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ADOPTION SERVICES

**Early permanence
foster carer
preparation session booklet**

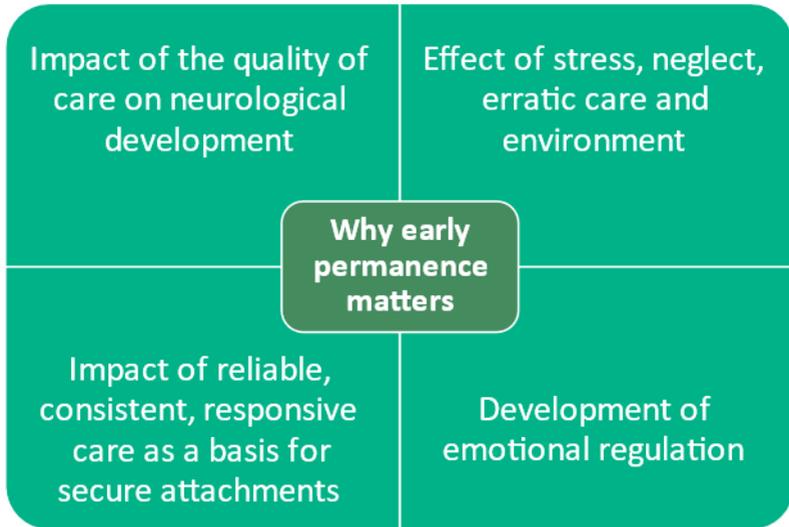


Qualities needed to be an Early Permanence Carer

- Child centred
- Patient
- Flexible/adaptable
- Empathic
- Accepting of support
- Realistic
- Resilient
- Able to manage the lack of control
- Sense of humour
- Organised



Why Early Permanence Matters



The road through early permanence

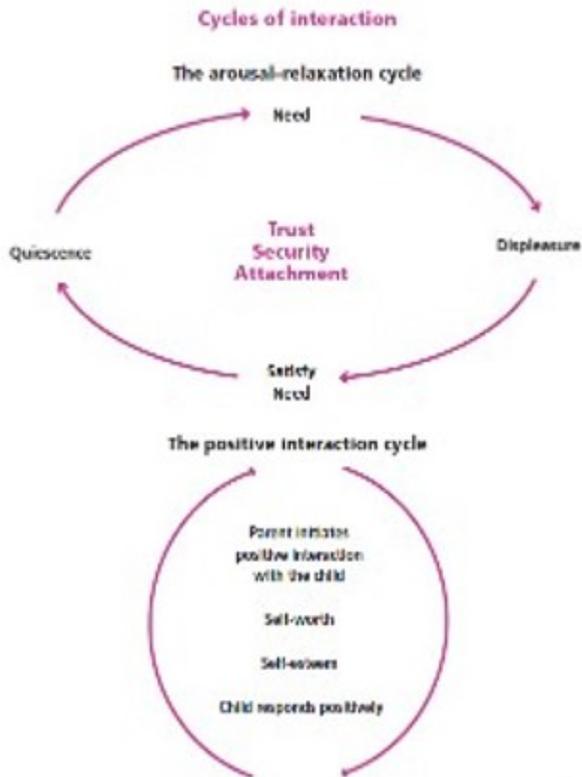
[Excel spreadsheet Tab 1.](#)

Visits and appointments

- Visits from the child's social worker – they have a statutory duty and must adhere to timescales; foster carers are not be expected to cancel or change these without good reason
- Looked After Child Reviews – these meetings track the journey of the child in care; they are chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO); foster carers attend to update on the progress of the child in placement
- Looked after child medical – these appointments are undertaken by a local authority paediatrician to oversee the holistic health needs of the child; the foster carer would take the child to these appointments



Arousal-relaxation cycle



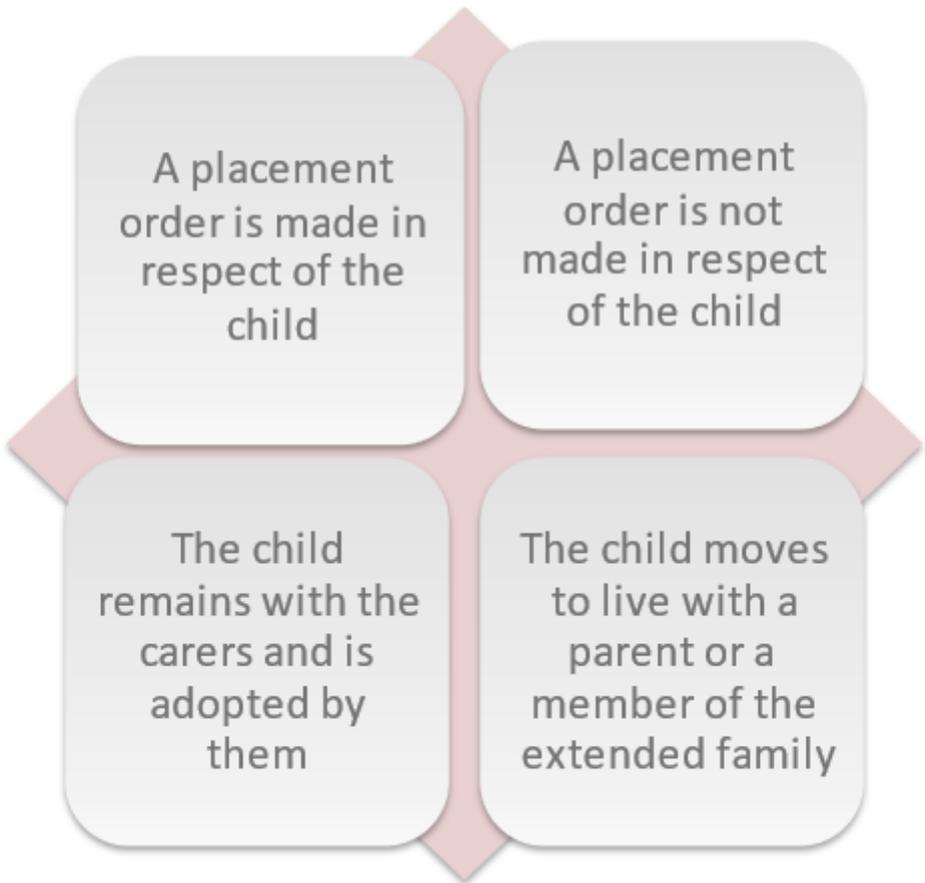
Reprinted from Feilberg, 1994

Foster carer role meetings and visits:

[Spreadsheet Tab 4: Visits and meetings](#)



Possible outcomes of Early Permanence placements



Post support plan

Support Network

- Do you have a strong support network?
- Can they support you emotionally and practically?
- Identify the people who can support you with the 'ups and downs' of EP
- How far away are they?
- When did they last help you?



Family time tips for Early Permanence carers

- Dress the child in clothes provided by the parents – this shows respect and supports development of a relationship
- Think of three things on the way to contact that you are going to share, e.g. last nap, last poo, blew a raspberry, rolled over – this helps to guide the conversation, particularly at the beginning
- Keep a separate baby bag for contact – this avoids bills and confidential information ending up in there – keep it stocked with nappies, feed, snacks, favourite book etc.

Support through the child returning to their family or another carer

Where would you turn to for support if it was decided that the child would move from your care? Have a think about what your own personal support plan would look like and try to note a plan.



“I feel like I’ve lost a child but that feels disrespectful to people whose children have died”

When a child returns to their family/
another carer; quotes provided by EP carers

“Knowing that I had to step back and encourage him to go to her... was incredibly hard”

“You can’t grieve in a traditional way”

“We were devastated and completely heartbroken. The heartbreak rippled across our whole family reaching into our extended family”

Glossary: Spreadsheet tab 2:Glossary

Process: Spreadsheet Tab 1: Process

Resources:Spreadsheet Tab 3: EP resources

