**Pre-Service Module: Permanence**

**Section 1: Permanency**

**Section Learning Objectives**

By the end of Section 1: Permanency, child welfare professionals will be able to:

* Explain the values of permanence
* Describe the necessity for emotional and legal permanency
* Recognize a sense of urgency for permanency for children living in out-of-home care
* Identifying the principles of permanency planning at each phase in the case process

**Section Themes and Key Points**

Below is a summary of the themes and key points covered in this section. This summary is intended to remind learners of the key learning points addressed and assist supervisors / coaches in understanding what was covered in order for them to guide and support the application of learning for new child welfare professionals related to this section.

1. This section identifies permanency as one of the pillars of child welfare and is an essential value within the Wisconsin Model for Practice. The child welfare system is responsible to work quickly and diligently to achieve permanency for children in Wisconsin.
2. This section defines legal permanence as reunification, guardianship, or adoption. Emotional permanence is defined as safe and nurturing relationships that can be expected to last for a lifetime. Legal and emotional permanency are interconnected and should both be achieved for every child, beginning with the first contact.
3. This section outlines Permanence Goals (with the first 3 goals as most desirable):

* Reunification
* Adoption (requires the termination of parental rights)
* Guardianship
* Placement with a “Fit and Willing Relative”

1. This section introduces the “Permanency Framework” (preparing the child and family for permanency):

* Stage Setting - involves concurrent planning
* Preparation - once it is determined that reunification is not an option, permanent placement resources are identified, and the focus is on preparing the child to transition to permanency
* Focused Services - assessing and understanding the child’s emotional, behavioral, or mental health needs and the capacity to address those needs

1. This section outlines the permanency plan as a partnership with the family to understand the specific conditions required before permanence can be achieved. These conditions should be related to the goals specified in the Permanency Plan or Court Order.

* The Permanency Plan is due sixty days after the removal date. This plan must include concurrent planning, goal selection, and relative engagement
* By six months after the removal date there must be a Permanency Hearing or Review (depending on agency practice)
* A Permanency Hearing occurs every year (or every 6 months if the agency does not conduct Permanency Reviews)
* For every placement change, re-evaluation of the permanency goals and re-engagement of relatives occurs
* Permanency planning requirements continue until permanence is achieved for a child or the child reaches the age of majority and ages out of care. The plan is updated every six months and reviewed by the court during Permanency Hearings or Reviews.

1. This section provides an overview of concurrent planning, the simultaneous pursuit of two permanency goals at the same time. The following are the core components of concurrent planning:

* Assessment/Determination – Reasonable Efforts
* Full Disclosure
* Family Search and Engagement
* Teaming
* Family Interaction
* Clear timelines
* Transparency
* Collaboration with stakeholders

1. This section reviews the Ongoing Standards, which state that diligent efforts to search for non-custodial parents, alleged fathers, and relatives must be initiated or continue at the following points in a case:

* It is likely that a child will be placed in out-of-home care
* The child is placed in out-of-home care on either an emergency basis or with planning
* It is likely that the child’s placement will change
* A concurrent permanence goal is established
* Reunification is no longer the permanency goal
* A child is determined to be subject to the Wisconsin Indian Child Welfare Act (WICWA), and active efforts to locate and involve relatives must be made

**On-the-Job Application Activities**

Listed in this section are optional transfer of training activities to support the learner in applying the knowledge acquired during the Permanence Pre-Service Module to their CPS roles and responsibilities.

These three activities are optional and are provided only to aid the child welfare professional and supervisor/coach in supporting transfer of learning from pre-service to the agency. The child welfare professional, with input from their supervisor/coach, may choose to complete all, some, or none of these activities or substitute in other activities.

Each of the three activities are described below, and a resource section to aid the post-activity supervisor/coach discussion with the child welfare professional follows the description for the first two activities.

**Option 1: Teens and Permanence Activity**

Permanency means a legally permanent, nurturing family for every child in the child welfare system, no matter what age. It includes both emotional and legal permanence. Teens and young adults need the emotional connection provided by family relationships to thrive.

* Watch the video “Every Kid Needs a Family: A Message to Caseworkers” (3:39) produced by the Annie E. Casey Foun­da­tion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wc6Bq6gltGQ>. [The Annie E. Casey Foun­da­tion (2016). Video: “Every Kid Needs a Family: A Message to Caseworkers.” Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wc6Bq6gltGQ>.]
* Take notes about the young people who spent time in foster care who make a compelling argument that child welfare professionals need to persist in connecting teens with family.
* Have a discussion with your supervisor or coach about how this is practiced in your agency.

**Resource for Option 1: Teens and Permanence Activity**

This resource section is provided to aid the post-activity supervisor/coach discussion with their child welfare professional after completion of Option 1 related to the video addressing the importance and need for permanence for children of all ages. Questions to ask your child welfare professional to spark discussions on the content of the video:

* What about this video resonates with you?
* What can you do to connect more with teens with family? What are some barriers you anticipate experiencing?
* What steps can you and your agency take to ensure more teens in foster care have strong, lasting family relationships, now and as adults?

**Option 2: Active Efforts in the Permanency Plan Activity**

In the Ongoing Standards, the child welfare professional is guided to use the goals in the Permanency Plan as the basis for measuring progress and change related to enhancing parent/caregiver protective capacities and achieving permanence.

* Pull out your Ongoing Services Standards.
* If you need to access a copy of the Ongoing Services Standards, you can find them on the DCF website page: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy> in the “Standards” section. If you need help finding them, ask your supervisor/coach for assistance.
* Go to “Evaluating the Permanency Plan”.
* Review the section, “Content in Evaluating the Permanency Plan”.
  + - Keep in mind, when the child is an Indian Child, the Permanency Plan evaluation must also ensure compliance with Active Efforts
* List the steps you could take to comply with the required Active Efforts.
* Discuss with your supervisor or coach and ask how your agency partners with tribal child welfare professionals to achieve permanency goals.

**Resource for** **Option 2: Active Efforts in the Permanency Plan Activity**

This resource section is provided to aid the post-activity supervisor/coach discussion with their child welfare professional after completion of Option 2 related to the Active Efforts in the Permanency Plan Activity.

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| **Additional Requirements When a Child is an Indian Child** (From the Ongoing Standards)  The Permanency Plan evaluation must ensure compliance with Active Efforts as defined by WICWA. This includes documentation of the agency’s efforts in the following areas:   * Requesting the tribal agency to assist in evaluating the case. * Inviting representatives of the child’s tribe to participate in custody proceedings at the earliest point * Notifying and consulting extended family members to provide structure and support to the child and parents/caregivers * Providing family interaction * Offering and employing all available family preservation strategies * Offering and actively assisting families in accessing community resources * Monitoring progress and client participation in services provided * Seeking alternative ways of addressing identified needs when services do not exist or are not available to the family   The Permanency Plan evaluation must also ensure that the Indian child’s placement complies with the order of placement preferences under s. 48.028(7)(b) Stats. or, if applicable, s. 48.028(7)(c) Stats. If the placement is not in compliance with that order, a statement as to whether there is good cause, as described in s. 48.028(7)(e) Stats., for departing from that order, must be a part of the evaluation process. |

**Option 3: Permanency Resources Activity**

The Permanency Module provides a list of resources that can be helpful and critical in your work with families.

* Review the links on the next page by topic to explore those resources relevant to the families you work with.
* With your supervisor or coach, discuss strategies or ideas you discovered that may assist with permanency for the children you work with.

**List of Permanency Related Resources**

**Guardianship**

* Guardianship Fact Sheet for Social Service Providers:

<https://www.qic-ag.org/guardianship-fact-sheet-for-social-service-providers/>. [Credit: Spaulding for Children.]

**Foster Care**

* Wisconsin Foster Care and Subsidized Guardianship Barred Crimes: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/publications>
* Coalition for Children, Youth and Families: <https://coalitionforcyf.org/>
* Physical Environment Licensing Requirements: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\_code/dcf/021\_099/56/07

**Permanency Plan**

* Permanency Plan: eWiSACWIS User Guides – Case Work>Case/Permanency Plan>Permanency Plan: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/knowledgeweb/training/ewisacwis-user-guides/case-work>
* Permanency Review or Hearing Results: eWiSACWIS User Guides – Case Work>Case/Permanency Plan>Permanency Review or Hearing Results:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/knowledgeweb/training/ewisacwis-user-guides/case-work>

* Policy Permanency Plan Guide: eWiSACWIS User Guides – Case Work>Case/Permanency Plan>Policy Review or Hearing Results:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/knowledgeweb/training/ewisacwis-user-guides/case-work>

**Permanency**

* Child Current Legal Permanency Status Form: Wisconsin Permanency Roundtables>PRT Case Documentation Materials>Forms>PRT Legal Permanency Status:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/permanency/prt>

* Permanency Continuum Framework – Quality Improvement Center for Adoption & Guardianship Support and Preservation: <http://www.qic-ag.org/continuum-framework/>

**Adoption**

* Post-Adoption Resource Centers in Wisconsin: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/map/adoption/parc>
* Coalition for Children, Youth & Families: <https://coalitionforcyf.org/>

**Kinship**

* Coalition for Children, Youth & Families: <https://coalitionforcyf.org/>