

Permanency Plan Development: Best Interest Considerations

Points to remember:

The following list is a series of considerations

All factors need to be considered in the development of concurrent planning goals

If concerns are identified, they need to be addressed

With the exception of safety, no single concern should drive permanency planning

Planning should occur with parents and caregivers in the context of Shared Planning Meetings

When consensus cannot be reached, Children's Administration is ultimately responsible for permanency planning recommendations

- Family functioning and prognosis for return home
 - Is return home foreseeable in the near future (three months)?
- Child's permanency need--safety, well-being and stability
 - Are the caregivers able to meet the child's needs for safety, well-being and stability? How do we know this?
 - Is the child attached to the caregiver? How do we know this?
 - Have you seen changes (especially positive ones) in the child's behavior, emotional well-being, academic performance, sense of security, etc...?
 - Does the caregiver advocate for the child at school? Take the child to doctor's and dentist's appointments?
- Consider the child's wishes
 - Has the child had multiple, on-going conversations about permanency?
 - Has the child stated a preference either for a specific caregiver or permanent plan?
- Identity considerations
 - Native American identity and Tribal recommendations
 - Is the child Native American? If so, what is the Tribe's level of involvement in case planning?
 - What is the Tribe's perspective on permanency?
 - Other facets of identity
 - Does the child have support for the development of all aspects of their identity including but not limited to their ethnic, cultural, linguistic, spiritual, gender and sexuality, and disability status?
 - Does the child's identity as a member of a specific community impact their values around permanency?
- Consider the child's connections to relatives
 - Does this placement allow the child to stay in touch with other relatives?
 - Do the caregivers offer additional connections extended family including kin?
- Sibling contact and placement
 - If there are siblings, how does this placement facilitate contact?
 - How frequently does the child get to see their sibling?
- Parent's plan for permanency
 - What is the parent's plan for permanency?
 - Do the parents support this placement?
 - If the child is placed with maternal relatives, are they able to facilitate visitation with the father? How about vice versa?
- Continuation of parent and child relationship is/is not beneficial to the child
 - *Note: this is one of the major considerations for all permanency planning
 - Is the child currently visiting with one or both parents?
 - Is the caregiver able to facilitate visitation in a manner that doesn't threaten the child's safety and stability?
 - If these visits are currently supervised, what is the plan to move to unsupervised visits?
 - If one or both parents are incarcerated, does the caregiver facilitate visits with the parents and/or support other forms of contact?