



Permanency Teaming to Promote Family Inclusion and Connections

One Child, Many Hands
A Multidisciplinary Conference on Child Welfare

June 4, 2009
The Field Center
University of Pennsylvania



CASEY FAMILY SERVICES
THE DIRECT SERVICE AGENCY OF THE ANNE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

Goals for Workshop	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Orient to Permanency Teaming Model<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Recognize core elements– Explore the challenges from multiple perspectives• Provide three perspectives on a multidisciplinary practice<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Social Worker and Practitioner– Attorney and Policy maker– Researcher and <i>Skeptic</i>• Use the session well<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Describing the general model– Case Illustration– Describe the challenges and responses– Ask questions



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The Permanency Practice Framework



Permanence is defined as an enduring family relationship that:

- Is safe and meant to last a lifetime;
- Offers the legal rights and social status of full family membership;
- Provides for physical, emotional, social, cognitive and spiritual well-being; and
- Assures lifelong connections to birth and extended family, siblings, and other significant adults;
- Preserves connections to family history and traditions, race and ethnic heritage, culture, religion and language.

Permanency Practice Framework

- Permanency Outcomes
 - Family preservation and support
 - Reunification with parent(s) or caretaker(s)
 - Legal guardianship with relatives or others
 - Adoption with relatives or non-relatives

	<h2>Permanency Teaming – General Model</h2>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broad family of family teaming interventions• Wide range of applications<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Integrated with other permanency promoting practice• Core Elements<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Child/youth-centered, family focused– Collaborative, concurrent planning– Shared decision-making– Differential use of self– Belief in the process
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	<h2>Path to better outcomes</h2>
	<p>Engagement with focus on youth, willingness to reexamine connections</p> <p>+</p> <p>Building collaboration and team ownership</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Better information and better decisions</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Better Plans and better resources to support</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Better Outcomes</p>
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What happens?

The essential roles of team members

Recognize youth's urgent needs for **family plus**

- Look anew: open mind about *present resources*, *future needs*, understand past

Voice wishes/concerns, keeping youth's needs central

- Share relevant information – full disclosure, respect confidentiality
- Suspend own needs to meet best interests of child/youth

Address own role and participate in solution

- Tolerate uncertainty and different routine
- Work through ambivalence, frustration, disappointment, uncertainty

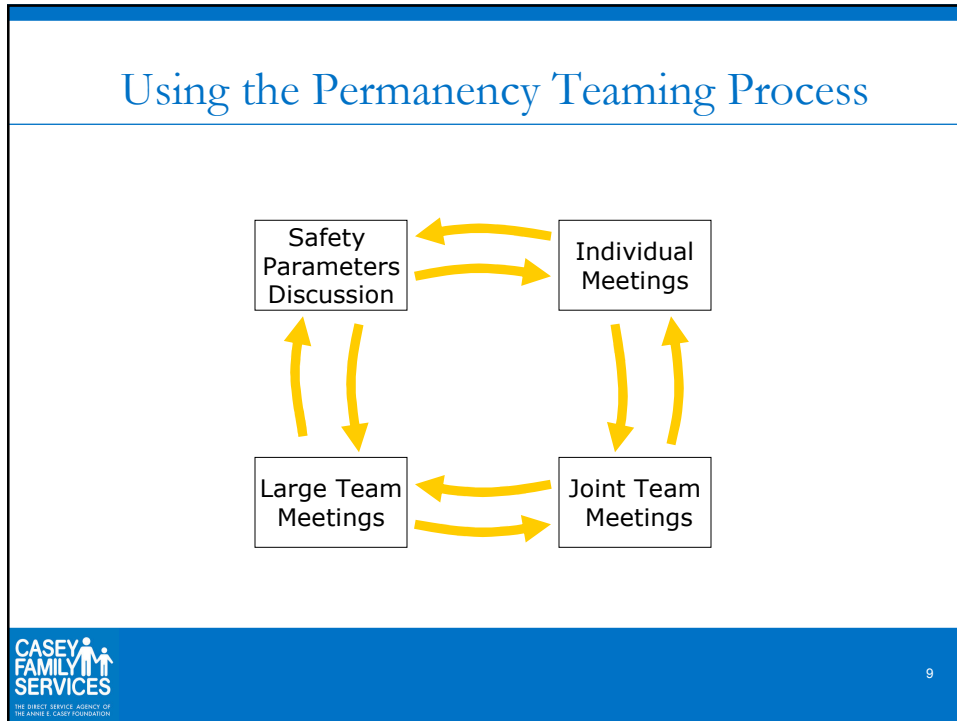
Share planning and decision-making with team

- Shared tasks – concrete & emotional

What happens?

The central role of the facilitator

- **Advocating:** helping all stakeholders become advocates for permanence
- **Facilitating:** establishing a team with youth; developing plans that address safety, permanency, well-being; monitoring plans and progress over time.
- **Preparing:** assessing readiness; establishing parameters; identifying and preparing core/additional team members; preparing youth and adults for permanence; clarifying past life events, addressing present security needs; future needs
- **Connecting:** assuring children and youth are not cut off from family and other significant adults; building family relationships
- **Supporting:** building community supports to achieve and sustain family permanence; providing emotional support to move forward



Peter's Story

- Collaborative concurrent planning
- Team support
- Reunification
- Guardianship Outcome
- Post-permanency supports


"I didn't have to choose between the parents who love me...."

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Permanency practice challenges

- Addressing racial and ethnic diversity and disparities
- Building relationships that can heal
- Support from public agency and stakeholders
- “Getting behind the ‘no’ with youth and families”
- Time allocation
- Supervision and training to build and use skills



Permanency Teaming: *Policy Implications*

Legal and Ethical Issues

ABA Model Code of Professional Responsibility – the Canons of Ethics:

- Attorneys have the duty of “diligent and competent” representation

Challenge:

- Balancing a client’s right to benefit from family resources vs. protecting the system involved client’s legal rights

Legal and Ethical Issues: The Clients

Child welfare demographics - client characteristics and concerns:

- Poverty
- Racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparities
- Immigration
- Cultural and linguistic identity
- Older youth in foster care

Legal and Ethical Issues: The Challenges

- Adequacy of legal representation of youth and parents involved with child welfare systems
- Attorney presence and/or participation in family engagement meetings
- Should an attorney's participation ever be prohibited? What child welfare stakeholder(s) has the right to make that decision?

Examples from the field:

- NYC pre-removal conferences
- CFS permanency team meetings

Legal and Ethical Issues

Confidentiality: Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Section 106 (b) (2) (A) (viii)

- States must preserve the confidentiality of all child abuse and neglect reports and records in order to protect the rights of the child and the child's parents or guardians
- States may share confidential child abuse and neglect reports and records with:
 - Individuals who are the subject of a report
 - A grand jury or court
 - Authorized individuals or classes of people pursuant to a legitimate state purpose

Legal and Ethical Issues

Confidentiality:

- Cross-systems information
- Substance abuse
- Domestic violence

Essential client protections:

- Full disclosure
- Written disclosures
- Appropriate language

Family Engagement Strategies: State Law and Policies

(fgdm@americanhumane.org)

American Humane compiled a list of 16 states and the District of Columbia with formal statutory policy related to family engagement strategies: AZ, CO, FL, HI, IL, IN, KS, ME, MI, MN, MS, NE, OK, OR, TX, WA

- D.C.: prior to removal or within 72 hours
- Florida: licensed dependency mediators
- Hawaii: “ohana” conference; family focused

Promoting Equity through Family Engagement

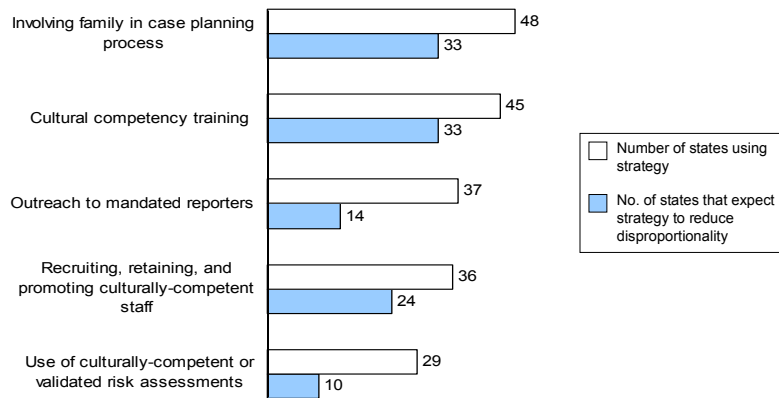
According to a survey of state child welfare commissioners as part of the 2007 U.S. G.A.O. Report on African American Children in Foster Care (GAO-07-816):

- Interventions are currently being used by 47 states and D.C.
- Every commissioner identified family engagement as an effective strategy to reduce disparate outcomes in child welfare

Does family engagement by definition mean youth engagement?



GAO-07-816 African American Children in Foster Care



Source: GAO analysis of state child welfare survey responses

Family Inclusion: Federal Policy

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351):

- Comprehensive landmark child welfare legislation that promotes permanence and equity through kinship guardianship and adoption, among other things
- Creates new protections and directs new resources to states to promote permanence and child well-being
- Mandates policies for increased “youth participation in decision making” and “relative inclusion” with state child welfare systems

Family Inclusion: Federal Strategies

Fostering Connections:

- Notice provision
- Youth involvement in permanency decision making
- Fostering Connections grants
 - Family finding technologies
 - Family group conferences
- DHHS released a RFP due on July 6, 2009

Researchers' angles

- 1. Support quality service delivery, infrastructure**
 - e.g., make information available to managers
- 2. Evaluating: What does it take? What are results?**
 - e.g., when does/doesn't it work?
- 3. Researching: Contribute to knowledge base**
 - e.g., establishing an evidence based practice

Feeding back critical information: Supporting agency infrastructure

Managers see work at three levels – *need data at each*

- Clinical model – child, family needs, services, results
- Program model – staffing patterns, support needs
- Business model – census, revenue & expense

Managing organizational changes and supports

- Impact evaluation of training
- Staff time and activity patterns
- Leader, SW and participant interviews
re. coaching & supervision; service quality

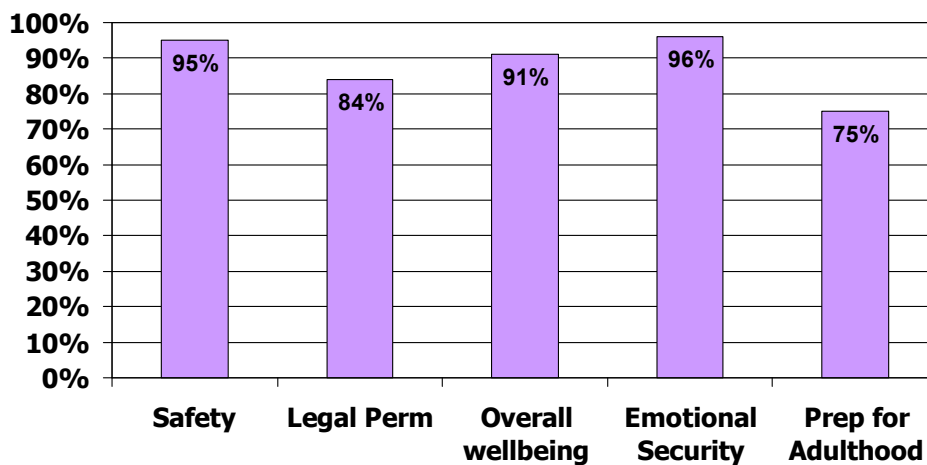
Looking at Results: Indicators of Teaming Quality
e.g., Inclusion is highly regarded by team participants

- **Youth participation**
 - Youth over 12 attended **88%** of their meetings
- **Family involvement**
 - **67%** teams involved birth parent(s)
 - **89%** teams involved foster parent(s)
- **Shared decision making**
 - **100%** of the youth said that their opinions were included
 - **86%** of all participants agreed that plan addressed all of their concerns



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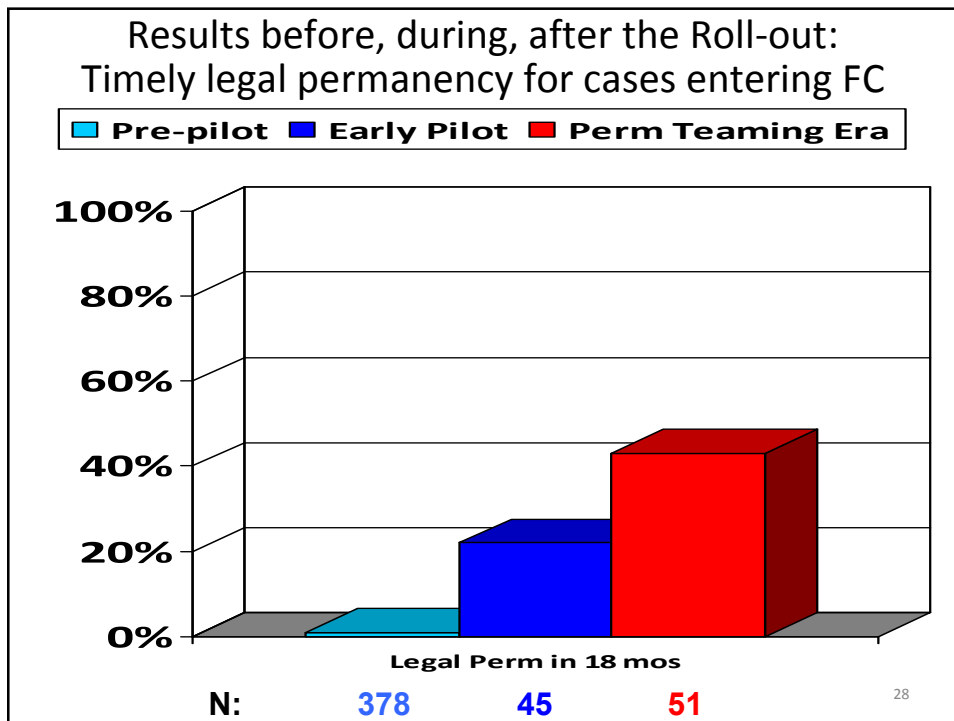
Looking at results: Early Indicators of Teaming Quality
Most team participants feel plans provide...



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Learning about Permanency over time
Developing a replicable, testable practice model

	Practice Innovation	Evaluation focus
Pre-Pilot	Legacy practice	Alumni Study Adoption Review Early results - Longitudinal Study
Initial Pilot ('04-08)	↑ Permanency focus Introduce strategies	Training, coaching feedback Quality in early 'pilot' cases Model adjustments by users
MGP Era ('09+)	Refine & detail model Standard FC practices Diversify applications	Comprehensive description Fidelity definition, measurement Comparative outcome evaluation Disseminate results, tools



Collaborative practice tool development supports practice development and change management.

- BEST (Belonging and Emotional Security Tool)
 - Assists social workers in talking with foster parents and youth about their commitment to each other
- PEP-T (Permanency Evaluation & Planning Tool)
 - Assists social workers in evaluating potential obstacles and resources in moving toward permanency
- Permanency Practice Supervisory Tool
 - Assists supervisors in talking with supervisees about case progress toward permanency and permanency teaming
 - Assists supervisors in evaluation of supervisees skills

Challenges for Establishing Evidence base

- Detailing model that will be replicable, testable
 - Clarify practice strategies, decision making
 - Understand parallels, implications of previous research
- Defining and implementing model... really/well
 - Developing measure of fidelity and quality
- Rigorous examination of links between fidelity & outcomes
 - Apply strong designs
 - Contrast with similar children served differently

Casey Family Services/Annie E. Casey Foundation
127 Church Street; New Haven, Connecticut 06510

Sarah Greenblatt, MS, ACSW
Director of Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice
SGreenblatt@caseyfamilyservices.org

Sania Metzger, JD
Director of Policy, Casey Family Services
SMetzger@caseyfamilyservices.org

Ben Kerman, PhD
Director of Research and Evaluation, Casey Family Services
BKerman@caseyfamilyservices.org

