Adoption:

1. PLANNING FOR SIBLINGS
   1. Siblings who cannot live with their birth families should be kept together wherever possible, including where the plan is for adoption or permanence.
   2. However, many dilemmas may arise and discussions will need to take place regarding whether to separate some siblings, and what criteria to use in making decisions.

Factors, which may make decisions difficult, will include the following:

* Large age gaps between children
* Groups large in size and with very different needs
* Children with very special needs or challenging behaviours affecting sibling relationships
* History of sexual abuse by one or more sibling towards another
* Multiple heritage backgrounds

(This list of course is not exhaustive)

* 1. Tools and resources, which can prove helpful in making decisions, include: -
* BAAF book “Together or apart-assessing brothers and sisters for permanent placement” (2001)
* Sibling Relationship checklist (in Pack A)
* Booklist available for Adoption Team

**Planning for Sibling Groups**

**Adoption Standards**

Section A sets out standards in respect of children. Standard 9 states that:

"Every effort will be made to recruit sufficient adopters from diverse backgrounds, so that each child can be found an adoptive family within the timescales……which best meets their needs, and in particular:

a) which reflects their ethnic origin, cultural background, religion and language, and

b) which allows them to live with brothers and sisters unless this will not meet their individually assessed needs. Where this is the case, a clear explanation will be given to them and recorded".

**Assessing Sibling Relationships**

* Understanding of shared and non-shared environments
* Possible impact of experiences within family of origin
* An understanding of roles and their significance in family of origin and now e.g. parenting child
* Possible impact of gender, birth order and spacing
* Assessment of risks, losses and gains e.g. safe care issues may need to be balanced against loss of attachment
* Recognition of current, short term and long term impacts
* Need to obtain assessment information from a range of sources
* Need to use some standard means of recording behaviour
* Strategies to manage or modify difficult aspects of behaviour should be used - rather than behaviour seen as fixed
* Recognition of strengths as well as any problems
* Decision making process should be clear and reasons for decision recorded

**ASSESSING SIBLING GROUPS**

**SIBLING RELATIONSHIP CHECK LIST 1**

Child A…………………………………………………….D.o.B……………………..

Child B…………………………………………………….D.o.B……………………..

**Behaviour of child A to Child B** frequency (select one)

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

A Defends or protects

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………….

B Recognise sibling distress and offers comfort

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………….

C. Accepts comfort from sibling

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

D. Teaches or helps

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

E. Initiates play

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

F. Responds to overtures to play

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

G. Openly shows affection

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

H. Misses sibling when apart

1.. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

I. Resolves conflict through age-appropriate reasoning

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………..

J. Annoys, irritates or teases

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

K. Shows hostility or aggression

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

L. Blames or attempts to get sibling into trouble

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

M. Behaviour sabotages efforts to meet other sibling's needs

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

**SIBLING RELATIONSHIP CHECK LIST 2**

Child B…………………………………………………….D.o.B……………………

Child A…………………………………………………….D.o.B……………………

**Behaviour of Child B to Child A**

frequency (select one)

A. Defends or protects

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

B. Recognises sibling's distress and offers comfort

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

C. Accepts comfort form sibling

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

D. Teaches or helps

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

E. Initiates play

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

F. Responds to overtures to play

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

G. Openly shows affection

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

H. Misses sibling when apart

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

I. Receives conflict through age-appropriate reasoning

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

J. Annoys, irritates or teases

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

K. Shows hostility or aggression

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

L. Blames or attempts to get sibling into trouble

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

examples of this behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

M. Behaviour sabotages efforts to meet other sibling's needs

examples of this behaviour

1. Often

2. Sometimes

3. Never

………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………….….

**SIBLING CHECKLIST 3**

**Interactions**

1. What evidence is there of sharing:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Examples

…………………………………………………………………………………

Boisterous play

………………………………………………………………………………….

Imaginative activities

………………………………………………………………………………….

Rituals

e.g. bed or bath time)

………………………………………………………………………………….

Jokes and fun

………………………………………………………………………………….

Secrets

………………………………………………………………………………….

Other

…………………………………………………………………………………

2. Are there marked differences between them in any of the following respects:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Examples

………………………………………………………………………………….

The roles they adopt

………………………………………………………………………………….

Activities and interests

………………………………………………………………………………….

Behaviour

………………………………………………………………………………….

Personality

………………………………………………………………………………….

Other

……………………………………………………………………………….…

3. What evidence is there of reciprocity e.g.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Examples

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Pride in each other

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Praise and criticism

………………………………………………………………………………….

Mutual help

…………………………………………………………………………………

4. Do they model on each other e.g.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Examples

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Think they look alike

………………………………………………………………………………….

Imitate each other

………………………………………………………………………………….

Emulate the qualities they like

………………………………………………………………………………….

Unite in face of problems

………………………………………………………………………………….

Other

………………………………………………………………………………….

5. Other observations on this relationship…………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………..

6. What are these siblings' own views of their relationship? (views of other siblings can also be very illuminating)

…………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………..

7. On the basis of all this evidence, sum up the positives and negatives that this relationship holds for each sibling.

…………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………..

Date check list completed: ..…………………………………………………………

In relation to fostering and all other placements the requester is referred to The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services (Chapter 3).

Relevant NMS for Residential Care.