



Bridging the Gap

Helping Kinship
Foster Parents
Collaborate with
Children's Parents

Bridging Relationships

Kin foster parents & caregivers with child's parents

Non-kin foster parents with child's parents

Non-kin foster parents with kin

All of the families caring for separated siblings



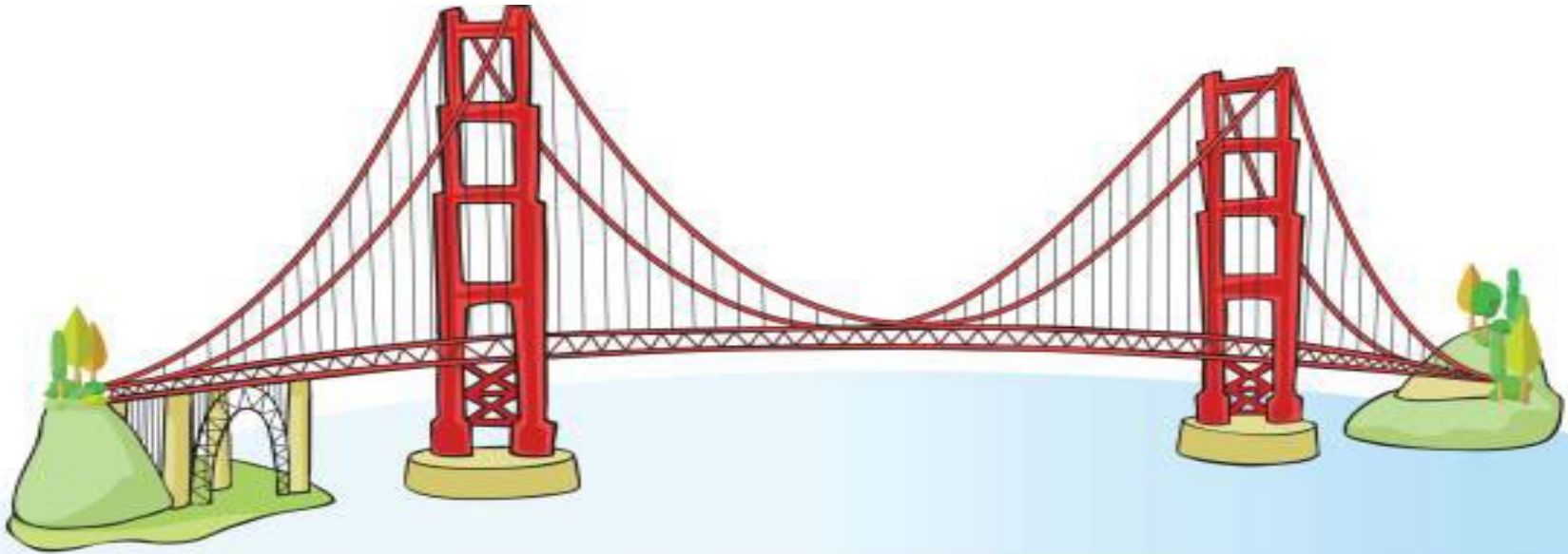
What do kinship caregivers see as helpful in partnering with parents?

From a study on kinship caregiver perspectives:

- Establishing and maintaining boundaries
- Honest and open communication
- Focus on child's best interests
- Caseworker facilitation
- Training for professionals on supporting kin family dynamics

KINSHIP CAREGIVERS

BRIDGING THE GAP OF SEPARATION BETWEEN
CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES
• A CONTINUUM OF CONTACT •



Support-----Engagement-----Involvement-----Participation

*No Personal
Contact*

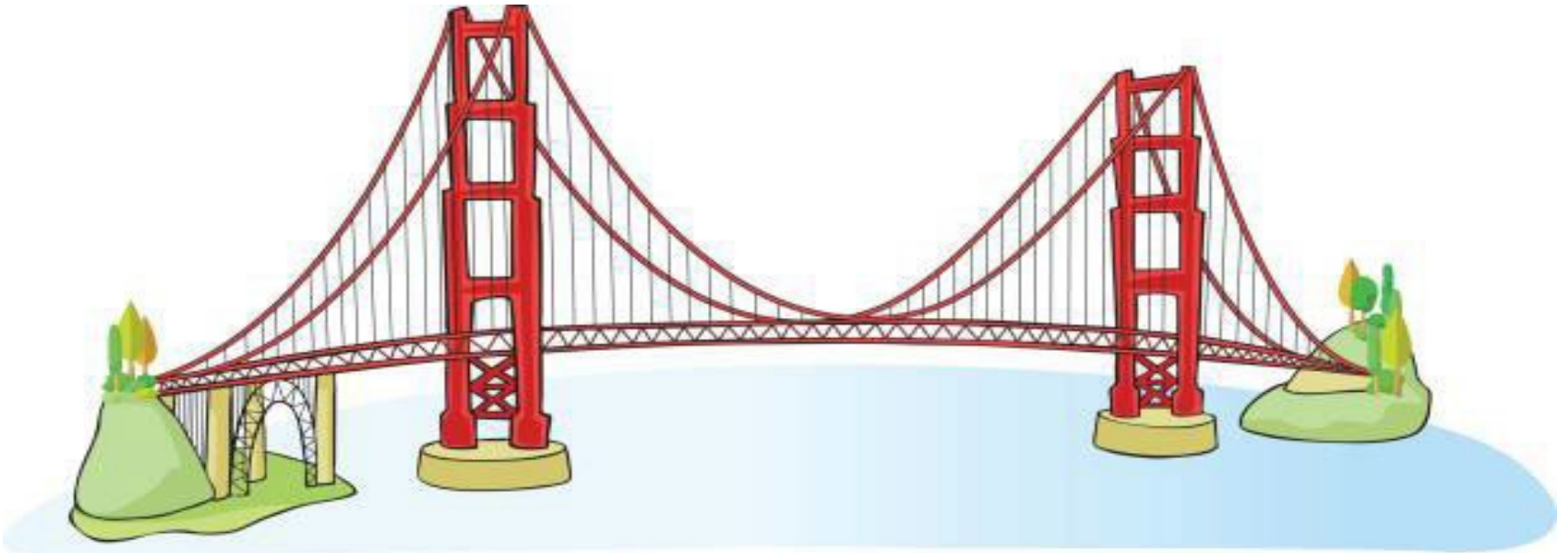
*Neutral
Territory*

*Community
Based*

*In-Home
Sharing & Caring*

KINSHIP CAREGIVERS

BRIDGING THE GAP OF SEPARATION BETWEEN CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES
• A CONTINUUM OF CONTACT •



- Send cards to BP from child
- Send pictures of child to BP
- Email school work to BP
- Share family history w/child
- Show child family/BP pictures
- Talk positively about BP to child
- Prepare child for visits
- Send updates to BP about child
- Place pictures of BP in child's room
- Text with BP--share child's progress
- Send snacks w/child to visits

- Visit in community: ie parks, church
- Invite BP to attend school functions
- Have speak on phone w/BP
- Talk with BP at family functions
- Encourage children to text BP
- Ask BP about child's routine
- Give updates about child to BP
- Transport child to visits
- Encourage BP to work on case plan
- Take children to family functions

- Visit in the BP's home
- Have phone calls w/BP
- Include BP in child's appts
- Help BP find resources
- Share parenting tips
- Support BP in their progress
- Encourage BP to take on parenting duties such as help w/homework
- Encourage BP plan birthdays

- Host visits in your home
- Invite BP to holiday meal
- Work on transition plans
- Provide respite care
- Include BP when possible
- Get BP involved in daily activities if possible

A Few Resources

- Dr. Joseph Crumbley: The Unique Dynamics of Shared/Co-Parenting in Kinship Families - Grandfamilies and Kinship Support Network (Recorded Webinar & Training Materials) <https://www.gksnetwork.org/events/co-parenting/>
- Children's Trust Fund Alliance: Birth Parent Foster Parent Partnerships (BFPP) <https://ctfalliance.org/partnering-with-parents/bfpp/#:~:text=The%20Birth%20and%20Foster%20Parent,that%20benefit%20children%20and%20families.>
- Annie E. Casey Foundation: Icebreaker Meetings Guide and Video <https://www.aecf.org/resources/icebreaker-meetings>

Bridging the Gap: Fairfax County, Virginia

- History & goals of Bridging the Gap
- Icebreaker meeting structure
- How it started: Developing the program & training for staff and foster parents
- How it's going: Bridging the Gap today
- Considerations for kin



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