

Concurrent Planning:

Permanency for Children and
Youth

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Concurrent Planning:

“To work towards family reunification while at the same time, developing an alternative permanency plan”.

Origins of Concurrent Planning

- 1980 The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act
- 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)

Wisconsin Laws and Practice

- 1997 Wisconsin Act 237
- Concurrent Reasonable Efforts
- 12 month Time Frame
- Legally allows social workers to simultaneously provide reasonable efforts to reunify and develop alternative permanency placement plan

Permanency Planning

Is based on:

- Social work knowledge and skill
- Clinical component is the concept of attachment, separation, and loss

Why Concurrent Planning Works

- Reduces amount of time in system
- Reduces moves and disruptions
- Reduces waiting period for adoption
- Increases attachment/trust for youth

How do visits help permanency?

- Increased visitation increases reunification
- Visits in the birth parents' home re-establishes attachment
- Shows birth parents the reality of parenting
- Provides transition for birth parent and child for successful reunification
- Help determine what additional services are needed

The Role of FGDM

- Works well with Concurrent Permanency
- Helps expedite permanency options
- Keeps families involved
- Uses more kinship placements
- Empowers families

Identifying Concerns With Concurrent Planning

- Break into groups of 8-10
- Get flip chart paper and markers
- Record concerns
- Place on wall
- Report back to larger group

Resource Families

- Foster families
- Adoptive families
- Concurrent families
- Kin placements
- Respite Care

What are we asking Resource Parents to do?

- Resource Parents have a huge job to do!
- They help foster child to have regard for two sets of parents
- Diffuse loyalty struggles the child experiences
- Develop an understanding of birth parents
- Expected to give everything with unknown return

Resource Parent Roles

- Nurturer
- Permanency Facilitator
- Birth Parent Supporter

Secondary Roles

- Trainer
- Parent Group Member

Resource Parents Rights

- To receive notice of reviews or hearings related to the child
- To be heard by the court
- To attend the hearing
- To give input when the social worker is writing the foster child's out-of-home placement plan
- To receive a copy of the plan

Our Goal

Help Child Welfare Workers Become:

- Aware of the Paradigm Shift
- Family- Centered
- Psychologically Sophisticated
- Culturally Competent

Agency Social Worker Responsibilities

- To devise the out-of-home placement plan to reunite child and birth parents
- To include resource parents' input when devising the placement plan
- To locate services that meet the needs of the birth parent and child
- To offer and provide services to birth parents over a sustained period of time

Agency Social Worker Responsibilities

- To report case progress to the court
- To offer supportive services to foster family and child
- To arrange and supervise (if needed) visits
- To work with the family system
- To authorize medical and dental care for the child

Support to Families

- Provide adequate training for all
- Support Groups
- Be more assessable
- Return calls as soon as you can
- Be willing to let them vent
- Don't take it personal
- Let them decide if it is a fit

Steps to Implementation

- Define Your Target Population
- Determine the Permanency Options
- Define timeframes you can live with
- Assess the availability of reunification
- Chose appropriate foster families
- Provide ongoing support for families

Criteria for Using Concurrent Planning

HANDOUT-POOR PROGNOSIS INDICATORS

- Choose age/factors to determine
- High Risk
- Prior TPR or Child Protective Services

A Model

- Dakota County seeks concurrent model
- Contracts training for parents and workers
- Identifies workers
- Creates protocol for criteria services
- Mandatory Support Group
- Ongoing supports –therapy, group, other
- Ongoing Recruitment

Recruitment

- How to keep homes
- How to find new foster care homes
- Should we recruit for concurrent?
- Finding kinship placements

Concerns with Concurrent

- Change in process
- How to implement it
- Meeting permanency time lines
- Will lose foster care homes

Open Discussion