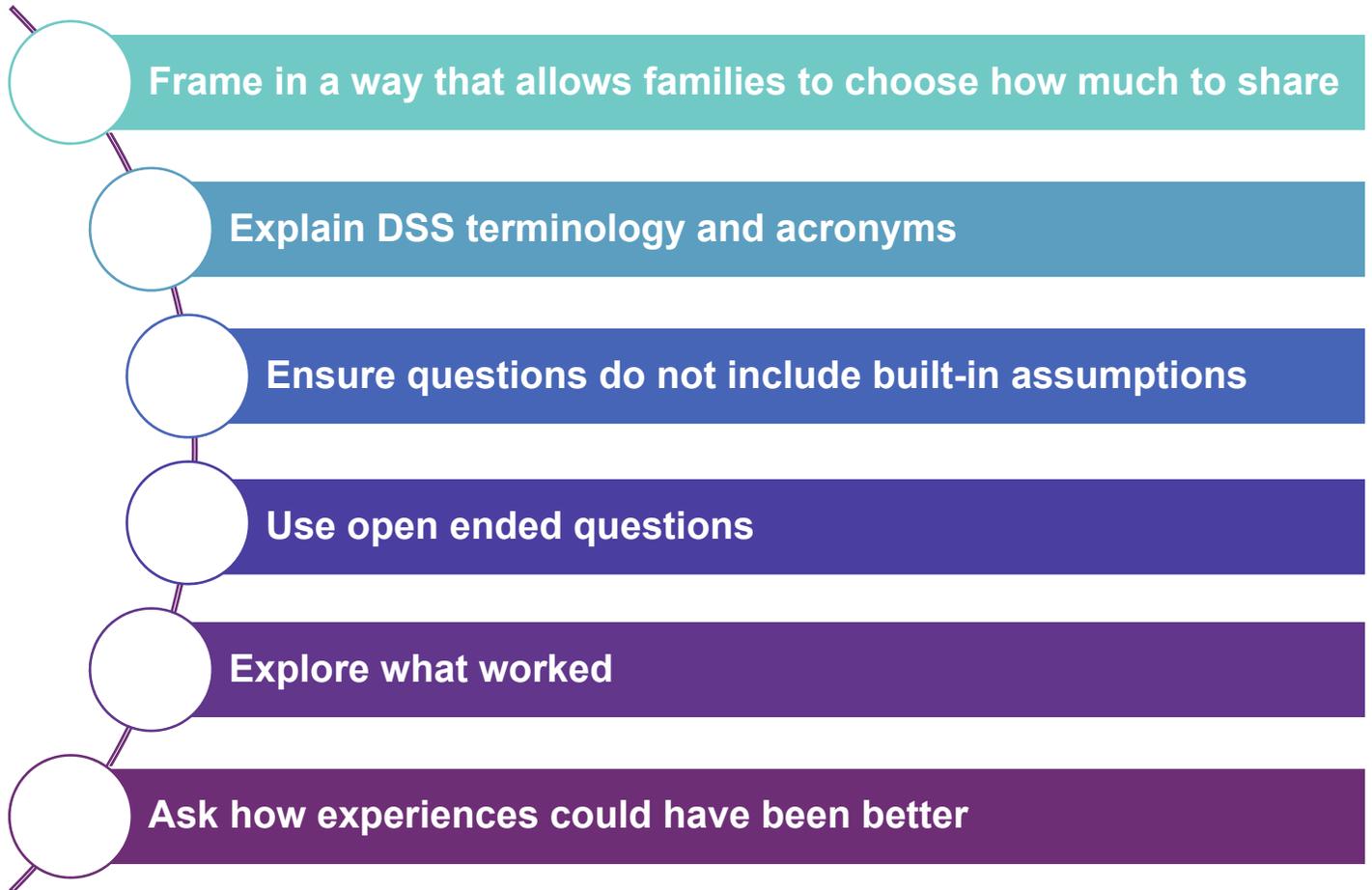


Tips for Questions That Engage Families



Tips	First Attempt	Final Question
Frame in a way that allows families to choose how much to share	Tell me about your first interaction with a DSS social worker. [This asks families to fully share an experience for which they may not yet feel safe enough to share.]	What do you think is important for social workers to know about the first contact with families? [This allows agency to glean the same information but without requiring family to share more than they are comfortable sharing.]
Explain DSS terminology and acronyms	What did you like about your CFT? [While this is a term that is commonly used, many families will not recognize that their meetings were “CFT’s”.]	Child and Family Team meetings or CFTs are how social workers collaborate with families to develop case plans. What did you like about your CFT (or case planning process)? [This explains the concept before asking the question.]
Ensure questions do not include built-in assumptions	How did your involvement with DSS make you a good parent? [This assumes that they were not a good parent before involvement with DSS.]	How did your involvement with DSS help you and your child? [This allows families to identify if/what helped.]
Use open-ended questions	Do you think cultural similarities or differences between yourself and your worker played a role in your ability to partner with DSS? [This is framed as a yes/no question and is also fairly lengthy.]	Culture is a word for the 'way of life' of groups of people. How did your family’s cultural similarities and differences with your social worker impact your relationship? [This explains terminology, is shorter, and is open-ended.]
Explore what worked	What were some of the challenges you faced in completing your case plan? [This focused on what’s wrong.]	What were the most useful parts of your case plan? [This focuses on what you don’t know that will help strengthen programming.]
Ask how experiences could have been better	How did your social worker share case information with you? [This focuses on getting historical information.]	What would have been the best way for your social worker to share case information with you? [This focuses on getting information that will help improve services.]

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