

# **Pathways to Permanency: Implementing the Concurrent Plan One week**

In the field of child welfare, children have a need for permanent homes and lifelong connections. This training will introduce values and policies that provide a framework for case management responsibilities related to developing a concurrent permanency plan when children are unable to return home.

Pathways to Permanency: Implementing the Concurrent Plan constitutes a fifth week of Child Welfare Core Training for new workers and must be completed within the first year of hire. This five-day training focuses on concurrent permanency planning for children. Best practices and critical analysis of complex variables when making permanency decisions are examined. Participants will explore the types and implementation of alternate permanent plans including: Adoption, Guardianship and APPLA. A focal point of training will be the caseworker's significant role in early and continual discussions with families regarding placement resources that maintain the child's cultural and familial connections.

## Pathways to Permanency: Implementing the Concurrent Plan

The Child Welfare Program / Portland State University / School of Social Work  
626 High Street NE, Floor 4 Salem Oregon 97301 503-315-4267

### *Preferred Agenda*

DAY	TIME	SESSIONS	PRESENTER(S)
<b>Monday</b>	9:00-9:20	<b>Welcome &amp; Housekeeping</b>	Linda Bello Andrea Bellows
	9:20-12:00	<b>Foundations of Permanency Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key values in permanency planning</li> <li>• Legislative influence on current child welfare permanency practice</li> <li>• Framework for Oregon permanency planning</li> <li>• Principles &amp; timelines of concurrent planning</li> <li>• Developing the concurrent plan</li> </ul>	Andrea Bellows Linda Bello  Linda/Andrea
	1:00-2:30	<b>Elements of Permanency Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural considerations</li> <li>• Working with relatives in planning</li> <li>• Permanency Planning Guide: consideration of complex variables associated with choosing the most appropriate option</li> </ul>	Karen Moorhead  Andrea
	2:40-4:30	<b>Early Planning &amp; Consultation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early permanency planning is critical</li> <li>• Rules and processes for managing cases</li> <li>• Mandate to File TPR, Extreme Conduct, and Aggravated Circumstances as defined by ASFA</li> </ul>	Karen Moorhead  Andrea

<b>Tuesday</b>	9:00-4:30	<i>Decisions, Decisions, Decisions!</i> <b>APPLA as the Alternate Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values around reducing APPLA</li> <li>• Assessing if APPLA is the best permanency plan</li> <li>• Continuing need for assessment and reunification</li> <li>• Lifelong connections</li> <li>• Permanency Committee as it relates to APPLA</li> </ul>	Karen Moorhead  Shelly
	11:00-Noon	<b>Guardianship as the Alternate Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on why guardianship might be chosen as the alternate plan and the case dynamics that influence the decision</li> <li>• Discussion of values pertaining to guardianship</li> <li>• How to accomplish different types of guardianships</li> <li>• Permanency Committee as it relates to Guardianships</li> </ul>	Karen Moorhead  Shelly
	1:00-4:30	<b>Adoption as the Alternate Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to accomplish an adoption plan</li> <li>• Policies influencing the selection process for selecting alternate plans for children, including: Adoption Selection Policy; Identification and Consideration of Potential Resources; Current Caretaker; and Adoption Committees</li> <li>• Permanency Committee as it relates to Adoption</li> </ul>	Karen Moorhead  Shelly
<b>Wednesday</b>	9:00-Noon	<b>Bias and Matching Children &amp; Families</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving beyond our biases when matching for children</li> <li>• Using critical analysis to determine best placement</li> <li>• Assessing caregiver's ability to meet a child's short-term and lifelong needs</li> </ul>	Shantika Green  Frannie
	1:00-2:45	<b>Transitioning Children: Best Practices to Promote Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuts and bolts of transitioning children</li> <li>• Promoting attachment through thoughtful transitions</li> <li>• Consider the challenges &amp; barriers to transitions</li> </ul>	Jennifer Scholes  Shantika
	2:45-4:30	<b>Talking with Children about Difficult Issues</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies for sharing difficult truths with children about their past circumstances and history</li> <li>• Talking with children about permanency</li> </ul>	Jennifer Scholes  Shantika

<b>Thursday</b>	9:00-Noon	<b>Attachment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attachment formation and interrupted attachment</li> <li>Strategies for strength-based casework practice that promotes attachment</li> </ul>	Lynne Herbert Jennifer Scholes
	1:00-2:00	<b>“My Life Story” - Documenting A Child’s History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life story books help children develop a sense of self</li> <li>Explore how a child’s book is used in adoption, guardianship and APPLA cases</li> <li>Casework responsibilities</li> </ul>	Andrea Bellows Shelly
	2:15-4:30	<b>Supporting Placements - Financial Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial considerations in permanency planning including Adoption Assistance and Subsidized Guardianship</li> <li>Negotiating a subsidy with a resource parent</li> </ul>	Scott Wickline DHS Back-Up Andrea
<b>Friday</b>	9:00-10:30	<b>Sibling Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Values, policy and practice regarding siblings</li> <li>Real world challenges and controversies around achieving placement plans in best interest of siblings</li> </ul>	Shelly Field Frannie
	10:45-Noon	<b>Preventing Disruption through Accurate Disclosure &amp; Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice, policy and liability issues around disclosure</li> <li>Learn stages of disruption &amp; strategies for stabilization</li> <li>Identify qualities of successful caregivers</li> </ul>	Frannie McMahon Shelly
	1:00-2:45	<b>Maintaining Lifelong Connections: A Panel Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children benefit when the adults in their lives work collaboratively to support their significant connections</li> <li>The panelists will discuss the benefits and challenges of maintaining contact. They will also share how specific issues resurfaced at various life stages &amp; impacted them</li> </ul>	Dan Garris Panel Frannie
	3:00-3:45	<b>Review of Key Concepts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and apply content learned over the Pathways to Permanency training in an effort to increase retention</li> </ul>	Linda Bello Kirstin O’Dell
	3:45-4:00	<b>Wrap-up</b>	Linda Bello

## **Pathways to Permanency: Alternate Permanency Plans**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Karen Moorhead

**Back up trainer:** Shelly Field

**Time:** 6 hrs. 30 min.

This part of Pathways to Permanency outlines three different permanency plans and introductory steps necessary to achieve those plans. The assessment of which permanency plan is appropriate begins at the time of the child's initial placement. Participants will discuss the importance of legal status, decision making capability, relationship with birth families as well as financial issues related to selecting a case plan. This session also explores policies related to permanency. These policies outline the placement decision guidelines and best practices. They include policy on permanency committees, guardianship, APPLA, adoption placement selection, identification and selection of adoptive resources as well as current caretaker policy.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Participants will become familiar with key differences between adoption, guardianship and APPLA plans.
- Participants will build skills around finding the appropriate policies which apply to implementing specific permanent plans.
- Participants will understand the importance of including the child, the resource family, the birth family and members of the child's team in identifying and implementing the permanent plan.
- Participants will become familiar with state and federal legislation influencing policy development related to permanency planning.

## Pathways to Permanency: Attachment

---

**Primary Trainer:** Lynne Herbert

**Back up trainer:** Jennifer Scholes

**Time:** 3 hrs.

Attachment issues are endemic to children who have experienced trauma, abuse and neglect. This training covers how attachment is formed, the spectrum of children's attachment styles and the experiences that influence those styles. Participants will develop a deeper understanding of how interrupted attachment impacts development over the lifespan and how caregivers must understand their *own* attachment styles and biases. Workers will explore how casework decisions can impact attachment and will learn strengths based strategies for helping children and families develop healthy attachments.

### Learning Objectives

- Attachment formation and interrupted attachment.
- Explore casework practice that is strengths based and promotes attachment.
- Transferring attachment and minimizing the impact of multiple moves (including honoring kids' connections to other emotionally significant people in their life).
- Strategies for considering lifelong needs.

# **Pathways to Permanency: Bias & Matching Children and Families**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Shantika Green

**Back up trainer:** Frannie McMahon

**Time:** 3 hrs.

Selecting a family for a child is a monumental decision. Fortunately these decisions are not expected to be made in isolation. When deciding on a permanent placement for a child, the people who are closest to the child and the people who best understand the needs of the child and the culture of the child's family should be consulted. It is natural for workers to have a particular bias when it comes to placement options for a child. However, it is important not to let personal bias get in the way of what is in the best interest of a child.

This session will discuss the importance of moving beyond worker bias in order to find the best match for a child and how to help caseworkers gather the essential information and use critical analysis to help determine the best placement for the child. The question of how to make a decision when more than one family is requesting placement of a child will be discussed, as well as how to plan for both the short term and the long term, when a child cannot return to their birth parent(s).

## **Learning Objectives**

- Recognize and learn how to overcome worker bias when finding culturally appropriate resources for children.
- Become familiar with the sources and types of information that lead to a comprehensive understanding of a child's lifelong placement needs.
- Practice matching children and families using case scenarios.

## **Pathways to Permanency: Early Planning & Consultation**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Karen Moorhead

**Back up trainer:** Andrea Bellows

**Time:** 1 hr. 45 min.

Recognition of cases requiring early permanency planning is critical. This session will compare and contrast various laws that require early identification of a permanency plan. There are both state and federal laws that mandate early planning for permanency; this session will help caseworkers gain an understanding of the rules and processes involved in managing these cases.

Key content will include: 1) federal mandate to file a petition for termination of parental rights, 2) Oregon's "extreme conduct" for termination of parental rights statute, 3) both federal and state conditions which meet the requirements to request that a court make a finding that DHS is not required to provide reasonable efforts to return a child home

### **Learning Objectives**

- Participants will identify reasons for early case consultation.
- Participants will practice application of the content through case studies.

## **Pathways to Permanency: Elements of Permanency Planning**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Karen Moorhead

**Back up trainer:** Andrea Bellows

**Time:** 1 hr. 30 min.

This section of training focuses on the initial steps in choosing an alternate plan. Cultural considerations are an integral part of this decision making process. This session will review the importance of identifying parents with legal standing as early as possible. There will be discussion around the need to involve relatives early and often in permanency planning. Participants will be introduced to critical variables associated with choosing specific permanency goals.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Understand the key values and current practice for concurrent planning.
- Participants will be introduced to key differences between types of permanency goals.
- Participants will understand the importance of involving relatives in the concurrent planning process.
- Participants will discuss some of the cultural considerations in permanency planning.

## **Pathways to Permanency: Foundations of Permanency Planning**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Linda Bello

**Back up trainer:** Andrea Bellows

**Time:** 3 hrs.

This is the introductory session of the Pathways to Permanency training. The intent of the session is to set a foundation for Child Welfare permanency planning in Oregon by presenting key Federal Acts and discussion of current practice, procedure and values that shape permanency planning casework. It begins with a brief “Welcome and Opening Statements” presentation that addresses logistics, training courtesies, and attendance requirements then proceeds to a structured activity that acquaints participants with an historical perspective of Federal legislation that has impacted permanency planning in Oregon’s Child Welfare system. Next we discuss Concurrent Permanency Planning, including the detrimental effects of long-term foster care placement, permanency timelines, and key components of this modality of permanency planning casework.

The session concludes with an activity that challenges participants to think critically about core values that are fundamental to permanency planning by responding to the following strategic questions:

- 1) What do children need to know about permanency planning?
- 2) When children cannot go home, what are their needs related to permanency?
- 3) Who should be involved in permanency planning for children?
- 4) How do CPS workers contribute to the permanency plan of a child?
- 5) How can a child in substitute care maintain connections to their family, culture, and community?
- 6) What constitutes a successful permanent placement?
- 7) What needs do youth preparing to age out of foster care have?

8) What information and items should be collected for a child upon and throughout their placement in substitute care?

### **Learning Objectives**

- Participants will become familiar with Federal legislation that has helped shape Child Welfare practice in Oregon.
- Participants will be able to define permanency planning and concurrent permanency planning.
- Participants will be able to identify core values that are fundamental to permanency planning in Oregon.

## **Pathways to Permanency: Maintaining Lifelong Connections: A panel discussion**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Dan Garris

**Back up trainer:** Frannie McMahon

**Time:** 1 hr. 45 min.

Children and their families benefit when the significant adults in their lives work collaboratively to support the lifelong emotional well-being of the child. A core value in child welfare practice is the commitment to maintain children's lifelong connections. Best practice includes engagement with birth parents and relatives regarding the lifelong needs of their children and strategies to maintain their child's cultural and familial ties, regardless of the permanency plan. This panel will explore the importance of maintaining connections and the impact on well-being.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Panelists will share the specific issues related to maintaining lifelong connections to their birth family, siblings, relatives, foster parents, and emotionally significant persons in their life.
- Panelists will share how specific issues resurfaced at various life stages and how those connections impacted their well-being (ie: divided loyalties, grief and loss).
- Panelists represent the following areas: Adoption, Mediation, Guardianship, and APPLA.

## **Pathways to Permanency: “My Life Story” – Documenting a Child’s History**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Andrea Bellows

**Back up trainer:** Shelly Field

**Time:** 1 hr.

For most of us, our families of origin provide information and knowledge of our personal childhood history. However, children entering the Child Welfare system often lack important pieces of their early childhood history. This makes it more difficult for them to develop a sense of self and to understand how past influences have shaped their current experiences. This session will introduce participants to the “Life Story Book”, a tool that should begin with the child’s first placement and continue throughout the life of a substitute care case. No matter what alternate permanent plan is selected for a child, this tool helps capture a child’s past and serves as a resource to facilitate acceptance and accurate understanding of significant past life events.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Participants will learn the importance of Life Story Books.
- Participants will learn what messages need to be given.
- Participants will learn some methods of gathering and preserving information.

# **Pathways to Permanency: Preventing Disruption through Accurate Disclosure & Services**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Frannie McMahon

**Back up trainer:** Shelly Field

**Time:** 1 hr. 15 min.

This module provides current research pertaining to disruption and effective support for caregivers while emphasizing the need to share information with permanent families prior to placement. The module provides an overview of the history of disclosure, areas of vulnerability to liability, the benefits of disclosure, practice recommendations regarding disclosure, and specific signs indicating serious problems in placements, which if ignored, can lead to disruptions.

## **Learning Objectives**

- Understand how disclosure of child information to caregivers directly reduces disruption rates.
- Understand the stages of disruption in placement.
- Learn which services are effective in stabilizing placements.

## **Pathways to Permanency: Sibling Planning**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Shelly Field

**Back up trainer:** Frannie McMahon

**Time:** 1 hr. 30 min.

The sibling connection is one of the most enduring relationships throughout the life span. Legal custody of a child within DHS begins a series of challenges around the intent to cultivate connections between siblings in substitute care. This session will delve into some of the critical and controversial matters surrounding sibling connection in substitute care. Emphasis is given to negotiating, prioritizing and problem solving the often competing values and practical realities that encircle questions of best interest, placement, separation and continuity of relationships.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Policy and practice around keeping siblings together.
- Real world challenges and controversies around achieving placement plans in the best interest of siblings.
- Assessing the value and benefits of continuity of sibling relationships alongside other significant relationships.
- Assessing sibling placement needs with case-by-case attention to specific behaviors, conditions and circumstances.

## **Pathways to Permanency: Supporting Placements: Financial resources**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Scott Wickline

**Back up trainer:** Andrea Bellows

**Time:** 2 hrs. 15 min.

This session will explore the case decisions pertaining to financial considerations. The history of financial assistance for foster and adoptive families is explored. The details and processes related to guardianship assistance and adoption assistance are explained, and participants use a case example to determine eligibility for adoption assistance.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Understand what is included in negotiating a subsidy with a resource parent.
- Recognize guardianship and adoption assistance eligibility criteria.
- Learn IV-E considerations and non-eligibility.
- Practice case scenarios for skill building.
- Understand the reasons for an early review, and the process involved with it.

# **Pathways to Permanency: Talking with Children about Difficult Issues**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Jennifer Scholes

**Back up trainer:** Shantika Green

**Time:** 3 hrs.

Children in the child welfare system have questions about their past, present and future – ones that must be answered in order for them to move through their trauma and grief, get and stay on track socio-emotionally, and be able to make sense of their lives.

This training focuses on what those questions will most likely be and ways to answer them in age and stage appropriate ways. Our own discomfort may be an obstacle, as well as the challenge of perhaps not having concrete answers to their questions. Participants will be provided with resources to help anticipate children's questions, some answers that work, and what to do when asked questions to which we do not have answers. Finally, participants have an opportunity to practice developing questions children might have in a particular situation and to practice developing answers that work for them.

## **Learning Objectives**

- Participants will be able to identify what information children need.
- Participants will be able to gear responses to the age/stage of the child.
- Participants will gain familiarity in talking with children about issues that are challenging for both the child and the worker.

# **Pathways to Permanency: Transitioning Children: Best practices to promote success**

---

**Primary Trainer:** Jennifer Scholes

**Back up trainer:** Shantika Green

**Time:** 1 hr. 45 min.

A well planned and executed transition will have a positive lasting effect on children and the families who care for them. Successful transitions promote attachment to the new caregivers and reduce the possibilities of disruptions. The transition process is also one of inclusion. A caseworker needs to make sure all important parties, including the child and caregiver, are part of transition planning.

## **Learning Objectives**

- Learn the purpose and elements of a successful transition.
- Become aware of special considerations and challenges to transitions.
- Understand the importance of supporting children and caregivers throughout the transition process.