

Kinship Permanency & Well-Being



Kinship Positive Impact on Permanency

- Kinship relationships are excellent opportunities for both legal and relational permanency.
- Kin connections provide relational permanency, which may be of higher importance to the youth than placement or legal permanency (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2013).
- A kinship connection may be unable to take placement but may be able to provide relative connections.
- In doing so relational permanency is promoted, as the child can stay involved with kin with whom they already have a strong connection and continue to feel loved and supported.
- Relational permanency can be referred to as “emotional” permanency.
- A relational permanency connection now could transform into a legal permanency later.
- Through kinship placements, parents and siblings are able to maintain a closer connection and strengthen their relationship (Capacity Building Center for States, 2018).
 - Almost half of all children that enter placement are reunified with their primary parent(s) (Children’s Bureau, 2018).
 - Caseworkers should prioritize continuing and strengthening relationships between children and primary parent(s) while placed out of the home.
- Kinship placements are often more open and available to:
 - Frequent visits in the kinship home.
 - Frequent phone contact.
 - Have visits with extended family and close friends.
 - Inviting primary parent to:
 - School activities/events/meetings.
 - Extra-curricular activities.
 - Doctor appointments.
 - Birthday parties and other special events.

Kinship's Positive Impact on Well-Being

- Current research (Annie E. Casey Foundation, n.d.; Child Information Gateway, n.d.; Capacity Building Center for States, n.d.; Winokur et al., 2014) lists several long-term benefits for children placed with kinship caregivers over foster care:
 - Fewer behavioral problems
 - Fewer mental health disorders
 - Less likely to run away
 - Less likely to re-enter the child welfare system
 - Reduced risk of homelessness
 - Reduced risk of unemployment
 - Increased relational wealth

- Maintains family roots/culture
 - Helps children understand “who’s my family?” and “where do I come from?”
 - Assists in identity formation as the child continues to develop
 - Facilitates connection to primary family through stories shared by kin
 - Maintains a sense of belonging
 - Facilitates ability to stay connected to siblings.

- Maintains school
- Maintains friends
- Maintains community
- Minimizes loss and trauma for the child