



Northwest Early
Permanence for Older
Children (4+ Years)

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Northwest Early Permanence Project for Older Children (4 - 8 years)

Who are
we?



WHY?

EP has been well established since 2014

The success of EP has mainly benefitted very young babies.

EP aims to protect our older children from additional moves and additional loss.

Northwest Early Permanence History



Benefits

- ✓ Statutory Obligation to consider EP
- ✓ EP works with the goal of achieving a culture change
- ✓ Keeping siblings together
- ✓ Adoption an option for older children with a plan of ongoing direct
- ✓ National Fostering Shortage



Raise awareness
not just for
young babies

Inspire carers to
consider EP for
older children

Improve
preparation for
the fostering role

Encourage
professionals to
think EP for older
children in care
planning

Achieve more EP
placements for
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The Plan 2024 - 2025



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EARLY PERMANENCE
BETTER OUTCOMES FOR MORE CHILDREN

NEWS LETTER
Issue 2 October 2024

Welcome EP Champions!!

North West Marketing
"Marketing Announcement"
We have had confirmation that our RAs and VAs in the North West **WILL** be working together again to launch a 2025 shared campaign!!
Our focus for 2025 is to find more adoptive parents for older sibling groups.
Your marketing leads are busy at work thinking of new ideas for the campaign.
We hope to launch in March 2025.

Please contact us if you have any families willing to speak to us and share their sibling stories.
Contact - kayleigh.starkie@adoptionnow.org.uk
We know real stories are what inspire more families to come forward to adopt!

Keep an eye out on our new shared website for the latest marketing campaign.

Other EP News
We have seen some great events recently. With a growing focus on maintaining lifelong relationships and the impact on social media.
On 24th September 2024, Adoption England facilitated an event that looked in-depth into seeking out first families via social media.
This event did a fantastic job in encouraging thinking about the many layers of social media contact, as well as the emotional wellbeing of all involved.

These conversations highlight to us the ever growing importance of considering EP for our children. EP is a great foundation for maintaining relationships and establishing first family connections from the outset.
Our friends and colleagues over at Adoption are kindly offering spaces to their social media course.
If you would like to refer families on to the course please get in contact.

North West Virtual EP Support
Across our North West Region your agencies hold a monthly North West Support Group (online).
Last week we held the September 2024 EP Support Group which had **only two** families attend.
These two families enjoyed the opportunity to chat with each other BUT they would have loved to have seen more EP families to talk to.
Attending support groups contributes to an FFA carer's fostering standards.
If we don't use the support groups we may sadly lose them 😞
Please encourage all EP carers to attend.
Email for an invite kayleigh.starkie@adoptionnow.org.uk

EP Champions Mailing List
Creating an EP Champion Network helps us all stay up to date with - information, resources, and is a great place to get some helpful peer advice when needed.
The EP Champion Mailing List can also be another link to reach out to colleagues from RAs and VAs when searching for EP carers.
Please get in touch if you would like to join the mailing list and receive these newsletters and other EP news.
Email kayleigh.starkie@adoptionnow.org.uk

FREE Therapeutic Training Event for Adopters
We have a FREE 2 day (virtual) therapeutic training event in November 2024.
Don't forget to invite prospective adopters!
This is a virtual event on **10th & 22nd November** and will benefit any adopters wishing to care for children aged 3+.
Email for invite: kayleigh.starkie@adoptionnow.org.uk

Adoption England
October Adoption England Events ...
9th October (1-2pm) Family finding events & the effectiveness of direct connections.
10th October (1-2:30pm) Working Inclusively with Dads!
22nd October (10am -11:30am) Adopter Journey National Standards.
All events can be booked [here](#)

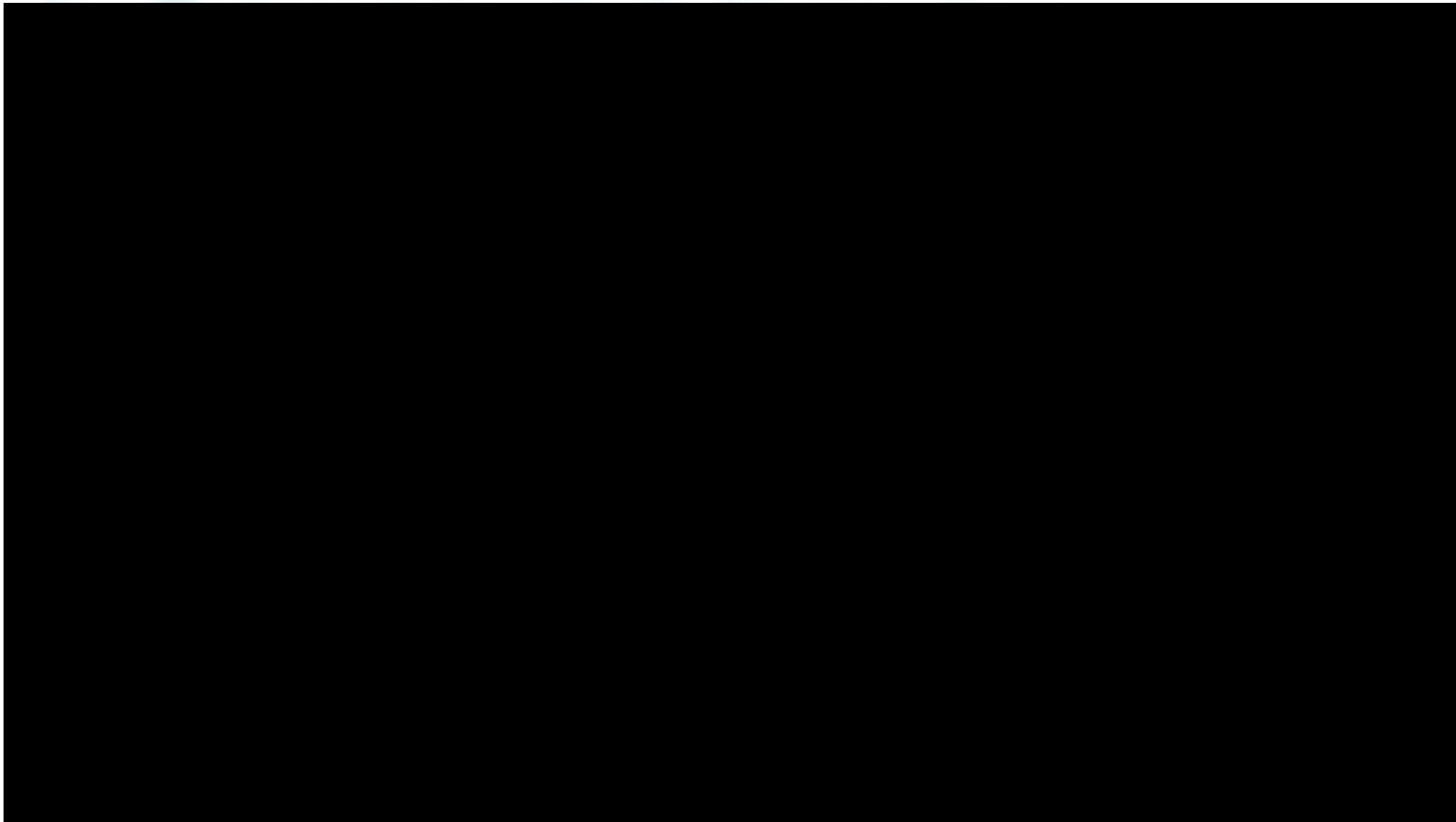
Our colleagues and friends in the North East have been working with Adoption England to create a NEW EP Campaign (September 2024).
The EP campaign is a true story, and the words have been written by a young person who has experienced adoption.
It is a great resource in championing EP for siblings and one that may be useful to show as part of your own EP training.
Check out the video here - [Early Permanence: A Guide to Adoption - YouTube](#)

Watch this space for an EXTRA course in December 2024 facilitated by Occupational Therapists around practical activities to support children with sensory integration needs. This will be another FREE event.

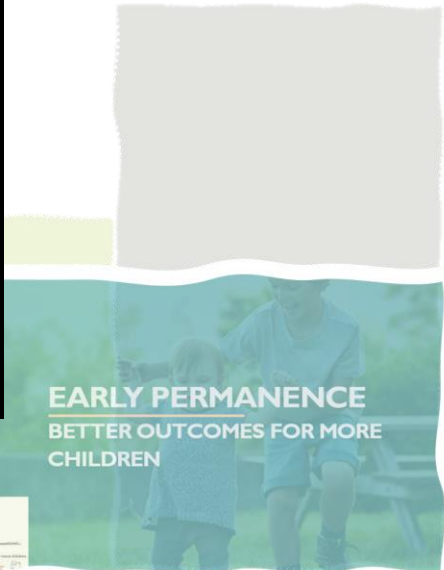
A Helpful Handbook for New EP Carers
Don't forget the user friendly handbook for new EP foster carers.
Check out the QR code for all things EP ...

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Hearing
from the
family
finders





Together we make a difference

Moving to EP Carers From Birth Family

Moving Older Children in EP

Moving from a child's birth family into a new home will be a traumatic and frightening experience. Add to this, the uncertainty of where you will live permanently will no doubt be terrifying. How this move is managed whether it be planned in advance or in more urgent situations will make a difference. Think about some of the factors below and consider whether you are able to address some of these areas to improve the experience of a move for older children.

Awareness of Self
Children in frightening and unpredictable situations will be looking to the adults in their company for signs of safety.
Understanding your own current emotions, your use of certain words, body language and general presentation will be helpful.
The more you check in with yourself, the more you can offer a child the emotional support and feelings of safety they need.
No matter how experienced you are, this is an upsetting situation and it's important that you check in with a colleague or manager afterwards.

Identifying Trusted Adults
When working with children, explore their support network and who children present as most comfortable. This may be a teacher, childcare professional, health professional or relative.
Would there be any possibility that this individual could help in offering reassurance?
Could this person of safety have some involvement in the transition to give the child access to those they can trust?

Visual Aids
The more predictable a situation can be, the safer children may feel.
Would there be an opportunity to create welcome books, recording.
Would there be opportunities for a welcome bag e.g. a toothbrush, toiletries, a little reassuring personalised note.
Items that could help a child feel wanted, special and cared for.
It may help to send the EP children's book to the identified EP carer to complete so that it can be shown to the child before they arrive in the placement.

Space for Questions
Giving children space to ask questions with individuals they feel able to talk to could be useful.
There may be occasions where children can spend time with a social worker (or professional that is known to them) where they can talk through what is happening.
This may be that rather than go straight to their new home, they can have time to hear what will be happening next and ask questions they may not feel able to ask later.

Validate
The situation will be distressing for all, no one involved would wish for a child to move from birth family if at all possible.
It will be important to acknowledge the situation so that children can see that professionals care that it is upsetting and that they are upset for the child. Validating how hard this is for children will ensure that they know professionals do care.

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Handbook for EP Carers to introduce fostering



"The Paperwork"

One thing is for sure when you start the fostering paperwork, there is a lot of it.

It can feel a little strange when you are initially presented with all the documents at the beginning of your role as an Early Permanency Fosterer.

In some Local Authorities, the documents will look the same as those used by traditional foster carers (both traditional foster carers and EP Carers).

This means that when you are signing fostering paperwork, you are providing information that is generic to all children of all ages.

The fostering service has a job to do in ensuring that the tools and knowledge needed for the role of foster carer are available to you.

By preparing you properly, you are protected and you can understand the fostering role better.

If there are any fosterers who wish to understand more detail, please contact your service for more information.

Daily Records

Whilst you are a foster carer, you will be asked to keep a record of what happens in the home. This means that you will be asked to keep a record of what happens in the home. Having these records can help you to understand what is going on in the home.



Going to Family Time

By now you will have attended your Early Permanency Training and have a good understanding of why family time is an important part of the fostering role.

We know that family time can be full of unpredictable scenarios, and you may have some questions to help better prepare.

Please do ask questions to build your confidence about family time before your start -

- The area you are travelling to
- What the building looks like and where to park
- Where do you go when you are there
- How do you sign in
- Names of family workers
- What to do in an emergency (e.g. car breakdown/illness)
- How to travel safely with a child (e.g. car seat safety)

The answers to all of these questions will not be available due to the nature of your role. However, having a list of questions to ask will help you to be ready for your first family time.

"Out The Loop"

EP carers share their struggle with "being out the loop" ... especially around -

- Details of court proceedings
- Specifics of family time
- Results of assessment work
- General day to day information about birth family circumstances

It's understandable to want to know everything. Having as much information as possible helps us all feel more in control of a situation and reduces anxiety.

Being an EP carer will mean that detailed information is not shared with you.

Care proceedings are a complex and sensitive process which requires the strictest confidentiality.

Receiving limited information from professionals is intended to make you feel excluded. It is essential to ensure everyone is protected.



Thinking about the statements below can help put things into perspective and help manage your own expectations -

- Birth families have a right to confidentiality just the same as EP carers do.
- Outcomes are not known and therefore personal information must be protected.
- EP carers are not invited to be part of the court process. Anyone outside of court have no rights to what is being said in the court room.
- Information can change at court. Sharing information that may change would cause confusion.

Sometimes less is more!
This can help EP carers focus on enjoying the day to day care of being with a child rather than fixating on a process they have no control over.



Talking Adoption
Genetics



Genetics and Adoption

Talking Adoption: Resources pack



Talking Adoption
Ongoing Contact



Ongoing Contact in Adoption

Talking Adoption
Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder



FASD and Adoption

Talking Adoption
Education and Attachment



Education and Attachment in Adoption



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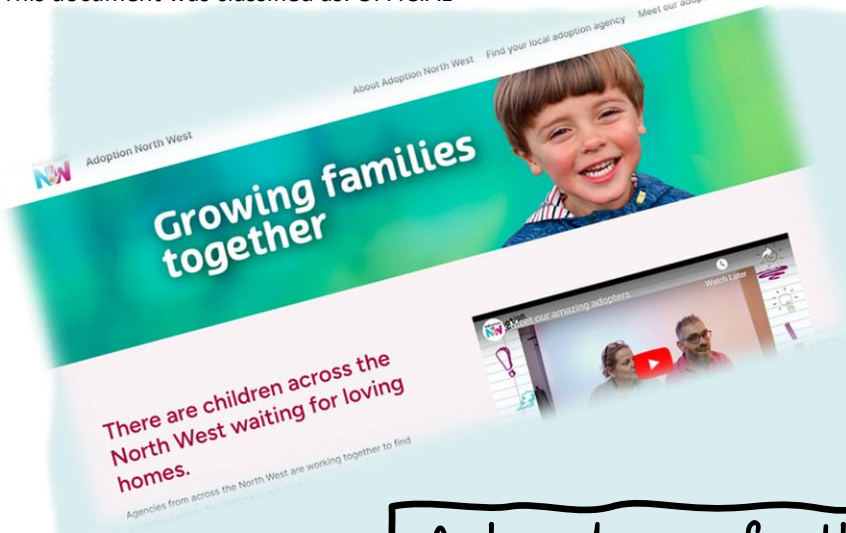


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Achieve more EP placements for older children

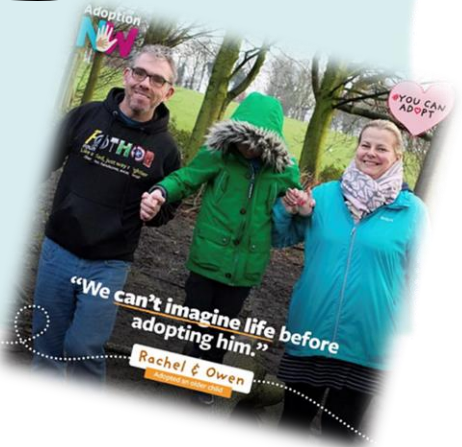
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A shared space for the marketing experts to come together and create a larger scale marketing campaign that would benefit all.

Adoption Northwest



TP Parenting Course



Northwest Therapeutic Parenting Virtual Course (2 Days)

Last Years Outcomes

43

families were referred to the NW EP Project

25

of these families were offering an FFA Placement

18

children (over 4 years) were matched to families who attended

10

children have been placed with a sibling with a family who attended

Course benefits...

- Inspiring families to consider FFA and/or older children
- Building confidence in parenting techniques
- Introducing practical tools for connection
- A helpful recap after prep training (and before match)
- Continuing learning whilst waiting
- Networking with other families across the region
- Strengthening the P.A.C.E Approach

Day 1
Friday 26th April
9:30am-4:30pm

Day 2
Friday 3rd May
9:30am-4:30pm

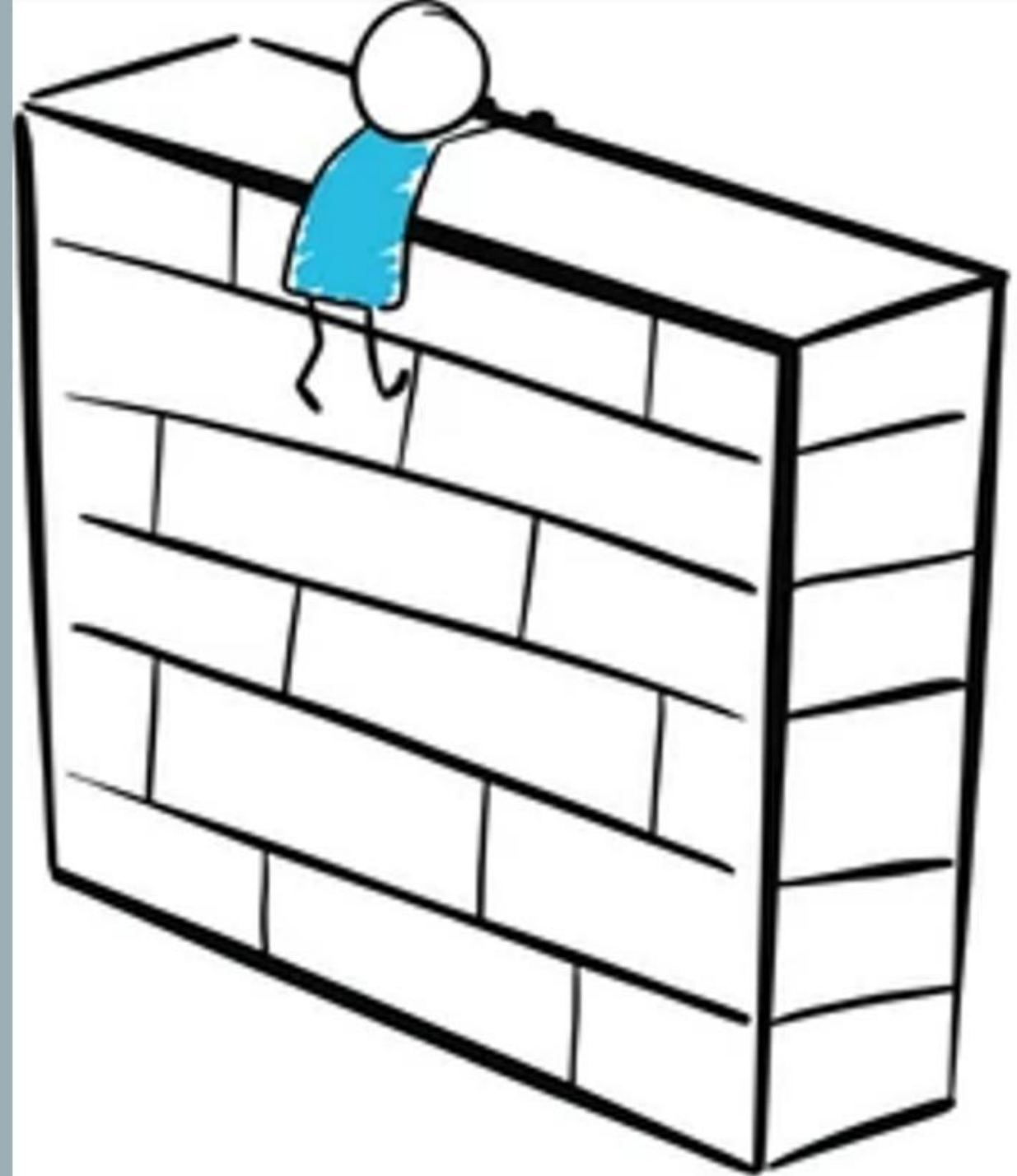
Course Content...

- What is therapeutic parenting
- Attachment strategies
- Trauma
- The needs of older children
- Importance of self-care
- P.A.C.E
- Practical tips for preparation
- Play to promote connection

To book a space...
please contact
Northwest EP Practitioner
Kayleigh Starkie
Kayleigh.starkie@adoptionnow.org.uk
07717892778



OBSTACLES



Timing

Confidentially

School


Preparation

Children
Waiting

Capacity



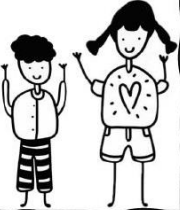
We would like your help





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Side By Side

Questions for my foster carer...



Moving from my family into a foster family



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Group Activity



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Final Thoughts



Thank you for
your time

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