

Components of Concurrent Permanency Planning

Family/Child Assessment

- Looking at the strengths, needs and core issues that brought the child(ren) into care, and that are impacting reunification.
- Forming a reasoned theory about the likelihood that the child(ren) will return home.
- Coming up with a plan for permanency if the child(ren) is not able to return to birth family.

Front Loading Services

- A concerted effort to supply all needed services to the birth family as soon as the child(ren) enters care, but no later than 30 days after placement.
- The use of treatment plans and service agreements that are clear on:
 - Short term immediate goals
 - Long term permanency goals
 - Links to services
 - Time frames that are documented and adhered to
 - Documentation of services
 - Documentation of progress (behavioral indicators)
- Early and ongoing case reviews to assess progress, understand continuing needs, plan for the future.

Relative Diligent Search

- Searching for relatives and nonrelatives of children placed in foster care:
 - Search to begin within 30 days of placement
 - CPS worker initiates search efforts prior to case transfer to foster care
 - Documenting the child(ren)'s relatives (Relative Documentation DHS 987)
 - Notifying the child(ren)'s relatives of his/her placement in foster care (DHS 990)
 - Searching for relatives (Diligent Search Checklist DHS 991)
 - Foster care worker makes continuous searches/follow up with relatives until legal permanence is achieved for the child(ren)
 - Documenting relative response (Relative Response DHS 989)
 - Utilizing family network to contact relatives (Relative Search Information DHS 988)

Full Disclosure – Plan A and Plan B

- Revealing that two permanency plans are made:
 - Plan A is reunification
 - Plan B is the alternative permanency plan: adoption, guardianship or another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA)
- Being honest and open with birth family, relatives, foster families and the legal system about the CPP process:
 - All are informed that there will be an alternative permanency plan
 - It is clear to all what steps the birth family must take to have the child(ren) returned
 - It is clear that the alternative permanency plan will be implemented if the birth family does not meet the expectations within the time frames specified

Permanency Planning Conference/Case Planning Meeting

- Use of group conferences to involve families, their support systems and others in early planning can incorporate some or all of the case planning meeting.
- Meeting participants include:
 - Birth family/relatives
 - Foster family
 - Worker
 - Child(ren) who are older (all children need to be informed of the meeting)
 - Service providers
- Meetings can serve to help build relationships between birth parents, foster parents, relatives, etc. and facilitate information sharing between parties.

Visitation

- Encouraging regular visitation by parents to increase the chance of reunification.
- Planning and following through on regular and timely visits that are scheduled with the child's needs and age in mind.
- Structuring visits so that parents are more likely to participate.
- Involving foster parents in visits to promote a supportive relationship between foster parents and birth parents.
- If reunification is the goal and unless otherwise ordered by the court- frequency of visitation based on age includes:
 - Ages 0 – 2 years – minimum 3 visits per week
 - Ages 3 – 5 years – minimum 2 visits per week
 - Ages 6 years and up – minimum 1 visit per week