

Options Used in Decision-Making for Permanency Planning

Option	Description	Preferred Decision
Child Protective Services/ Family Preservation	Providing services to children in their own home. The birth family of father, mother, and their children constitutes the preferred means of providing family life for children, and should for that reason be fostered and preserved whenever possible. (CLWA, Standards for Adoption Service, 1988)	4 when child is at low to moderate risk for further abuse / neglect. 4 parent /child conflict 4 truancy issues
Adoption	The primary purpose of adoption service is to help children who would not otherwise have a nurturing family, to become members of a family giving them the care, protection, and opportunities essential for their healthy personal growth and development. It is the method provided by law which establishes the legal relationship of parent and child between persons who are not related by birth, with the same mutual rights and obligations that exist between children and their birth parents.	4 when parents cannot or will not provide an environment free from abuse and neglect. 4 when there are no family members who are a resource to provide care and parenting.
Foster /Adopt	Children are adopted by the foster parents with whom they have been living. Placement has generally been ongoing over a period of time.	4 when child and foster parent have a strong relationship which demonstrates that removal would be detrimental to the child.
Long Term Foster Care	After the goal of adoption has been explored and not selected, and relatives are not feasible, a goal of planned long-term foster care is a viable goal. This should not be the goal of choice. This option is available on a limited basis with the implementation of ASFA. If this is to be the goal then a compelling reason must exist. All Children and Youth agencies in Pennsylvania have been given discretion to define what they believe to be compelling reasons why filling TPR petitions may not be in the best interest of the child. When planning to submit a compelling reason to the court so that TPR petition does not have to be files, it may be submitted at the 12-month permanency hearing and must have court approval before the end of the 15 th month.	4 circumstances for the child are best met in the current situation of foster care, and it is not in the best interest of the child to be moved; relinquishment of parental rights has been unattainable. 4 foster parents are not interested in adoption, but are willing to make a long term commitment to the child.

Option	Description	Preferred Decision
Reunification	Returning children to the physical custody of their parent(s) after placement.	4 when the family has utilized services and the goals of the Family Service Plan and the Placement Amendment have been met; the conditions of intake no longer exist
Kinship Care	Placement of child(ren) with related family members when return to the biological parents is not in the child's best interest. Placement with relatives should be considered early in the placement, rather than after substitute caregivers have been the psychological parents. Some relatives might be adequate short-term resource, helping to minimize the trauma of a child being placed with strangers on an emergency basis. Others might be more appropriate as a long-term permanent resource. (Vera Fahlberg, <i>A Child's Journey Through Placement</i> 1991)	4 a related family member is an available resource to provide long term care for the child and has resources to provide care for the child until adulthood.
Permanent Legal Custodianship	A custodian to whom legal custody has been given by the court the right to the physical custody and the right to determine the nature of care and treatment of the child, including ordinary medical care. They have the right and duty to provide for the care, protection, training, education and the physical, mental and moral welfare of the child. They must abide by the conditions and limitations of the order and to and to the remaining rights and duties of the parents of guardian of the child as determined by the court.	4 A significant person to the child is available to provide long term care and resources for the child until adulthood.

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