**SIBLING ASSESSMENT OF [NAMES OF CHILDREN]**

1. **Identity:**

*[Identity and qualifications of the author.]*

1.1.

1.2.

1. **Purpose of Statement:**

*[For example: ‘This Statement represents a Sibling Assessment of Child A and Child B with the purpose of informing the Local Authority’s permanency planning for them. The Sibling Assessment considers whether their needs would be best met together or apart in the future. Child A and Child B are currently placed in the same foster placement.’]*

2.1.

2.2.

2.3.

1. **Legal and Theoretical Framework**

*[Explain what the Law says about whether or not siblings should be separated and under what circumstances. You may want to refer to The Children Act 1989, Human Rights Act, 1998 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Be clear about the Local Authority’s duty to place siblings together unless their individual needs are such that they would fare better apart.]*

3.1.

3.2.

3.3.

1. **Summary of the background to this assessment:**

*[To include the circumstances as to why the children are in care proceedings and any complications that have arisen since this time that indicate this assessment was necessary]*

4.1.

4.2.

4.3.

**5. Sibling Assessment Plan: The methodology.**

*[How did you carry out your assessment, how did you gather the information –*

*e.g.visits, direct work, telephone calls, reading files etc]*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 5.1. |  |
| 5.2. |  |

**6. Sources of information:**

*[Who did you involve in the assessment? What files did you read? What research did*

*you read? What observations did you do? When and how was this obtained?]*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Source | Method [e.g. observation, telephone call, reading, visit] | Date Obtained |
| 6.1. |  |  |  |
| 6.2. |  |  |  |

1. **Findings of information gathered:**

*[List here the findings from all the observations, visits and conversations with all who participated in the assessment, including the findings from the research you have read.]*

7.1.

7.2.

7.3.

1. **Analysis:**

*[Debate and conclude your findings, looking at all possible outcomes and how they would impact on the children now and in the future.*

NOTES: SOME HELPFUL GUIDANCE - *Some research suggests that if siblings have shared traumatic experiences, their mutual attachment may help them to manage the trauma of separation from their parents (Dunn and Kendrick 1982, Silverstone, 2006). Dunn and Kendrick found that in some types of adversity, such as maternal depression, sibling relationships often improve as they turn to each other for the attention and comfort their mother is unable to give them.*

*However, the picture is complex and other researchers (Schofield and Beek, 2006) link poor attachment relationships with parents as building up the child’s defences and ‘harmful ways of being’ which can then lead to sibling relationship being characterised by extreme rivalry and jealousy, exploitation or scapegoating, conflict and in some cases such behaviours as amount to re-traumatising of each other.*

*Ref. Wakelyn, Jennifer (2007) Entagled Bonds, psychodynamic assessments of sibling relationships for the family courts . In: Re-rooted Lives. Interdisciplinary work within the family justice system. Jordan, Bristol, pp.49-56.*

*Family Futures talk about a hierarchy of needs, which is:*

1. *The primary need a child has is for a secure attachment relationship with a permanent care giver.*
2. *The secondary need is to be placed with siblings unless the sibling relationship has not been severely pathologised\* by their previous care and birth family experiences.*
3. *The third need is to maintain meaningful and facilitated contact with separated siblings (influenced by the child’s views and wishes).*

*\*Research is beginning to tell us that children who have suffered neglect and trauma develop maladaptive neurological pathways which are resistant to change. For ‘remedial rewiring’ to occur, children need to experience intensive developmental re-parenting, which, in many cases, means experiencing being a ‘safe baby’.*

*Ref.* [*www.familyfutures.co.uk*](http://www.familyfutures.co.uk) *]*

8.1.

8.2.

8.3.

1. **Recommendations:**

*[Make a clear recommendation, based on your analysis above. If recommending separation, suggest future contact arrangements. If suggesting stay together, suggest what support may be needed. Also mention any preparation the children may need to separate/come together]*

9.1.

9.2.

9.3.

Signed ……………………………………………………………..

Date ……………………………………………………….