



# Children Always First

## Our DDP Journey

September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017

# Children Always First

I love my mum and dad for what they do for me and loving me. I am doing really well at school and I am nearly always on silver and gold in class. They are lovely and caring and supply me with things I need.

I really like the Agency as it has a nice family feel to it. The Agency is a lot better than the last Agency mom and dad worked for.

I have met the directors, I think they are really cool because they come on the activities.

I love living here with mum and dad as they are literally like our real parents because of how supportive they are. Especially by how they accept me being transgender and the slight difficulties that have come along with it.

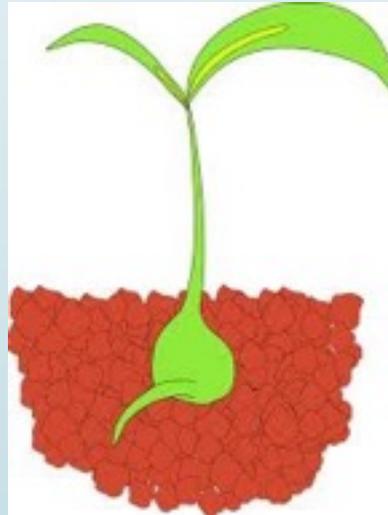
They support me emotionally and physically

# Planting the seeds 2012/13

Jan Blazak + Julie Elliott = CAF!

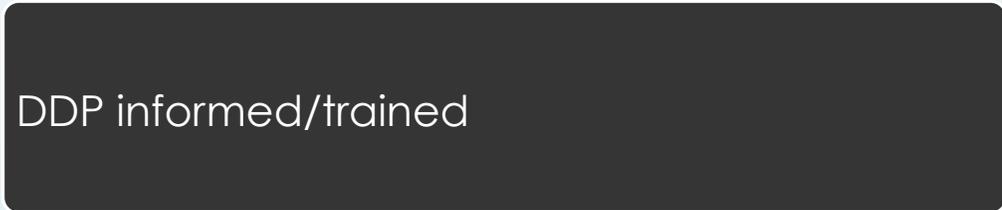
Why 'Children Always First'?

Why therapeutic approaches?

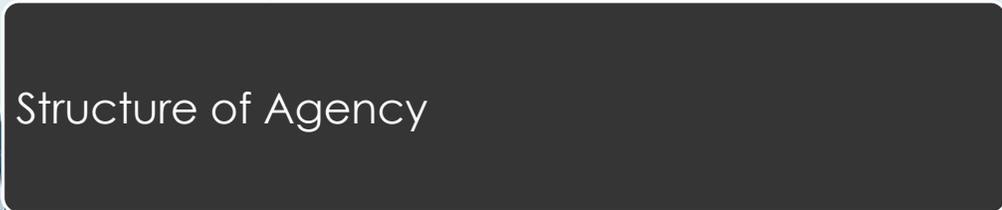




# Our Golden Thread - management



DDP informed/trained



Structure of Agency

# 'Management'

DDP level 1 trained

Regular meetings with Kim

Modelling PACE in the team

Live DDP action plan /Review the plan involving the team

Team away days

Celebrate awards and practice

Involve foster carers in the direction of the agency

Transparent communication (minutes of meetings/forums/newsletters)

Weekly Case Management meetings

We love the small family feel to the organisation. We know the Directors of the company personally and have been welcomed into this family with open arms.



# Our Golden Thread - the team

Recruitment

Support and Training

# The CAF Team

## Recruitment

Website

Advert

Interview process

## Support

Monthly supervision (DDP 2 trained supervisor)

Clinical one to one

Monthly Clinical Group supervision

Monthly Team meeting/catch ups

Attendance at Jigsaws



From the top to the bottom, every member of staff is highly efficient, professional, warm and welcoming, a true testament to the ethos of the company.

# Training...

## Training

Training plan for each member of staff

Minimum 5 days/year

Core training- Safeguarding & CP refresh/Data Protection

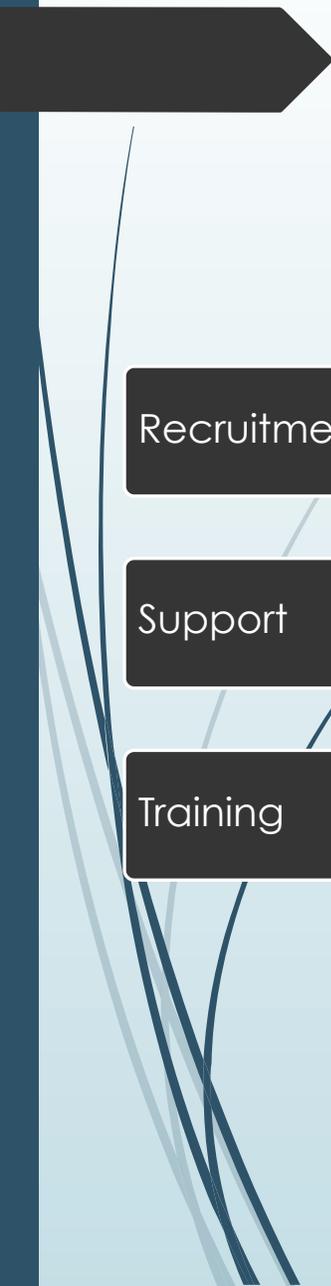
DDP 1 & 2 basic minimum + DDP refresh x 2 per year

Specialisms and interests (social pedagogy/CWD/UASC/CSE/preparing of independence)

Quarterly Practice meetings (themes; managing disclosures, radicalisation)

Specialist commissioned training (sexual abuse)

Annual seminar (transgender/health and well-being of LAC)



# Our golden thread - foster carers

Recruitment & Assessment

Support

Training

# Recruitment and Assessment

- Initial Enquiry phase
- Registered Manager initial visit
- Second opinion
- Pre-panel training
- Rigorous assessment process
- Quality assurance
- Robust panel
- Effective use of Stage 1 process!!



# Support

Induction

DDP informed Supervision

Home visits/Telephone support

Additional support plans

Unannounced visits

24/7 support

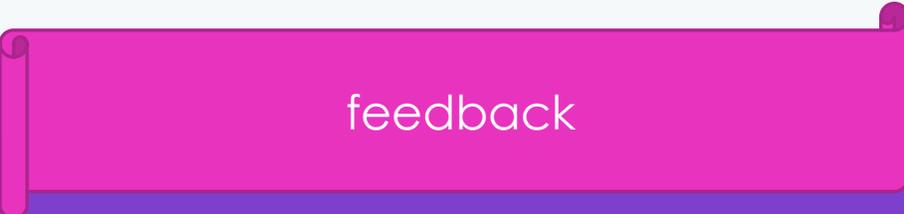
Youth support worker role

Independent advocate role

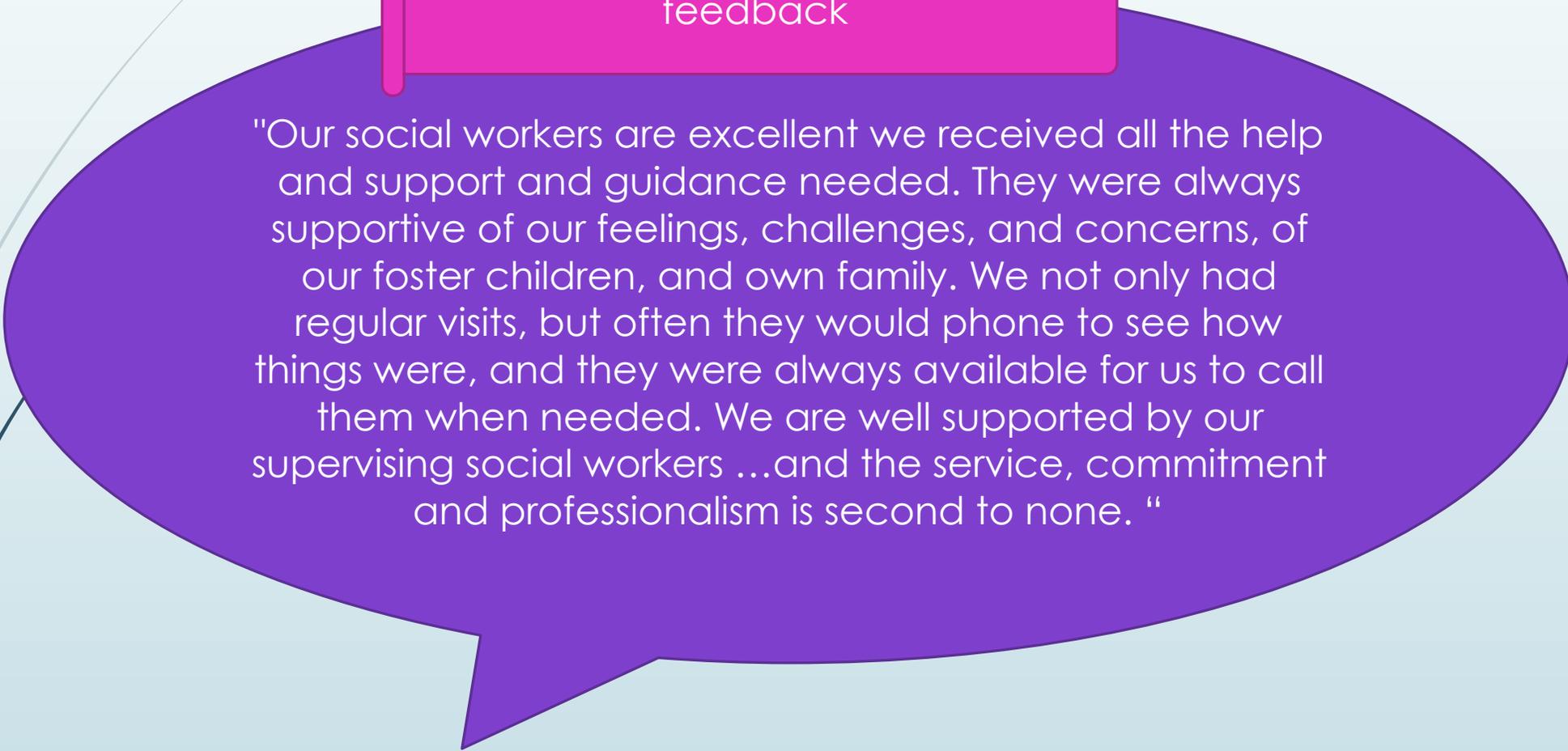
Management hands on....

Training & support provided is second to none and we always feel well equipped to deal with all situations because we receive such in depth training. We always know there is someone at the end of the phone if we need to help or advice...each social worker knows exactly who our boys are.

We have been given so much support by CAF any big serious questions and issues and Jan (Director) has been on the phone offering support immediately offering reassurance and acting swiftly on issues.



## feedback



"Our social workers are excellent we received all the help and support and guidance needed. They were always supportive of our feelings, challenges, and concerns, of our foster children, and own family. We not only had regular visits, but often they would phone to see how things were, and they were always available for us to call them when needed. We are well supported by our supervising social workers ...and the service, commitment and professionalism is second to none. "



## What others say...

“I recently had a discussion with my line manager about the quality of service we get from fostering agencies in general, and I cited Children Always First as an excellent example in terms of quality of service and value for money - I do think you guys are probably the best agency I've ever worked with.” (Staffs LASW 2016)

“S&D have helped ME to settle in and have been very responsive to his needs. It is evident that S has attended attachment training and that he has applied this learning to his interactions with ME. I have never seen ME looking as relaxed and comfortable as he does with S&D.” (Solihull LA 2015)

“The local authority are very pleased with the progress that TSR is making with A&T. The independent reviewing officer commented that the level of support from the Agency was ‘second to none’.” (IRO comment 2016)

# Training

## DDP 'Golden Thread'

Pre-panel

Mandatory and additional training

Specialist training

- Foundations for Attachment (3 days)
- Nurturing Attachments (18 weeks)
- DDP advanced Support Groups
- DDP level 1 (4 days)

Additional bespoke training packages

"Through the assessment process and up till now CAF has delivered on their promise. The training is excellent and ongoing. It is evident that the children are at the heart of the agency."

# Bonita Fradd



"We found her training style really easy to understand and she was very approachable and gave us a lot of advice. We have both discussed how relevant the attachment training and her advice was and are putting it into practice".



We are proud to be a part of Children Always First. ...what makes CAF so much different from other agencies is the family atmosphere...there is that family touch that expresses real love and care, the type of expression seen in a family. CAF has an excellent training programme that ensures that all carers are fully equipped for the demands of looking after children in care. I believe at the heart of the training provided by CAF is the attachment course; they have given us a greater understanding of our children...

# Support for children and young people

## Ingredients of our Dyadic Developmental Parenting environment

Listen & accept unconditionally

Attitude of PACE

Social Pedagogy

Connection with correction

Relationship-based play

Understanding and supporting behaviours

Belonging to CAF family

# Support to children and young people

Youth support-social pedagogy (DDP trained)

Support in school/to schools

Individual one to one

Mentoring/befriending

Group work- Have Your Say

Social activities programme



# How do our children do?

Children feel safer and secure

Education

- Attendance
- Attainment

Few unplanned endings

Successful transitions

No S47s in 4 ½ years

No formal complaints (from FCs/children)



# Agency Achievements

## 2013-2017

- 0 to 50 foster carer households by end of year
- 0-75+ children
- 0-17 staff team

2014 runner up Worcestershire ethical trading business

2015 Worcestershire ethical business of the year

2016/17 Birmingham social value charter

2017 First in UK to be certified DDP organisation!





## Feedback

"It has been an absolute pleasure to look after the three girls and to see them grow, not just in height, but in confidence, personality and be able to adapt to what was about to happen to them and then be able to move onto their forever homes (fingers crossed). CAF's help with all of this has been paramount in the training we have received from pre panel through to now, the advice we receive and the support. So as I take down their photos off the wall in the dining room and think about the things that we have done with them I know that as a team we have all changed their lives! They have affected our lives as much as hopefully we have effected theirs. They will always be our first foster daughters and will always make me smile, so thank you for having the confidence in us to take us on your journey as CAF." (Foster carer 2015)

# Learning and reflections

Total is sum of its constituent parts!

Fostering is a roller coaster...

DDP must be the golden thread

There will be carer and staff casualties!

LA curve balls (commissioning/referrals/poaching)

Keep the faith 🙏 'trust the process'!

And

Have fun..... 😊

# The Journey continues...

Consolidation of existing practices/ working towards continued certification

Evidence based Improvement and Developments

- DDP informed therapeutic life story work
- DDP practicum - therapist in agency
- DDP therapy for children and families
- International social pedagogy projects
- Organisational mentoring

External support and training to LAs and schools



# The journey continues...



And last but not least...Thank you!

