

Child Welfare Agency Self-Assessment Instrument For Youth Permanency

Target Group: CPYP defines older-children and youth as any child ten or over. Which ages fit into your category of *youth* when discussing youth permanence?

Answer:

I. **Current Situation:**

A. **Administrative, Policy/Structure:**

1. What administrative/judicial/other processes exist to ensure that an older child or youth has an appropriate family permanency goal and is moving toward that goal (e.g., supervisory checklist? Administrative Reviews, etc.; court reports)?

2. Do you have any agency policy directed specifically at family permanency for older children and youth? **Yes No**
Has it been publicized? **Yes No**

In what ways? _____

3. If a child is over ten and reunification is not likely, do you routinely consider other family permanency options such as adoption, guardianship, or extended family search for that child? **5 4 3 2 1**

4. Have your administrators placed a visible priority on finding family permanency for older children and youth? **5 4 3 2 1**
In what way? _____

5. Do you have a policy or protocol on how to proceed if a staff person wants to adopt a youth with whom he/she works in a professional capacity? **Yes Being Developed No**

6a. Does your county/state have any legislation that focuses on family permanency for older children and youth? **Yes Being Developed No**

6b. Do you have an internal legislative analyst who has family permanency for youth on his/her agenda? **Yes No**

6c. Do you have access through another source to an external legislative analyst who has family permanency for youth on his/her agenda? Yes No

7. Do you have a recruiter(s) who works primarily on finding family permanency for older children and youth? Yes No

B. Practice:

1. Does your agency have a definition of what constitutes family permanence for older children and youth? Yes No
What is it? _____

2a. With regard to long term foster care (APPLA – Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement), does your agency’s policy and practice require that social workers regularly assess whether there is a change in circumstance regarding family permanency? Yes No

2b. If so, does actual agency practice reflect this policy? 5 4 3 2 1

3. How do you view placements with relatives in terms of permanency? (Check one)

- If a youth is placed with a relative we consider that permanent. _____
- We do not consider a relative placement permanent unless a conversation has been held with the relative about the relative’s permanent commitment to the youth and with the youth about his/her desire to permanently live with the relative and there is concurrence. _____
- We do not consider a relative placement permanent unless a conversation has been held with the relative about the relative’s permanent commitment to the youth and with the youth about his/her desire to live permanently with the relative **AND a (non-legal) form regarding commitment has been signed.** _____
- We do not consider a relative placement permanent unless the relative has made a legal commitment to permanency in the form of adoption or guardianship. _____

4. In your agency’s experience, what percentage of relatives who have cared for older children and youth adopt them? _____ %

Unknown – we do not track that. _____

5. Is family permanency for youth a routine part of supervision, that is, are supervisors expected to ascertain that their staff seek permanency for youth on their caseloads? 5 4 3 2 1

6. If you have a wrap-around program, are the services used to find or maintain permanency for youth? 5 4 3 2 1

7a. Is finding family permanency a service priority in the group homes with which you work? 5 4 3 2 1

In family foster homes? 5 4 3 2 1

In residential treatment centers? 5 4 3 2 1

7b. In your experience, doest your agency expect group homes to assist in finding family permanence as part of their contract? 5 4 3 2 1

Family foster homes? 5 4 3 2 1

Residential treatment centers? 5 4 3 2 1

Are mental health providers expected to assist in finding or supporting family permanence? 5 4 3 2 1

C. Training:

1. Are your staff trained in youth permanence practice (e.g., how to talk with youth about family permanence; how to talk about permanence with potential permanent adult resources; child specific recruitment; case mining; relative search skills)? Yes No

If yes, which of the following staff are trained?

Adoption staff _____

Kinship staff _____

Emergency Response staff: _____

Permanency Placement staff _____

Foster Care staff _____

Mental Health Staff _____

Foster Parents _____

IL/ILP staff _____

All staff _____

Other (Please specify) _____

2. Do you provide information on youth permanence at staff orientation/induction? 5 4 3 2 1

3. Do you hold joint trainings with collaterals on family permanence for youth (mental health staff, attorneys, group homes?) 5 4 3 2 1

- 4. Does your IL staff training include a section on family permanence? 5 4 3 2 1
- 5. Are your group home (or other non-familial providers) personnel trained in discussing family permanence with youth? 5 4 3 2 1
- 6. Are your mental health service providers trained in discussing family permanence with youth? 5 4 3 2 1

D. Tracking:

Do you have a data system that can tell you how many youth in foster care/ group homes/RTC, etc., have stated plans for long-term foster care? Yes No

2. If so, what percentage of your youth have plans of long term foster care? _____%

3. How many youth in care in your agency were reunified, adopted, or placed under guardianship in the year indicated below. If you used an age category to define 'youth' in collecting your data, please indicate this (e.g., over 10, over 15).
In 2003?

Reunified _____
Adopted _____
Placed Under Guardianship _____

Age Category?
In 2002?

Reunified _____
Adopted _____
Placed Under Guardianship _____

Age Category?

4. Are there categories of youth for whom you have been particularly successful in achieving permanency? (Please check all applicable)

- Youth with a goal of adoption only _____
- Youth who in a foster family setting _____
- Youth who indicate an interest in permanency _____
- Youth under fifteen (15) _____
- Youth adjudicated delinquent and/or in physical custody _____
- Youth in mental health settings _____
- Youth in group homes and residential treatment _____
- Other _____

5. Categories for whom you have had great difficulty? (Please check all applicable)

- Youth with a goal of adoption only _____
- Youth in a foster family setting _____
- Youth who indicate an interest in permanency _____
- Youth under fifteen _____
- Youth adjudicated delinquent and/or in physical custody _____
- Youth in mental health settings _____
- Youth in group homes and residential treatment _____
- Other _____

6. What role do the following events or processes have on family permanency practice for youth in your county?

Emancipation/Discharge Planning/other meetings:

We routinely address family permanency _____

We rarely address family permanency in the meetings. _____

We do not have emancipation meetings. _____

Court Reviews routinely focus on family permanency. 5 4 3 2 1
(reunification, adoption or guardianship)?

Administrative Reviews routinely focus on family permanency. 5 4 3 2 1
(reunification, adoption or guardianship)?

7. Do you have an *easily accessible face sheet* or other like document that lists all the youth's potential adult resources over the life of the case with their contact information? Yes No

E. Recruitment:

1. How do you find permanent families for youth? (Check all that apply)

Talk to the youth: _____

Talk to the youth's birth and foster families: _____

Case mining _____

Use television, radio, newspaper to recruit potential families _____

Photolisting _____

Talk to therapist _____

Talk to school _____

Other (Please specify) _____

2. Who is involved in finding permanency? (Check all that apply)

- Youth _____
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) _____
- Guardians ad Litem _____
- Adoption Agencies _____
- Biological families _____
- Independent Living staff _____
- Foster Parents _____
- Placement facilities _____
- Other (Please specify) _____

3. Could any of the persons listed in #2 above be allies in helping to find family permanency for youth in your agency? *Yes No*

Which ones specifically? _____

4. Can you think of other outside agencies or groups, currently uninvolved, that could help? *Yes No*
Who are they? (e.g., chamber of commerce, churches, etc.) _____

5. Do you utilize child-specific recruitment methods to find a permanent family connection for youth? *Yes No*

F. Post-Permanency:

1. How are families supported after the child achieves permanence? (Check all that apply)

- Financial Support (Adoption Assistance Program, etc.) _____
- Medicaid or other state financed health care coverage (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment, etc.) _____
- TANF _____
- Advanced planning with parents on how to obtain help _____
- Mental Health Services for children _____
- Mental Health Services for adults _____
- Crisis Intervention Services _____
- Temporary out of home care or residential treatment _____
- Hands-on in-home support services _____
- Support groups (adult, children or family) _____
- Respite care _____
- "Buddy systems" _____
- Other _____

2a. To what degree are these services adequate for your youth and families? *5 4 3 2 1*

2b. What additional or increased post-permanency services do you think are needed?

3. Have you discussed collaboration with mental health on post-permanency support for children and families? *Yes No*

4. Are agreements or protocols for such a collaboration in place? *Yes Being Developed No*

G. Other Initiatives:

1. Do you utilize family group conferencing for youth permanence? *5 4 3 2 1*
Could you? *Yes No*

2. If you are a Family to Family jurisdiction, is family permanency for youth integrated into your Family to Family work (for example, at TDMs) ? *5 4 3 2 1*

3. What other initiatives do you have that are relevant to family permanency for youth? _____

H. Fiscal:

1. Is your agency sufficiently funded to focus on youth permanence? *Yes No*

2. Are there some youth permanence areas that are fairly well funded? *Yes No*
What are these? _____

Are there other areas of permanence support/services that are not well funded? *Yes No*
What are these? _____

3. What is the source of the funds you have used to support family permanency for youth? (Please list all)

4. Do you use "Chafee Independence Program" money to support finding family permanency for youth? *Yes No*

5. Do you use Independent Living funding to support finding family permanence for youth? *Yes No*

I. Strengths:

Based on the above assessment, what do you see as your agency's strengths in finding family permanency for youth

J. Barriers

1. Which of the following stand in the way of achieving family permanency for youth? (Check all that apply)

- Agency culture (it hasn't been done before and staff are not used to thinking about it).
Worker attitudes (do not believe youth permanence is possible or that teens want it)
Caseload size
Staff turnover
Unsupportive attitude of collateral agencies toward permanency for youth
Foster Parents
Group Homes
Residential Treatment Facilities
Family Foster Homes
Courts/attorneys
Mental Health Staff
Alcohol and Drug Treatment
Social Workers lack of experience in discussing family permanency with youth and potential resources
Attitudes of youth themselves
Youth lives in a distant county or area
Social worker's relationship with youth superficial
Youth behavior problems
Lack of county families for youth and teens:
Lack of outreach to potential families:
Family of origin problems that impede reunification (e.g., felons, etc.)
County cannot mandate training for staff
Other (List):

2. What do you think staff in your jurisdiction believe about the possibility of family permanency for youth?

- 100% believe it is possible _____
- 75 % believe it is possible _____
- 50 % believe it is possible _____
- Fewer than half believe it's possible _____

3. What do you think administrators in your jurisdiction believe about the possibility of family permanency for youth?

- 100% believe it is possible _____
- 75 % believe it is possible _____
- 50 % believe it is possible _____
- Fewer than half believe it's possible. _____

4. At your agency, are there incentives for finding family permanency for older versus younger youth? **Yes No**
 What are they?

Are there disincentives? **Yes No**
 What are they?

5. In your experience, what attitudes do youth have towards their own permanency? (Check all that apply)

- A minority are not interested. _____
- The majority are not interested _____
- Most of them don't know what permanency means _____

6. Do you have a youth speakers' bureau or project? **Yes No**
 Do the speakers address youth permanence? **Yes No**

K. Resources to overcome barriers:

1. What do you need to overcome your agency's barriers?

2. What resources do you have available to overcome the above barriers?

3. Are there training resources available to you on working with youth? *Yes Not Enough No*

II. FUTURE

A. Opportunities:

1. If, at the end of three years, you achieved success in family permanency for youth , what would your agency look like?

2. Based on the previous assessment, what might be a next step in your agency to improve family permanency for youth outcomes?

3. Which group of youth might you concentrate on initially?

4a. If you were to establish an agency youth permanency team, who would participate?

4b. What outside agency partners would you invite to join the team?

5. What kind of assistance would you need to get the data you need?

6a. Could an advisory committee assist you with this work? *Yes No*
Who might be included? (Two former foster youth with a permanent family would be an asset)

7. Do you have fiscal staff able to help find financial resources? *Yes No*

B. Technical Assistance and Training Needs

1. Which of these training/technical assistance needs do you have?

- Reunification skills _____
- How to engage youth in family permanency planning _____
- Changing the agency belief system _____
- Fathers and paternal resources as potential permanency resources _____
- How to search for and engage extended family _____
- How mine the case files _____
- Clinical skills to prepare families and youth _____
- Child Specific Recruitment skills _____
- How to develop post-permanency support for family and youth _____
- Fiscal strategies to support family permanency for youth _____
- How to develop a project plan on family permanency for youth _____
- Other _____

Good Luck in Your Youth Permanence Efforts!