

Helping a Looked After Child consider who he/she wants to live with/visit

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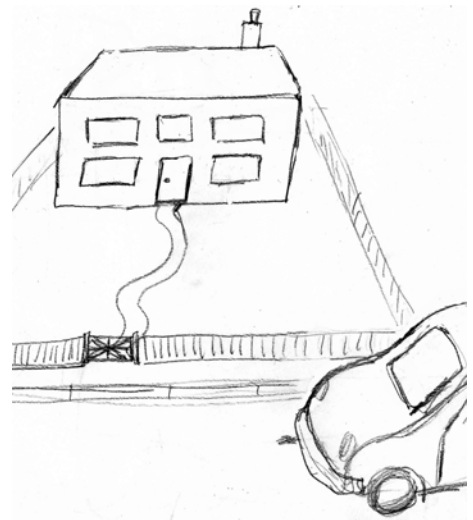
Session 1 - on a piece of flipchart paper, ask the child to think about all the people who are important to them in their lives. The hope is that this will be an extensive list of family members, foster carers and their family, teachers, neighbours, friends, pets etc.



Session 2 Emphasising to the child that this is "pretend", ask them to imagine that they have won a competition. They have won a holiday and they can take anyone on this holiday with them. Draw a picture of a "holiday island" on flip chart paper - a big sun in the top corner, a beach, palm trees, deck chairs and fun fair etc or similar. It honestly doesn't matter if the drawing is

very basic; it is the idea not the image that counts. Referring back to the list that the child had made up the previous session, ask him/her what each of the people/pets might be doing on this holiday and spend some time together drawing them swimming, on the big wheel etc. This time is useful to get to know the child better and is also completely INCLUSIVE - the child can take everyone on this holiday.

Session 3 - this time take time to explain that this is NOT pretend. Draw a picture of a house in a garden with a long garden path. Also draw the pavement outside the garden and a car going past on the road. This time say to the child that this is YOUR home and ask who would you like to stay with you in the house? Who would be walking up the garden path to visit you? Who would be standing on the pavement waving hello now and again? To explain this 'hello' concept of the pavement, explain to the child that this might be someone who he/she wouldn't see very often. Remind the child how inclusive he/she has been the previous week, so that he/she feels able to be more exclusive this time around.



At the end of the sessions you will have two pictures to consider or take to the child's meeting, an inclusive and an exclusive one. This makes it easier for the child as they have included everyone somewhere in the sessions and is less hurtful for parents and carers alike depending on who the child says that he/she wants to stay with.