



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

Division of Social Services

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Permanency Planning Services Track Training

Participant Workbook Day Three

August 2026



**PUBLIC
KNOWLEDGE®**

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Permanency Planning Services Track Training**Day 3**

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Instructions

This course was designed to guide child welfare professionals through the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to engage with families in need of child protection services. The workbook is structured to help you engage in the lesson through reflection and analysis throughout each week of training. Have this workbook readily available as you go through each session to create a long-lasting resource you can reference later.

If you are using this workbook electronically: Workbook pages have text boxes for you to add notes and reflections. Due to formatting, if you type in these boxes, blank lines will be “pushed” to the next page. To correct this, when you are done typing in the text box, you may use the delete key to remove extra lines.

Course Themes

The central themes of the Permanency Planning Track Training are divided across several course topics.

- Purpose, Practice Standards, and Legal Aspects
- Disproportionality in Child Welfare Services
- Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (ICWA)
- Communicating
- Family Engagement
- Assessing in Permanency Planning Services
- Trauma-Informed Practice
- Permanency Plans and Concurrent Planning
- Attachment
- Family Engagement: Family Time and Shared Parenting
- Working with Relatives
- Partners in the Permanency Planning Process
- Permanency Planning with the Family
- Permanency Planning Family Case Plan
- Child and Family Team Meetings
- Authentically Engaging Children and Youth
- Family-Centered Permanency Planning
- Quality Contacts
- Preparing for Permanency
- Engaging Relatives
- Placement
- Placement with Relatives
- Monitoring the Permanency Planning Family Case Plan
- Achieving Permanency
- Termination of Parental Rights
- Adoption
- Documentation
- Worker Safety

Training Overview

Training begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. If a holiday falls on the Monday of training, the training will begin on Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. This schedule is subject to change if a holiday falls during the training week or other circumstances occur. The time for ending training on Fridays may vary, and trainees need to be prepared to stay the entire day.

Attendance is mandatory. If there is an emergency, the trainee must contact the classroom trainer and their supervisor as soon as they realize they will not be able to attend training or will be late. If a trainee must miss training time in the classroom, it is the trainee's responsibility to develop a plan to make up missed material.

Pre-Work Online e-Learning Modules

There is required pre-work for the Permanency Planning Track Training in the form of online e-Learning modules. Completion of the eLearnings is required prior to attendance at the classroom-based training. The following are the online e-Learning modules:

1. North Carolina Worker Practice Standards
2. Safety Organized Practice
3. Understanding and Assessing Safety and Risk
4. Understanding and Screening for Trauma

Transfer of Learning (TOL) Tool

The Permanency Planning Track Training Transfer of Learning (ToL) tool is a comprehensive, collaborative activity for workers and supervisors to identify worker goals, knowledge gains, and priorities for further development throughout the training process. In four distinct steps, the worker and supervisor will highlight their goals and action plan for participating in training, reflect on lessons and outstanding questions, and create an action plan to support the worker's growth. The tool should be started prior to beginning the Permanency Planning Track Training and re-visited on an ongoing basis to assess growth and re-prioritize actions for development.

- Part A: Training Preparation: Prior to completing any eLearning and in-person Track Training sessions, the worker and supervisor should meet to complete Part A: Training Preparation. In this step, the worker and supervisor will discuss their goals for participating in training and develop a plan to meet those goals through pre-work, other learning opportunities, and support to address anticipated barriers.
- Part B: Worker Reflections During Training: There is space in each topic for workers to record their notes. For many slides, questions prompt workers to reflect on why the materials matter and how they will apply them in their practice. Some, but not all, of these questions may be asked by the training facilitator during the training. Each section has a "Reflections & Check-In" at the end, where the worker will document their thoughts, takeaways, and outstanding questions regarding each section. This level of reflection serves two purposes. First, the practice of distilling down a full section of training into three takeaways and three remaining questions requires the worker to actively engage with the

material, subsequently forming cognitive cues related to the information for future use in case practice. Second, prioritizing takeaways and questions by section allows workers to continually review information to determine if questions are answered in future sessions and supports the development of an action plan by requiring workers to highlight the questions they find most important.

- Part C: Planning for Post-Training Debrief with Supervisor: The worker considers the takeaways and questions they identified in each section and creates a framework to transfer those takeaways and questions into an action plan.
- Part D: Post-Training Debrief with Supervisor: Provides an opportunity for the supervisor and worker to determine a specific plan of action to answer outstanding questions and to further support worker training.

While this ToL is specific to the Track Training in North Carolina, workers and supervisors can review the takeaways and questions highlighted by the worker in each section of training on an ongoing basis, revising action steps when prior actions are completed, and celebrating worker growth and success along the way.

Training Evaluations

At the conclusion of each training session, participants will complete a training evaluation tool to assess satisfaction with the training content and methods. The training evaluation tool is required to complete the training course. Training evaluations will be used to determine the need for revisions to the training curriculum.

All matters as stated above are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances and with approval.

Day Three Agenda

Permanency Planning Services Track Training

- I. Welcome and Introductions

Assessing in Permanency Planning Services Learning Lab

- II. Assessing in Permanency Planning Services Learning Lab

Permanency Plans and Concurrent Planning

- III. Permanency Plans
- IV. Concurrent Planning
- V. Preparing for Permanence

BREAK

Attachment

- VI. Attachment

Family Engagement: Family Time and Shared Parenting

- VII. Family Engagement and Alliance
- VIII. The Basics

LUNCH

- IX. The Basics, continued
- X. Barriers to Family Engagement

BREAK

Shared Parenting Learning Lab

- XI. Shared Parenting Learning Lab

Working with Relatives

- XII. Relative Diligent Search

End-of-Day Reflection

Day Three Learning Objectives

Assessing in Permanency Planning Learning Lab
Learners will be able to identify safety threats and risk factors when working with children and families.
Learners will be able to demonstrate strength-based and solution-focused strategies to interview children and families.
Permanency Plans and Concurrent Planning
Learners will be able to assess permanency options on a case-by-case basis and document concurrent plans as required by policy.
Learners will be able to describe the benefits of reunification for children.
Learners will describe the interconnection of legal, relational, and cultural permanence
Attachment
Learners will be able to provide examples of the purposes of Family Time.
Learners will be able to define emotional and relational permanency and describe the benefits of each type of permanence.
Family Engagement
Learners will be able to describe the behaviors and elements that encompass family-centered practice and how they impact safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.
Learners will be able to demonstrate family engagement skills when permanency planning with caregivers.
Family Time
Learners will be able to discuss the purpose of Family Time.
Learners will be able to defend the importance of Family Time and the reasons why Family Time should be a top priority in case and permanency planning.
Learners will be able to describe the role of Family Time in achieving safety, permanency, and well-being.
Learners will be able to provide examples of the purposes of Family Time.
Learners will be able to articulate their role in supporting successful Family Time and demonstrate that role with thoughtful planning.

• Learners will be able to discuss their role in facilitating and supporting Family Time.
• Learners will be able to identify and overcome barriers to successful Family Time.
• Learners will be able to develop plans to support Family Time regardless of case or systemic barriers.
• Learners will be able to develop plans for Family Time that provide children in foster care with timely access to time with the parents and siblings following placement into foster care
• Learners will be able to fulfill documentation requirements associated with Family Time.
• Learners will be able to describe factors to consider for Family Time based on the child and parent's needs and strengths.
Shared Parenting
• Learners will be able to discuss the purpose and importance of shared parenting.
• Learners will be able to explain the purpose and benefits of shared parenting.
• Learners will be able to describe their role in supporting and facilitating shared parenting.
• Learners will be able to discuss their role in facilitating and supporting shared parenting between parents and out-of-home care providers.
• Learners will be able to explain the benefits of fully engaging the out-of-home care provider and the child's family in partnership.
• Learners will be able to provide examples of shared parenting and different ways that families can participate in shared parenting.
• Learners will be able to document and monitor shared parenting communication and activities.
• Learners will be able to develop plans to overcome barriers to successful shared parenting partnerships.
• Learners will be able to identify and address risks to successful shared parenting partnerships.
Shared Parenting Learning Lab
• Learners will be able to support partnership between placement providers and the child's parent(s) to promote normalcy.
• Learners will be able to develop plans for shared parenting that support the needs of children in out-of-home care and build parental protective capacity.

Learners will be able to identify and address risks to successful shared parenting partnerships.
Working with Relatives
Learners will be able to develop and support ongoing connection between children and relatives, even if those relatives are not placement providers.
Learners will be able to defend the benefits of placement and ongoing connection with relatives.
Learners will be able to develop plans to expand the child's support network by engaging additional relatives to participate in the family team.
Learners will be able to discuss the policy and procedure requirements for diligent search of relatives from the beginning of the case until case closure.
Learners will be able to discuss their role in the notification process for communication, placement with relatives, permanency, and ensuring connections with relatives, including what information can be shared with relatives, changing roles, and boundaries.
Learners will be able to describe important steps to identify, locate, and engage relative caregivers.
Learners will be able to define diligent search requirements and determine steps to identify, locate, and engage relatives for children in out-of-home care.

Permanency Planning Services Track Training Day Three

Assessing in Permanency Planning Learning Lab, Continued

Skills Practice: Interviewing

Activity: Skills Practice: Interviewing

The Interview Practice Process:

There will be three rounds of role-play to allow each person an opportunity to practice their interviewing and engagement skills. Each round will consist of a five-minute practice interview and two minutes of feedback. Roles include:

- One person will be the Permanency Planning Services caseworker
- One person will act as the person being interviewed
- One person will be an observer, keeping time and taking notes on an observation form to give strengths-based feedback

Role Assignments were determined at the end of yesterday during the Preparing for Initial Contact Interview activity when groups counted off by 3's. Yesterday's activity gave each person time to prepare for the interview they would conduct this morning.

Person 1:

- Interviews a parent, George or Monica, in Round 1
- Is the observer in Round 2
- ACTS the role of a child, either Van or Raymond, in Round 3

Person 2:

- ACTS the role of a parent, George or Monica, in Round 1
- Interviews the placement provider, Laverne, in Round 2
- Is the observer in Round 3

Person 3:

- Is the observer in Round 1
- ACTS as the placement provider, Laverne, in Round 2
- Interviews a child, either Van or Raymond, in Round 3
 - You have been welcomed into the home and received permission to speak with the child alone

Round 1:	Round 2:	Round 3:
• Person 1 interviews a parent, George or Monica • Person 2 acts as a parent • Person 3 is the observer and timekeeper	• Person 2 interviews a foster caregiver, Laverne • Person 3 acts as Laverne • Person 1 is the observer and timekeeper	• Person 3 interviews a child, Van or Raymond • Person 1 acts as a child • Person 2 is the observer and timekeeper

What did you do well?

What skills will you need to work on in the future?

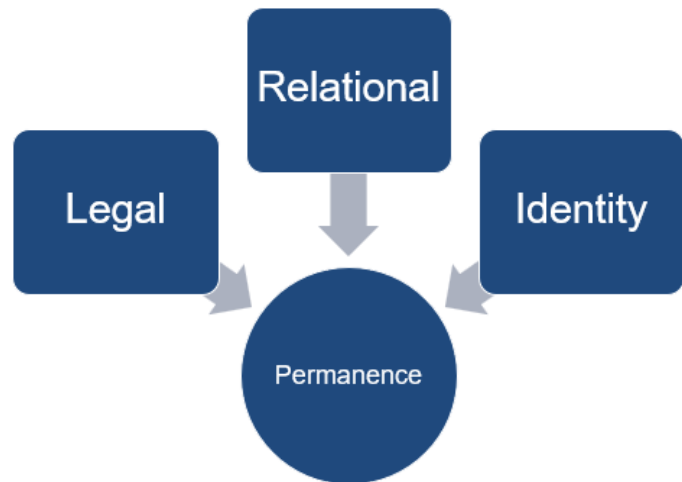
What is one thing you will remember to do when working with children and families on your caseload?

Permanency Plans and Concurrent Planning

Permanency Plans

Permanency

- Permanency includes legal, relational, and identity dimensions
- **Legal permanence** provides formal, lasting family relationships
- **Relational permanence** supports enduring connections with caring adults and family
- **Identity permanence** helps children maintain connections to social groups, ethnicity, family, community, and a sense of belonging



What are some ways that we talk about the concept of permanence outside of the realm of child welfare?

Permanency Stories from Former Youth in Care

Video: Permanency Stories from Former Youth in Care

Video: Permanency Stories from Former Youth in Care

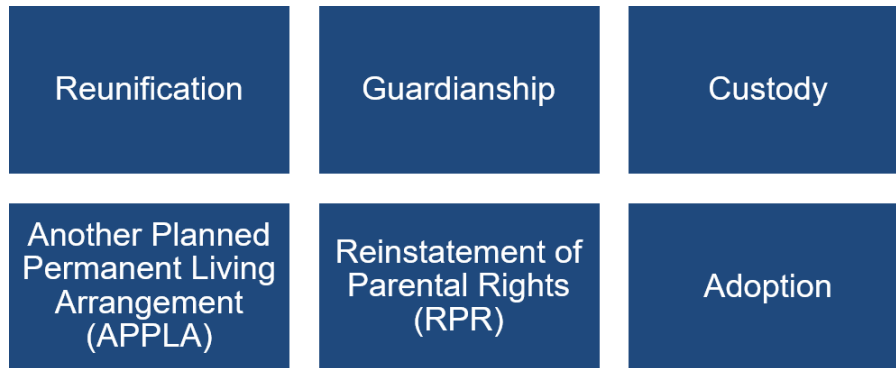
Video Discussion Questions

What did you notice in this video about relational permanence?

What did you notice about identity permanence?

What did you notice about the mention of legal permanence?

Legal Permanency Options



- Per policy, there are six possible permanency outcomes for children in foster care:
 1. Reunification
 2. Guardianship
 3. Custody
 4. Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA)
 5. Reinstatement of Parental Rights (RPR)
 6. Adoption
- NC Permanency Planning options and timeframes are defined slightly differently than federal guidance, which provides a minimal standard
- Each permanency option is defined by policy and offers benefits and limitations

Notes

Permanency Outcomes Knowledge Check

Activity Worksheet: Permanency Planning Legal Options Knowledge Check

Take the following quiz to test your knowledge of the six legal options for children in out-of-home care in North Carolina. Circle or mark your answer:

1. Which permanency option is generally considered first when it can be achieved safely?
 - A. Adoption
 - B. APPLA
 - C. Reunification
 - D. Guardianship

2. According to North Carolina permanency expectations, reunification should generally be achieved within:
 - A. 6 months
 - B. 12 months
 - C. 18 months
 - D. 24 months

3. Guardianship differs from adoption because:
 - A. Guardianship automatically terminates parental rights
 - B. Adoption is always temporary
 - C. Guardianship transfers certain legal responsibilities without terminating parental rights
 - D. Guardianship requires the child to remain in foster care

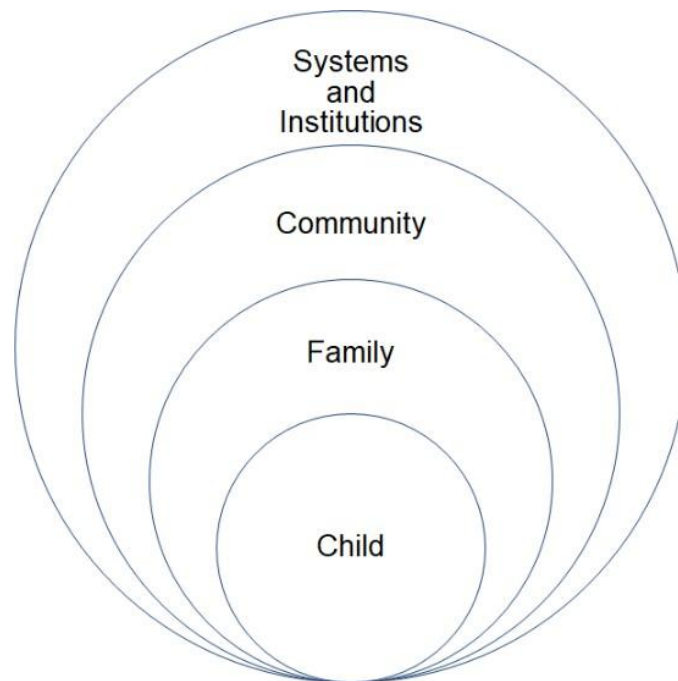
4. Adoption becomes the primary permanency goal when:
 - A. The child requests to remain in foster care indefinitely
 - B. Safe reunification is no longer appropriate, and parental rights have been or will be terminated
 - C. The child is placed with a foster parent for 30 days
 - D. The family declines services

5. North Carolina's permanency expectations generally identify adoption within:
 - A. 12 months
 - B. 18 months
 - C. 24 months
 - D. 36 months

6. What is the purpose of Reinstatement of Parental Rights (RPR)?
 - A. To return legal parental rights that were previously terminated when specific legal requirements are met
 - B. To establish guardianship
 - C. To transfer custody to DSS
 - D. To initiate adoption proceedings

7. Reinstatement of parental rights may be considered when:
 - A. Adoption has been finalized
 - B. Returning legal rights to a parent is determined to be in the child's best interests and legal criteria are met
 - C. The child remains safely reunified with a parent whose rights were never terminated
 - D. A foster care placement exceeds 30 days
8. Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA):
 - A. Is the preferred permanency option for all youth
 - B. Can be used only after other permanency options have been thoroughly considered and ruled out
 - C. Terminates parental rights automatically
 - D. Eliminates court oversight
9. Which of the following is an example of a permanency-focused practice?
 - A. Delaying decisions until the child reaches adulthood
 - B. Maintaining a child in foster care without exploring permanent connections
 - C. Actively assessing and pursuing the most appropriate permanent plan for the child
 - D. Waiting for the court to identify a permanency option
10. A child can safely return home because the parents have successfully addressed the safety concerns that led to removal. What permanency goal is most appropriate?
 - A. Adoption
 - B. Custody
 - C. Reunification
 - D. APPLA
11. A grandparent is willing and able to provide long-term care, and termination of parental rights is not necessary. Which permanency option may be most appropriate?
 - A. Guardianship
 - B. APPLA
 - C. Reinstatement of Parental Rights
 - D. Residential Treatment
12. A 16-year-old youth has been in care for several years. The agency has explored reunification, guardianship, custody, and adoption, and none are appropriate or achievable. Which permanency goal may be considered?
 - A. Reunification
 - B. Adoption
 - C. APPLA
 - D. Trial Home Placement

Barriers to Permanency

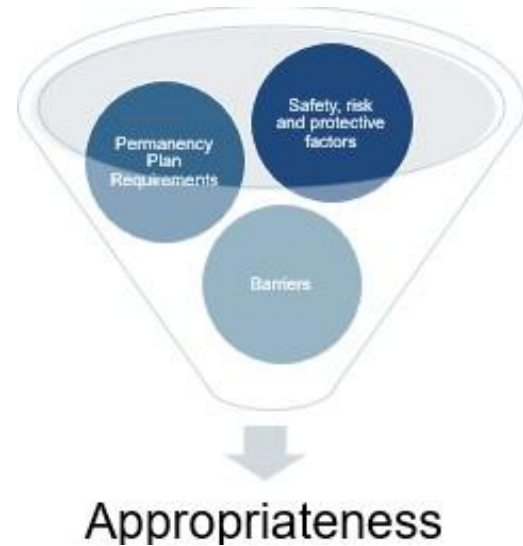


- Barriers to permanency exist at the child, family, community, and systems levels
- Family and environmental factors often interact and must be assessed holistically
- Case plans should address both family challenges and systemic barriers that affect a family's ability to achieve permanency

Notes

Appropriateness of Permanent Plans

- Determining the appropriateness of a permanent plan is a joint decision-making process that involves the family, child, child and family team, the caseworker, the caseworker's supervisor, and the courts
- The appropriateness of a permanent plan must go beyond just permanency plan requirements and consider safety, risk, protective capacities, protective factors, and possible barriers to permanency



What specific skills and knowledge do you think are necessary for assessing the appropriateness of a permanent plan?

What are the consequences if we don't have adequate skills in choosing the correct permanent plan for children?

Concurrent Planning

Concurrent Planning Benefits

	Quicker resolution and permanency for children
	Full disclosure and direct communication with all involved regarding permanence planning
	Few placements for a child in the event reunification is not possible
	Involvement of family members in identifying potential kinship placement options
	Ongoing relationship between parents and child's caregivers that supports child well-being

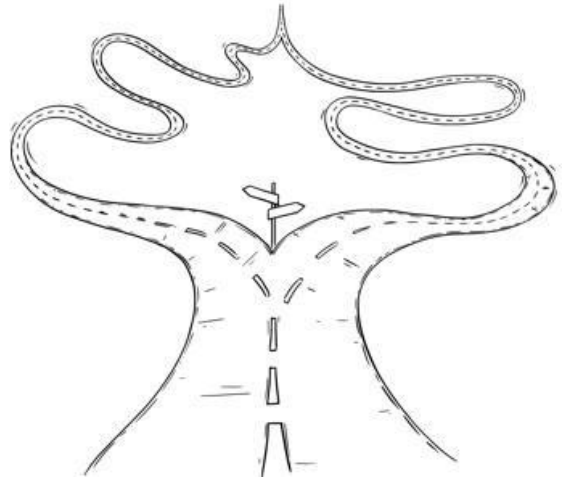
- Concurrent planning promotes faster permanency for children
- Families, children, resource parents, relatives, and DSS should have clear, direct communication about permanency goals, timelines, expectations, and potential outcomes
- When an alternative plan is being developed alongside reunification efforts, children are less likely to experience additional moves if reunification cannot occur
- Concurrent planning encourages early identification, involvement of, and collaboration with relatives and kin as supports, caregivers, or permanency resources
- Concurrent planning shall continue until:
 - (i) a permanent plan is or has been achieved or
 - (ii) reunification is not identified as a permanent plan (primary or secondary)
- Reunification shall be a primary or secondary plan unless the court relieves the department from making reunification efforts.

Notes

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Different Road, Same Destination

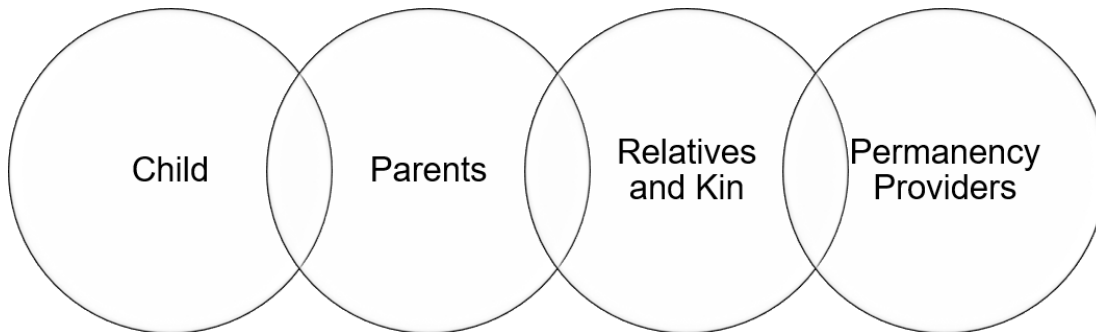
- Regardless of the legal permanency outcome, the goal is child well-being, safety, permanency, and connection
- Caseworkers should intentionally support:
 - Legal permanence
 - Relational permanence
 - Identity permanence
- Many case planning activities support multiple permanency outcomes simultaneously
- Family connections matter even when reunification is not possible
 - Children need access to their story and family connections regardless of the legal permanency outcome



What are our goals for all children?

Preparing for Permanence

Preparing for Permanence



- Preparing for permanency is an ongoing process that begins at entry into foster care
- Children, parents, relatives and kin, and permanency providers all require intentional preparation and support
- Effective permanency preparation promotes legal, relational, and identity permanence while supporting successful transitions

Notes

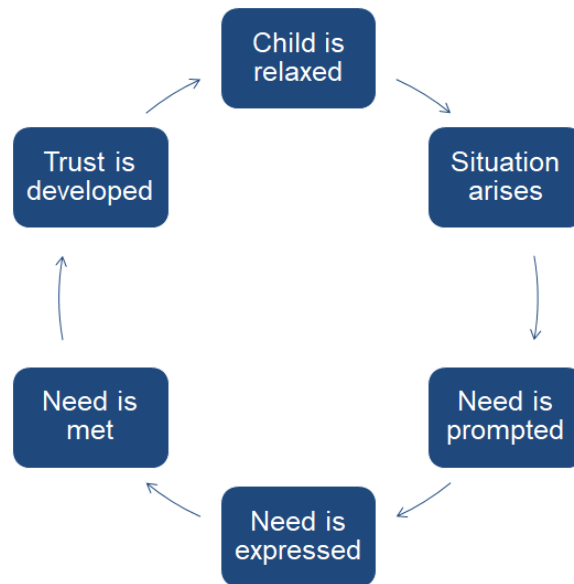
Attachment

Attachment

- Attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond between a child and caregiver
- Secure attachment is built through consistent, responsive caregiving that meets children's needs and is foundational to all human relationships
- Secure attachment helps children develop emotional regulation, trust, and social-emotional skills
- Children with secure attachments are better able to cope with stress, adversity, and traumatic experiences

Notes

Creating Attachment



[Video: The Attachment Cycle](#)

[Video: The Attachment Cycle](#)

What stood out to you about how attachment is formed through everyday interactions between a child and caregiver?

What behaviors might a child show when the attachment cycle is repeatedly disrupted?

How can understanding the attachment cycle help you make better decisions in permanency planning work?

Supporting Child Needs to Build Attachment



- Attachment is built on a responsive interaction between children and their caretakers
- Connection and support needs occur when a child is uncomfortable, stressed, and distressed, or has basic needs that they are unable to meet for themselves
 - Caretakers meet connection and support needs by providing comfort, soothing, and co-regulation
 - Caretakers meet basic needs with resources to meet needs
- Exploration needs are when a child desires to explore the world through curiosity, play, and investigation
 - Caretakers meet exploration needs by monitoring and encouraging children to explore and intervening when danger is present that children do not recognize or are unequipped to manage
- As children age and grow, they become more self-sufficient in meeting their basic needs and managing their emotions
 - During adolescence, personal development leads children further away from those who protect them to explore intimate relations and to develop a sense of belonging to a community
- Attachment and a caretaker's ability to meet a child's needs must be a part of every assessment we do in child welfare
- Meeting a child's needs is providing a secure base for children to return to when they have needs

What caregiver behaviors help children develop trust and a sense of security?

How do children communicate their needs for connection, support, and comfort?

What does healthy exploration look like for children and adolescents at different ages?

How can understanding these attachment needs improve your assessment and permanency planning practice?

Attachment Continuum



- **Attachment** occurs on a continuum from secure to insecure to disorganized attachment
- **Secure:** Children who are secure in their relationship readily seek contact with the caretaker when stressed or worried. In return, the caretaker responds appropriately. It can be said that the child and caretaker are in tune with each other
- **Insecure:** Children are not confident that their caretaker will meet their needs and respond to this lack of trust with anxiety and avoidance or both
 - Anxious children may intensify their emotions to ensure they are not ignored and may refuse to accept the caretaker's attempts to address their needs
 - Avoidant children may downplay their distress by suppressing their need
- **Disorganized:** Children who experience disorganized attachment are left emotionally overwhelmed and physically distressed for long periods of time. They often don't have a clear way to cope with this distress. Disorganized attachment is much less common than secure and insecure attachment

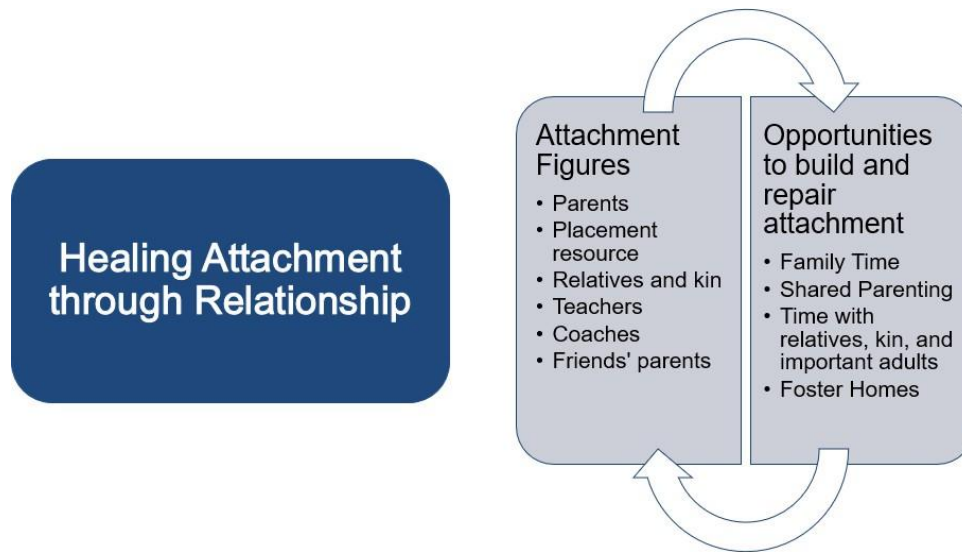
When children are upset or stressed, what behaviors tell you they are looking for support from an adult?

What differences have you observed between children who trust adults to meet their needs and those who do not?

What caregiver or family circumstances can make it difficult to consistently respond to a child's needs?

How can understanding caregiver-child relationships improve your assessment and permanency planning practice?

Healing Attachment through Relationship



- Attachment is an important component of our development
 - There are many elements of the foster care experience that fundamentally challenge the relationship with attachment figures
 - There are also opportunities, if taken with intention, that can build, support, grow, and heal attachment relationships for children and youth
- The loss of the primary attachment figure in a child's life causes intense distress, even when the attachment is insecure or distrustful
 - Understanding the impact of this separation on children's behavior and emotional state is crucial to supporting attachment
- Repairing the relationship between the child and primary caretaker is the most effective way to promote healthy attachment
- Caseworkers need to offer support and understanding, and help parents learn skills to adjust their routines, expectations, or interactions with the child to foster bonding
- Acknowledging that children will develop attachments with other significant people in their lives is also important to healing from unhealthy attachments
 - This may be especially true for older children, who are likely to have already developed important relationships
- Supporting children in remaining connected to secondary attachment figures in their lives through relational and identity permanency efforts is crucial
- Placement providers will also play important roles in healing relationship trauma and attachment
- Research suggests that continuing contact with birth parents after a separation, particularly in the transition to foster care, may help the child come to terms with the separation, and could play a crucial role in preparing the child to accept a new caretaker

What was something new you learned about attachment and the healing process?

How does our understanding of attachment support best practice in Permanency Planning Services?

How might you use your understanding of healing relationship trauma and attachment with the families you serve? Notes

Family Engagement: Family Time and Shared Parenting

Family Engagement and Alliance

Family Rules and Tradition

- Rules and traditions shape belonging
- Separation can disrupt more than placement
- Incorporating family rules and traditions into the placement setting and in Family Time supports belonging while in out-of-home care
- Caseworkers help surface what matters

Activity: Family Rules and Tradition

What to do:

- Write down the rules and traditions from your childhood home
- The training facilitator will direct where to write (on flipchart paper or sticky notes)

Activity Discussion Questions:

What did this activity remind you about how everyday family rules and traditions shape a child's sense of belonging?

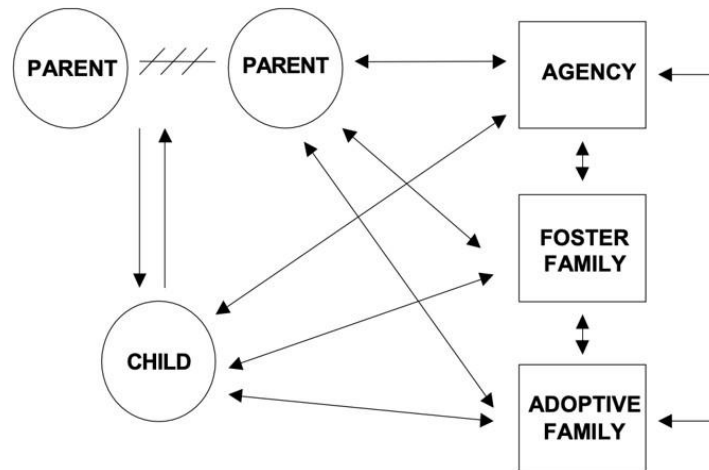
What might a child lose, emotionally, relationally, or for their identity, when those routines and traditions are disrupted by placement?

How can shared parenting help birth parents and resource parents preserve what matters most to the child?

How can Family Time support connection to family traditions and identity?

As the caseworker, what questions could you ask to help parents and resource parents exchange this information respectfully and purposefully?

The Alliance Model of Child Welfare Practice



- An alliance in a family refers to two members sharing a common goal or interest that does not harm other family members
- The Alliance Model describes how caseworkers, parents, and placement providers can promote relationships that support collaboration and child well-being
 - The lines and arrows in the diagram represent alliances
 - Slashed marks on the diagram represent a damaged or broken alliance
 - Solid lines represent a positive alliance
 - When an alliance among members is broken, the child is forced to form two separate alliances with the parties involved to survive
- When parents, caseworkers, and placement providers have conflictual relationships, children have conflicting loyalties that impact their behaviors, emotions, and well-being
- The goal is for everyone to work together to preserve or rebuild the family around the child's long-term welfare
- Shared parenting and Family Time offer opportunities to build an alliance

How might loyalty conflicts show up in how a child behaves?

Tools of Family Engagement and Alliance

- Family time and shared parenting are tools for permanency, family engagement, and alliance-building
- Family time and contact plans are required and provide opportunities to assess parent-child interactions and progress toward reunification
- Family time should occur in the least restrictive environment and strengthen family, sibling, and relational connections
- Shared parenting creates an active partnership among parents, foster parents, and the child welfare agency
- Quality shared parenting and family time support reunification, relational permanency, and healthy identity development for the child
- Quality shared parenting and family time prepare the child, siblings, and parents for reunification
- Caseworkers should observe the interactions between the child and parent, and among siblings
- Family time strengthens sibling relationships and supports relational permanence
- Shared parenting involves communication and planning regarding the child's daily care and needs
- Placement providers and kin play vital roles in supporting birth families



Notes

The Basics

Family Time is a right, not a privilege

- Family Time is a fundamental right for children in care:
 - Family Time is not elective or a bonus
- Reactions to Family Time can be intense
- Family Time is not based on agency convenience and should occur in natural settings
- Family Time and Contact Plans are required and must continue until the court orders the termination of said time or termination of parental rights
- Family Time between siblings only ends if the court orders it to end
- Before Family Time can be terminated due to parental concerns, the following must be demonstrated:
 - Demonstrate that the child's difficulties are not a child's normal anxiety response to parent-child visits
 - Demonstrate that reasonable efforts have been made to explain to parents the implications of not working to improve visits
 - Provide support for the decision through consultation with medical, psychiatric, or other appropriate professionals
 - Petition for a court order limiting visitation, even if the parents agree with this plan
- Caseworkers cannot withhold or stop court-ordered visitation based on a parent's substance use or a positive drug screen alone
- Strong Shared Parenting supports meaningful, high-quality Family Time

Notes

What does it feel like to be a birth mother with a child in foster care?

Video: North Carolina Lived Experience: The Birth Parent's Perspective

Video: North Carolina Lived Experience: The Birth Parent's Perspective

What were some words that stood out to you?

How can you apply what you've learned to your practice with children and families?

Shared Parenting Overview of Policy and Procedure Requirements: Knowledge Check:

How soon after placement must a shared parenting meeting occur?

What placements require that shared parenting meetings occur?

Who participates in shared parenting meetings?

When does shared parenting stop?

Handout: Shared Parenting Benefits Everyone!

Shared Parenting Benefits for Everyone

- Feelings of grief and loss that both a child and a birth parent might feel upon separation are minimized. Children can see that their birth family is okay and still loves them; this can help a child relax.
- The child's relationship with the birth parent can be maintained.
- Resource parents can form a realistic picture of the birth parent's strengths and needs.
- The birth parents can be reassured that their child is in a nurturing and stable home.
- Resource parents can model effective parenting. By knowing what good parenting looks like, birth parents can practice parenting skills.
- Resource parents can ask birth parents about the child's schedules, fears, allergies, sleep habits, likes, and dislikes. Resource parents can also learn culturally specific child-care strategies from birth family members, which can enhance a child's cultural identity.
- Birth parents can view the resource family as a resource rather than a threat.
- Planning for visitation can be simplified.
- Transitions back into the birth parent's home can be smoother.
- After the child returns home, there can be ongoing support.

"Child welfare systems need to attend to parents' sense of safety and have the first step in working with parents be around having them feel that they are safe, and their child is safe."

~ Norma McCarthy, Rise

Benefits for the child

- Consistency of care is more likely
- Child does not have to develop separate alliances
- Child can relax and attend to growing and playing (vs. worrying about the parents)
- Child's needs are more fully met because their resource parents are more fully informed (and vice versa)
- Minimizes the trauma of placement for both children and parents by preserving and nurturing children's relationships with their parents, siblings, and extended family
- Shared parenting contacts are a great opportunity to work on the child's Lifebook

Benefits for the child's parents

- Able to play a role in the child's adjustment to the resource home
- Feel valued through sharing their insights with the resource parents
- Experience decreased anxiety about the care their child is receiving
- Learn new skills for managing difficult behaviors

- Minimizes the trauma of placement for both children and parents by preserving and nurturing children's relationships with their parents, siblings, and extended family

"Birth parents may be more likely to make improvements in their life situations when they have a positive relationship and sense of support from the foster family. This relationship can be extremely helpful for children and their parents dealing with separation."

~ Sandra Killelt, birth parent

Benefits for the resource parents

- Gain valuable information that will ease the child's adjustment in the home
- May see fewer behavioral concerns with the child
- Experience fewer conflicts with the child's parents related to the care of the child
- May be able to continue to play a role in the child's life after reunification
- Helps resource parents make reasonable and prudent parenting decisions that are in line with the child's parents' decisions and/or wishes

Benefits for the agency

- Reduces worker time needed for transportation and supervision of visits
- Increased placement stability
- Plan for permanence may proceed more quickly
- Establishes trusting relationships by reassuring the child's parents that their children are well cared for
- Creates positive, ongoing connections among everyone involved in caring for the child
- Improves family engagement through the life of the case by immediately demonstrating to the child's parents that social workers can be trusted to follow through on their promises and commitments

Handout: Shared Parenting Throughout the Life of the Case

Shared Parenting is about both sets of caretakers joining together to make the best possible decisions for the children they are responsible for. Shared parenting can also remain important when adoption becomes the permanent plan. State law allows for Post-Adoption Mediated Contact Agreements.

Before a child in foster care is relinquished for adoption, the child's parents and the prospective adoptive parents may voluntarily participate in a court-approved mediation process to develop a post-adoption contact agreement.

How the Child Welfare Caseworker Can Help:

Advocate for the child's best interest by supporting biological parents and prospective adoptive parents to explore their concerns and how possible post-contact arrangements might address those concerns

Inform families about the option for post-adoption contact agreements early in the process

Support participation in mediation and ensure all parties understand their rights.

Help biological and prospective adoptive parents develop realistic expectations, keeping in mind that the mediation process is voluntary and either party may decide not to attend or may leave the session at any point. This decision will not be used against any party by the court or service providers.

Help families prepare emotionally and logistically for their roles in the agreement

Discuss Success Coach with adoptive families for post-permanency support

By guiding both families with compassion and clarity, CW caseworkers help build strong, stable, and respectful adoptive relationships.

To learn more, review the Post-Adoption Mediated Contact Agreement section of Permanency Planning Services Policy, Protocol, and Guidance

Family Time Knowledge Check: True or False

Circle or mark your response to each statement.

True	False	Family Time refers to visits between parents and children supervised by the caseworker at the DSS office.
True	False	Family Time must occur between the parent and children within 14 days of the child entering foster care.
True	False	If in separate placements, Family Time between siblings must occur within 7 calendar days of entering foster care.
True	False	Family Time and Contact Plans should be presented at court hearings and incorporated into the court order.
True	False	To ensure coordination is documented in one place, all Family Time arrangements are made in one plan, even if parents and siblings are visiting separately.
True	False	Parents must be notified within 7 days of any changes to the Family Time and Contact Plan
True	False	Shared Parenting is addressed in the Family Time and Contact Plan.

Notes

Assessing Family Time

Assess the caretaker's success with the planned frequency of family time with each child in care, as well as the quality of family time.

Caretaker efforts to maintain consistent family time	Caretaker behavior with the child
☐ Consistent ☐ Inconsistent ☐ Does not follow/prohibited	☐ Positive interactions ☐ Showing improvement ☐ Unhealthy or harmful interactions

Part 1, Section 3 of the Reunification Assessment assesses Family Time.

First, the level at which the caretaker has participated in the Family Time Plan is rated, using the scale:

- ☐ Consistent
- ☐ Inconsistent
- ☐ Does not follow/prohibited

Then, the tool prompts assessment of caretaker behavior during family time with the child, using a scale:

- ☐ Positive interactions
- ☐ Showing improvement
- ☐ Unhealthy or harmful interactions

Assessment based on:

- Direct observation when possible
- Observations of the child
- Reports from placement providers or alternative caregivers

Caseworkers should consider these areas when constructing Family Time plans.

The fact that Family Time participation and quality are key components of the Reunification Assessment underscores the importance of this time between children and their parents or caretakers.

Notes

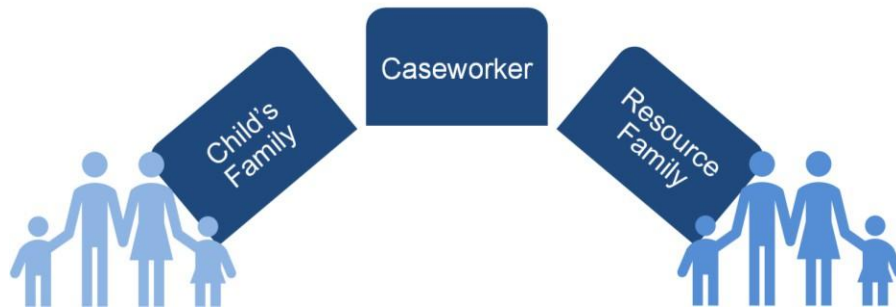
What sources of information might you utilize to complete your assessment?

Which of those sources may be more difficult to assess?

How might you construct Family Time visits to evaluate the more difficult areas to assess?

Roles and Responsibilities

Family Time and Shared Parenting



Activity: Family Time and Shared Parenting

What to do:

- Each small group will be assigned a role:
 - Child's Family role in Family Time
 - Child's Family role in Shared Parenting
 - Caseworker's role in Family Time
 - Caseworker's role in Shared Parenting
 - Resource Family's role in Family Time
 - Resource Family's role in Shared Parenting
- Record the role and circle either Family Time or Shared Parenting below
- Identify a notetaker and spokesperson for your group
- Develop a list of responsibilities for your group's assigned role and record it on a flipchart paper
- Be prepared to report out

Role: _____ in Family Time Shared Parenting

Responsibilities List

--	--

Barriers to Family Engagement

Barriers and Solutions to Shared Parenting

Video: Overcoming Common Barriers to Shared Parenting

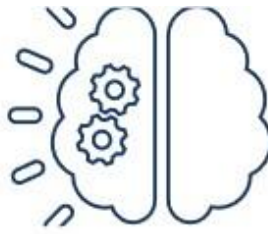
Video: Overcoming Common Barriers to Shared Parenting

Notes

Barriers to Family Engagement: Family Time and Shared Parenting



Safety



Values,
Stereotypes, and
Bias



Logistics

- Shared parenting is essential for the well-being of children in out-of-home care
- Barriers can interfere with successful shared parenting
- Shared parenting requires intentional work to address barriers
- Caseworkers can partner with families and placement providers to identify solutions that support collaboration and permanency

Barriers to family engagement fall into three categories:

- Safety: considers both physical and psychological safety. In this category, we would consider domestic violence relationships and patterns of physical aggression. We will also consider the emotional components that influence safety, like shame, grief, trauma, and anxiety.
- Values, Stereotypes, and Bias: consider the beliefs that we hold that make family engagement difficult. This could be a caseworker who believes that the parents aren't really experts on their children, or a parent who believes that all foster parents want to adopt children and keep them away from them forever.
- Logistics: are the competing demands that get in the way of planning. These could include transportation challenges (such as limited transportation, long distances between homes, lack of reliable vehicles), conflicting work, school, extracurricular, medical, or therapy schedules, or childcare needs for other children during meetings. A placement change also disrupts the developing family engagement, and family time and shared parenting routines.

Notes

Activity Worksheet: Barriers and Solutions to Family Engagement

What to do:

- Spend three minutes brainstorming ideas about what barriers exist for family engagement, shared parenting, and family time
- Record your ideas in the table below
- When time is up, write your barrier ideas on the corresponding flipchart
- If the barrier is already listed, place a check mark next to it
- The training facilitator will form six small groups and assign a category:
 - Shared Parenting-Safety
 - Shared Parenting-Values, Stereotypes, and Biases
 - Shared Parenting-Logistics
 - Family Time-Safety
 - Family Time-Values, Stereotypes, and Biases
 - Family Time-Logistics
- Work with your group to form strategies to mitigate, resolve, or overcome barriers to shared parenting
- Remember, it is possible for multiple barriers to be addressed with a single strategy, or that multiple strategies may address a single barrier
- You will have three minutes to share your group's strategies when time is up
- Nominate one person to share your group's strategies

Activity Worksheet: Barriers to Family Engagement, Shared Parenting, and Family Time

Logistics			
Values, Stereotypes, and Biases			
Safety			
	Parents	Caseworkers	Placement Providers

1

Activity Worksheet: Strategies to Mitigate, Resolve, or Overcome Barriers

Assigned Category: _____

Strategy Notes

UNC Family and Children's Resource Program: Shared Parenting

Video: [Fostering NC: Creating Permanency](#)

Video: [Fostering NC: Creating Permanency](#)

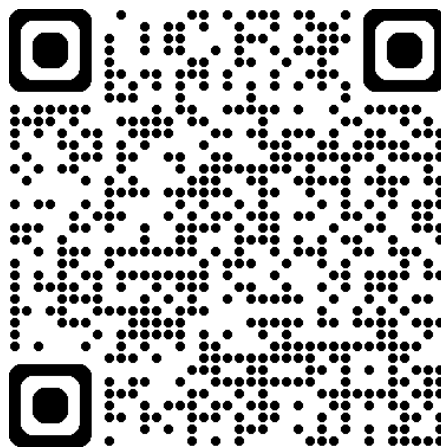
What impact do you think a shared parenting relationship could have on a child's permanency?

Engagement through Shared Parenting and Family Time Learning Lab

Activity: Engagement and Advocacy

What to do:

- Each group will be assigned a member according to their group number:
 1. Placement Provider
 2. Court and GAL
 3. Supervisor
 4. Relative and Kin
 5. Parent
- With your small group, read the scenario specific to your group member found on the “Engagement and advocacy” activity worksheet on the next page
- Create a short, one-minute “elevator speech” or “pitch” advocating for Family Time and Shared Parenting to your assigned group member. Think about how you will get this member on board
- Consider:
 - What role does your audience member play in the Permanency Planning Process?
 - Identify how your audience member might contribute to successful Family Time and Shared Parenting
- Use the QR code to review the ACF Bulletin and pay close attention to recommendations that start on page 13
- Use the NC Child Welfare Manual: Permanency Planning Policy, Protocol, and Guidance policy and your experience to develop your pitch
- Select someone to share your pitch with the larger group:
 - Identify your member’s role and their power in the Permanency Planning process
 - Share your pitch



**Administration for Children and Families Bulletin:
Family Time and visitation for children and youth in out-of-home care**

Activity Worksheet: Engagement and Advocacy

Scenarios:

1. Placement Provider: The children have just returned from the visit and are acting out. The resource parent is upset and believes the visits are counterproductive. They have been hesitant to reach out to the parent to get their perspective. Educate the resource parent on best practices and pitch the reason family time will continue and support for strengthening Shared Parenting efforts.
2. Court and Guardian ad Litem: The Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) is known for wanting supervised family time. It is early in the case but there are protective factors evident that would keep the children safe for 3 hours of family time. The resource parent and birth parent have a strong relationship. The resource parent has volunteered to transport the children and will be available if needed for support. Prepare your pitch for the court for unsupervised parenting time, considering how to counter the GAL objections.
3. Supervisor: Your supervisor is out on leave, and another child welfare worker has an opportunity to temporarily fill in. Family Time visits are at the agency's discretion. They have been taking place in the office. You have determined that family time in the community, supervised by relatives with transport provided by the placement provider, would be safe and support progress toward getting parents back in a natural setting. The worker filling in behind your supervisor is reluctant to make any changes till your supervisor returns. No one is sure when that will be. Develop your pitch for your temporary supervisor and the program manager.
4. Relatives and Nonrelative Kin: The mother relapsed and tested positive for substances. The children's relative kinship provider wants the mother's family time suspended as a result. Develop your pitch to inform the relative that suspending the mother's family time would not be an acceptable plan, and explain how they can work together through Shared Parenting.
5. Parents: The case is progressing, and the father is hesitant about increasing family time. His 12-year-old daughter is still angry with him and either yells at him or ignores him during family time. The resource parent has experienced similar behaviors from the child and has recently had success with a few parenting techniques. Develop your pitch to discuss with Dad the benefits of increasing family time and accessing the resource parent for support.

What is your member's role and power around Family Time?

Pitch Development: include what you are advocating for, facts that support your request, best practices, policy, or data that supports your argument

Activity: Engagement Considerations and Planning

What to do:

- Each group will be assigned a case member:
 - George
 - Monica
 - Van
 - Raymond
 - Laverne
- Prepare to engage your group's assigned individual to complete the Family Time and Contact Plan
- Record the following on flipchart paper:
 - Identify who the group is at the top by labeling it with the assigned person's name
 - Make a list of considerations and information needed to share, following the rules of confidentiality
 - Make a list of -
 - Make a list of barriers or safety concerns that must be addressed for this Family Time and Contact Plan
- You have 7 minutes to complete this part of the activity
- When time is up, develop two strategies for each of the following:
 - To center the considerations and information important to the assigned person
 - To mitigate the worries, barriers, or safety concerns
- Add your group strategies to the flipchart
- You have 10 minutes to complete this part of the activity
- When time is up, post your group's strategy flipchart paper on the wall
- When all groups have posted their strategies, walk around the room to see what each group recorded

Activity Worksheet: Engagement Considerations and Planning

Assigned Case Member's Name: _____

What should be considered when preparing for this meeting?

Anticipated Meeting Outcome(s)

What considerations and information are needed to share, following the rules of confidentiality?

What concerns or worries might this person have about engaging in the process of building a Family Time and Contact Plan?



What barriers or safety concerns must be addressed for this Family Time and Contact Plan?



Planning: What statements, letters, and talking points should I prepare for this meeting?



Develop two strategies to center the considerations and information important to the assigned person

1.

2.

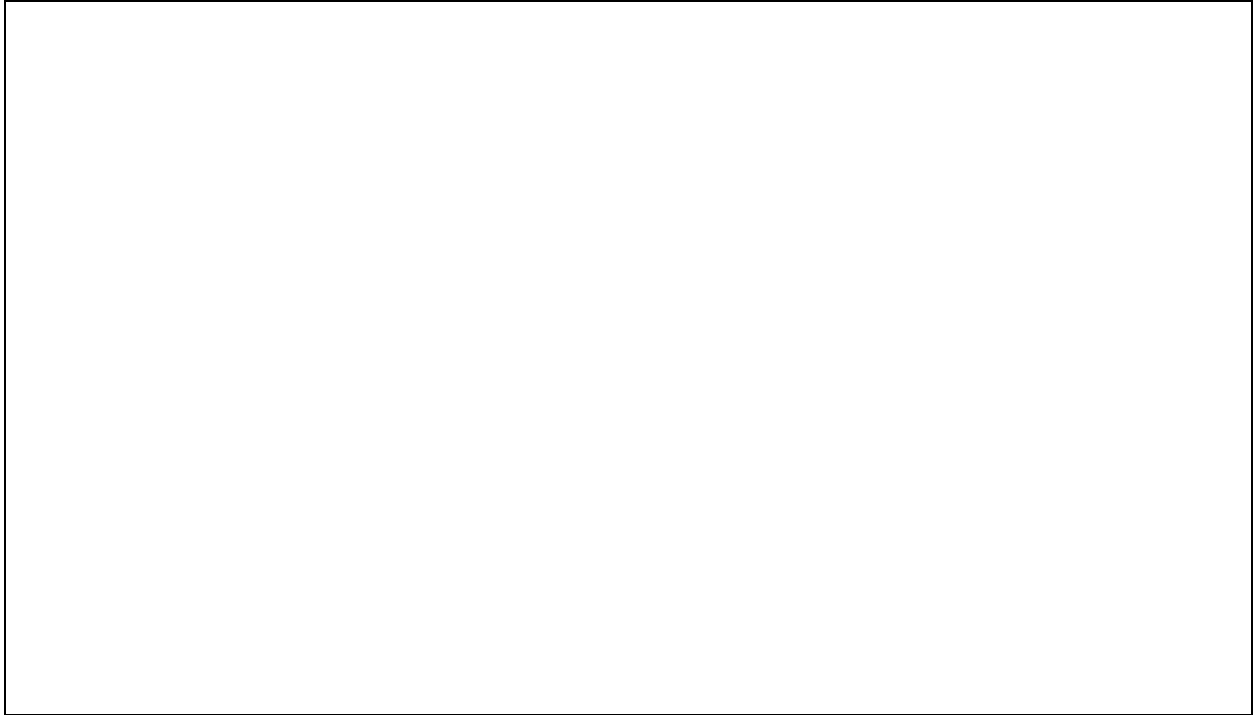
Develop two strategies to mitigate the worries, barriers, or safety concerns

1.

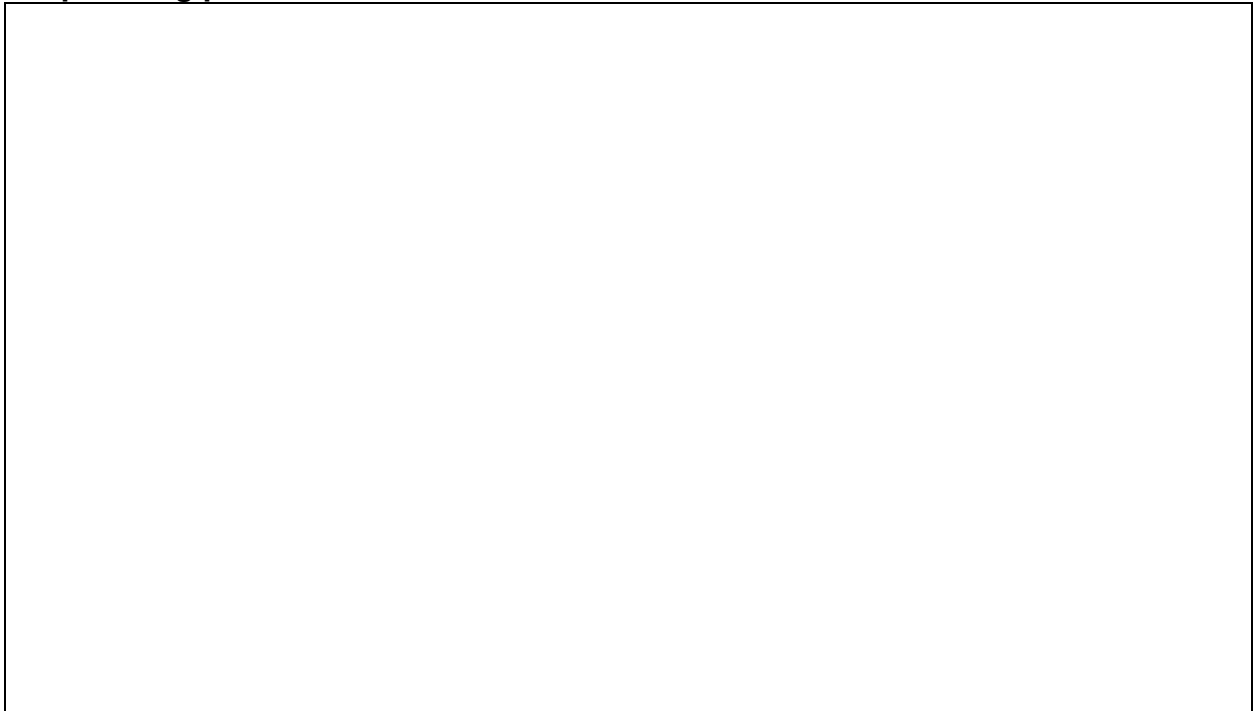
2.

Activity Discussion Questions:

Which perspective challenged your assumptions the most, and how might that change the way you prepare for a Family Time and Contact Plan meeting in practice?



Looking across all five perspectives, what is one strategy you would use to build trust and engagement while ensuring the needs of all parties are considered in the planning process?



Engagement Conflict Management

Activity: Engagement Conflict Management

What to do:

- Remain in the same group as the previous activity
- Each group member will receive a different statement
- One participant will read their statement aloud to the group
- Group members will have three minutes to practice responding to the statement
- Repeat this process until all group members have had an opportunity to practice

Activity Discussion Questions:

What went well during the practice?

How might this practice prepare you for engagement with children, parents, and placement providers?

What might you do differently when you have a similar situation in the field?

Working with Relatives

Relative Diligent Search

Family Search and Engagement

The SEEK model for Family Search and Engagement is presented by Kinnect:

- Searching involves seeking diligently in pursuit of finding relatives and kin
- Engaging involves initiating meaningful connections with relatives and kin
- Exploring involves inquiring, assessing, and understanding the contributions of kin to move ahead
- Kinnect involves bringing together or into contact relatives and kin with the family to establish a real link

The
SEEK
Method
from
Kinnect

Search

Engage

Explore

Kinnect

Federal and state law requires DSS to identify and notify all adult relatives and other persons with legal custody of a sibling of the child within 30 days of the child's removal from their parents or caretakers.

Documentation of diligent search efforts must be provided to the court

Notes

Handout: Family Search and Engagement

Social Service or Criminal Record Databases

Always try to utilize all resources available to you, starting with an individual's history with the child welfare or criminal justice systems. These sources can provide not only detailed history, but relationship information, possible contact information, and leads to identifying more relatives and kin.

Social Media

Use these tools for individual searches, friends' lists, location identification, employment, and social connections through photo tags, etc. Also, cross-reference information from other search resources.

Free People Searches (Connect Our Kids, True People, Fast People)

Search for names, locations, and reverse address searches. These sites can provide addresses, phone numbers, and lists of known relatives and associates.

findagrave.com

Use these sites to search for deceased individuals. **findagrave.com** provides details of birth and death, obituaries, location of burial, and links to any other known deceased relatives. **Familysearch.org** requires the creation of a profile but is completely free. It provides information on the 1930 and 1940 censuses, draft records, marriage and death certificates.

Local Personal Property Searches

Access a specific county's assessors' website to do a personal property search. This is useful for finding and verifying good addresses for relatives, and doing reverse address searches to locate individuals.

vinelink.com / bop.gov / locator.ice.gov

Access these sites to locate incarcerated individuals. Vinelink is used for State facilities, and bureau of prisons (BOP) is used for Federal facilities.

Google / Bing

When all else fails, simply google names, addresses, etc. to yield a variety of information.

Diligent Search Tools

- ☐ Search.connectourkids.org
- Paid Search (i.e., Accurant, CLEAR)
- Child Support & Benefits
- Online court records
- Auditor's website
- Property records
- Obituaries
- Social media
- Online newspapers
- Vinelink.com/Bop.gov
- Voter registrations
- Truepeoplesearch.com
- ☐ Fastpeoplesearch.com
- Findagrave.com
- Familysearch.org
- Whitepages.com
- Google.com / Bing.com
- Radaris.com
- Thatsthem.com
- Peoplefinder.com
- Legacy.com
- ☐ Mylife.com

Outside the Box

Depending on the search, use all resources that are available or come to mind. This could include professional registries, utility info, the department of vital records, funeral home records, income maintenance databases, the DMV, etc.

GET CREATIVE!

All searching should lead to efforts to engage. Any of these lists can be used to promote kin exploration with parents and other family members.

If you only have 15 minutes to search, follow these steps to locate **Kin Names** and **Contact Info** quickly:

Access LexisNexus® Accurint®	• Run an Advanced Person Search • Start with First and Last Name (provide date of birth if able) • Click the LexID (for individuals) once you locate the correct individual • Try every phone number shown • Run a Real Time Phones Search • Cross-reference with numbers yielded from Advanced Persons Search • Attempt any of the numbers not listed in initial search
Access Connect Our Kids	• Run www.search.connectourkids.org search and cross-reference with phone numbers previously found • Attempt any new phone numbers yielded
Try Additional Sites	• Access www.truepeoplesearch.com, www.fastpeoplesearch.com, or www.thatsthem.com • Provide Name, City, and State, and narrow down age ranges if necessary • Cross-reference with phone numbers previously found • Attempt any new phone numbers or emails yielded • Click on any of the individuals named in Possible Relatives and Possible Associates and search for contact information for them as well
Search Social Media	• Find one of the parents (even if they have already been spoken with) • Check for known connections (friends and family) • Look for the same last names and those who interact frequently • Use the Search Profile magnifying glass tool to search key terms such as “mom” and “family” to access posts with these words • Look for life events (birthdays, weddings, family reunions/gatherings) • Look for details in pictures, frequented-location posts, and any other helpful info • If possible, send a generic message (See Social Media Overview Handout for sample messages) • Follow all agency policies and procedures related to social media use
Obituaries	• Try searching obituaries like www.legacy.com or www.findagrave.com to find additional names • Click More Options on main screen • Fill in First Name, Last Name, State, and City if known, and choose date range • Try a google search of the deceased person’s name with the word “obituary” along with the name of a child or spouse

Handout: SEEK: Family Resistance

Possible Reasons for Resistance

- Fear of children being removed
- Experience of poor service
- Negative reputation of agency within community
- Mental health
- Substance misuse
- Trauma
- Low social support

Common Behaviors/Reactions

- Ambivalence
- Mixed feelings/contradicting ideas
- Weighing positive and negative components
- Denial or avoidance
- Refusal to acknowledge or accept
- Defense mechanism
- Placing blame elsewhere

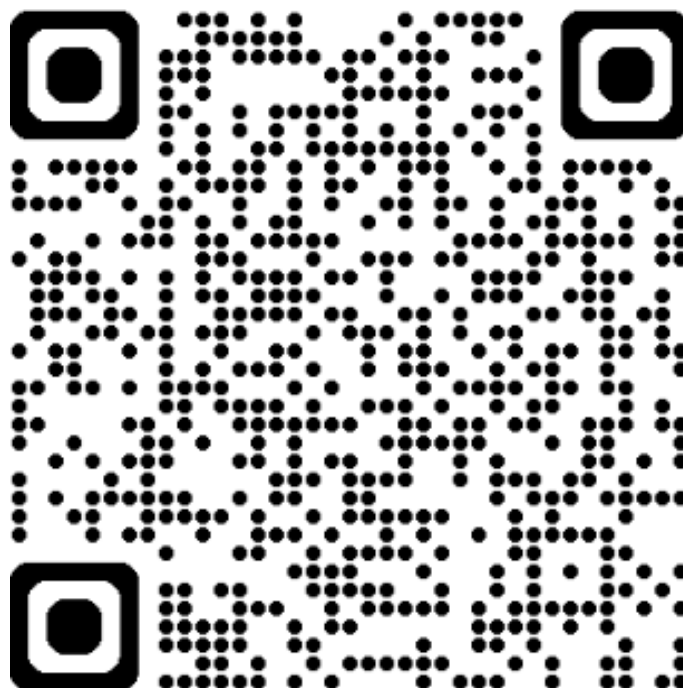
Strategies for Navigating Ambivalence

- Ask them to commit to a process to determine if they are a permanency option
- Develop criteria and benchmarks to determine the ability to be caregivers and the degree of involvement (informal, guardian, custody, foster or adoptive)
- Work with them to determine their threshold for loss/sacrifices
- Take the time to have them self-identify needed supports
- Develop alternative exit or back-up plans that prevent compromising the child's safety and well-being

Verbal Cues Indicating Potential Risks

- "I'm not sure I can do this."
- "Is it okay with the children's parents?"
- "I don't get along with the birth parent."
- "What if things don't work out?"
- "Can I change my mind?"
- "I only want to be a grandparent."
- "How long will the child be here?"

Handout: SEEK: Family Support Plan



SEEK Family Support Plan

<https://www.kinnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/SEEK.Family-Support-Plan.01.22.pdf>

Handout: SEEK: Sample Family Involvement Spectrum

When children enter the foster care system, _____ attempts to ensure that they have contact with relatives/kin. You have been identified as a relative, kin or support person for a child involved with _____.

Children need support from people who know and care about them. We are asking you to determine what level of involvement is best for you and this child. Keep in mind, this can change over time. What type or level of involvement will you consider for _____?

Limited	Some contact through letters and/or phone calls. I would consider phone calls, texting, Skype or other video calls. We will have each other's phone numbers and we can exchange letters. Contact is sporadic and I can offer information and advice.
Checking In	See child at family reunions, holidays or birthday. Visit once in a while, and while with family or friends. Occasional phone calls to check in, send a birthday card and recognize important events/accomplishments. Contact is occasional and includes some face-to-face time. I can offer support and encouragement.
Routine	Regular, ongoing visits for a couple hours with the child. These can be at my home, at the park or other locations we decide. We keep in contact on the phone and see each other on a regular basis. The child knows my family and I am involved in the child's life.
Invested	Regular, ongoing visits that are overnight or for the weekend. I can offer supervision during summer break or non-school days. Child can spend the night or up to two weeks with me. I offer a lot of support and can be consistent in this child's life.
Committed	I can take placement responsibility for this child. The child can live in my home, and I can care for them on a full-time basis. I will care for the child as if they were my own. I will always be part of this child's life, and they will be a part of my family.

Comments or concerns I have about involvement with this child:

Other family members that could be involved:

Handout: SEEK Myth and Barrier Busting

MYTH 1: “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.”

- Family members can distance themselves from unsafe situations and recognize risk.
- Everyone has the capacity to change.
- People do things better the second time around.
- It can be scary, but so is not being with family.
- We are also looking for natural supports. Everyone has something to contribute.

MYTH 2: “If they don’t know this relative, a stranger is a stranger.”

- With two similar caregiver options, family is preferred because the child will have a chance to learn stories, meet family, learn family history and heritage, and stay in their community.
- Family knows other family.
- The caregiver may be able to provide relative connections to those who are unable to serve as the caregiver but still want to be involved.
- Relatives are the least restrictive care.
- Check for child welfare service bias – foster parents may feel “safer” because professionals know them, but family is safe too.

MYTH 3: “You can’t ensure safety when you are working so quickly.”

- Home visits and assessments are conducted to evaluate safety, as well as additional extensive conversations to ensure peace and safety.
- Quickly and carefully are not mutually exclusive.
- This work explores all aspects of the family and drills down to fully assess.

MYTH 4: “We are working harder than the relative caregiver.”

- Defend family/kin placement
- Ask first if the family has the resource.
- At first, the agency may have to assist with setting up the caregiver and their home, but the long-term investment is always the family’s.
- The agency has resource knowledge that the family may not have.
- Don’t keep score of who does what, just get it done.
- Approach this conversation with family if there are concerns about their commitment
- Have an honest and upfront meeting with the family member.
- Explain how important it is to move quickly and put in adequate effort. This will be expected of them throughout their involvement with Children's Services.
- Explain the Involvement Spectrum. Not being a caregiver does not mean no connection or contact. It is ok for Grandma to just be Grandma.

BARRIER 1: “Trauma if removed from foster parent/Multiple moves are negative for a child”

- The long-term positive effects of moving the child into a family member’s home greatly outweigh the potential negative impact of a move.
- Not all moves are bad moves; some moves can be beneficial and therapeutic.
- The current foster parents or caregiver can still be a support to the child (roadmap).
- Having a great foster home open up a space is a chance for another child to have a great home as well.
- There is a finite number of good foster parent homes needed for another child.

BARRIER 2: “The child has needs that only a medically trained foster home can care for.”

- There are no medical needs I am aware of that a kinship caregiver could not learn about and be trained on.
- This is a good place for natural supports, such as a cousin who is a nurse.
- Opportunity for mentoring and emotional support. Get creative with bringing support in.
- Includes behavioral needs, not just medical needs.
- Trauma training may be needed and should be offered.

BARRIER 3: “The family isn’t convinced that their family is safe.”

- Explain the significant background checks and home visits.
- The on-going case worker will still be involved and following up.
- What would make that person feel safe? Listen to their concerns and research them.
- We are working for the child’s best interest.
- Reunification rates and contact with family are higher when children are with kinship caregivers.

Handout: SEEK: Questions for Finding Naturally Connected Networks

PAST

- Who are the people who have stuck with you at your best and worst moments in life?
- Tell me about someone in your life who you really felt understood you?
- What has been the most important day in your life, and who was there to share it with you?
- Who in your life surprised you the most when you needed help caring for your child?
- Who have you relied on when things got crazy in life?
- When you think about your past, who has been most supportive of you in the choices you've made regarding your kids?
- When you were younger, who was your favorite person?
- Think back to a day when you were having a really tough time. Who was there to support you?
- Tell me a story about a happy time in your life. Who was there with you?
- Who was there when your child was born?
- Think about a time in your past where you were in a crisis of some kind (financial, medical, etc.). Who did you confide in?
- Who have you called to care for your kids in the past?
- Who was the person who helped you in a really tough time that surprised you when they were helpful to you in that time?
- Who knows about what happened in this situation?
- Who do you trust the most?
- Where did you get your faith traditions from?
- Where in the world does your family come from – who holds those stories?
- Who was there for you when you had troubles in the past?
- When you think of all the people you have been close to in your whole life, whether family or friends, who has taught you the most about yourself as a person or parent? Tell me about a time that sticks out when that person showed or told you something about being a parent that you've never thought of before?
- Who did you consider to be the most significant people in your life growing up?
- Tell me about a moment in your life that you are proud of. Who did you share this with? Who would you share this with if they weren't there?
- What was the most fun thing you have done in the last 6 months? Who was present?
- When you think of your favorite holiday with your family or loved ones, who was there and what made it special?
- Who has meant the most to you in your life? When were you the happiest in your life?

PRESENT

- Who is someone in your life that you can call on or depend on in a time of need (crisis)?
- Who would you call for your children's birthday party?
- Who would you call first today if you had wonderful news? News that you were the most excited you have ever been.
- Who do you call on a bad day? On a good day? Who would call you on their bad/good day?
- If I gave you 1 million dollars right now and said you can have the 1 million free and clear, but you must give a million dollars to 5 other people to receive yours, who would those 5 people be?
- Who is the person you trust the most to take care of your kids, no matter what?
- This is a difficult discussion. Who in your life, if they were here right now, would help you feel like it is a little more manageable? Can we call them to come here?
- Who are you going to call about this when you get off the phone with me? Who do you want that person to call?
- Who in your life do you wish had been here to help when I knocked on your door? Who might be the first person you told about this meeting today?
- Who is the most important person in your life today?
- Who would you call to care for your child if you went to the hospital today?
- Who will you call in the middle of the night when you need help? What is it about that person that lets you know you can count on her/him (them)?
- Who do you call when you are stuck and unable to pick up your kids at school?
- Who is the one person you may be taking for granted most right now?
- If you won a big award, who are 5 people you would want to be there?
- Who would you invite to your child's birthday party?
- Who did you send a text message (phone call) to first today?
- Who is the one person you wish were with you right now to support you right now?
- In case of an emergency (or if you were in an accident), who do you feel are the two most important people to contact?
- Who do you go to in life when you are making important decisions (like moving to a new town)?
- Who is your go-to person when life gets tough?

FUTURE

- Please think about all the important people in your life right now. If I were to come to you 10 years from now and ask who has been the most unconditionally caring person in your life over the last 10 years, which of the people you know right now would you most want to describe to me?
- Tomorrow, you end up in a serious accident, and you are in the hospital in a coma. Who would you want the doctor to call to take care of your kids until you get out?
- If you could fast forward 5 years from now, who would be your support network and who would rely on you?
- Who would be the people that you see in your life sharing your birthday 5 years from now?
- Who would you hope to have at your side for comfort in your older years of life?
- Tell me about your wildest dreams for the future? What does it look like, and who's there with you?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years? Who is with you? What do your relationships look like?
- If you were hit by a bus next month and unable to care for your children, who would be able to care for your kids?
- If next year you found yourself homeless, who would you call?
- If you were to die in a car accident tomorrow, who would you want to raise your children?
- You wake up tomorrow, and it's two years from now. Who are the people you would hope to have in your life?
- If you were getting married, who would you want to be there to celebrate with you?
- Who will you call to invite to your next birthday celebration?
- If your child were getting married tomorrow, who would you want or dream would be there?

Family Finding/Signs of Safety Residency with Kevin Campbell and Andrew Turnell: Questions for Finding Naturally Connected Networks.

Sharing Information with Relatives



Notification is sent to ensure adult relatives of children under the care and supervision of county child welfare agencies are given the consideration and opportunity to be a placement resource or to be able to participate in the child's care plan.

- The only information the agency can provide is the following in the notification:
 - That the child has been removed from the custody of the parent
 - The options the relative has under federal, state, and local law to participate in the care and placement of the child
 - The options that may be lost by failing to respond to the notice
 - The requirements to become a family foster home
 - The services and supports that are available for children in a foster home; and
 - How relative guardians of the child may receive kinship guardianship assistance payments if the county child welfare services agency has elected to offer such payments
- NC GS 7N-2901(b) outlines confidentiality requirements for information sharing to relatives when children are in care. Information cannot be shared with potential providers of care, including information regarding birth parents, if not relevant to the care of the child.
- Be specific in your ask to relatives and kin about how they can support children in care
- It is the caseworker's responsibility to search for and reach out to relatives and kin because it is important to many aspects of their cases

Notes

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Appendix

Reflections and Check-In

Reflections and Check-In		
		
Self-Values Reflection	Reasonable Efforts	Two-Level Decision-Making

Reflections and Check-In		
		
Self-Values Reflection	Reasonable Efforts	Two-Level Decision-Making