

Child and Family Permanency Teaming

WHY:

The concept of permanency is based on certain values, including the primacy of family, significance of biological families, and the importance of parent-child attachment. Research has shown that children grow up best in nurturing, stable families. These families:

- Offer commitment and continuity
- Have legal status—parents have the legal rights and responsibility to protect their children's interests and welfare.
- Have members that share a common future.

PERMANENCY DEFINITION:

Achieving permanency means having an enduring family relationship that:

- Is safe and lifelong;
- Offers the legal rights and social status of full family membership;
- Provides for physical, emotional, social, cognitive and spiritual well-being; and
- Assures lifelong connections to extended family, siblings, other significant adults, family history and traditions, race and ethnic heritage, culture, religion and language

WHAT:

Permanency Teaming is a collaborative approach to permanency planning. It ensures decisions are made on behalf of the child/youth with their active participation (or their voice) as well as the active participation of birth parents, family members, and the child/youth's network of supports. The desired outcomes of permanency teaming are as follows:

- Children are safely maintained in home, supported by a natural network of supportive relationships
- A legal parent is identified for children in care who are unable to reunify with family;
- Legal permanence is achieved for the child/youth in care; and
- A natural network of supportive relationships is established.

WHO:

This teaming approach will be used for every child/youth served in-home as well as those children/youth in foster care or congregate care settings including youth involved in either child protection or juvenile justice, regardless of their permanency goals and facilitated by the assigned DCF Social Worker.

HOW:

Permanency Teaming is consistent with family centered practice; engaging families and community members in case planning and decision-making thereby increasing the family's investment in the process and plan. It includes:

- an active family search and engagement practice component.
- permanency preparation in partnership with private providers
- a blend of individual and joint conversations
- large team meetings approximately every 6-8 weeks throughout the life of a case.