

# Practice Focus

## DEVELOPING PERMANENCY

<p><b>What is it?</b></p>	<p>Permanency - is defined as “having a relationship with at least one adult that is characterized by these five points: parenting; life-long intent; belonging; status; and, unconditional commitment.” The “Gold Standard” is achieving legal permanency for each child or youth in one of the following ways: reunification; adoption; or, legal guardianship.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Types of Permanency:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Emotional Permanency</b> – Appropriate, positive connections to adults who support the youth in a real, permanent way; elicit feelings of continuity, stability, and belonging.</li> <li>• <b>Legal permanency</b> - Permanent placement, either through reunification, kinship placement, or adoption.</li> </ul> <p>Here are examples of what agencies are doing to develop permanency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>PRTs</b> - Permanency roundtables (PRTs) give PCSAs a structured process for identifying individualized and realistic strategies for overcoming the obstacles to permanency that youth in their care may be facing. The three goals of each PRT are to (1) expedite legal permanency for the child, (2) stimulate thinking and learning about ways to accelerate permanency, and (3) identify and address systemic barriers to timely permanency.</li> <li>• <b>WWK</b> - To keep older children with lengthy placement histories from lingering in the foster care system in Ohio and further assure the population of adoptive families reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of children needing permanency.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What laws and rules (OAC) apply?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008</li> <li>• 5101:2-33-03 - Procedure for Complaints of Alleged Discriminatory Acts, Policies or Practices in the Adoption Process that Involve Race, Color or National Origin</li> <li>• 5101:2-39-01- Removal of a Child from the Child’s Own Home</li> <li>• 5101:2-40-04 Kinship Permanency Incentive (KPI) Program</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5101:2-42-18 PCSA and PCPA Approval of Placements with Relative and Nonrelative Substitute Caregivers</li> <li>• 5101:2-42-19 Requirements for the Provision of Independent Living Services to Youth In Custody</li> <li>• 5101:2-42-19.1 Requirements for Independent Living Arrangements for Independent Living Youth in Custody</li> <li>• 5101:2-42-19.2 Requirements for Provision of Independent Living Services to Young Adults Who Have Emancipated</li> <li>• 5101:2-42-95 Obtaining Permanent Custody: Termination of Parental Rights</li> <li>• 5101:2-48-02 to 5101:2-48-25 Adoption Rules</li> <li>• 5101:2-53-07 – Permanent Surrender or Parental Consent to Adoptive Placement of Indian Children</li> </ul>
<p><b>Developing Permanency may look like this if you are an <u>Ongoing Worker</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore all permanency options, including: reunification; adoption; legal custody or guardianship.</li> <li>• Possessing a working knowledge of the child’s needs and ensure that all familial characteristics (i.e. only child in the home vs. multiple children in the home) have been considered prior to placement.</li> <li>• Discuss with the child (if developmentally appropriate), family and other key case participants, what is in the best interest of the child.</li> <li>• Have an open and honest discussion with the potential placement family about the child’s needs, the family’s needs and permanency expectations.</li> <li>• Plan preplacement visits.</li> <li>• Arrange postplacement follow-up.</li> <li>• Initiate the grief process.</li> </ul> <p>(Source: Child welfare information Gateway)</p>
<p><b>Developing Permanency may look like this if you are an <u>Adoption or Independent Living Worker</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce and discuss the different permanency options with the youth.</li> <li>• Arrange first meetings between youth and potential placements.</li> <li>• Provide “homework” for child and family.</li> <li>• Discuss long term commitment with the potential placement family.</li> <li>• Plan preplacement visits.</li> <li>• Arrange postplacement follow-up.</li> <li>• Initiate the grief process.</li> </ul>

	(Source: Child welfare information Gateway)
<b>Developing Permanency may look like this if you are a Family Team Meeting Facilitator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite the child (if age appropriate) to attend meetings and explore all permanency options with the child.</li> <li>• Engage relatives or non-blood kin in discussions about the types of support they can provide and roles they can plan in permanency planning.</li> </ul>
<b>Developing Permanency may look like this if you are a Kinship Worker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to assess any relatives or non-blood who come forth or are discovered throughout the life of the case.</li> <li>• Talk to children and parents about permanency options.</li> </ul>
<b>Documentation Suggestions/Reminders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any FSE type of contact should be labeled in SACWIS with a Family Search and Engagement subcategory.</li> <li>• Family and kin who are identified in a genogram activity log should also be added to the associated persons tab in SACWIS for <u>all</u> cases.</li> </ul>
<b>Tools</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <a href="#">Permanency Pact</a></li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Initial Visits</a></li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Lifebooks</a></li> </ul>
<b>Supervisor Strategies</b>	<p>Here are some suggested activities to complete during supervision that pertain to "scaling."</p> <p><b><u>Example 1</u></b></p> <p><i>Supervisor: "Is there anything about Johnny's placement with paternal aunt Susan that worries you?"</i></p> <p><i>Worker: "I am worried that Johnny is going to skip school which will make Susan upset and maybe she will ask him to leave."</i></p> <p><i>Supervisor: "On a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being lowest worry and 10 being the most worry where do you rate the worry that Johnny is going to skip school which may make Susan upset and kick him out?"</i></p> <p><i>Worker: "I would rate my worry a 3."</i></p> <p><i>Supervisor: "What would you need to have to move your worry lower?"</i></p> <p><i>Worker: "Talk with Susan to see what plan she would like to create so that if Johnny starts skipping school she won't kick him out."</i></p>

**Example 2**

Another Supervision tool to consider that includes scaling and could identify areas of growth for a worker in working with a facilitating the family and youth planning for sustaining permanency is to think about these questions with your worker:

Thinking of a scale from 1 to 10 with 1 being Never and 10 being Always where does your worker fall (having them rate themselves and comparing the ratings can be a helpful exercise. (adapted from Signs of Safety® Supervisor Practice Fidelity Assessment Report completed in partnership with Casey Family Programs, 2012)

- 1- Listens to family members
- 2- Treats family members as unique individuals
- 3- Do what he/she says she will do
- 4- Works with humility (accepts that their judgements may have to change)
- 5- Is honest with family and the youth
- 6- Pays attention to what is working within the family
- 7- Tells the family and youth what he/she sees is working well
- 8- Involves family in figuring out what needs to happen to sustain permanency
- 9- Involves youth in the process
- 10- Helps ensure the youth's voice is heard

**Training Suggestions  
via the Ohio Child  
Welfare Training  
Program**



E-Track #210-18	Trends in Permanency: Applying What We Have Learned	6 Hour Classroom Learning
E-Track # 210-26-NOS	Lifelong Connections: Permanency for Older Youth	6 Hour Classroom Learning
E-Track #210-12	When Young People Say No to Permanency	6 Hour Classroom Learning