



Permanency Values Training

What is Permanency?

Who wouldn't want a family?

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Let's Look at Some Data

A national snapshot:

2008: 500,000 children in care

2011: 424,000 children in care

Youth Aging Out of Foster Care Where are they?

- More likely to live in the least "family-like" settings
- Many have "goal" of "emancipation"
- More than 28,000 do "emancipate" each year
- 12-22% become homeless from day one



From: AFCARS Data, and studies by
Courtney, Wulczyn, Hislop, Casey

Educational Outcomes

- One study (Courtney) found that 37% had not finished high school nor a GED
- Used GED to complete education at 6 times the rate of general population (NW Alumni Study, Casey Family Programs)
- Experienced 7 or more school changes
- Only 1.8% completed a bachelors degree



Other Outcomes

- Less likely to be employed
- Poverty level incomes
- No health insurance
- More likely to have children out of marriage
- Post traumatic stress rate double war veterans
- Serious untreated health conditions
- Higher rate of becoming victims of crime, or engaging in criminal activity – over 270,000 American prisoners were once in foster care





Texas Data continued

PERMANENCY GOAL OF CHILDREN IN SUBSTITUTE CARE FOR WHOM DFPS HAD LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FISCAL YEAR END 2010
Total Children: 23,447

Goal	Count	Percent
Adoption	11,419	48.7%
Reunification	7,356	31.4%
Alternative Long Term Living	1,662	7.1%
Adult Living	1,230	5.2%
Permanent Placement with Relatives and Other Caregivers	1,780	7.6%
Total Children	23,447	100%



Status of Children No Longer in DFPS Legal Responsibility ~ Fiscal Year 2010

Total Children: 14,182

Family Reunification	4,115 (29.0%)
Custody Given To Relatives	3,475 (24.5%)
Adoption Consummated	4,803 (33.9%)
Children Emancipated	1,529 (10.8%)



Permanence:

What is It? –

Now Let's Think About Our State's Children Who Attain Permanency VS. those who don't

- Demographics?
- Other youth-related characteristics?
- Placement or familial factors?
- What is the most important factor that determines whether a youth attains permanency?
- Why is this good news?



Permanence: What is it? A Professional Perspective

“The highest level of physical, legal and emotional safety and security that can be attained for each individual child or youth within the context of a family relationship.” Lauren Frey & 1st Stuart Permanency Convening



WHAT is Permanence? A Youth Perspective

- PERMANENCE is **NOT** a place ~
- Permanency is a state of mind, *not a placement*;
- That there is someone *in the middle of the night* who will answer your *collect* phone call
- Or *miss you* when you don't show up
- “Permanence, I never had it, **When Can I Get it?**”



Permanence: What is it? My working definition



- **A parent or two** – A parenting relationship with at least one adult
- **Intent** – a mutual understanding that this relationship is intended to last forever
- **Unconditional commitment** by the adult(s)
- **Participation** of all parties in the relationship
- **Lifelong and mutual** support and involvement
- **Intimacy & Belonging** – “My son”, “my mom”
- **Status** How the world views your relationships

The Loneliest People

- 60 Minutes ~ Kevin Campbell interview



Permanence: WHO NEEDS IT?

Genuine Permanence ~ How do you know it when you see it?

3 Tests

- The “Miss-me-when-I-don’t-show-up” Test
- The “Age 34” Test
- The “Hospital” Test



Creating a Context ~ Bringing it Home Permanence For Me?

- Over 18 ?
- Competent?
- Why need a family?

Many Doors to Permanency

- Youth are **reunified safely**
- Youth are **adopted**
- Youth **permanently** reside with **legal guardians**
- Youth are connected to **kinship or customary adoption networks (esp in Native American families)**





Engagement

- PCP ~ Circle of Support
- FGC ~ FTDM
- Mobility Mapping

KEY QUESTIONS

- What will it take?
- What can we try again that has been tried before?
- What can we do differently?
- What can we do concurrently?
- How can we engage the youth in developing & implementing the plan?



Summary of Key Points

- **No child should ever grow up in foster care** ~ Permanency is vital for healthy development and well-being in all children and youth.
- **Permanency is possible and achievable** for all children and youth.
- **Meaningful, effective engagement** of the youth, parents, caregivers and other significant people **is the key to successful permanency** outcomes.
- **Using a team approach improves** engagement opportunities and permanency **outcomes**
- **There are skills, strategies and specific casework behaviors** that, when consistently applied, can enhance practice and improve outcomes.

If we understand the importance of permanence – why can't we achieve it for all of our children and youth?

"FAMILIES ARE NOWHERE"
