GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP SUPPORT NETWORK
A National Technical Assistance Center

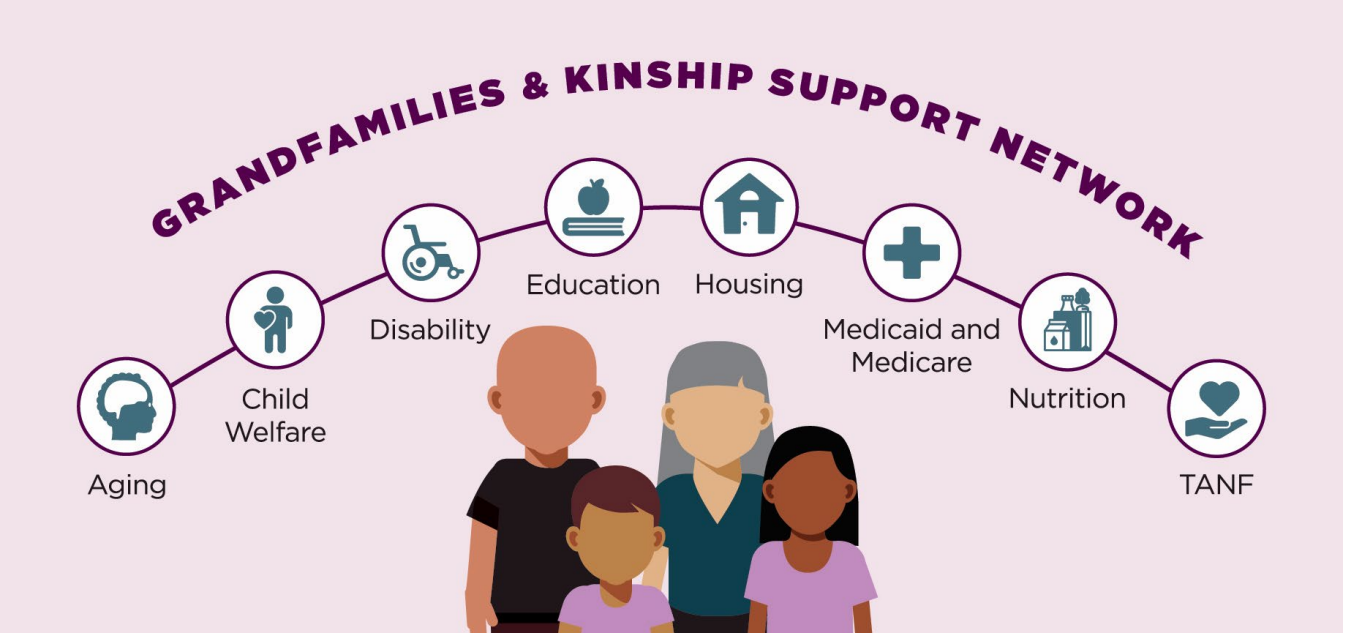
Data-Driven Insights on Kin Placements & Kin Stability

September 29, 2025

- Welcome, we will begin at the top of the hour
- Please type in the **chat** box - your name, state, tribe (if applicable), and role
- Type questions in the **chat** box at any point during our time together. We will address our questions during our 30-minute Q&A session.
- **We will provide a separate meeting link in the chat for a 30-minute Q&A with our presenters, Noah Duncan and Jack Tait, starting in an hour, at 3 PM ET**
- By the end of the week, all participants will receive a link to the slides and the recording

generations united
Because we're stronger together®

- Since 2021, Generations United, in cooperation with the U.S. Administration for Community Living, has operated the first-ever federally funded technical assistance center on kinship/grandfamilies
- Purpose is to provide technical assistance to the array of state, territorial, and tribal government agencies and organizations so they can better serve the families by working across systems and maximizing resources



How We Help

Learning Collaboratives and Information Dissemination

The Network hosts webinars and facilitates learning collaboratives.

Individual Assistance

We respond to individual requests for help from government agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Bridging Systems for Kinship Families

The Network is helping Idaho, San Diego County, and Oneida Nation of Wisconsin optimize their collaborative approaches and improve their services. Solutions will be replicable for others.

A Centralized Hub

The Network is elevating exemplary kinship/grandfamily practices and programs from around the country on its new accessible website, www.GKSNetwork.org.

Welcome Our Presenters

Noah Duncan, Executive Director,
Foster Insights, University of Chicago

Jack Tait, Data Scientist,
Foster Insights, University of Chicago

Learnings from kin placement data and shifting kin success metrics

Foster Insights
University of Chicago

2025

Experienced with Foster Care Data
We have spent four years helping child welfare agencies use data to drive better outcomes

Based at the University of Chicago
Our work is informed by data and research, and we have access to world-leading experts

Centered on the Child's Experience
We root our analysis in a ground truth: where the child is placed when they are in care

Focused on Real-World Outcomes
We measure success by impact, not by whether our work gets published in an academic journal

Who we are:

Foster Insights is a nonprofit dedicated to using data to improve child welfare

Using state administrative data, we ask very simple questions

1

Are children with relatives or other kin?

2

If not...

a

Are they in a family-like setting?

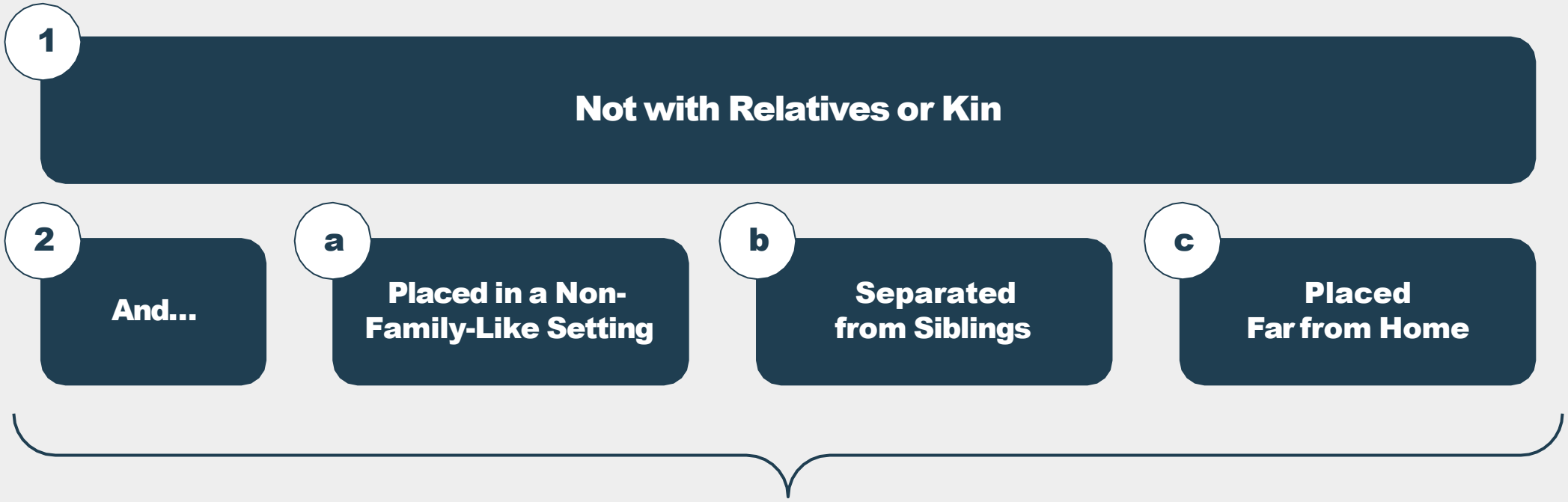
b

Are they with their siblings?

c

Are they near their community?

And create a simple metric to target support where gaps exist



Adverse Placement Score (APS) tracks the percent of children who were not with kin or family and were instead in at least one of the above adverse placements.

The goal of lowering APS aligns strategy with desired outcomes

APS = % of children in adverse placements

APS can be reduced by **increasing placement with kin** *or*
placement in foster homes with siblings, close to home

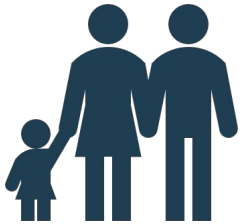
Leave reflections in the chat…

What assumptions do you have about kin placement?

As we dive deeper into this work, we uncover more benefits of kin

Stability

- Much **less likely to disrupt** compared to foster homes
- Better for child *and* worker



Connection

- Often (but not always) **closer** to child's community of origin
- More likely to take **all siblings**

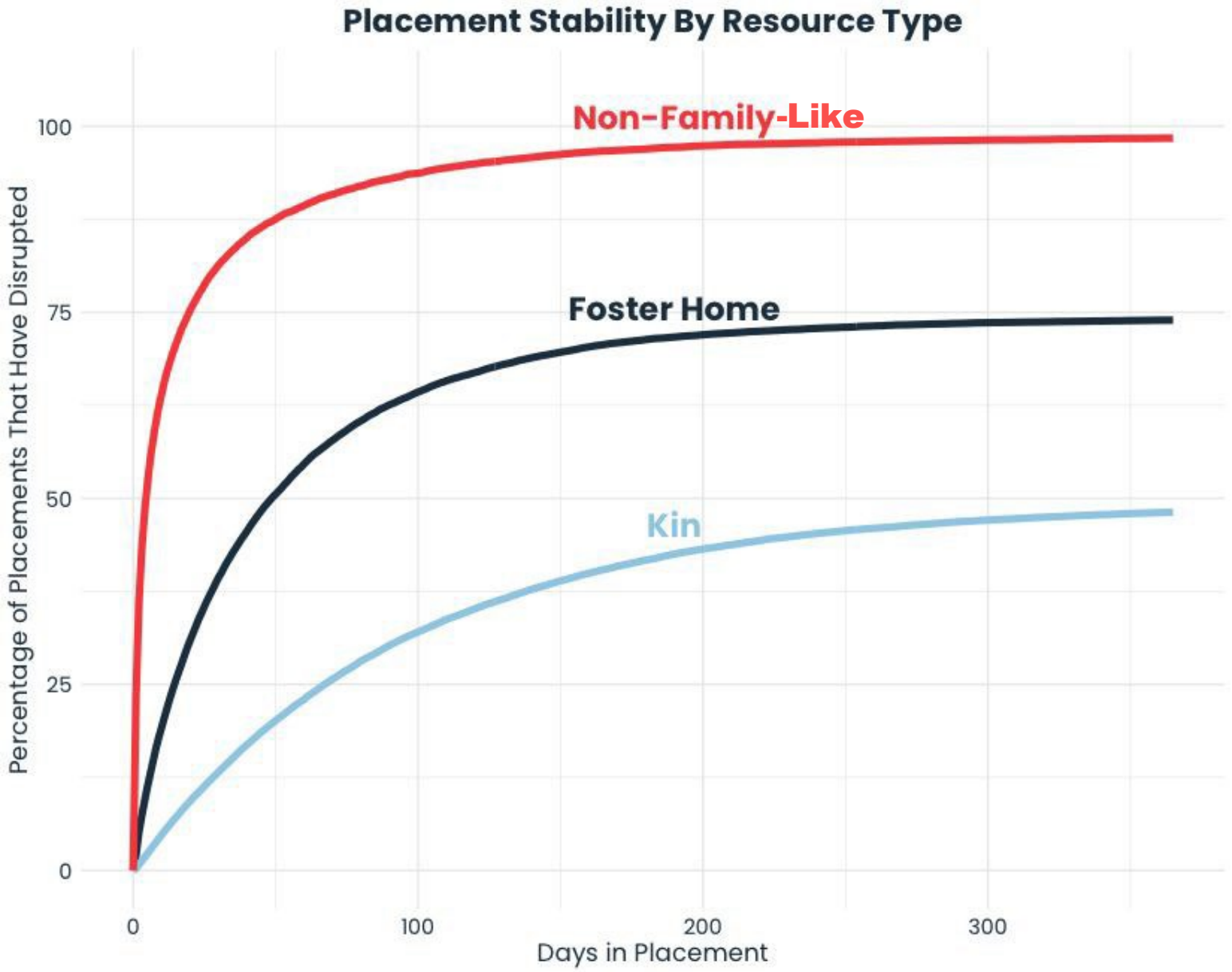
Capacity

- Every kin placement **saves a foster home** for children with fewer kin connections

Kin placements are more stable

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

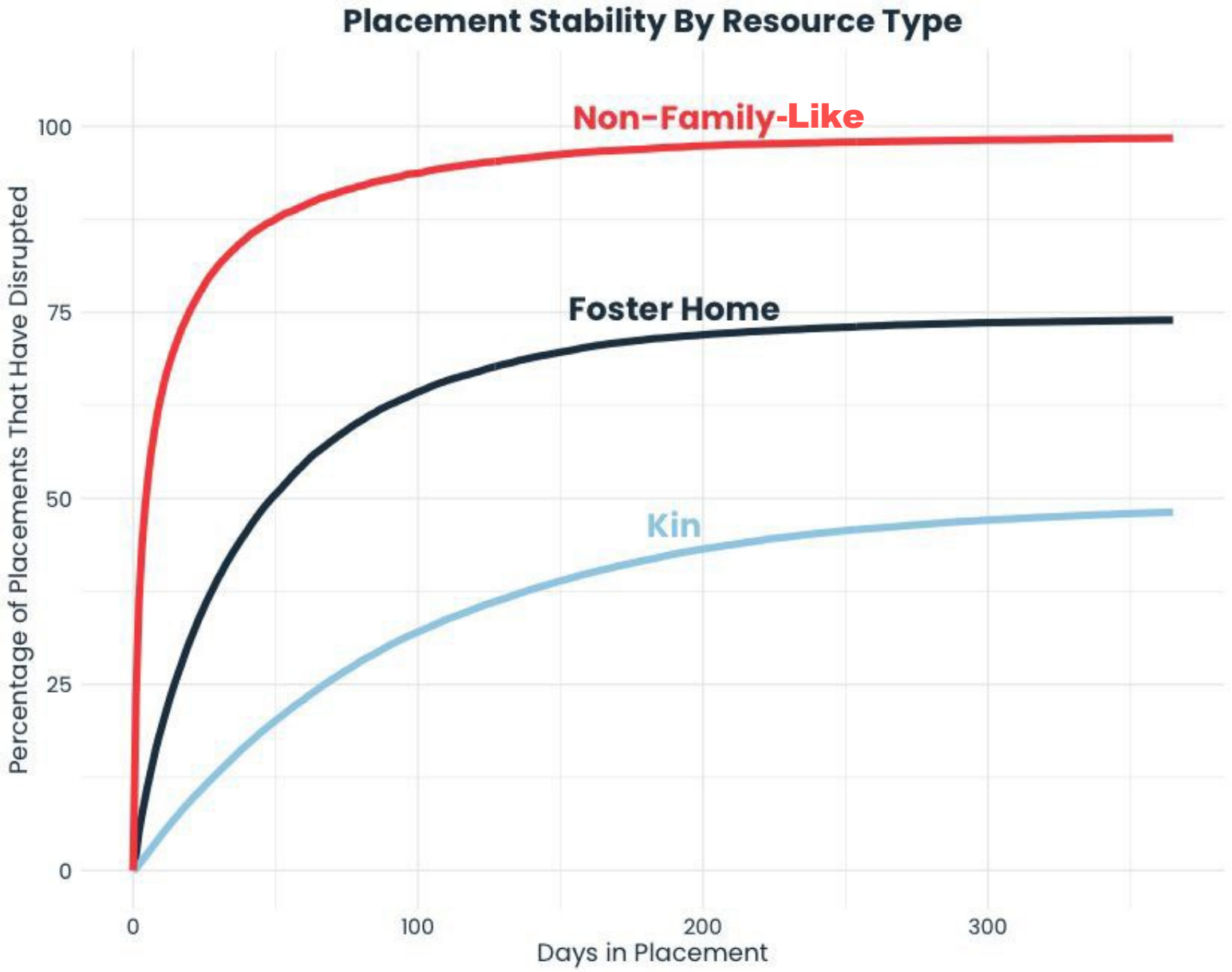
In **every state** that we've worked with, **kin placements are less likely to disrupt** than other settings



* Non-Family-Like placements include institutional settings (group homes, crisis centers, detention, hospital) and AWOL

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Kin placements not only reduce disruption for children but also **reduce workload for placement teams**



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Kin placements support connection

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Larger sibling groups tend to be placed with kin most frequently

Sibling Group Size	% Days Spent with Kin
No Siblings	50%
2 Siblings	53%
3 Siblings	55%
4 Siblings	70%
5+ Siblings	65%

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Is kin-finding more challenging for individual children?

Sibling Group Size	% Days Spent with Kin
No Siblings	50%
2 Siblings	53%
3 Siblings	55%
4 Siblings	70%
5+ Siblings	65%

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Children placed with kin tend to be closer to their removal address

Placement Type	Median Drive Time To Removal Address
Kin	25 Min
Foster Home	40 Min
Non-Family-Like	110 Min

* Non-Family-Like placements include institutional settings (group homes, crisis centers, detention, hospital) and AWOL

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

More localized kin placements benefit children and workforce

Placement Type	Median Drive Time To Removal Address
Kin	25 Min
Foster Home	40 Min
Non-Family-Like	110 Min

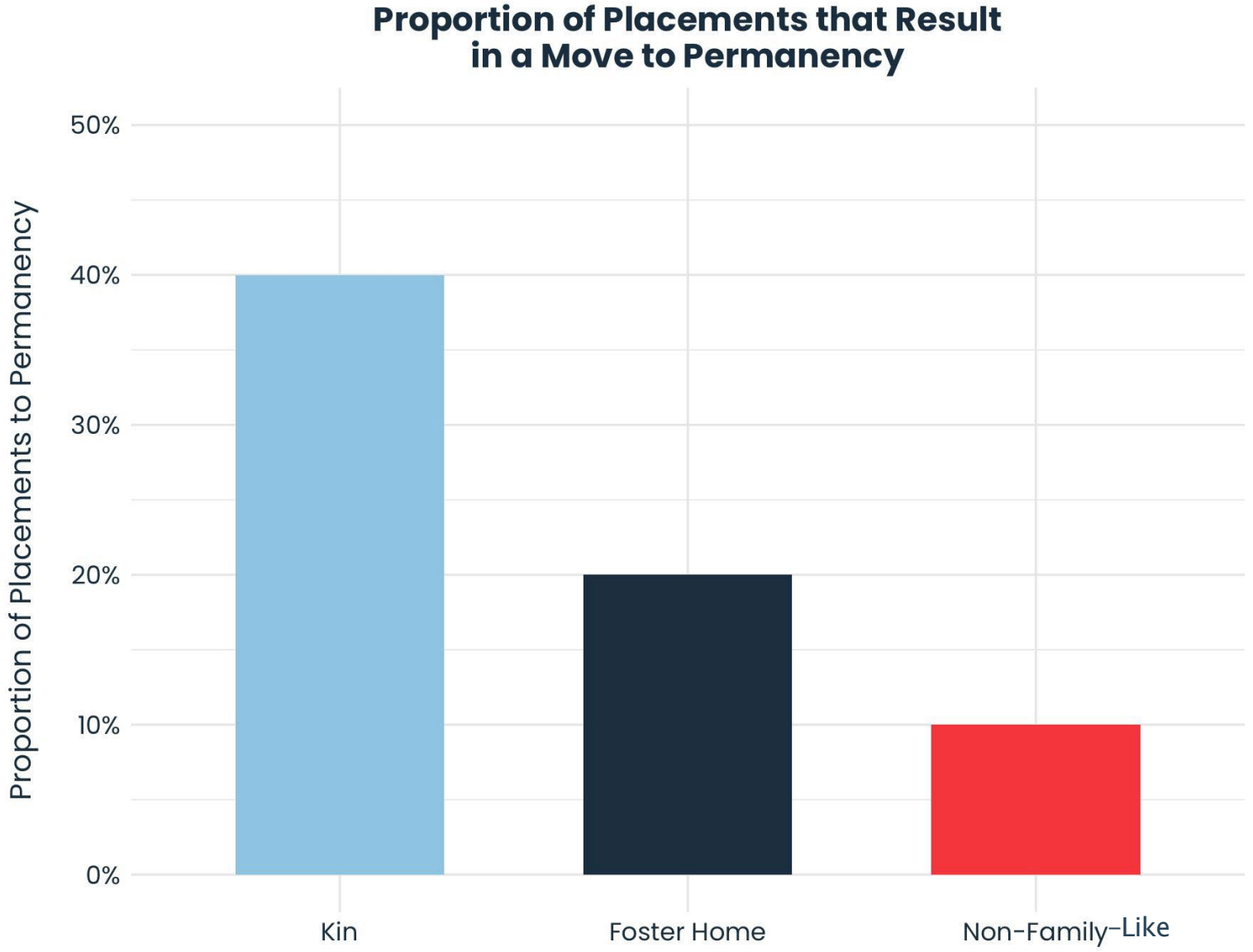
Closer-to-home placements enable more children to remain in their school and connected to their community

Closer-to-home placements reduce load on caseworkers by minimizing driving times

* Non-Family-Like placements include institutional settings (group homes, crisis centers, detention, hospital) and AWOL

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Kin placements are **significantly more likely to result in a move to permanency***



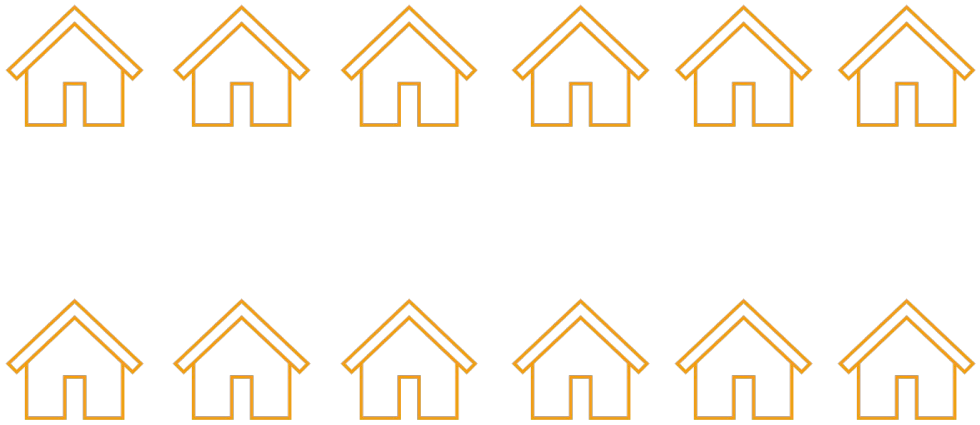
*Includes exiting care or moving to trial reunification

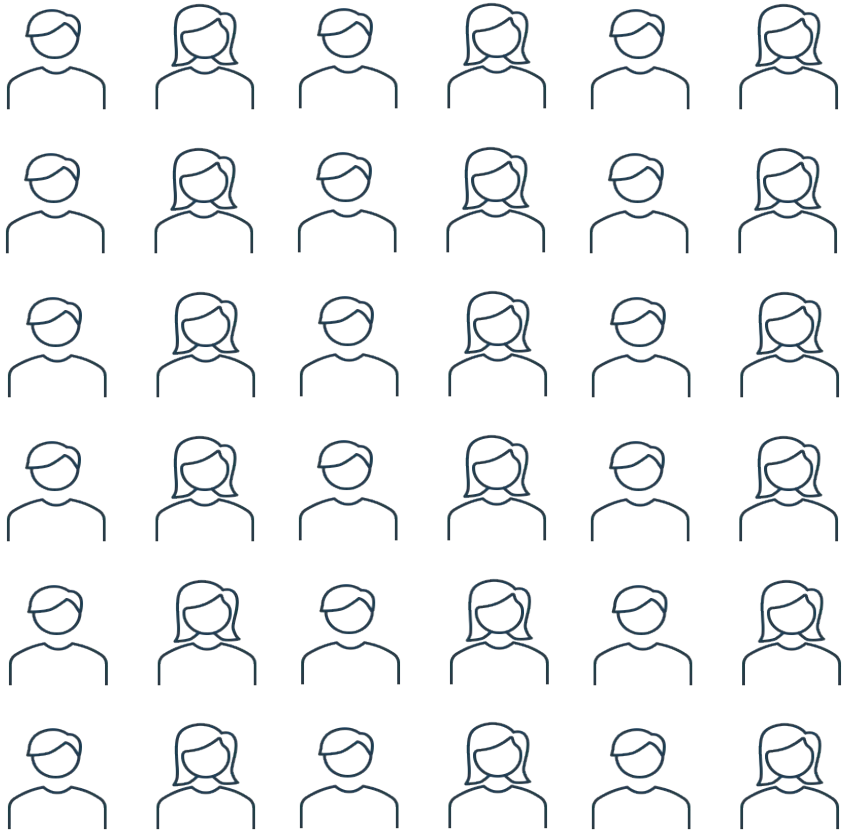
Kin placements increase capacity

We will use Cook County, Illinois to illustrate a trend that we see in big cities across the country

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

In large cities, we typically see <u>many</u> more children than non-kin homes

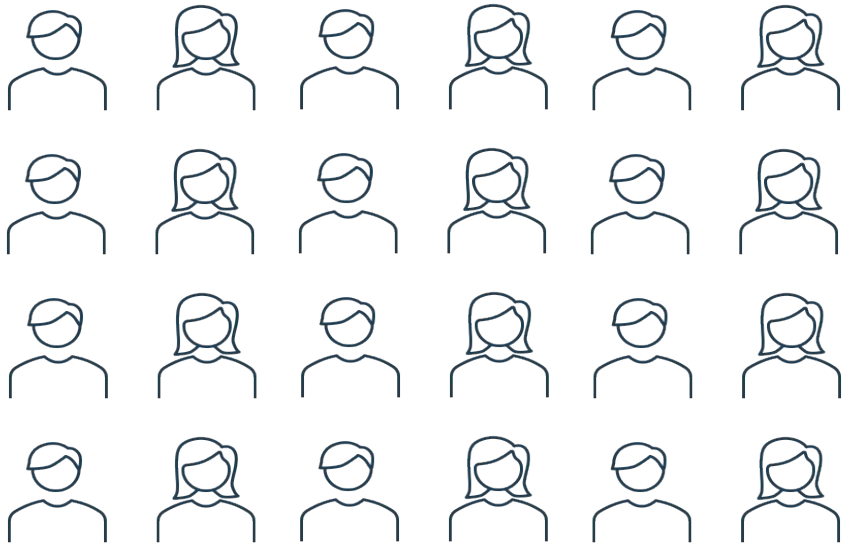




ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Even with perfect utilization, there are many children without a home

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



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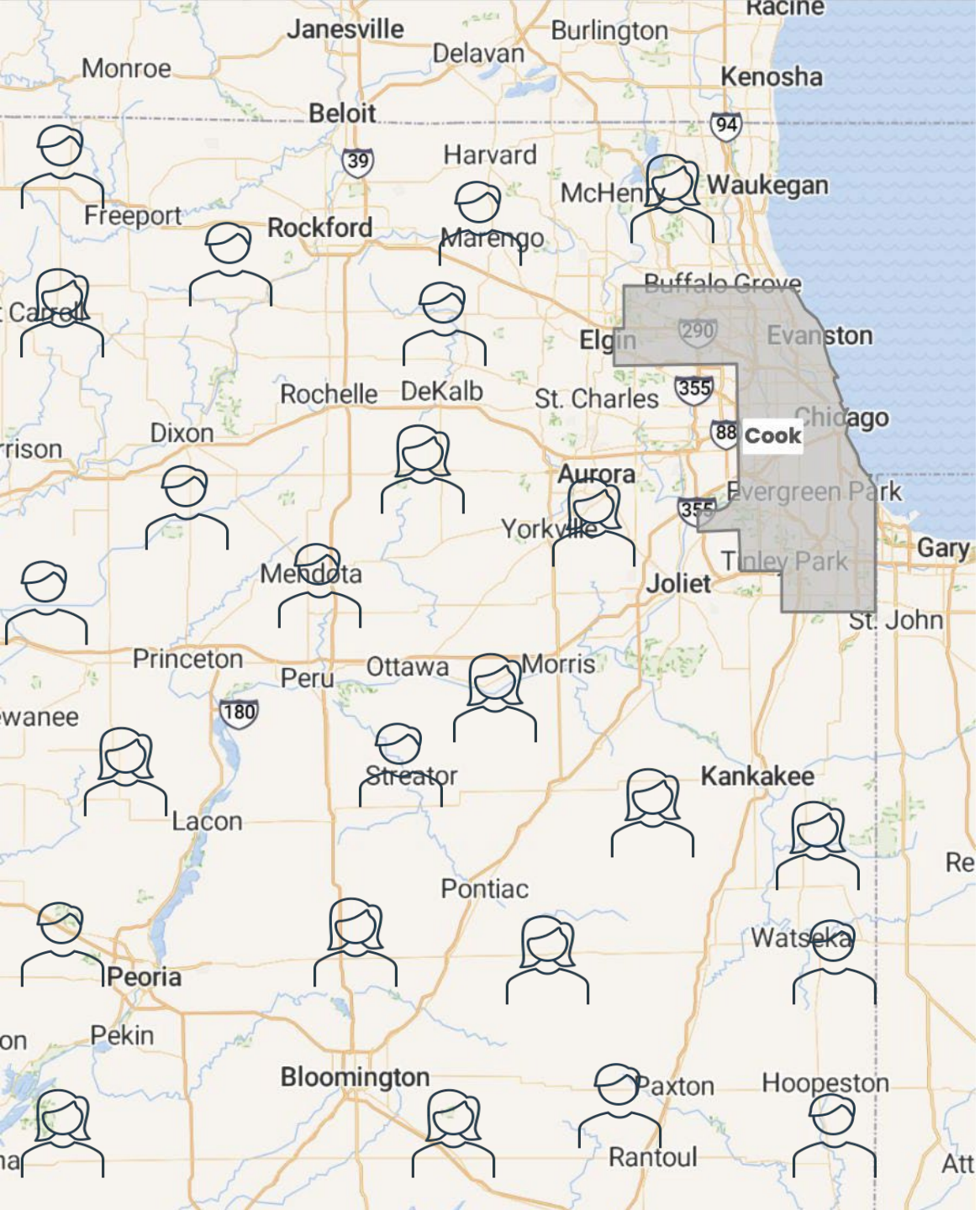
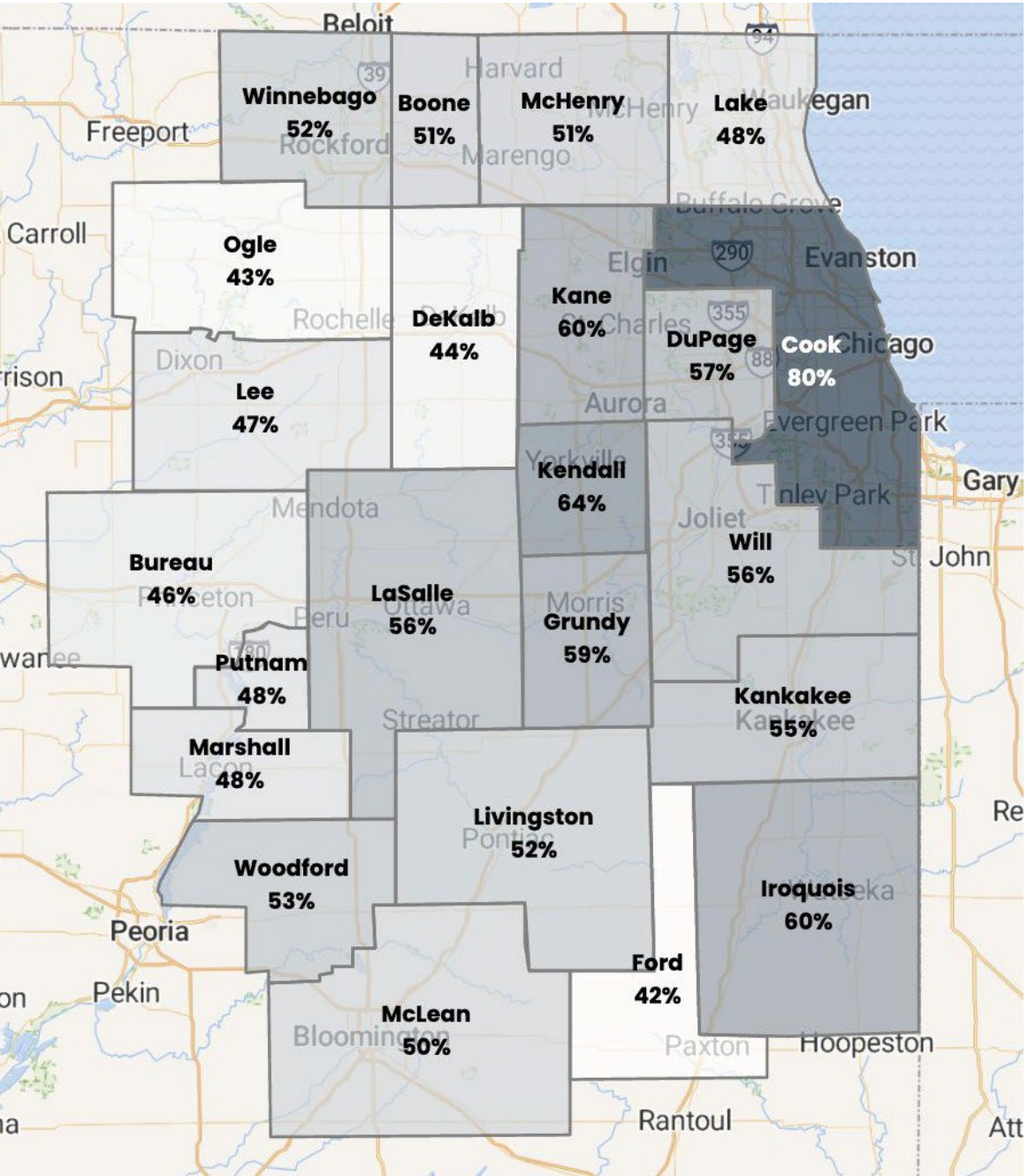


Without kin placements, the foster home shortage in big cities places **huge pressure on capacity in surrounding areas**, which results in even more far away placements

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

% of Days with Kin by Removal County



We often see high rates of kin placement in big cities, **almost out of necessity**

Kin acts as an **extra source of capacity**, limiting foster home shortages and even relieving outward pressure

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Looking at the data has reinforced the benefits of kin placement

- **For the child:**
  - Significantly greater stability in care
  - Likely to be placed closer to home
  - More likely to exit care or move to trial reunification after kin placement
- **For child welfare systems:**
  - Reduces workload for placement team and drive time for caseworkers
  - Frees up foster homes for children without kinship options, particularly in areas with foster home shortages

Leave reflections in the chat…

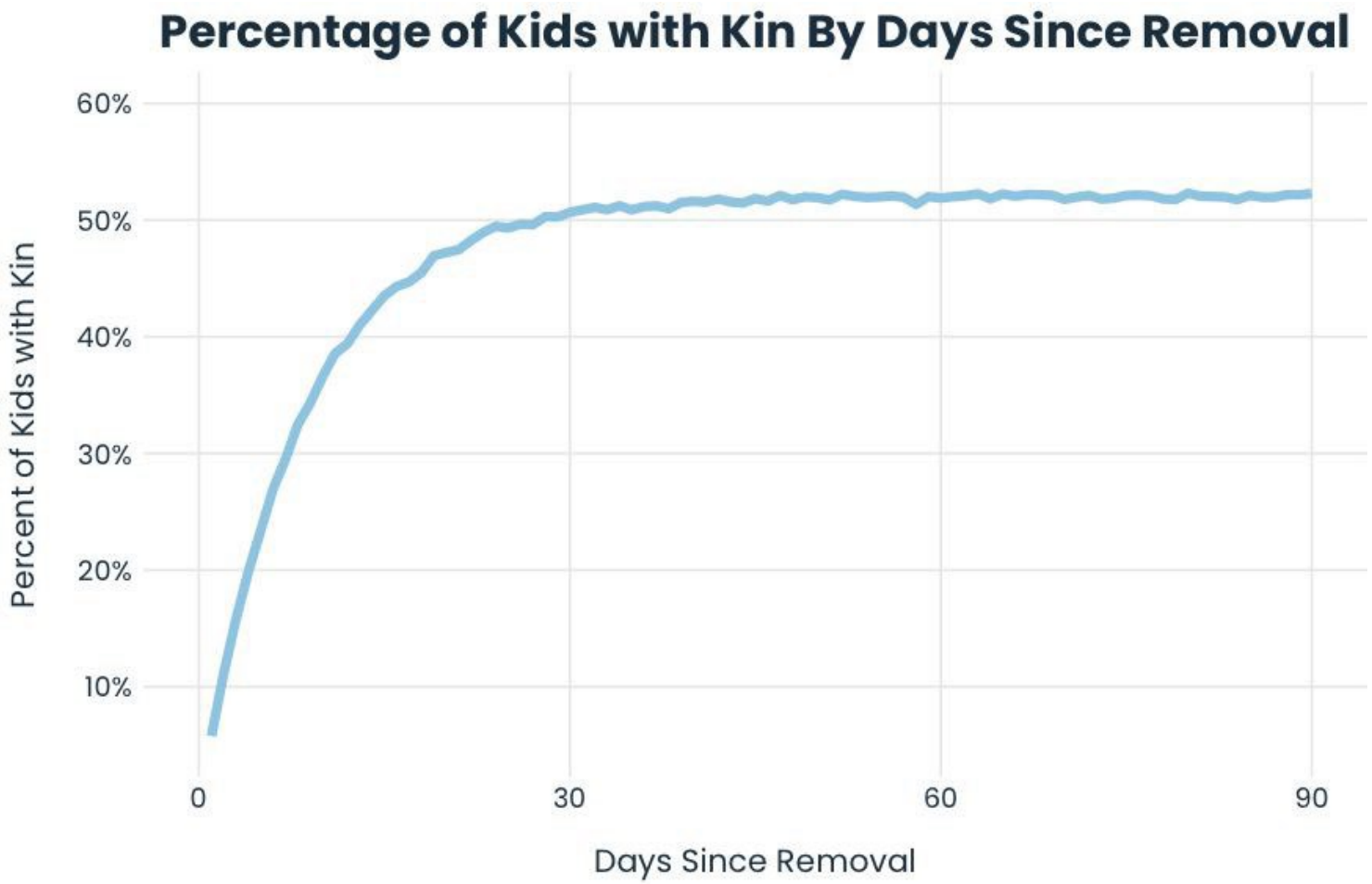
Does our data align with your experience?

Is any of this surprising? Reaffirming?

“First placement with kin” is a start

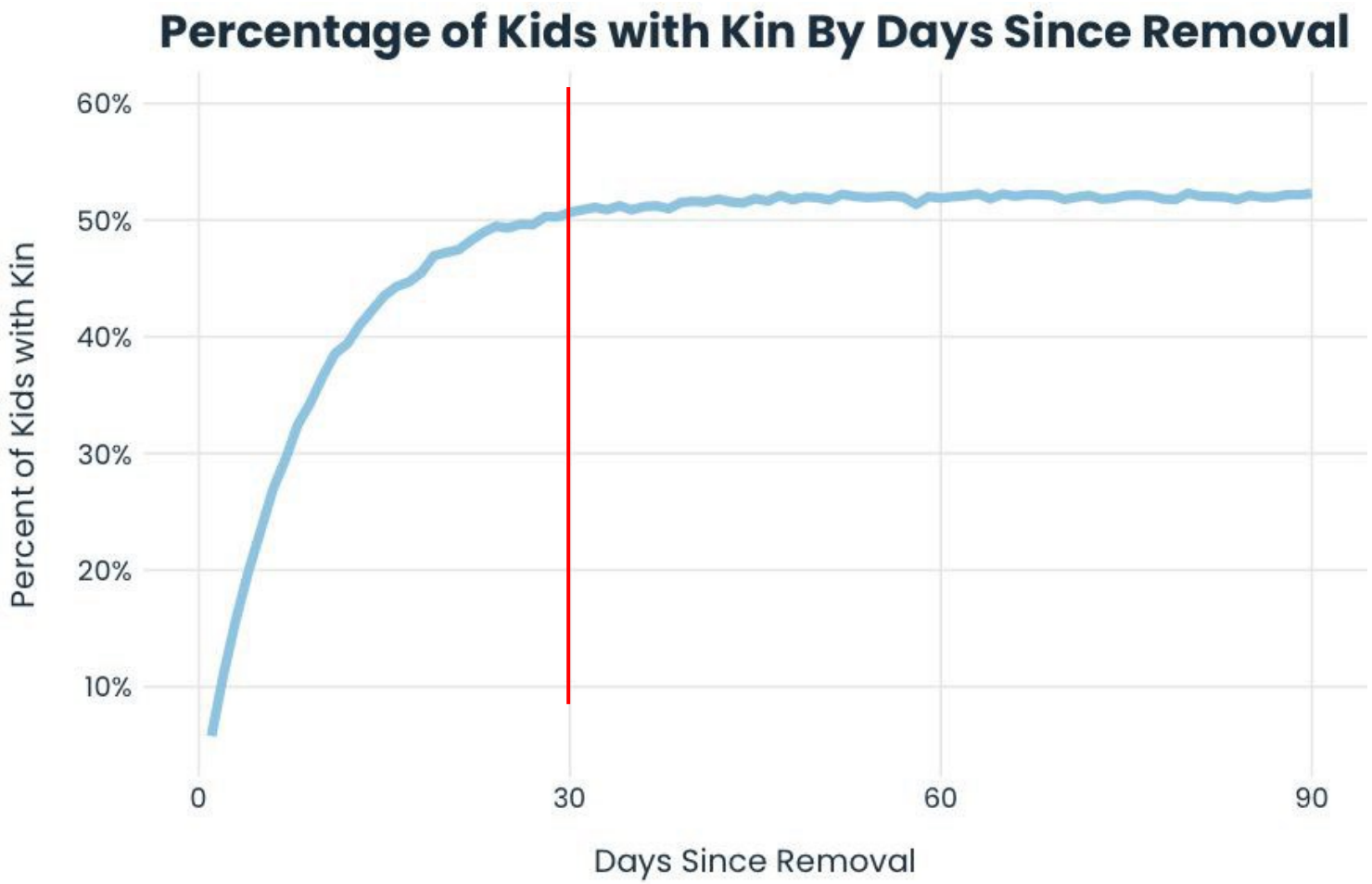
Children in out-of-home care should spend as much time as possible with kin

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



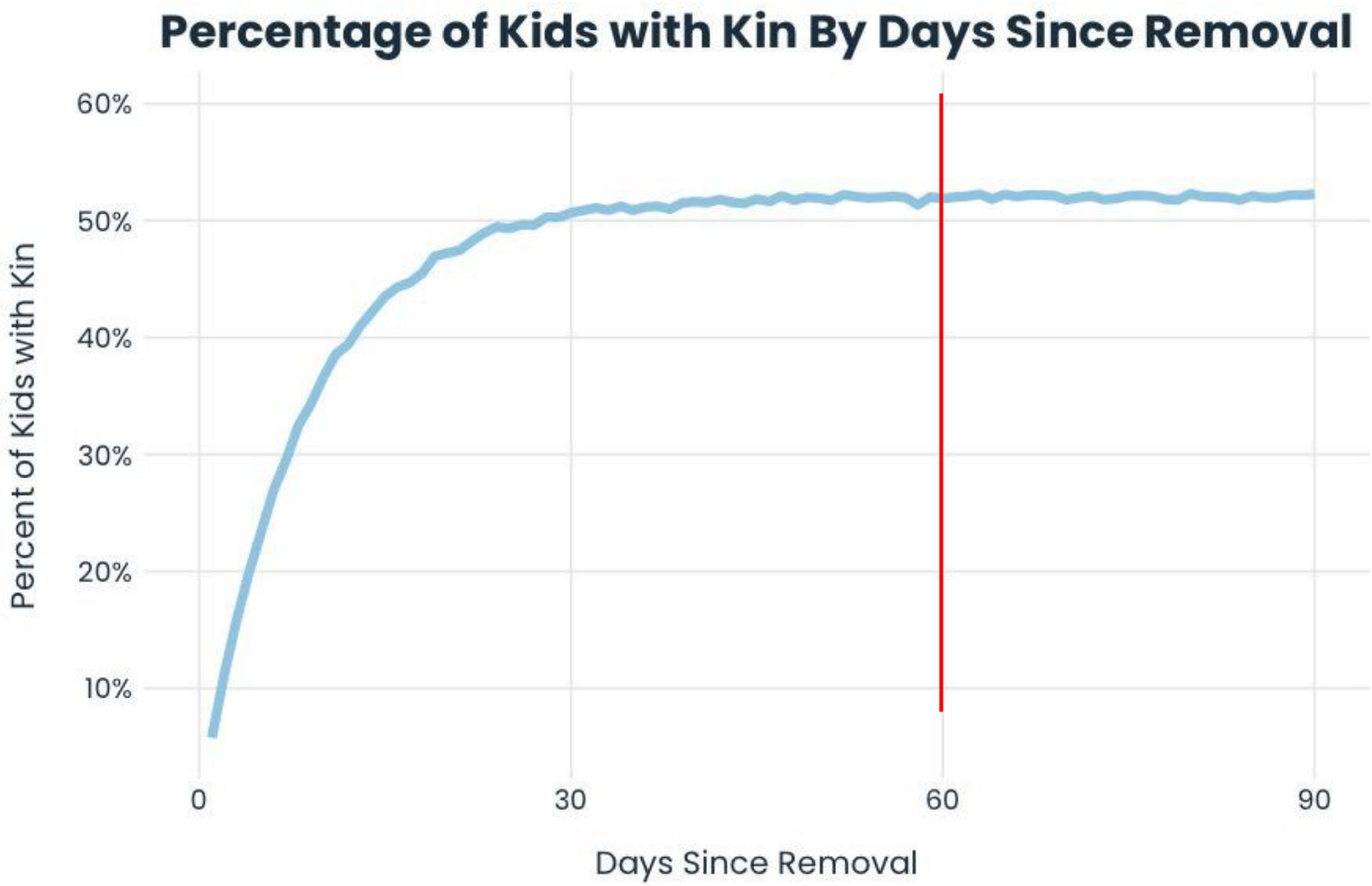
We have observed a **consistent pattern** in kin placement on each day after removal

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



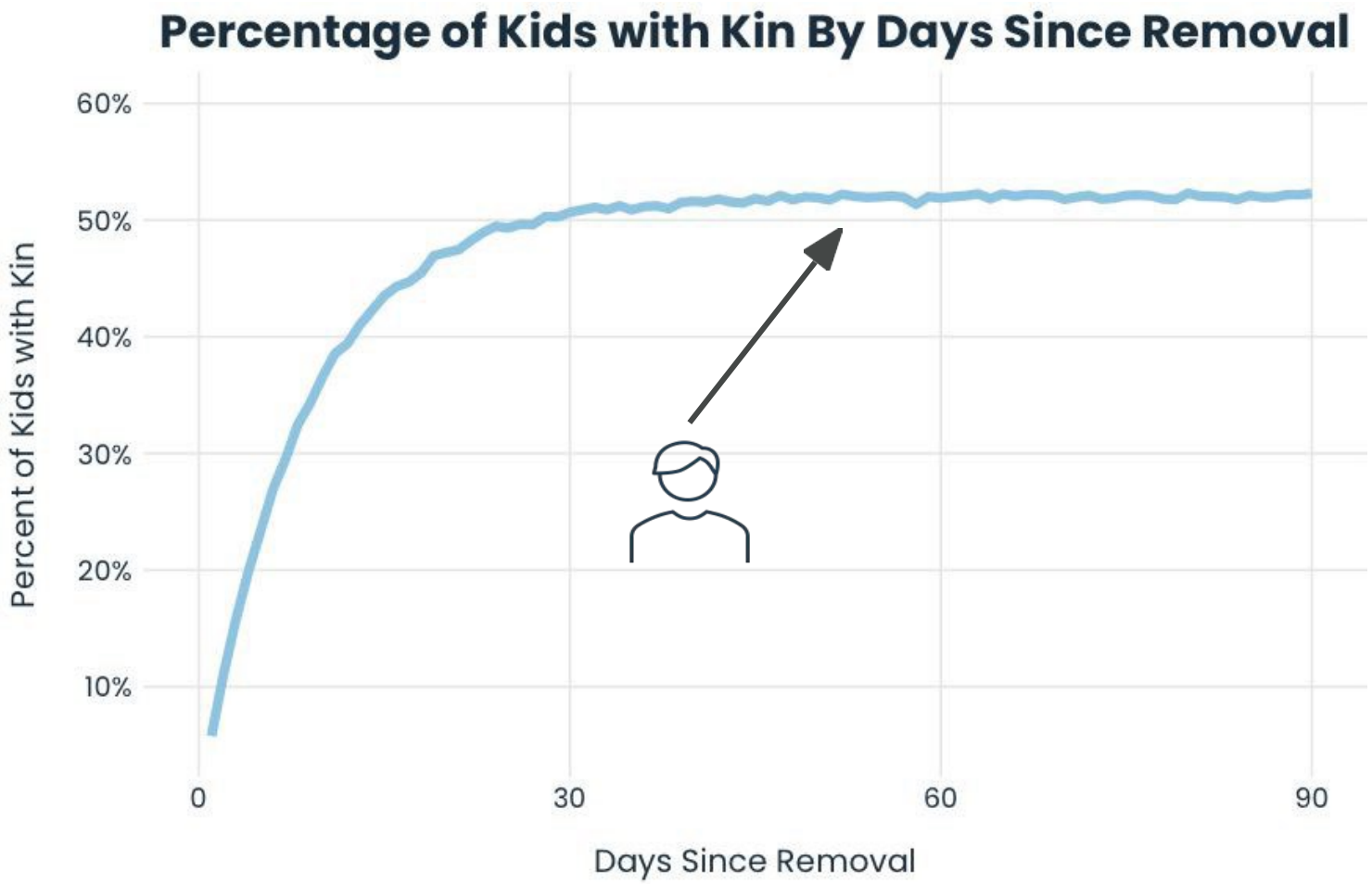
The share of children with kin increases rapidly over the first month…

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



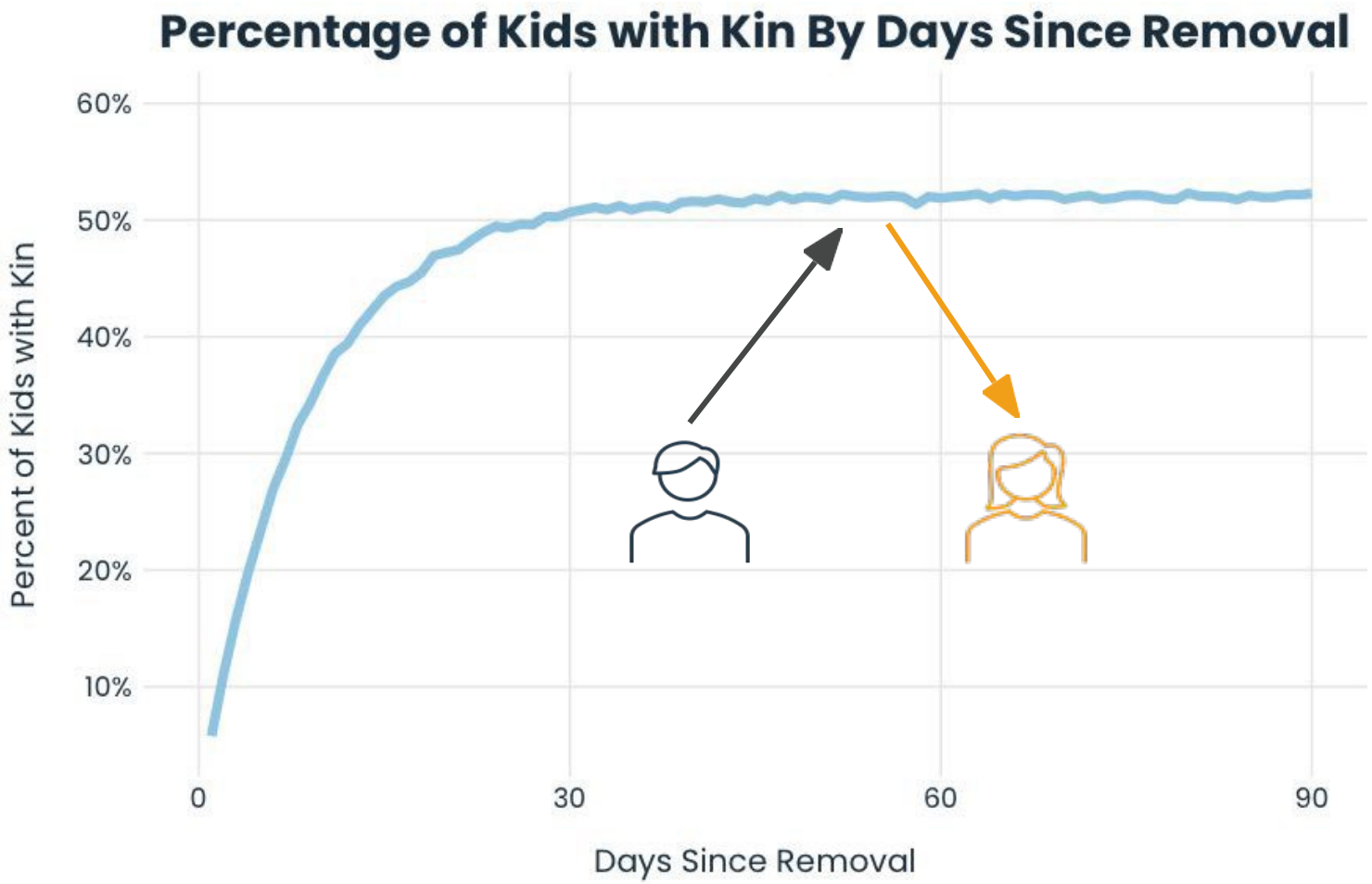
...before plateauing as the percentage of children with kin stabilizes after the first month in care

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



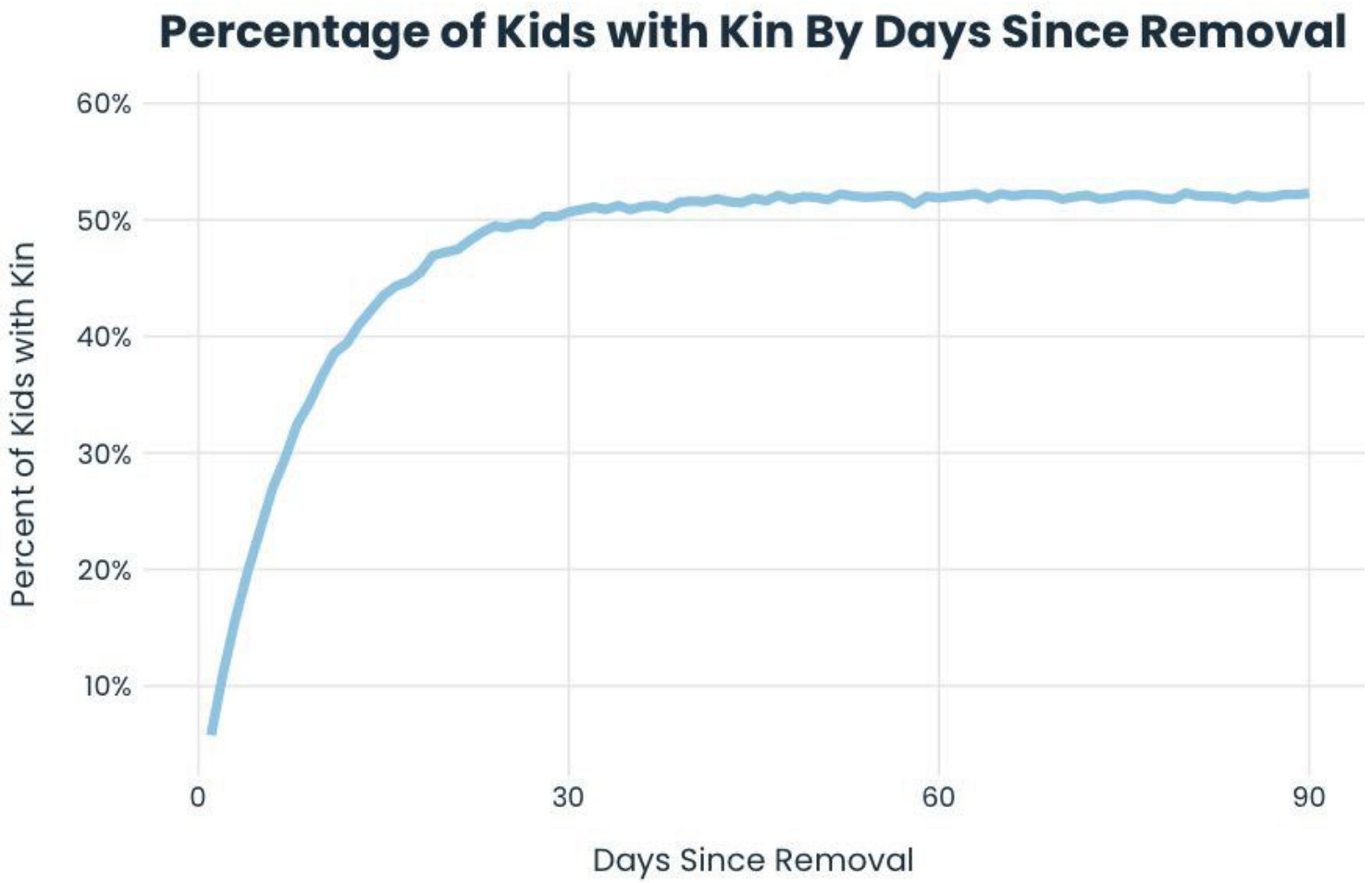
Despite the flat line,
new kin placements *are* happening after day 30…

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



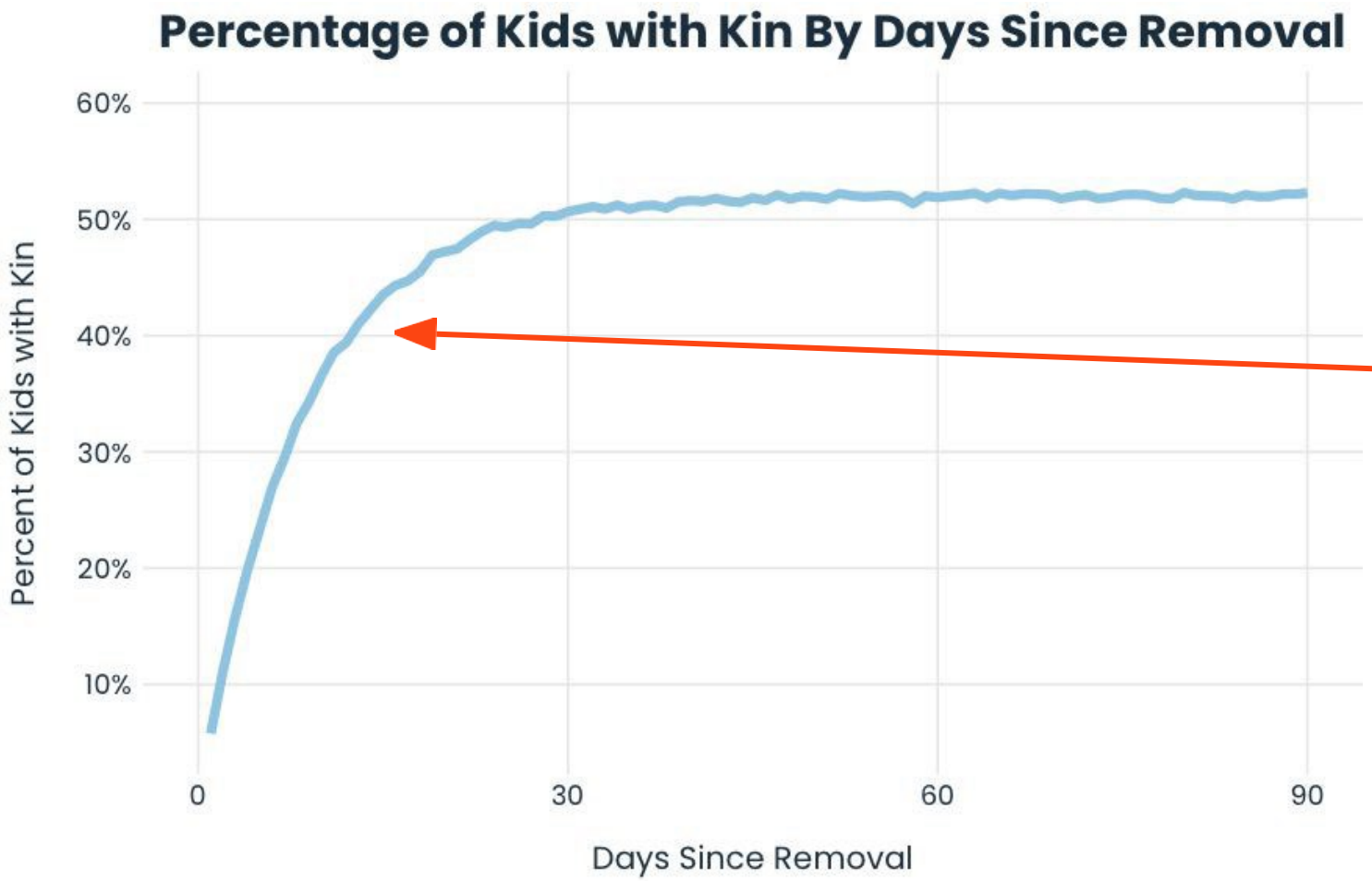
...but they are happening at roughly the same rate as **children are leaving kin** due to placement disruptions

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



By relying solely on "first placements with kin" as our kin metric, we may…

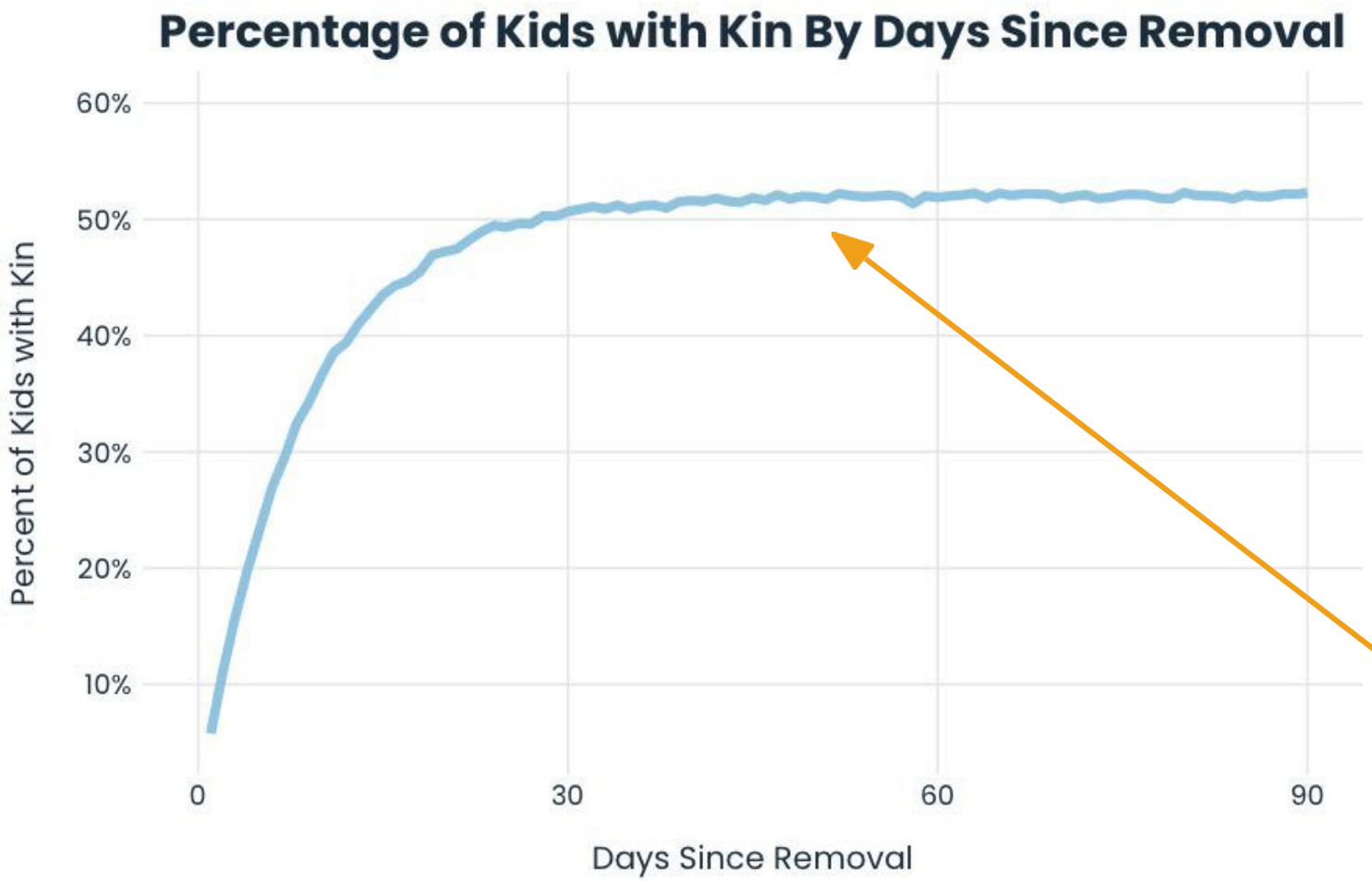
ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



By relying solely on "first placements with kin" as our kin metric, we may…

…not account for those that are placed with kin *but not immediately*

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA



By relying solely on "first placements with kin" as our kin metric, we may…

…not account for those that *are* placed with kin immediately but move out of kin soon after

“Percent of days with kin” tracks kin placement at *all* stages

1. Identifying the **BEST first kin placement** so that first placement sticks

2. Incentivizing **continuous kin-engagement** so that future placements are with kin

3. Providing **stability support to all kin placements** after placement is made

Leave reflections in the chat…

What are challenges with ongoing kin-finding?

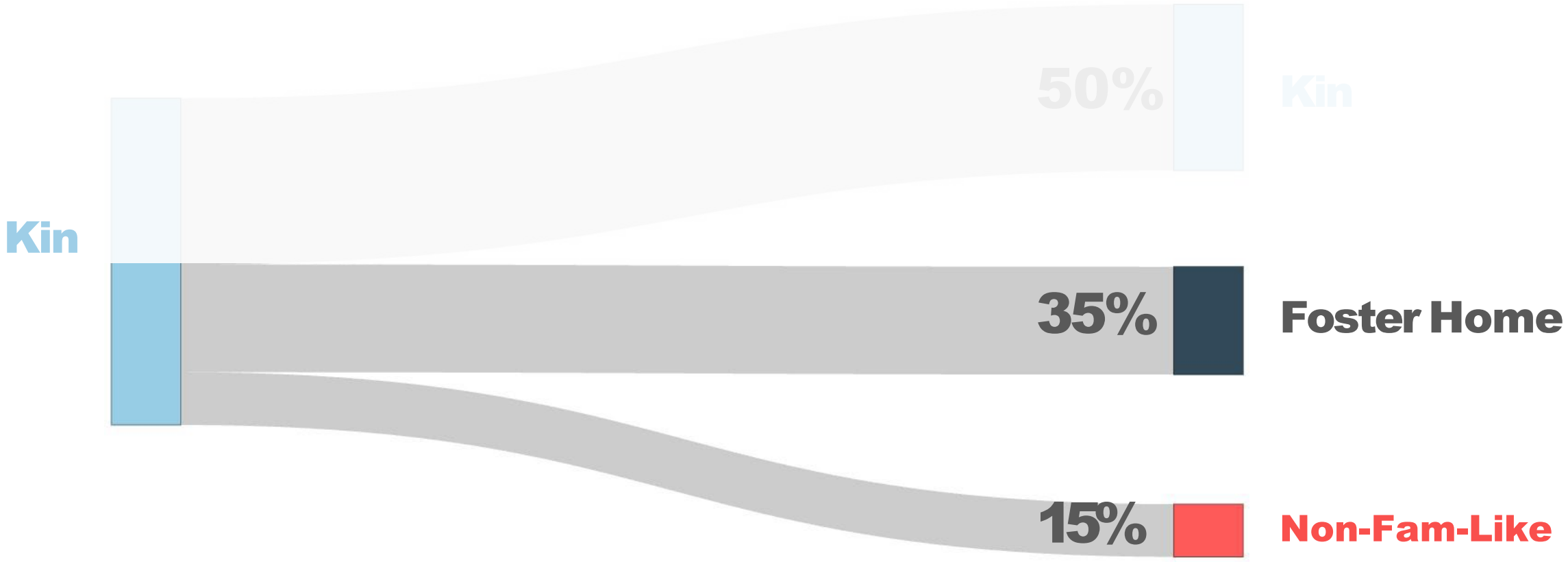
To what extent does kin-finding happen when a child is *already placed with kin*?

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

When a kin placement disrupts, children tend to move to another kin around half the time

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

The other half of disruptions result in a move to other placement settings

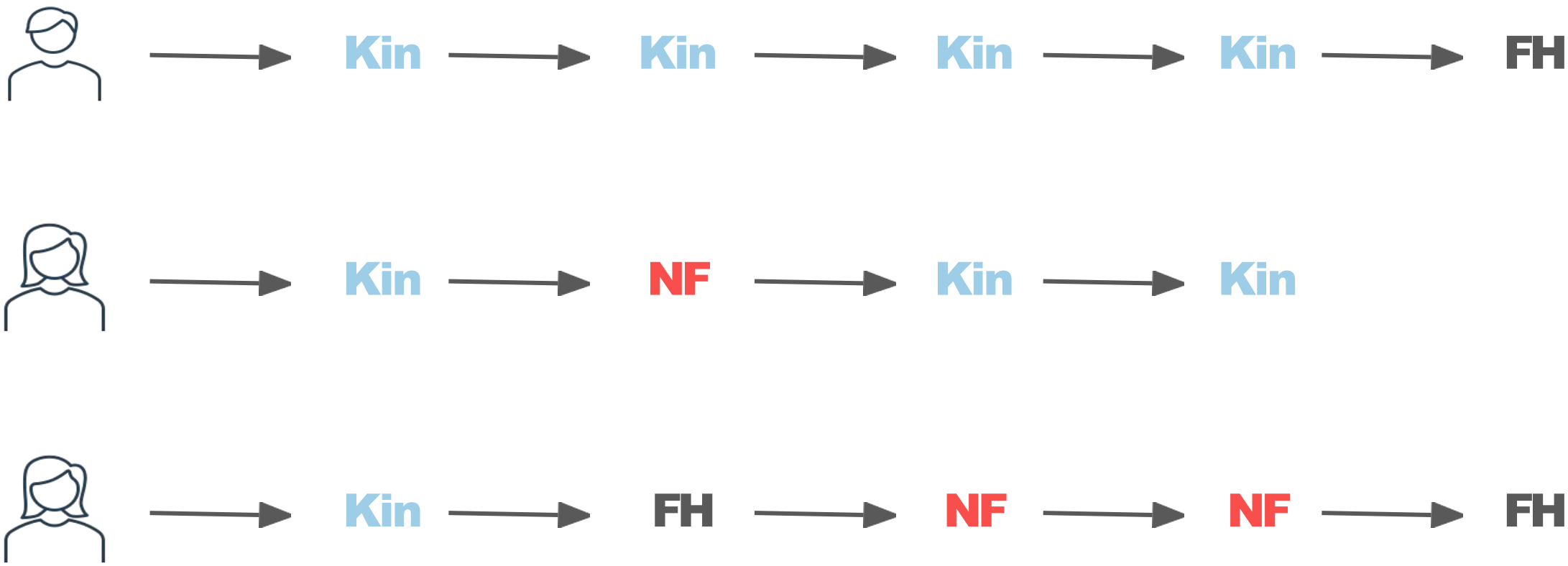


* Non-Family-Like placements include institutional settings (group homes, crisis centers, detention, hospital) and AWOL

What is the pathway through care for those children that move from a kin to a non-kin placement?

Did they have many kin placements before moving to a non-kin setting? Do they ever make it back to kin?

Moving out of kin is very different depending on the pathway through care



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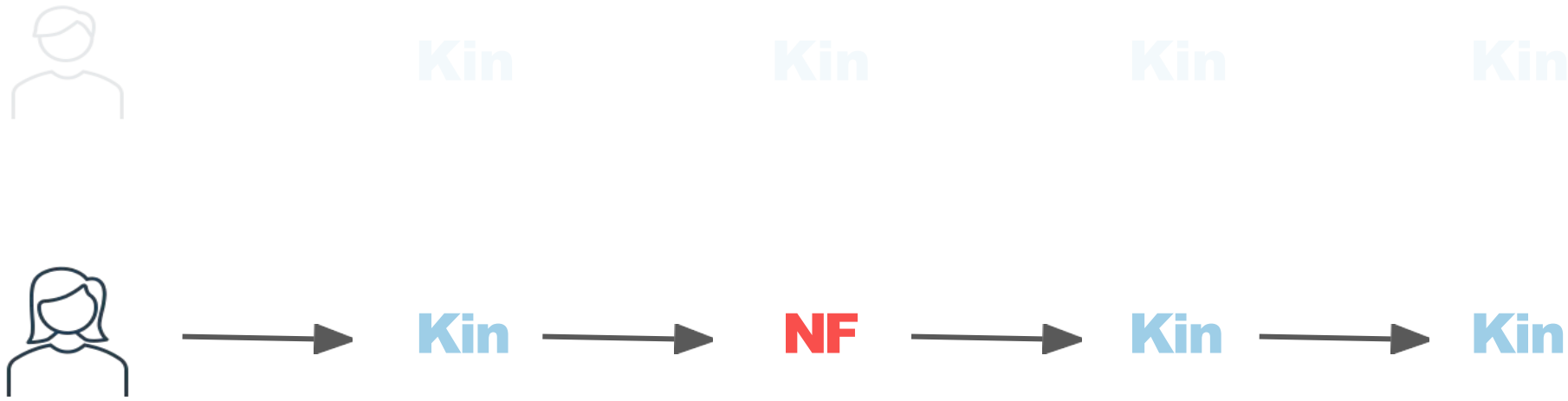
ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Child #1's kin options were likely exhausted before moving to a foster home

* Non-Family-Like placements include institutional settings (group homes, crisis centers, detention, hospital) and AWOL

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Child #2 returned to kin very quickly after a move to a non-kin placement



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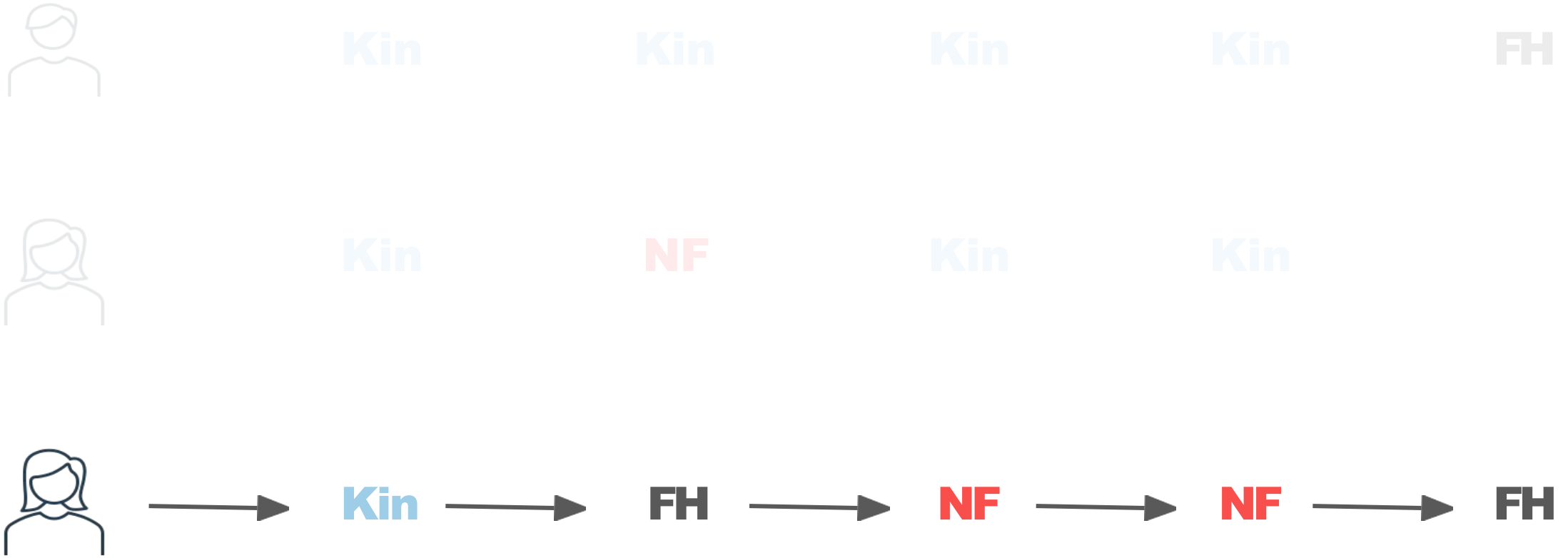
ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

Whereas child #3 had just one kin placement and did not return to kin



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ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

To better understand ongoing kin-finding, we break down the numbe before and after moving out of kin

Kin Placements **After** Leaving Kin

Kin Placements **Before** Leaving Kin	0	1	2	3	4+
1					
2					
3					
4+					

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

We have found that the most common scenario is that a child has just one kin placement and <u>will not have another</u>

Kin Placements **After** Leaving Kin

Kin Placements **Before** Leaving Kin	0	1	2	3	4+
1	45%	21%	7%	1%	1%
2	9%	3%	3%	1%	0%
3	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%
4+	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%

ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

We have found that the most common scenario is that a child has just one kin placement and <u>will not have another</u>

Kin Placements **Before** Leaving Kin

	Kin Placements **After** Leaving Kin: 0	1	2	3	4+
1	45%	21%	7%	1%	1%
2	9%	3%	3%	1%	0%
3	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%
4+	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%

Additional kin-finding, both at entry into care and on an ongoing basis, may help keep children with kin even when a placement disrupts

Leave reflections in the chat...

What other data-specific questions do you have?

What are the limitations of your data right now?

Let's Celebrate National Kinship Care Month!

Toolkit to Raise Awareness and Celebrate Kinship Families

There's still time!

September 2025

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www.gksnetwork.org/kinship-month-2025/

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