



Community of Practice for Siblings Newsletter

Keeping the Promise to Brothers and Sisters

Upcoming Meetings

Registration for the next virtual session is open! Sign up [here](#) for the event on 1st February 2024 10am – 12 noon. This will include an input from colleagues in West Dunbartonshire on their active programme of work to nurture sibling relationships.

Publications

An Insights Briefings from the Adoption UK Getting It Right For Brothers and Sisters funded project have been published on the AFKA website: [Getting It Right For Brothers and Sisters : Association for Fostering, Kinship & Adoption Scotland \(afkascotland.org\)](#)



Key Themes from Discussions on the 5th of October 2023

Here are a few common themes that surfaced via breakout rooms:

The Data -

- ➡ Data and recording systems are not always able to reflect the true extent of family connections.
- ➡ Lack of consistency of systems and definitions makes drawing comparisons and establishing connections complex.
- ➡ There's a need for as close to real time data returns as possible.
- ➡ What is being routinely heard is also data and needs to be looked at as data to improve.

What helps keep brothers and sisters together?

- ➡ The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) was highlighted as important in keeping a focus on sibling and sibling-like connections. Their role also presents an opportunity to ensure sibling focus is standard practice.
- ➡ A consistent Social Worker for the entire family group.

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What hinders keeping brothers and sisters together?

- ➔ Perceptions around risk, especially as siblings get older. The need to take a more trauma informed view, and shift towards a life-long relationships perspective was identified.
- ➔ Identified the issue of the lack of carers able to support sibling groups, especially as groups grow.
- ➔ Resourcing challenges, around a stable, well supported workforce consistently emerge.

“Since becoming part of the group in Autumn this year, I have felt that the community of practice is a massively welcoming and powerful space. The breadth of perspectives; quality of discussion; and commitment to delivery on the promise Scotland made is incredible. Connecting with colleagues across Scotland has been invaluable and I look forward to the group growing and developing over the next year.”

➔ Claire Burns, The Promise Scotland

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Key Challenges and Opportunities

- ➔ Maintaining connections post-adoption
 - Building this into information sessions, training and support for adopters.
- ➔ Opportunity for the Care Inspectorate to influence work.
- ➔ Multi agency perspectives
 - Building this into training and development pathways.

Developments from the Discussions

The Promise Scotland were generously invited to attend the Independent Reviewing Officer Conference on 7th November 2023. It was a great opportunity to hear from colleagues at CELCIS and STAR, and collaborate with IROs across the country.

The Care Inspectorate are now part of the Community of Practice Planning Group, with Aileen Nicol attending and providing invaluable perspective on the group and work.

