

PERMANENCY PLANNING

CONTENT

1. Introduction
2. History
3. Defining permanency planning
4. Philosophy and ideology
5. Permanency planning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
6. Theories and research
7. Policy and practice
8. Implications for permanency planning
9. Conclusion
10. Definitions

1. INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Children's Guardian supports and promotes the implementation of the principles of permanency planning provided for in the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (the Act).

This paper outlines the historical and cultural contexts of permanency planning. It also discusses current literature and philosophy underpinning the NSW legislative framework for the implementation of permanency planning for children and young people in out-of-home care.

2. HISTORY

Residential or group care in Australia has been declining for decades and is one quarter the size it was twenty years ago, whilst the foster care population is now at historically unprecedented levels. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that from 1983 to 1996 foster care placements for children in out-of-home care increased significantly from 58% to 88%.¹

On a national scale out-of-home care in Australia has increased steadily since the early 1990's and despite an enormous investment in family preservation the need for services has continued to rise.² Recent statistics show that nationally there are 18,880 children and young people in out-of-home care,³ compared to 15,674 in 1999.⁴ Four out of every 1000 Australian children and

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, cited in Barber, J. G., Gilbertson, R. (2001), *Foster Care: The State of the Art*, The Australian Centre for Community Services Research, Flinders University. p.3.

² Ibid.

³ Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service provision – Report on Government Services May 2003 – Indigenous Compendium.

⁴ Op. cit., footnote 1.

young people between the ages of 0-17 years were in out-of-home care placements in 2001.⁵

The growth of the foster care population started in the 1960's and increased in the late 1970's.⁶ Pelton (1991) argues that the reason for this phenomenon is that child placement was extensively used as a response to child welfare problems.

Concern has grown over the large numbers of children in foster care, and in particular the occurrences of foster care 'drift', whereby children in the foster care system remained in unplanned placements with tenuous status and indefinite care plans. This concern has given rise to the practice called 'permanency planning'.⁷

While permanency planning was a response to the dissatisfaction with service delivery in the foster care system, it has also been associated with questions about the effectiveness of foster care programs meeting the needs of children and young people. Researchers have indicated that some children in foster care find it difficult to establish an identity or a sense of belonging and often have difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships.⁸

More recently the focus of permanency planning in the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK) has turned to adoption. It is seen as an important and under used avenue for permanent placement with the aim to find permanent homes for those children unable to return to their biological families. Recent research⁹ shows that adoption provides for a more successful outcome, in appropriate cases, than stable long-term foster care.

Adoption initiatives in the UK and US have established concrete goals to increase the numbers of adopted children. In the US, the *Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA)* promotes the achievement of permanency planning through strict timelines and permanency hearings within 12 months of a child's entry into care. If a child has spent 15 of the most recent 22 months in care, a petition to terminate parental rights must be filed (unless a specific exemption applies). In the UK, the *Adoption and Children Act 2002* mandates that at least 95% of children are to be placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision that adoption is in the best interest of the child (applicable to England and Wales).¹⁰

⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001, Census of Population and Housing.

⁶ Pelton, H., Beyond Permanency Planning: Restructuring the Public Child Welfare System. *National Association of Social Workers Journal*. 1991, pp. 337-343. Vol. 36, No. 4.

⁷ Maluccio, A.N. Fein, E, (1984), 'Beyond Permanency Planning' *Australian Child & Family Welfare Journal*. Vol. 9, No. 3. Spring, pp. 3-5.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Triseliotis, J. (2002), Long Term Foster Care or Adoption? The Evidence Examined, *Child & Family Social Work*, No. 7. pp 23-23.

¹⁰ Sargent, S. (2003), 'Adoption and looked after children: A comparison of legal initiatives in the UK and the USA.' *Adoption & Fostering*, Vol. 27, No. 2.

Amendments to the *NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* were commenced in February 2001.¹¹ Permanency planning was introduced as an integral part of service provision for children and young people who cannot safely return to their biological families.

3. DEFINING PERMANENCY PLANNING

Whilst there is no commonly accepted definition of permanency planning, it still remains important to establish some terms of reference around the concept of permanency planning.

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989* (CROC) emphasises the need for continuity in a child's upbringing. CROC article 20 states that 'due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing'.

Permanency planning in NSW is found in sections 70A, 78 78A, 81, 82, 83, 84 and 85A of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*. In this context permanency planning is defined as:

'the making of a plan that aims to provide a child or young person with a stable placement that offers long term security and that:

- a) has regard, in particular, to the principle set out in section 9f, and*
- b) meets the needs of the child or young person, and*
- c) avoids the instability and uncertainty arising through a succession of different placements or temporary care arrangements.'*

The *NSW Standards for Substitute Care Services* manual (DoCS 1998) defines permanency planning as:

'a formal commitment to ensuring that continuity of significant relationships, stability of placement and planned outcomes for children or young people are maximised.'

Pike (1997) defines permanency planning as:

*'clarifying the intent of the placement, and during temporary care, keeping alive a plan for permanency. When a temporary placement is prolonged, foster care may have the appearance of permanency, but it lacks the element of intent that is critical to permanency.'*¹²

Maluccio (1984) expands on the quality of permanence by exploring Emlen's (1977) definition of permanency planning:

¹¹ *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Permanency Planning) Act 2001.*

¹² Pike 1977 cited in Maluccio, A.N. (1984), 'Permanency Planning a redefinition.' *Australian Child & Family Welfare Journal*. Vol. 9, No 2. Winter, p.3.

*'(1) intent – the home is intended to last indefinitely, although it is not guaranteed to last forever; (2) commitment and continuity – the family is committed to the child, makes assumption of a common future, and provides continuity in the child's relationships with caretakers and other family members; (3) legal status – the family offers the child definitive legal status protecting his or her rights and interests and promoting a sense of belonging; and (4) social status - the family provides the child with a respected social status, in contrast to the second-class status typical of prolonged foster care.'*¹³

Maluccio (1984) believes that these two definitions emphasise that permanence implies intent and provides the following integrative definition:

*'Permanency planning is the systematic process of carrying out, within a brief time-limited period, a set of goal-directed activities designed to help children live in families that offer continuity of relationships with nurturing parents or care givers and the opportunity to establish lifetime relationships.'*¹⁴

4. PHILOSOPHY AND IDEOLOGY

Underpinning permanency planning is the philosophy that every child has the right to a permanent and stable home, preferably with his or her own birth family. The aim is to either assist the child or young person return home, or if this is not appropriate, to consider adoption or legal guardianship and long-term foster care.¹⁵

Professional carers and practitioners in the care system have acknowledged how critical, in the lives of children and young people, is their need for continuity with their primary attachment figures.¹⁶ Permanency planning recognises that children and young people need a sense of identity and belonging, stability, continuity of relationships and emotional attachment for the development of positive self-esteem and well-being.¹⁷

Allowing children the opportunity to form healthy attachments helps fulfil their need to be attached to someone, who considers them to be special and has a commitment to provide for their ongoing safety, health and well-being.

¹³ Emlen 1977 cited in Maluccio, A. N. (1984), 'Permanency Planning a redefinition.' *Australian Child & Family Welfare Journal*. Vol. 9, No 2. Winter, p.3.

¹⁴ Maluccio, A.N. (1984), Permanency Planning a redefinition, *Australian Child & Family Welfare Journal*. Vol. 9, No 2. Winter, p.3.

¹⁵ The Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia (August 2002) *A Time to Invest in Australia's Most Disadvantaged Children, Young People and their Families*, Policy Paper, pp 2-13.

¹⁶ Through awareness of the work of Bowlby et al related to attachment theories in child psychology.

¹⁷ Op. cit., in footnote 13, p.8.

Children who do not form an intense attachment to a parent (figure) can develop a limited and fragmented autonomy and are likely to experience deep shame, intense rage, pervasive anxiety and extreme isolation and despair.¹⁸

The ideology of permanency planning is that the family providing the care has the intention to provide the child or young person with a permanent home where the family is committed to them. Maluccio (1984) argues that by maintaining this intention for permanent care and stability, children and young people will not drift in care and the disadvantage they have experienced will not be compounded throughout their life.

Permanency planning can seem to conflict with the influential work associated with attachment theory. In some instances when acting in the best interests of the child or young person, practitioners are faced with difficult decisions. They need to weigh up the relative merits of a future, 'as-yet untried,' permanent and stable placement in the face of the significant effects of the removal of the child or young person from all their valued attachments which are, according to attachment theory, imperative for the positive development of the child or young person.

How children and parents view themselves and their significant relationships is influenced by the prevailing ideology outside the care system (eg media, cultural /religious constructs, family, socio-economic or community values).

Cross-cultural studies of fostering add to the consideration of the ideology of permanency planning in the provision of out-of-home care. Kilbride (1994) looks at fostering (or as it is sometimes called 'fosterage') as a widespread practice found in various forms, often informal, in many communities.¹⁹ For example, fostering in some communities is an established practice observed to be confined to the process of rearing with little change in the identity of the child and the formal legal status of the parents. Often this rearing is carried out by extended family or kin who have the resources and obligation to help parents in hard times or, in some cases, to strengthen family ties or meet the needs of childless couples. These observed practices are made possible by the existence of an ideology that views the child or young person in the context of their identity in and connection to the wider family and their valued place in their community. These views facilitate and operationalise permanency planning within these communities.

Permanency planning offers a wide range of placement options. These can include restoration to the birth family as the preferred option, long-term foster care, relative/kinship care, sole parental responsibility to another person, adoption and independent living. These permanency planning components

¹⁸ Hughes, D. A. (1997), Facilitating Development Attachment – *The Road to Emotional Recovery and Behavioural Change in Foster and Adopted Children*, Polity Press, p.1.

¹⁹ Kilbride J. E. & Kilbride P. L. (1994), 'To Have and to Share: Culturally Constituted Fostering in Familial Settings' in Jan Blacher (ed) *When There's No Place Like Home*.

should be conceptualised from the outset and be reflected in the case or restoration plan for each child or young person entering out-of-home care.²⁰

5. PERMANENCY PLANNING FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Whilst care options are available for all children and young people for whom out-of-home care is being considered, many of these options are not accessible or culturally appropriate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) families in New South Wales. With respect to ATSI children and young people, regard must be given to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Young Person Placement Principles in section 13 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

From a traditional Aboriginal perspective, the European concept of permanency planning does not exist. Chisholm (1982) argues that:

*'Permanency planning seems a rather European view; it assumes, to put it rather crudely, that home is everything. In the society of many non-Aboriginals, this may be so but things are very different in Aboriginal families.'*²¹

Aboriginal children and young people are brought up by the community and they are the responsibility of the community as a whole.²²

In their report on out-of-home care, the Children and Family Welfare Association of Australia²³ states that:

*'the importance of relative/kinship care cannot be underestimated. Kinship care placements have higher rates of stability, are important to children and young people because they are non-stigmatising, preserve identity, contact with their families and culture, and relieve the pressure on an already stressed out-of-home care sector.'*²⁴

McHugh (2003) raises issues associated with the growing use of kinship care particularly for Aboriginal children and young people. She refers to the effects of the lower levels of reimbursement for kinship carers, who are often older families or grandmothers already with relatively lower levels of resources and

²⁰ *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Permanency Planning) Bill 2000*, NSW Department of Community Services: Issues Paper February 2000.

²¹ Chisholm, R., *Child Care, Aboriginal Children and Permanency Planning' A Sceptical View*, Paper presented at the Third Australian Conference on Adoption SA 1982.

²² See the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian's *Aboriginal Policy Statement*, 2004 for further details – www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au.

²³ The Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia (CAFWAA) is the National Peak body representing community service organisations in all states and territories.

²⁴ Op. cit., footnote 13, p20.

education, and the lack of recruitment, training and support for kinship carers²⁵ on children and young people needing special care and attention.

Given the historical events associated with 'the stolen generation' experienced by many Aboriginal people, the permanency planning provisions in the legislation need to be sensitively handled with regard given to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Young Person Placement Principles. Section 78A (3) of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* clearly states that:

'A permanency plan for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person must address how the plan has complied with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Young Person Placement Principles in section 13.'

The objectives and principles noted in section 13 of the Act provide, in order of priority, four placement options:

1. Placement with a member of the child or young person's extended family or kinship group, as recognised by the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community to which the child or young person belongs; or if this first option is not practicable,
2. Placement with a member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to which the child or young person belongs; or if not practicable,
3. Placement with a member of some other Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander family residing in the vicinity of the child's or young person's usual place of residence; or if not practicable, lastly
4. A suitable person approved by the Director-General after consultation with members of the child's or young person's extended family or kinship group, as recognised by the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community to which the child or young person belongs and such Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander welfare organisations as are appropriate to the child or young person.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, kinship groups, representative organisations and communities are to be actively supported to participate in decisions regarding the placement and all other significant decisions about their kids in care.

Permanency planning needs to be carefully implemented so as not to further disadvantage children and young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Section 78A (4) states that where a permanency plan for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person indicates an intention to provide permanent placement through a sole parental

²⁵ McHugh, M. (2003) A Further Perspective on Kinship Care: Indigenous Foster Care, *Developing Practice* No. 8 Summer.

responsibility order or adoption, and no suitable placement can be found in accordance with the principles set out in section 13 of the Act, the approval of the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs is required.

6. THEORIES AND RESEARCH

Permanency planning is influenced by theories of child development, bonding and attachment and aims to promote opportunities for children and young people to form consistent and lasting relationships in their lives. Foster carers need to be fully assessed and carefully matched with the child or young person in order to optimise their potential to meet the child or young person's long term needs.

Children and young people in out-of-home care need to be supported to maintain consistent and lasting relationships. Where possible, supporting and facilitating an environment that enables carers and biological parents to meet and have an ongoing relationship with the child or young person assists their progress developmentally. It also gives them an opportunity to form positive, significant and lasting relationships with an adult figure.

Significant research (Cashmore (1996), Vorria (1998a), Vorria (1998b), Belinsky (1994)) suggests that children and young people who experience instability in care, are more likely to experience poorer outcomes than those who receive stable and personalised care. This can be either as the result of multiple placements whilst in care or because of unsuccessful and temporary returns to the care of their family.

7. POLICY AND PRACTICE

The objective of the principles of the Act requires that permanent placement arrangements for children and young people in out-of-home care should be completed in a timely manner, to ensure the provision of a safe, nurturing, stable and secure environment (section 9f). Furthermore, based on theories of bonding and attachment, the younger the age of the child, the greater the need for early decisions to be made in locating a permanent placement. Another principle (section 9e) of the Act impresses that when a child or young person is deprived from his or her environment, his or her name, identity, language, cultural and religious ties should be preserved, as far as possible.

Children and young people are entitled to stable relationships in a safe and secure environment. The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* states that:

'If a child or young person is placed in out-of-home care, arrangements should be made, in a timely manner, to ensure the provision of a safe, nurturing, stable and secure environment, recognising the child or young person's circumstances and that, the younger the age of the

*child, the greater the need for early decisions to be made in relation to a permanent placement.'*²⁶

The importance of permanency planning being carried out in a brief time limited period is consistent with research that shows for permanency planning to be effective, it must be organised and timely. Designated agencies need to ensure permanency planning is a planned activity from the start of a child or young person's placement and that it is completed in a timely fashion.

Permanency planning must be included in designated agencies' policies and procedures. The following priorities are based on theoretical foundations of permanency planning and what is expected in service delivery:

1. *'Preventing separation of children from their homes by providing necessary supports to families;*
2. *Where separation is necessary, developing plans and providing support services to enable children to be reunited with their families;*
3. *Where these options are inappropriate, providing highly active services that enable children to be adopted or, where it is a plan of choice, to be placed in a permanent foster home.'*²⁷

Concurrent planning is a technique that aims to maximise timely placement of children into permanent families. It was developed as a tool to address the inadequacies of delay and drift for young children in care and to speed up their placement into permanent families.²⁸ It attempts to achieve the goals of permanency by:

- *Intensive casework with birth families.*
- *Frequent, meaningful visits between the children and their birth families.*
- *Full disclosure with the birth families about the importance of permanence in the lives of children, the various options for permanency planning, and consequences of their actions or inactions; and consistent communication with birth families throughout the life of a case, about feedback on positive case progress or the need to confront planning ambivalence.*
- *Diligent search efforts to find absent parents and address all paternity issues such as blood tests, child support, etc.*
- *Aggressive and diligent searches for and assessment of relatives who might have an interest in caring or planning for permanence for the child.*

²⁶ Section 9(f) of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

²⁷ Op. cit., footnote 12.

²⁸ Monck, E. (2003), *The Role of Concurrent Planning, Making permanent placements for young children*, British Association for Adoption & Fostering. Russell Press, Nottingham.

- *Frequent and substantive case reviews that carefully assess the efficiency of services being provided to assist the family to achieve case plan goals and modification of the service plan as required.*
- *Use of foster-adopter families who can work towards reunification but are also able to offer the child a permanent home if needed.*²⁹

Consistent with concurrent planning is that permanency planning has to encourage contact between children or young people and their biological families, irrespective of orders reallocating parental responsibility. Section 9 (g) of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* states that:

*'children and young people are entitled to the retentionof relationships with people significant to the child including birth or adoptive parents, siblings, extended family, peers, family friends and community.'*³⁰

The literature suggests that children and young people who do best in long term foster care are those who have ongoing contact and/or links with their families. In comparison, children and young people without ongoing involvement with their family do less well. Cashmore's (1996) study of wards leaving care indicates that children or young people who went into care aged older than six and then grew up in care, reunite with their family after leaving care, particularly where their birth family's life circumstances improved. Contact is a means of developing positive future relationships.

Families can provide continuity, roots and identity for children and young people in out-of-home care. There is a growing body of research that suggests that, irrespective of the quality of the family links, most children and young people who experience out-of-home care do return to their parents or some family member. If those links have been strong and positive, it is more likely that when the child or young person leaves out-of-home care, they may benefit from support, assistance and possible accommodation.³¹ Family reunification requires agencies and staff members to adopt a flexible approach and promote effective programs and models of intervention before, during and after placement to support the process.³²

Children or young people can experience a range of emotions when moving into a permanent family, including conflicts of loyalty, guilt, anger, grief and fear. This has a greater impact on older children and young people. Macaskill

²⁹ National Resource Centre for Foster Care and Permanency Planning – www.Hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp

³⁰ Section 9 (g) *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*.

³¹ *Patterns and Outcomes in Child Placement: Messages from Current Research and their Implications. The Children Act 1989*, Department of Health (publishers), 1998 (third impression).

³² Curtis, P. (1999), *The Foster Care Crisis, Translating Research into Policy and Practice*, Nebraska Press.

(2002) as reported in Tregagle³³ states that contact counters a child or young person's feelings of rejection and self-blame through evidence of their birth family's continued interest. Contact also satisfies a child or young person's need for information and prevents an unhealthy idealisation of their birth family.

Contact with the birth family and significant others must be considered in every child or young person's care plan. Plans must be reviewed regularly to reflect changes in circumstances. Determining levels of contact should take into account the child or young person's needs, age and their life experience.

Face-to-face meetings are a means of contact. However contact also includes exchange of information in the form of letters, cards, photographs, emails and telephone calls, as well as various outings involving the child or young person with their family and significant others in leisure activities, celebrations, significant cultural and religious events, etc. Children's views are particularly important in the making of contact plans. Contact plans should be developed in consultation with all parties concerned and decisions about contact should remain child focused.

8. PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS FOR PERMANENCY PLANNING

Pelton (1991) argues that permanency planning has failed in some aspects and the major reason is due to a number of practitioners having a dual role with families. Practitioners that investigate families and have the ability to remove children are also responsible for preventative and restoration services. However this environment creates conflict between practitioners and families because of the power dynamics. This can produce a negative environment making it difficult for families to build trust with practitioners.

Agencies that have a dual role face a dilemma between the choice of allocating scarce resources to foster care or to preventive services. The placement of children and young people is often the easiest option and appears to be the safest way to protect children and young people, in the short term. This may lead to a vicious cycle, where the more foster care is used the more funding will be budgeted for it. Pelton (1991) argues that this in turn creates a 'placement finding' industry. Time constraints due to casework load can often supersede locating an alternate care option to foster care.

Permanency planning requires a consistent set of requirements for practitioners to work from in order to be a success. There is a need for an increase in preventive and supportive services to ensure restoration or another form of permanency for children and young people that are at risk or who have entered out-of-home care.

³³ Tregagle S. (2003), Establishing permanency for children – the issues of contact between children in permanent foster care and their families, ACWA Autumn, in *Developing Practice, The Youth and Family Work Journal*.

Maluccio (1984) argues that the potential danger of permanency planning is that it can become merely a program label, covering only cosmetic changes in service delivery. Therefore permanency planning policy may need a shift of resources from remedial to preventive services, to avert placements of children and young people from vulnerable families. Maluccio (1984) highlights the difficulties of practitioners being able to make the shift from focusing upon families' weaknesses to their strengths, in order to bring about family reunion and the provision of extra resources required to assist practitioners in permanency planning.³⁴

Permanency planning has been shown to reduce the size of the foster care population and decrease the length of time that children spend in the foster care system.³⁵ It holds great promise for achieving, at the minimum, the goals of permanent families for children and young people in out-of-home care.

9. CONCLUSION

The Office of the Children's Guardian supports and promotes the application of permanency planning principles established by the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Permanency Planning) Act 2001* within the operations of designated agencies in NSW.

In seeking accreditation with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, out-of-home care services need to demonstrate that they aim to establish and maintain stable placement arrangements and long term security for children and young people in out-of-home care.

Case managers cannot always afford to wait to see how events in the life of the child or young person evolve in the face of what the literature and practice wisdom tell us about probability and outcomes. Evidence regarding the impact of identified factors on the probability of a successful placement or restoration to parents, should influence placement decisions, in giving priority to the best interests of the child. Factors may include an ongoing history of substance abuse or the failure of a parent to complete a detoxification or rehabilitation program, as per the restoration plan or programs, where the designated agency involves parents even when a child or young person is placed permanently in foster care.

Theories on bonding and attachment and associated research findings have established that it is better to act early on decisions in locating a suitable permanent placement.

By implementing the permanency planning provisions in the Act, a designated agency is starting to lessen the impact of successive placements or temporary care arrangements that do not meet the needs of the child.

³⁴ Op. cit., footnote 12.
³⁵ Op. cit., footnote 5.

10. DEFINITIONS

Permanency planning

The Act defines permanency planning as the making of a plan in order to meet the needs and long term security of a child or young person in out-of home care. The plan should aim to avoid the instability and uncertainty that arises through a succession of different placements or temporary care arrangements.

Permanency planning offers a wide range of placement options. These can include restoration to the birth family as the preferred option, long-term foster care, relative/kinship care, sole parental responsibility to another person, adoption and independent living.

Contact

Contact can be defined in terms of an exchange of information in the form of letters, cards and photographs, face-to-face meetings between the child or young person and their family and/or significant others.

Ongoing relationships

Consistent contact between the child or young person and their family in all forms, as outlined in the contact plan.

Concurrent planning

A technique that uses strategies aimed at maximising the timely placement of children into permanent families in order to avoid delay and drift in care.

REFERENCES

- Barber, J.G., Gilbertson, R. (2001), *The State of the Art*. The Australian Centre for Community Services Research (ACCSR), Flinders University.
- Belinsky, J. and Cassidy, J. (1994), *Attachment: Theory and Evidence, Development Through Life: A Handbook for Clinicians*. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford.
- Cashmore, J. and Paxman, M. (1996), *Longitudinal Study of Wards Leaving Care*. Report of Research Commissioned by the NSW Department of Community Services, Social Policy Research Centre and University of NSW.
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Permanency Planning) Bill 2000, Issues Paper*. (February 2000), NSW Department of Community Services.
- Chisholm, R. (1982), *Child Care, Aboriginal Children and Permanency Planning: A Sceptical View*. Paper presented at the Third Australian Conference on Adoption SA.
- Curtis, P.A., Dale, G. Jnr. and Kendall, J.C. (1999), *The Foster Care Crisis, Translating Research into Policy and Practice*. University of Nebraska Press.
- Hughes, D.A. (1997), *Facilitating Development Attachment - The Road to Emotional Recovery and Behavioral Change in Foster and Adopted Children*. Polity Press.
- Kilbride, J.E. and Kilbride, P.L. (c1994), 'To Have and to Share – Culturally Constituted Fostering in Familial Settings.' *When There's No Place Like Home- Options for Children Living Apart from Their Natural Families*. ed Jan Blacher, Baltimore: P.H. Brookes Pub. Co.
- Maluccio, A. N. (1984), 'Permanency Planning a redefinition.' *Australian Child & Family Welfare Journal*. Vol. 9, No 2 Winter.
- Maluccio, A.N., Felin, J., Hamilton, J., Klier, J. and Ward, D. (1984), 'Beyond Permanency Planning.' *Australian Child & Family Welfare Journal*. Vol. 9, No 3. Spring.
- McHugh, M. (2003), 'A Further Perspective on Kinship Care: Indigenous Foster Care' in *Developing Practice: the Child, Youth and Family Work Journal*, No.8 Summer.
- Monck, E., Reynolds, J. and Wigfall, V. (2003), *The Role of Concurrent Planning, Making permanent placements for young children*. British Association for Adoption & Fostering, Russell Press, Nottingham.

National Resource Centre for Foster Care and Permanency Planning –
www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp

Pelton, H. (1991), 'Beyond Permanency Planning: Restructuring the Public Child Welfare System.' *National Association of Social Workers Journal*. Vol. 36, No. 4.

Sargent, S. (2003), 'Adoption and looked after children: A comparison of legal initiatives in the UK and the USA.' *Adoption & Fostering*, Vol. 27, No. 2.

Tregeagle, S. (2003), 'Establishing permanency for children – the issues of contact between children in permanent foster care and their families' in *Developing Practice The Youth And Family Work Journal*, ACWA, Autumn, No 6.

Triseliotis, J. (2002), 'Long Term Foster Care or Adoption? The Evidence Examined.' *Child & Family Social Work*. No. 7.

The Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia. (2002), *A Time to Invest in Australia's Most Disadvantaged Children, Young People and their Families*'.

Vorria, P., Rutter, M., Pickles, A., Wolkind, S. and Hobsbaum, A. (1998a), 'A Comparative Study of Greek Children in Long-Term Residential Group Care and in Two-Parent Families – Social, Emotional and Behavioural Differences.' *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. Vol 39.

Vorria, P., Rutter, M., Pickles, A., Wolkind, S. and Hobsbaum, A. (1998b), 'A Comparative Study of Greek Children in Long-Term Residential Group Care and in Two-Parent Families – Possible Mediating Mechanisms.' *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. Vol. 39.