

## Inherent Strengths of Kinship Care

# Inherent Strengths in Kinship Families



## Six Kinship Family Strengths

**Attachment**

**Legacies**

**Identity**

**Healing'**

**Adaptability**

**Co-Parenting**

# Module 6: Co-Parenting

Inherent Strengths of Kinship Care



## Co-Parenting in Kinship Care

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### Learning Objectives:

Define co-parenting specific to kinship families

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Identify the strengths of co-parenting in kinship families

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Provide approaches for caregivers to engage and involve birth parents in co-parenting

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## *Definition*

### **Co-Parenting**

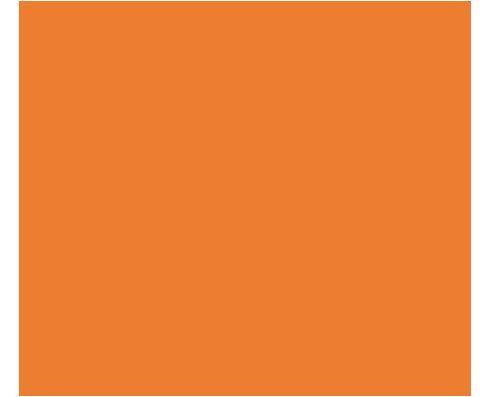
The shared responsibility of parenting between the kinship caregiver and the birth parents as well as extended family members.

# Strengths of Co-Parenting in Kinship Families



- Pre-existing relationships are the basis for co-parenting between the caregivers and birth parents. They don't have to get to know each other and they have a personal relationship.
- Both the caregiver and birth parents have a personal relationship with the child. The child then feels a personal relationship with the caregiver and birth parents.
- The caregiver and birth parents are mutually accessible to each other as family members. Accessibility is not limited by professional boundaries.
- Children can maintain relationships and support with the caregiver after reunification with their birth parents.
- Co-parenting can continue if the children are not re-unified with their birth parents.

# Parental Roles for Biological Parents



## Supervisor

Responsible for the emotional and physical welfare of child by making appropriate decisions and providing adequate attention, limits, and boundaries.

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## Contact Person

Maintains contact with the child in order to provide a parental connection -- ie phone calls, email, letters, and photos.

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## Disciplinarian

Involved in deciding limits, structure and consequences for the child's behavior. Teaches values, morals, expectations, responsibilities and appropriate behaviors.

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## Provider/Protector

Responsible for the total care and well-being of their child by providing or accessing food, shelter, protection, medical, educational and spiritual resources necessary to parent a child.

7



## Supportive Friend

Provides positive and supportive feedback to the child around activities and events in the child's life.

2



## Advisor/Problem Solver

Provides advice, recommendations, opinions and alternatives the child might use in solving problems or making decisions and choices.

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## Brainstorming Confident

Listens to the child's situations or problems, and directs them to sources of information, advice, solutions and answers.

3

- When biological parents are not able to take on the traditional responsibilities of parenting, there are different roles they can assume to match their abilities that allow them to maintain a positive connection with their children
- Biological parents do not have to stay in one role.
- They can change roles as their capabilities and circumstances dictate.

# Approaches for Co-Parenting

Approach	Scripts
<b>Identify Common Goals</b>	<p data-bbox="580 739 1737 911">“You’re in need of a family for your children until you’re able to care for them again. I want to be the family to care for your children until you’re able to.”</p> <p data-bbox="580 982 1686 1153">“Your needing a family and we are wanting to be that family for your children is what we have in common.”</p> <p data-bbox="580 1225 1727 1339">“I want to be there for my grandchildren, and I also want to be there for you as my son/daughter.”</p>





# Approaches for Co-Parenting

Approach	Scripts
<b>Acknowledge the Birth Parents' Power, Influence, Importance</b>	<p>“This will be easier if you use your power and influence with the children.”</p> <p>“This will be easier if you decide to accept our help in caring for your children.”</p> <p>“The children need to see your influence and involvement in how they are being raised and cared for.”</p>



# Approaches in Co-Parenting

Approach	Scripts
<b>Elicit Birth Parents' Buy-In (benefits them and the children)</b>	<p>“The children can be in a home where you can monitor their safety and well-being. And you can have input into their care.”</p> <p>“You’ll have the time to do what you need to do to show you are able to care for your children.”</p>



# Approaches in Co-Parenting

Approach	Scripts
<b>Identify and Dismantle Past Barriers</b>	<p>“Since the children have been with me, we haven’t been able to be... Caring Cooperative Respectful</p> <p>“Because of our past history, we haven’t been able to be... Caring Cooperative Respectful</p>



# Approaches for Co-Parenting

Approach	Scripts
<b>Initiate Positive Interactions</b>	“From now on, I’m going to be courteous to you, respectful, civil and caring. Because I know you care, I’m going to call and text you on a regular basis about how the children are doing and what they are up to.”



# Approaches to Co-Parenting

Approach	Scripts
<b>Establish a Partnership and Guidelines for Co-Parenting</b>	<p>“We’ve got to be ok for the the kids to be ok. We’ve got to be stable in order for the kids to be stable.”</p> <p>“The children need to see us cooperate as a team so they’ll feel safe and stable.”</p> <p>“Let’s set up guidelines for handling conflicts that keep the children out of the middle or make them feel confused.”</p>



# Approaches to Co-Parenting

Approach	Scripts
<b>Acknowledge Birth Parents' Losses and Your Willingness to be a Support</b>	<p data-bbox="580 668 1753 761">“I can only imagine how hard it must be to not have your children with you.”</p> <p data-bbox="580 818 1753 911">“Use this time to take care of yourself so you can then take care of the kids. You’ve got to be ok for the kids to be ok.”</p> <p data-bbox="580 968 1753 1110">“Let us help the kids out while you take care of yourself and get things in place (ie shelter, income) for the children’s return.”</p> <p data-bbox="580 1168 1753 1310">“Please remember I not only want to support you in your role as the children’s parents, but I also want to support you in my life as my son/daughter/brother/sister, etc.”</p>



# Summary



# Summary

## The Strengths of Co-Parenting in Kinship Families

- ❑ Pre-existing relationships are the basis for co-parenting between the caregivers and birth parents.
- ❑ Both the caregiver and birth parents have a personal relationship with the child.
- ❑ The caregiver and birth parents are mutually accessible to each other as family members.
- ❑ Children can maintain relationships and support from the caregiver after re-unification with their birth parents.
- ❑ Co-parenting can continue if the children are not re-unified with their birth parents.





# Summary

## Approaches in Co-Parenting

- Identify common goals
- Acknowledge the birth parents' power, influence, and importance
- Elicit the birth parents' buy-in
- Identify and dismantle past barriers
- Establish a partnership as co-parents
- Acknowledge the birth parents' losses and your willingness to support them





Question & Answer



**YOU STEPPED UP  
FOR A LOVED ONE.  
WE'RE HERE  
TO HELP YOU!**



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**CALL OUR SUPPORT LINE TODAY**

ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH

# Thank You!