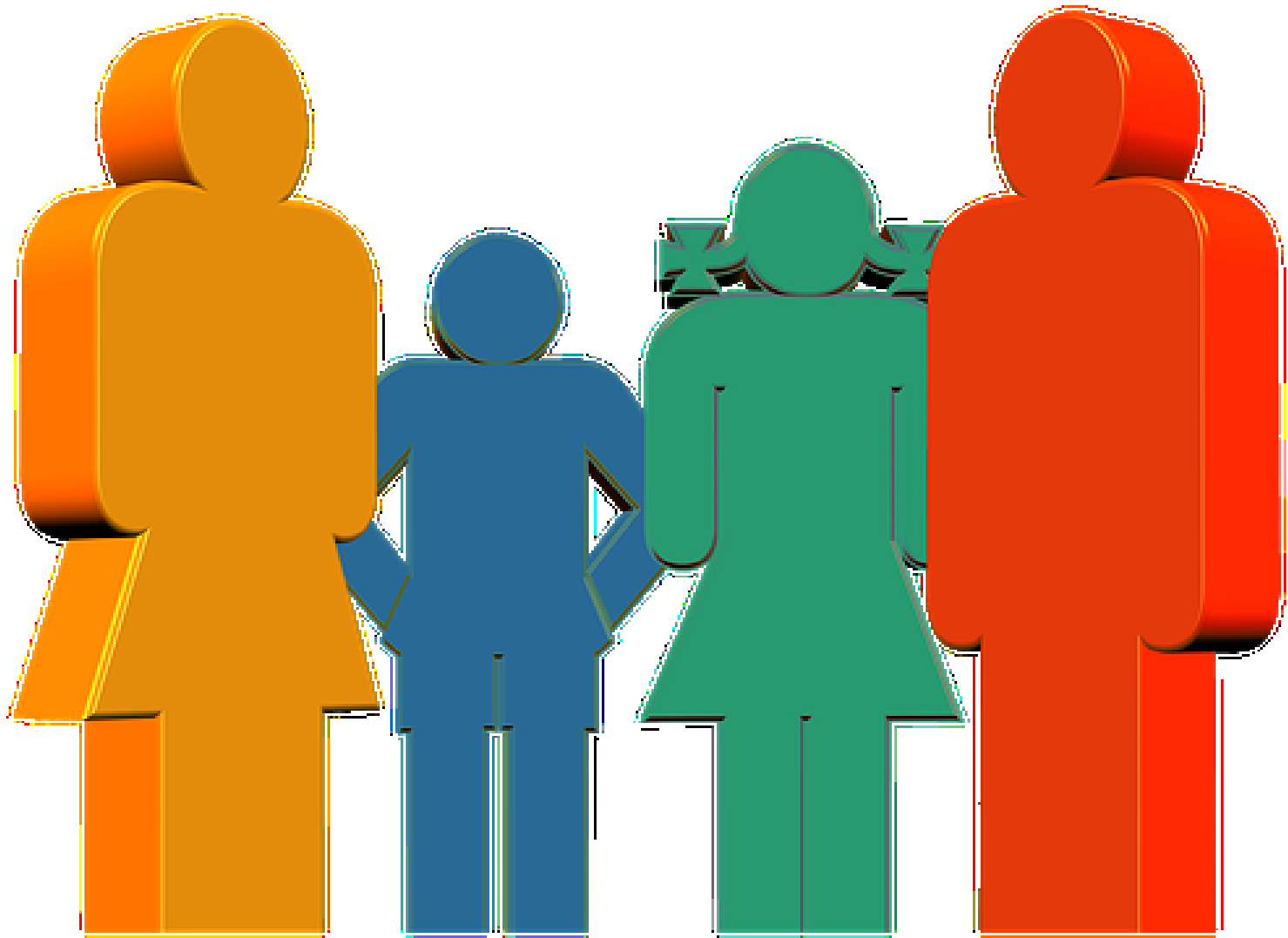
**The best possible outcomes:**

- **for the child are...**
- **for primary family are...**
- **for caregivers and adoptive parents are...**



**“My greatest concern about having direct contact with primary parents is...”**





**Relationship Barriers**

# Reality





# Generational Trauma



# 5 Strategies

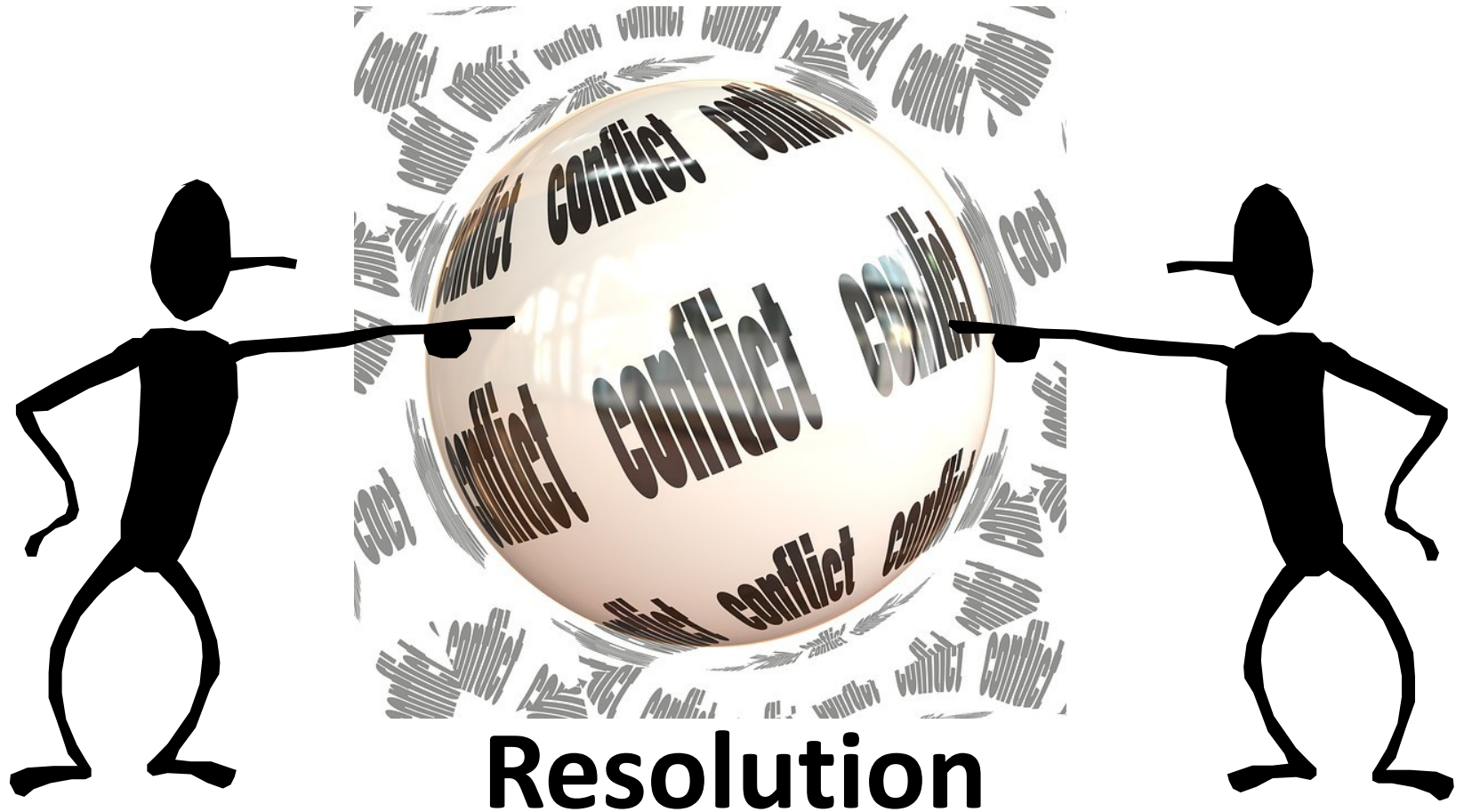


#1





#2



**#3**



#4



**Focus**



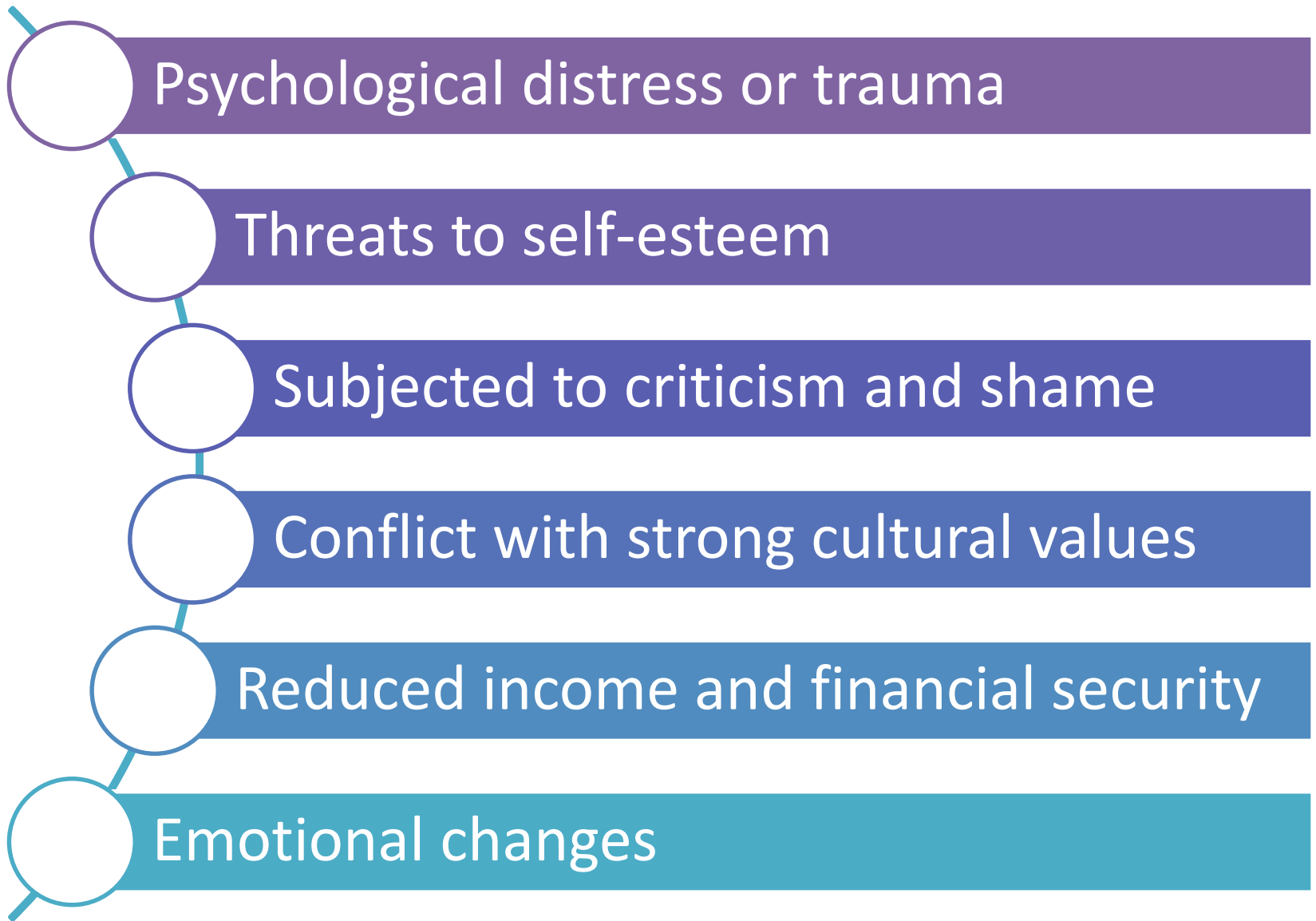
#5



**Communicate**



**Losses**



**Denial**



**Anger**



# Bargaining





# Depression



# Acceptance





***Interview with a  
Mother about  
Addiction and Foster  
Care***

**What were indicators of trauma during this mother's childhood?**

**Do you believe this mother loved her children?**

**Why (or why not)?**

**How did the removal of her children impact the mother's addiction?**

**What were the mother's strengths? Challenges?**

**If you were the caregiver for her children, how would you have felt about interacting with this mother?**

**What insights about working with primary parents did you receive from this film?**



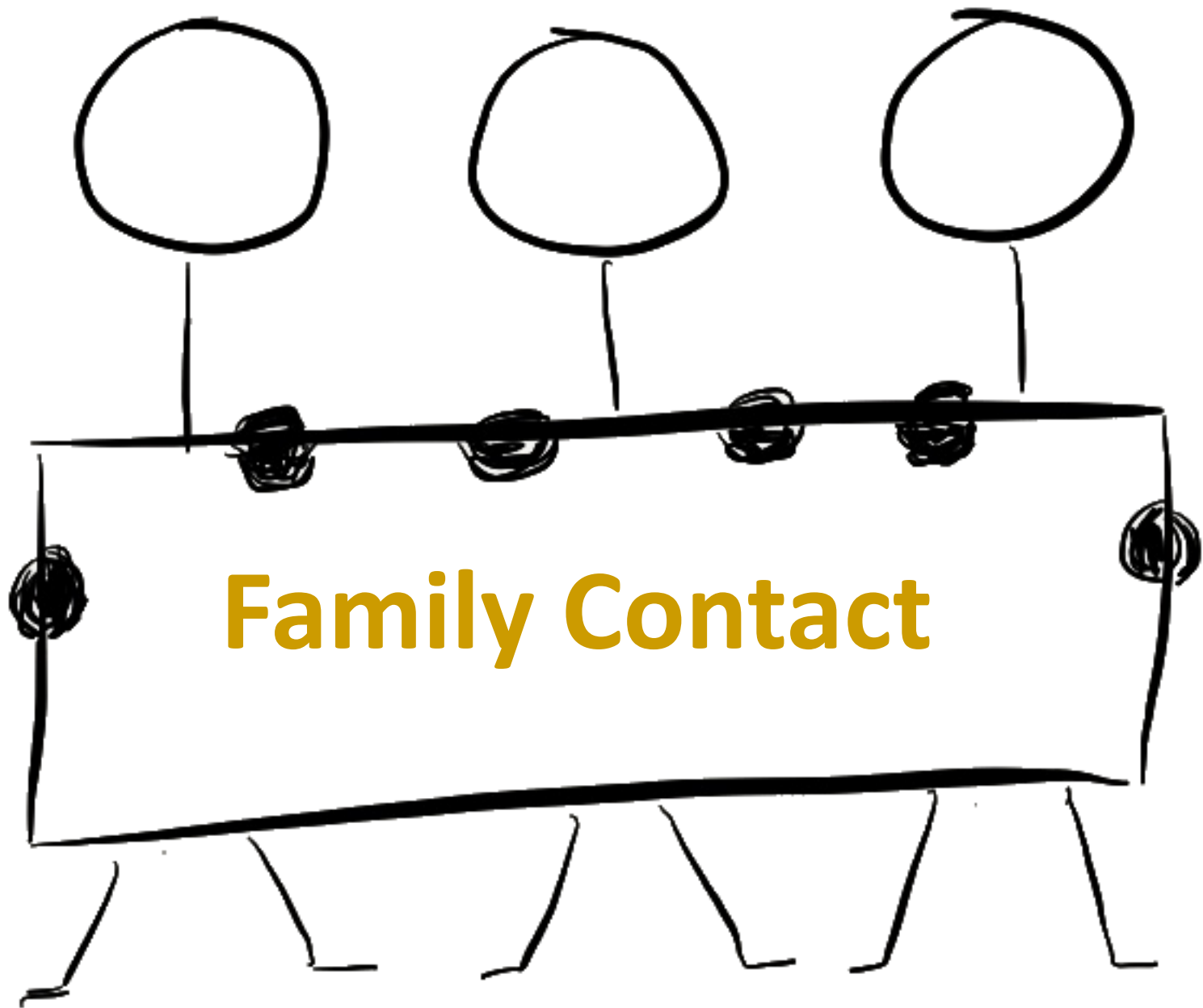
5

*Respect and support the positive,  
stable and enduring relationships  
in the life of your child*

# Challenges







A close-up photograph of a white puzzle piece. The piece is slightly raised from the surface, casting a soft shadow. The background is a solid black color, which is visible through the interlocking gaps of the puzzle. The text 'Maintaining Contact' is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font on the white piece. The piece is oriented diagonally, with the text following the same angle.

**Maintaining  
Contact**



**Mentor**

**Strengthen &  
Maintain  
Attachments**

**Support  
System**

**Develop  
Relationships**

# Nature and Intensity of the Relationship



Needs of the child

Primary parent engagement

Goal of casework

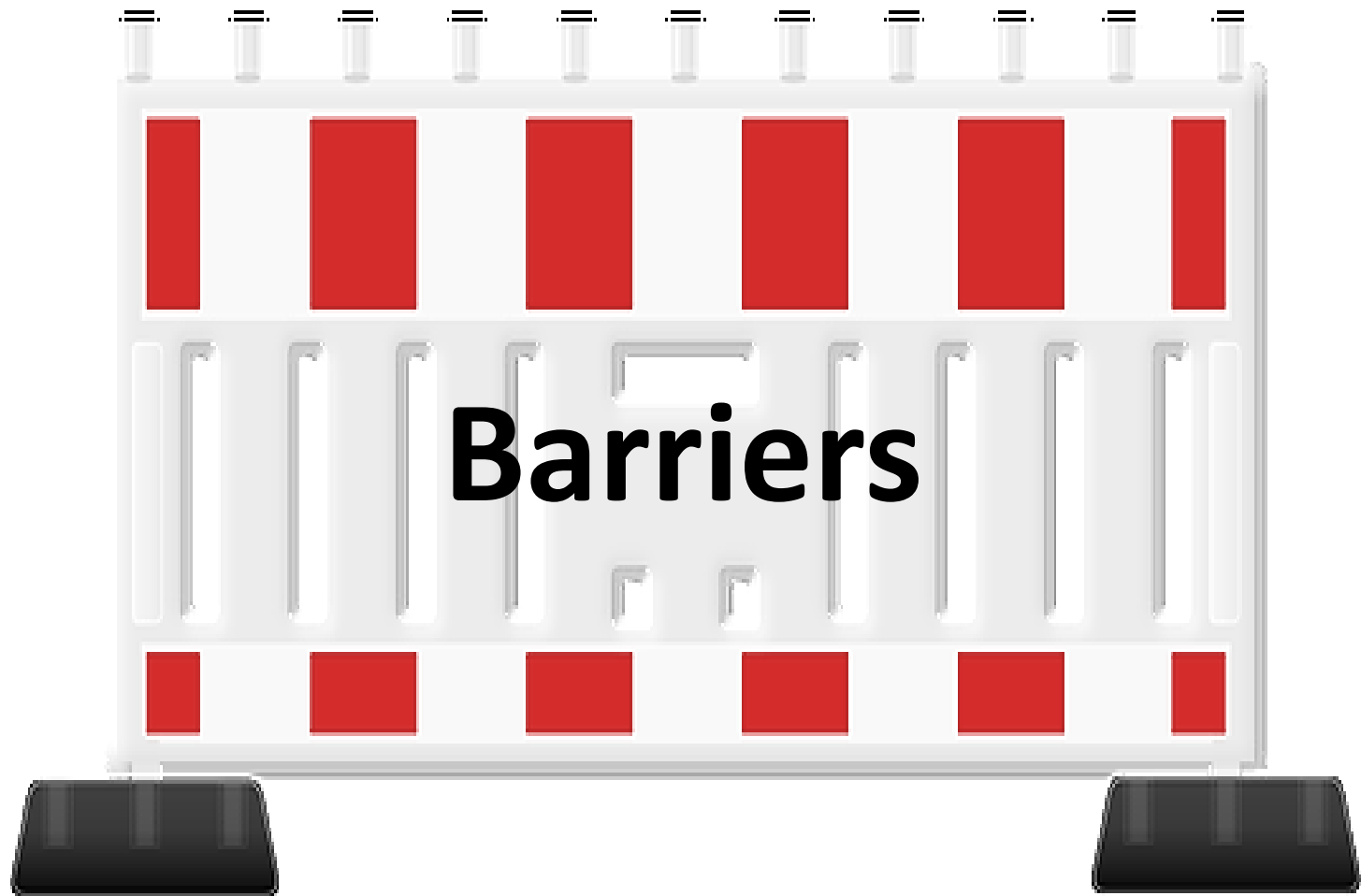
Relationship at time of placement

Degree to which safety is ensured

Training and skill



# Sibling Connections



**Sibling group size**

**Age gap**

**Differences in the needs of siblings**

**Type of placement**

**Behavior problems**

**Organizational policies and procedures**

**Adequacy of placement resources and supports**

**Agency rules**



“When children enter foster care, being with siblings can enhance their sense of safety and well-being.”

*Child Welfare Information Gateway*

**Transfer of**

**LEARNING**

**LEARNING**



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What are some of the common reactions to loss you may notice from the primary parents?

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What are the advantages to the child if you have positive interactions with the primary parents?

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What are some ways you can involve the primary parents in decisions regarding the care of his or her child?

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Why would it be important to help the child maintain strong sibling connections?

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# 1

The most common reactions a primary parent may experience when their child is in foster care shock, denial, anger, and protest.

# 2

When there is positive interaction between primary parents and foster caregivers, all parties benefit.

# 3

Maintaining strong sibling connections can help enhance the child's sense of safety and well-being.



# Thank you!

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