

Permanency Options

What they are and how we get there!

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Shared Planning Meetings

- Discussions around case planning begin and continue in Shared Planning Meetings or Permanency Planning Meetings.
- To have a transparent conversation around case planning, all participants and supports in a case need to have an understanding of permanency outcomes and what each means.
- Family has a role in the case planning process.



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Permanency Options

• Reunification

- Are the safety concerns that brought the child/youth into a dependency action MANAGEABLE?
- What are the conditions to return home?
- What changes would we need to see to assess that the child or youth would be safe?
 - Factors to consider:
 - Age of child/youth
 - History: can be an indicator, not a “crystal ball”
 - Is there a plan that could be put in place that would allow child/youth to return home?

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Permanency Options

• Adoption

- The most permanent legal option after reunification.
 - When would this be important?
- Is reunification not likely in the foreseeable future?
 - What is “foreseeable future”?
- Is continuing the parent-child/youth relationship detrimental to the child/youth’s stability and well-being?
- Is adoption in the child/youth’s best interest? What does that mean?
- Provides a subsidy for the adoption of every dependent child/youth

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Permanency Options

- **Guardianship—Title 13**

- Presumes that the continuation of the parent-child/youth relationship is beneficial to the child/youth and would not disrupt the stability of the guardianship.
- By law, must include a plan of visitation.
- Relative Guardianship Assistance Program: available for most relative guardians.

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Permanency Options

- **Limited Guardianship – Title 11.130**

- Effective as of January 1st, 2021
- Repealed RCW 26.10 non-parental custody
- Court can make a decision if parents will retain some decision making rights (limited guardianship).
- Limited guardianship actions may be initiated by any person believing the child or youth should have a guardian in Superior Court.

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Adoption vs. Title 13 Guardianship

Adoption

- Provides lifelong legal ties to adoptive caregiver.
- Medicaid may be offered to the child up to age 21 through adoption support.
- Adoption cannot be terminated or modified upon a motion.
- Adoptive applicants must be 18 years of age or older.

Title 13 Guardianship

- Guardianship ends once the child turns 18.
- Medicaid may be offered to the child up to age 18 through RGAP subsidy or CSO grant.
- Guardianship may be terminated/modified upon a showing of a substantial change in circumstances.
- Potential guardians must be 21 years of age or older.

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Permanency Options

- **Permanency Planning Matrix!** A “Cheat Sheet” to Permanency Options.
- **Permanency Planning starts from day one.**
 - Continues throughout the lifetime of the child/youth’s case until permanency is achieved;
 - Secures a safe, stable and permanent home for the child/youth as soon as possible;
 - Protects the child/youth developmentally;
 - Protects primary attachments or creates new attachments; and
 - Preserves cultural and family connections.

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Concurrent Planning

- Identifying and working towards a child/youth's primary permanency goal while simultaneously identifying and working on a secondary goal.
 - What is your back-up plan if your primary plan falls apart?
- Required by the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997
- Seeks to eliminate delays in attaining permanency for children and youth in out of home care.
- Resources, research and additional information available at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/permanency/planning/concurrent/>

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Shared Planning Meetings

- DCYF Policy requires that case planning uses a team meeting approach. These meetings are all under the general term:



- **Shared Planning Guide** provides Meeting Type, Purpose, Timeframe, Who Must Be Invited for all DCYF Meetings

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Permanency From Day 1 Grant

- Federally Funded to enhanced the shared planning process with expedited permanency planning meetings.
- Ensures that successful components of the teaming process are met.
- Provides a grant facilitator to lead all staffings with neutrality, to model inclusion, having difficult conversations and transparency and to guide cases towards timely permanency.

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Permanency Planning Meetings

- Team Approach to case decision-making including permanency and visits/family time.
- Opportunities to share information.
- Model respect, inclusion, transparency.
- Address safety, permanency and well-being of family.

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Team Approach

- What does this look like to you?
- First and foremost need to make sure that all case participants are invited to attend.
- Second need to provide an explanation of what the meeting is, what will happen and why it is being held.

We call this the “Pre-Meet”



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Sharing Information

- Information needed to make informed decisions as a team
 - Current Safety Risks
 - Are safety concerns being managed?
 - Conditions to Return Home
 - How are children/youth doing?
 - What else would you need to know to make an informed decision about a case?
 - What are timeframes and why do we have them?

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Modeling Respect, Inclusion, Transparency

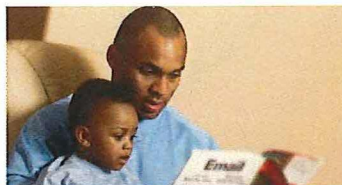
- Every participant deserves to be treated with respect.
- Honestly address case issues for planning.
- Allowing families to create their own case plan to address safety concerns

Family Break-Out Time

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Addressing Safety, Permanency and Well-Being

- Open discussions around safety concerns and if they are managed or manageable with in-home placement.
- Sharing information about the child/youth's medical, emotional, cultural development.
- Honest conversations about concurrent planning choices and decisions.



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Overarching Goal

- Inclusion in case planning of all key case participants.
- Create a team plan that is understandable, addresses safety concerns and increases family strengths.
- Transparent, open conversations that contribute to informed decision-making and lead to decisions that are in the best interest of the family.

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- Questions?



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