

WELCOME!

This event will start shortly. In the meantime,
visit us at OhioFamiliesEngage.osu.edu

Ohio Family Engagement
— LEADERSHIP SUMMIT —

Family Engagement

BYDESIGN

How Schools and Families Can Promote Academic Success in Adopted Children

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Why did I become interested in this topic?



Status of Adoptions

- 391,000 children in foster care system on any given day
 - 53% reunited with families/relatives
 - 25% adopted
- 2021: 53,000 adoptions
 - 55% by foster parents
 - 34% by a relative
- Who adopts?
 - 68% married couples
 - 25% single females
 - 3% single males
 - 4% unmarried couples
- Average age of adoption: 6 years
- 93% of adoptive families rely on adoption subsidies/post-adoption services to meet children's needs
- 9% in foster care system aged out without the emotional/financial support to succeed in life

Academic Challenges for Adopted Youth (AY)

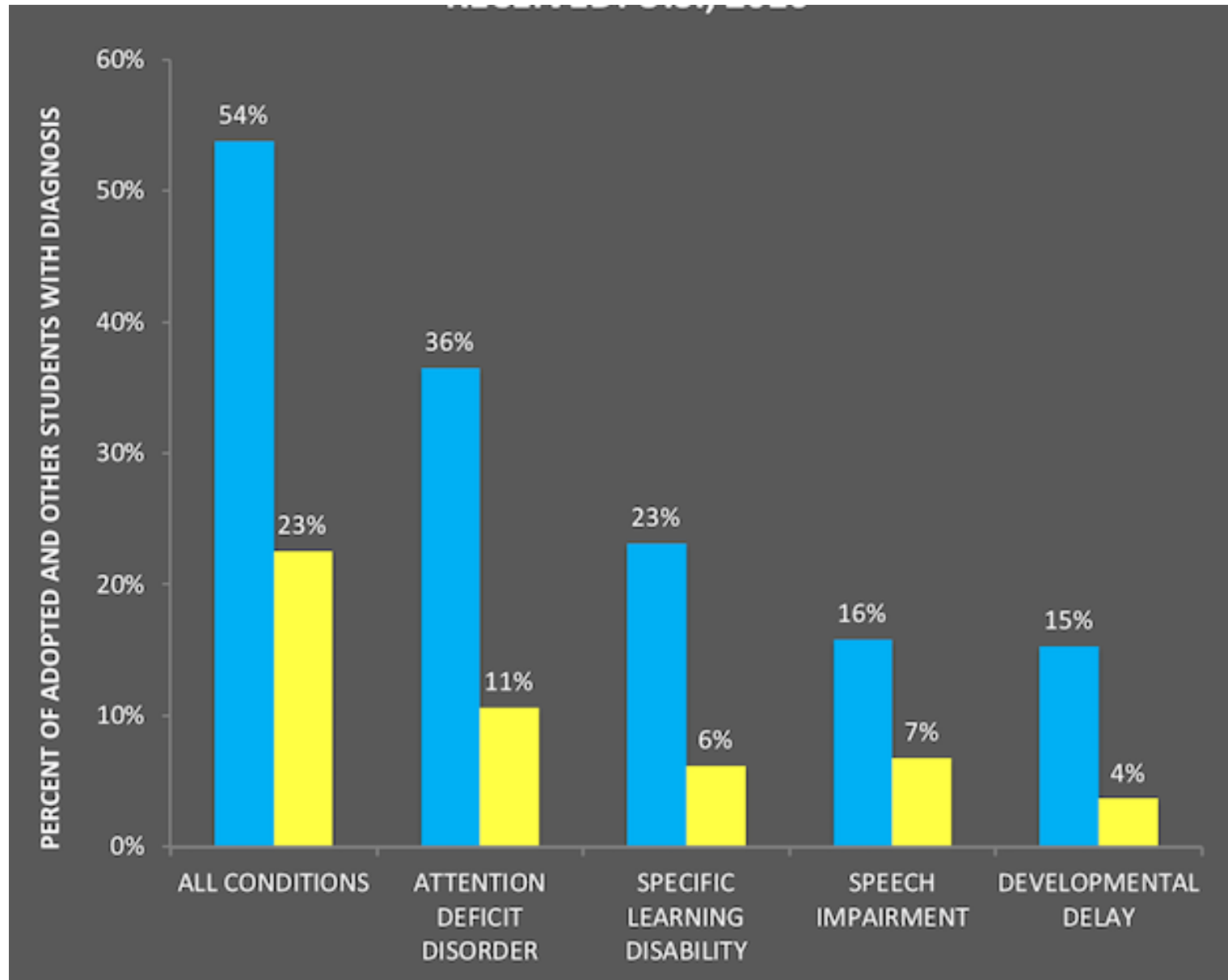
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- Experience greater academic difficulties
 - But limited evidence for differences in IQ/achievement in some studies
 - Twice as likely to have parents contacted by school personnel about schoolwork
 - Three times as likely to have parents contacted by school about behavior
 - Four times more likely to repeat a grade
 - Achievement lower when adoption occurs after the age of 1
 - Three times more likely to be suspended/expelled
 - International adoptees (IAY) not adopted until school age – impaired intelligence, attention span, reading/language

Why do AY Experience Difficulties in School?

- Trauma of Separation
- Pre-Adoption Trauma
- Prenatal exposure to drugs/alcohol
- Time of adoption
- Language exposure
- Early nutrition

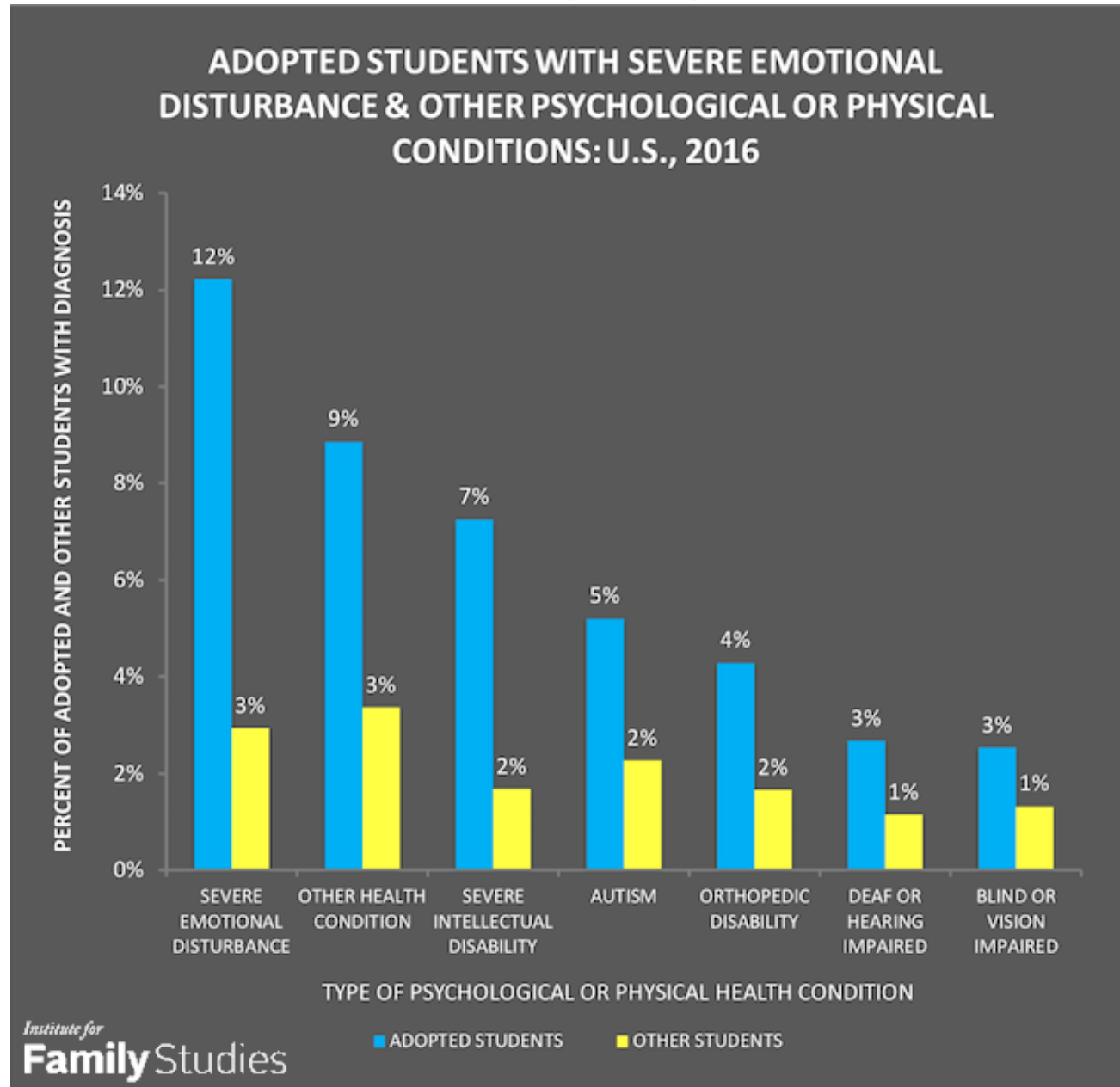
- 54% of parents report health problems in AY that affect
 - Ability to learn
 - Ability to get along with other children
 - Ability to engage in physical activities

Psychological/Physical Health Conditions by Adoption Status



Source: <https://ifstudies.org/blog/the-adoptive-difference-new-evidence-on-how-adopted-children-perform-in-school>

Severe Conditions by Adoption Status



Source: <https://ifstudies.org/blog/the-adoptive-difference-new-evidence-on-how-adopted-children-perform-in-school>

Why do AY Experience Difficulties in School?

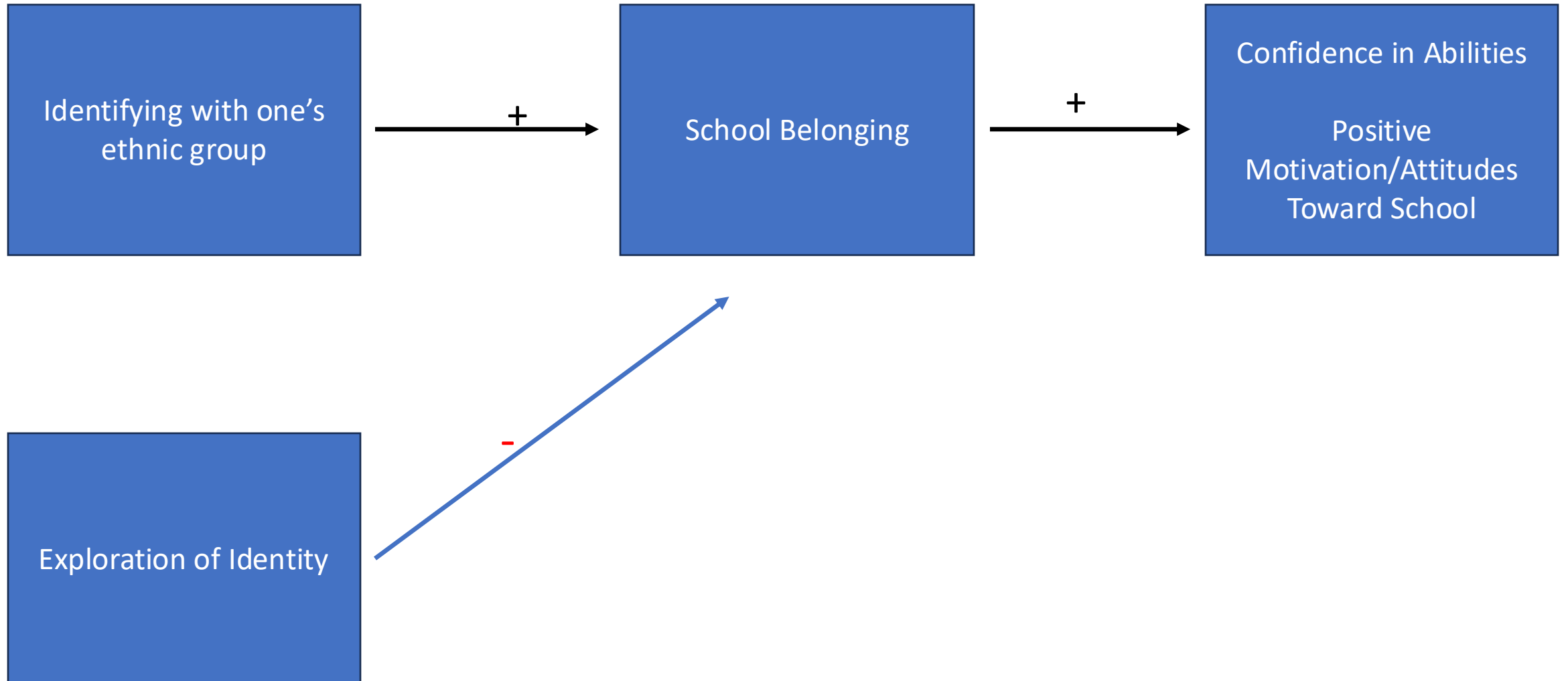
- Problems with identity development – Who am I?
- Identity in Adopted Children
 - *Why was I given up by my birth parents?*
 - *Who were my birth parents, and what is their story?*
 - *Do I have any biological siblings?*
 - *Race/Ethnicity – different from adopted parents/siblings?*

Motivation in Adopted Adolescents

- Limited research on this topic – almost nothing!
- AY find math to be less interesting than non-adopted youth
- IAY like math and science less, and have lower confidence in their abilities in math, than do either domestically or non-adopted youth

Anderman et al., 2018, 2021; Koenka et al., 2020;

Motivation in IAY



But please keep in mind that many adopted children do very well in school!

How can parents and teachers support academic success in adopted youth?

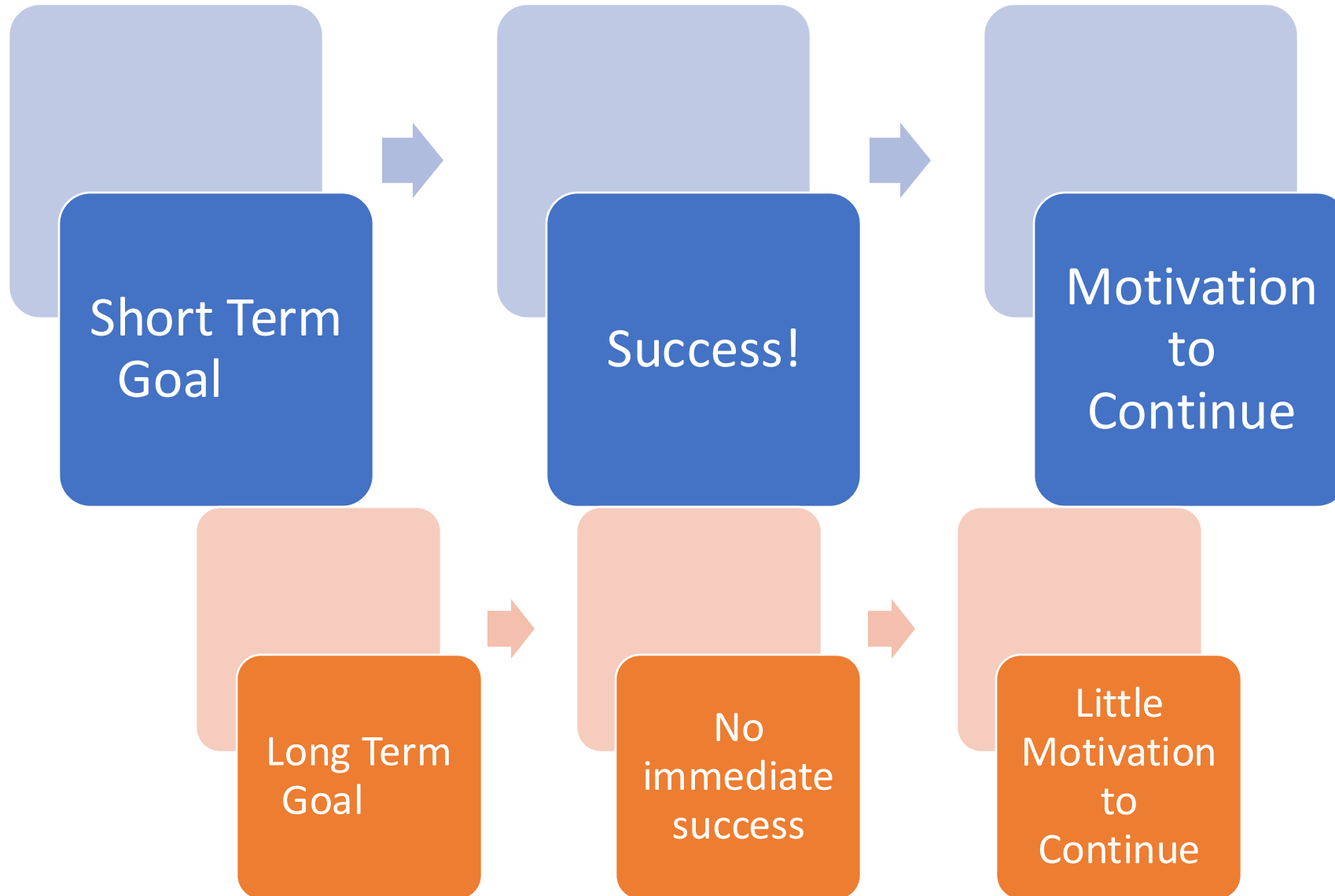
- Communicate with teachers/school staff
 - Build positive relationships early and consistently
- Early Intervention
- Promote Belonging
 - School
 - Family
- Self-Regulation (Study Skills)
- Request support services/assessments
- Be aware of adopted youth's "multiple identities"
- Help youth set short-term goals

Consider the following word choices–

Use:	Instead of:
<i>Birth</i> or <i>first</i> mother, father, family	<i>Real</i> or <i>natural</i> mother, father, family
We could not have a child <i>born</i> to us.	We could not have <i>our</i> own child.
They were not able to take care of a <i>child</i> (or <i>any child</i>) at that time.	Your birth parents were not able to take care of <i>you</i> .
<i>Intercountry</i> adoption	<i>Foreign</i> adoption
Your birth family (or the judge) <i>made a plan</i> for you to be adopted.	They <i>gave you up</i> for adoption.

Source: [https://health.uconn.edu > uploads > sites > 2016/07](https://health.uconn.edu/uploads/sites/2016/07)

Specific Strategies: Goal Setting



How can we help a child set short term goals and experience success in these situations?

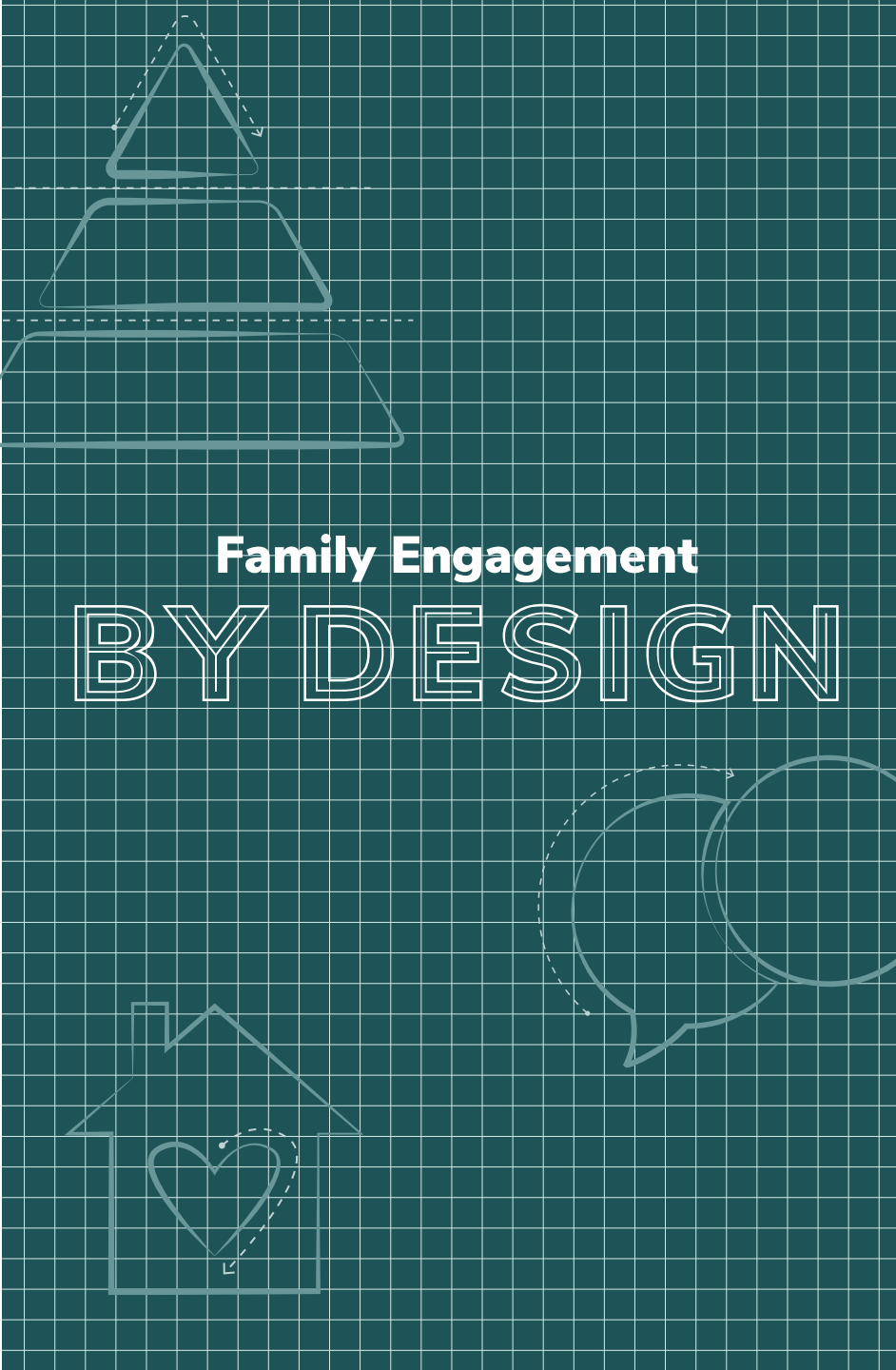
- Learning how to count to 20 and do simple math problems in Spanish
- Learning how to play a short song on the violin (beginning violinist)
- Learning how to add fractions
- Learning how to solve simple algebra problems

$$2x + 8 = 18$$

Questions?

Thank
you!

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THANK YOU FOR WATCHING!

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