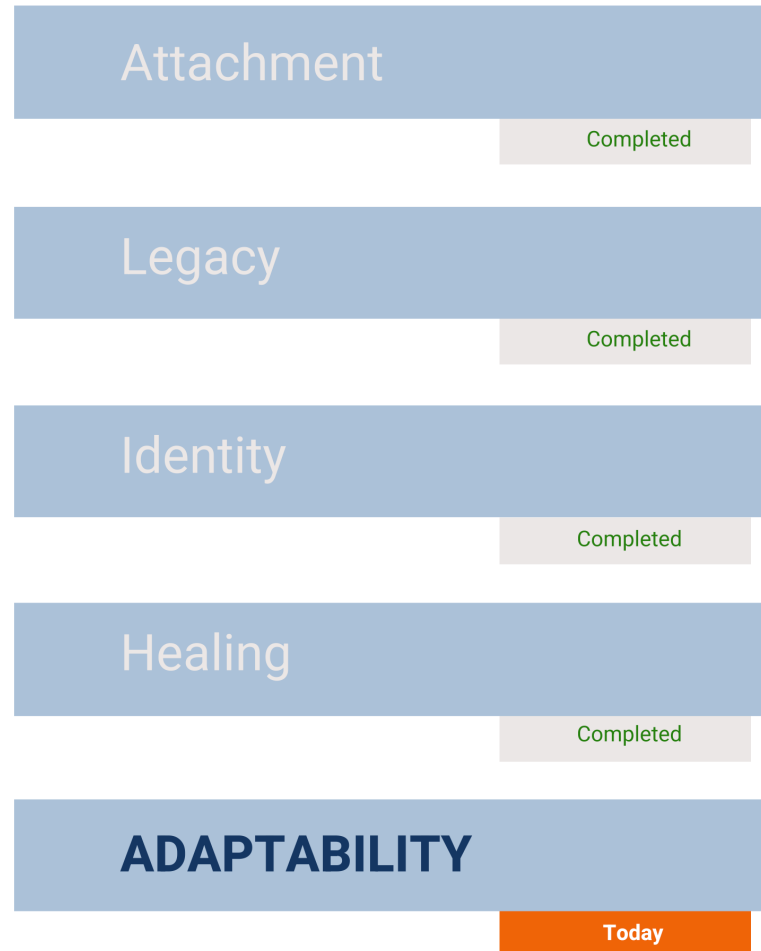


# Inherent Strengths of Kinship Care

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Training Series  
September 2022

# Inherent Strengths in Kinship Families



# Module 5: ADAPTABILITY

Inherent Strengths of Kinship Care



## Adaptability in Kinship Care

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### Learning Objectives:

Define and explain why adaptability is a strength in Kinship

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Describe how Kin adapt as caregivers

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Identify tasks for caregivers in facilitating the family's adjustment and adaptation of becoming a Kinship Family

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## *Definition*

### **ADAPTABILITY**

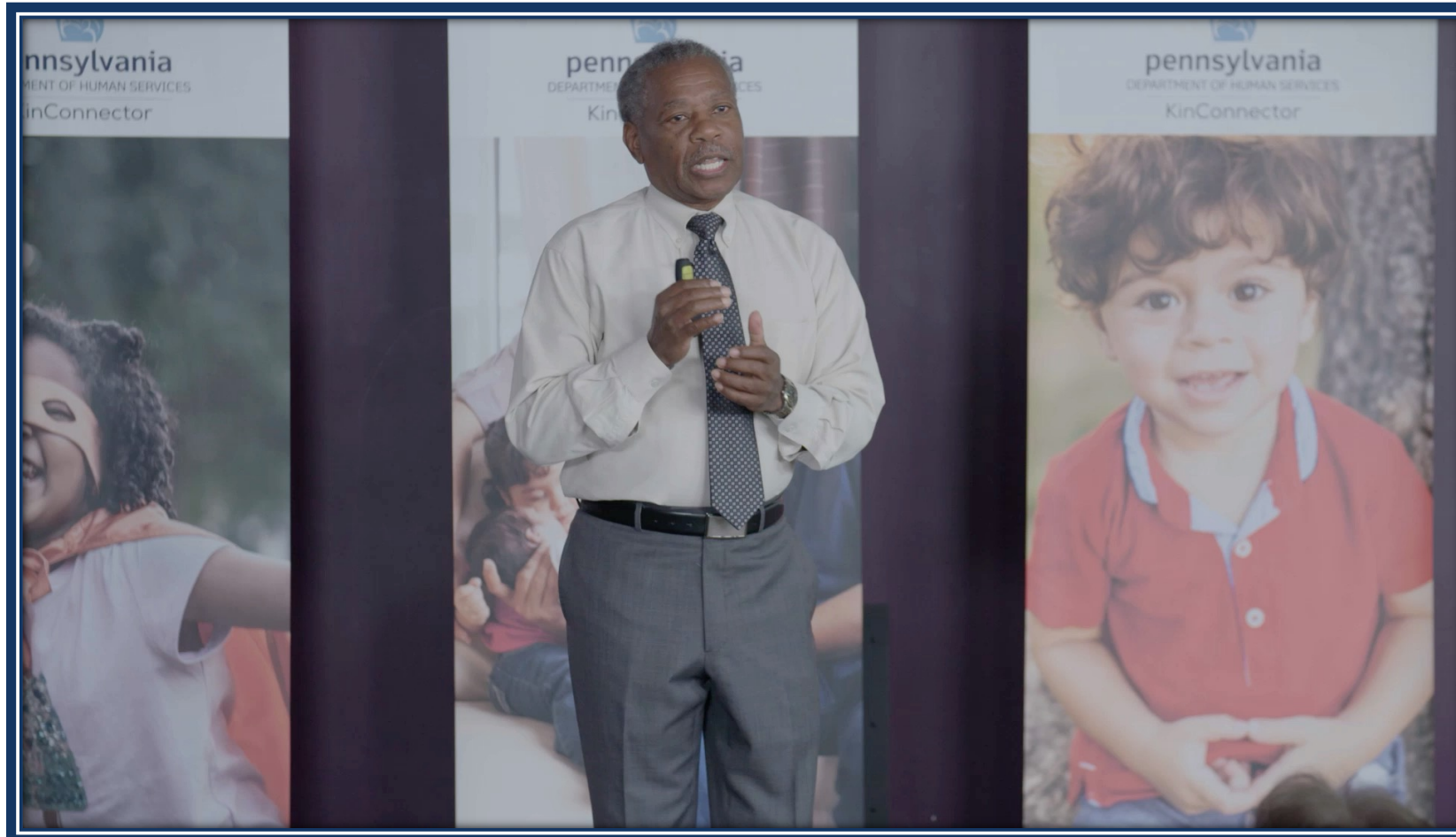
The kinship family's ability to assume the roles and responsibilities necessary for providing permanence, well-being, protection and stability for children in the absence of their parents.

# The Strengths of Adaptability in Kinship Families



- The ability to reassign roles that then allow children not to be removed from the family
- The ability to reunify children with their parents and then remain involved with the birth family after reunification, as a support, respite and safety net.
- The ability to provide permanency, if reunification does not occur, while also keeping the child in the family and connected to their birth family (parents and siblings)
- Minimizing the trauma of separation and loss by reassuring the children they will always remain with family, if not with their parents.
- Maintaining and increasing the potential access(i.e. family visit, events, traditions) of children to family, siblings and birth parents as a result of living with kin

# How Kinship Care Changes and Impacts Families



# Methods and Approaches for Facilitating Family Adaptations and Changes in Family Dynamics

Approach	Scripts
<b>Determine how Kinship care has changed family:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Structure</b></li><li>• <b>Roles</b></li><li>• <b>Responsibilities</b></li><li>• <b>Authority</b></li><li>• <b>Relationships</b></li></ul>	<p>“I’m raising your niece as if she was my child and she was your sibling. So, we need to accept her as a family member who lives here, not as a visitor.”</p> <p>“She has the same rights and responsibilities as a family member to be protected and cared for as you do as a member of this family.”</p>





# Methods and Approaches for Facilitating Family Adaptations and Changes in Family Dynamics

Approach	Scripts
<b>Engage Family members Impacted by the Changes and Importance of Their Roles</b>	<p>“I’m going to need you to care and protect your niece as if he was your sister. She’s going to need to listen to you as if you were her big sister, since she’s younger than you.”</p> <p>“Let’s talk about how you and I will still spend time together as mom and daughter and how you’ll still have your privileges even though your niece now lives with us.”</p> <p>“I need your input and support in order for the changes to work.”</p>



# Methods and Approaches for Facilitating Family Adaptations and Changes in Family Dynamics

Approach	Scripts
<b>How changes can impact family:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Closeness</b></li><li>• <b>Stress/relief</b></li><li>• <b>Loss/support</b></li><li>• <b>Trust/mistrust</b></li><li>• <b>Healing/triggers</b></li><li>• <b>Loyalty/disloyalty/betrayal</b></li></ul>	<p>“Let me know if you feel as if you’re being replaced or if I care more about your niece than I care about you.”</p> <p>“If I think you’re feeling someway I’ll bring it up.”</p> <p>“If I’m making changes that will affect you (.ie. privacy, responsibilities), I’ll make sure I get your input and ask how you feel about the changes.”</p>



# Methods and Approaches for Facilitating Family Adaptations and Changes in Family Dynamics

Approach	Scripts
<b>Get Buy-In/Support for Changes (via individual/family meetings/therapy)</b>	<p data-bbox="580 776 1640 873">“We don’t want our children going into system. That needs to be a goal in our family.”</p> <p data-bbox="580 936 1646 1033">“Our role is temporary until the children can return to their parents.”</p> <p data-bbox="580 1096 1691 1193">“Let’s give the parents time to get themselves together so the children can be returned to their parents.”</p> <p data-bbox="580 1256 1605 1353">“What’s the plan if the children can’t return to their parents.”</p>



# Methods and Approaches for Facilitating Family Adaptations and Changes in Family Dynamics

Approach	Scripts
<b>Identify/reconcile challenges to goals (family/external)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>How to earn trust</b></li><li>• <b>How to make amends</b></li><li>• <b>How to forgive</b></li><li>• <b>How to survive loss issues</b></li></ul>	<p>“What do we need to do to make our family stronger and heal from the shock, loss or embarrassment we’re feeling, so we don’t hurt or turn on each other?”</p> <p>“Remember, you may need help ( ie. kinship care) with your children one day. That’s why it’s important that we work together, so that our children won’t have to go into the system.”</p>

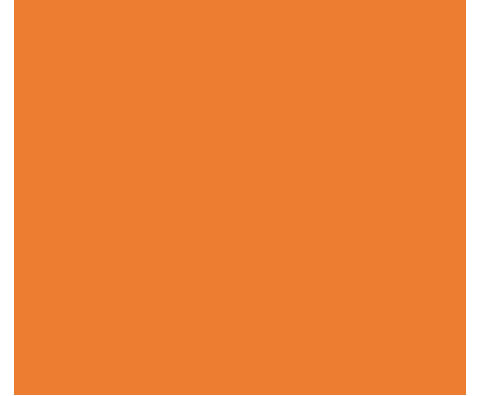


# Methods and Approaches for Facilitating Family Adaptations and Changes in Family Dynamics

Approach	Scripts
<b>Refer to Family Legacies, Values, Identity</b>	<p>“Let’s remember we’ve always taken care of our own and our Faith will get us through.”</p> <p>“We’ve survived in the past and will do it in the present.”</p> <p>“We’re no longer just survivors, we’re also thrivers, as well.”</p>



## *Discuss Contact and Shared Parenting With the Birthparents*



### Birth parent dialogues and Roles with Children To Stabilize the Kinship Family

- Validate the kinship family
- Transfer/delegate authority to caregivers
- Give children permission to accept authority
- Reinforce caregiver's rules/lifestyle
- Allow children to attach with caregivers in a parental relationship

## *Discuss Contact and Shared Parenting With the Birthparents*



- How to Support Birth Parent Around Loss and Grief related to children
- Conflict Resolution to minimize triangulation/split loyalties
- Parent's Individual Goals/Tasks/Timelines in Preparation for Reunification
- Reunification/Permanency Plans
- Alternative Plans to Reunifications

## *How to Provide Support to Caregivers and the Kinship Family*



- Financial
- Material
- Respite
- Childcare
- Obtain Authorization to Visit/Supervise/Overnights
- Joint Legal Authority
- Transportation/Shopping
- Intervention with Family Members/Birth Parents



# Summary



# Summary

## The Strengths of Adaptability in Kinship Families

- ❑ The ability to reassign roles that then allow children to remain within the family.
- ❑ The ability to reunify children with their parents and then remain involved with the birth family after reunification, as a support, respite and safety net.
- ❑ The ability to provide permanency, if reunification does not occur, while also keeping the child in the family and connected to their birth family (parents and siblings)
- ❑ Minimizing the trauma of separation and loss by reassuring the children they will always remain with family, if not with their parents.
- ❑ Maintaining and increasing the potential access and connections of children to family, siblings and birth parents as a result of living with kin



# Summary

## **Kinship Care Changes and Impact Families : MAPPING YOUR FAMILY**

### Tasks and Questions

- How would I draw a map of my family?
- How has kinship changed my family (ie responsibilities, roles, tasks, relationships)?



# Summary

## Approaches in Facilitating Adaptation

- ❑ Determine how Kinship care has changed family
- ❑ Engage family members affected by changes to discuss impact
- ❑ Get buy-in/support for changes (via: individual/family meetings/therapy)
- ❑ Refer to family Legacies, Values, Identity
- ❑ Discuss contact and shared parenting with the birthparents
- ❑ How to provide support to caregivers and the Kinship Family





Question & Answer



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FOR A LOVED ONE.  
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TO HELP YOU!**



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# Thank You!