

Permanence – Planning for Children

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Owers Advisory Ltd

Permanence – Planning for Children

Permanence for children who are in the care system involves building and maintaining strong and stable relationships, a sense of family and stability around living arrangements. This workshop will explore in more detail what is required to ensure that the best interests of the child are considered at all times.

Welcome and introduction

- Thank you.
- Independent Government adviser on Children in Care and Permanence.
- Regionalising Adoption and the RAA Leaders Group - 18 RAAs/80 LAs
- Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board.
- National Stability Board.
- *Review of Fostering in England*
- Qualified social worker.
- Parent of 5 children, 2 adopted children and birth triplets.
- Married to a Cleethorpes girl.

Some truths about the care system.

System

1. All routes to permanence are equal and unique. There is no hierarchy and there is no template. What is best for the child over the longer term should be the focus.
2. Our Care System is inherently discriminatory. Too often access to entitlements and support are defined by legal status or stage of a statutory process. That is not right.
3. There is an imbalance between protecting and safeguarding children and promoting their stability and sense of belonging. We can't just save them from abuse and neglect, we must equally enable them to thrive in stable and permanent families.
4. Funding is constrained, and we need to secure best value from our resources.

Practice

5. Birth parents should be held in mind, and included when they are ready, without being framed in a simplistic, blaming, and drain on our time and resources manner.
6. Children and young people in care and care experienced adults need ongoing support to develop their identity and to enable them to thrive across the lifespan.
7. The forming of a new family and the end of proceedings does not mean everybody lives happily ever after. Second families need the right multi-disciplinary and multi-agency support, at the right time and in the right place to enable them to thrive.

- What do we mean by permanence?
- How exactly do we build and maintain:
 - a. Strong and stable relationships
 - b. A sense of family
 - c. Stability around living arrangements?
- What do we mean by the term best interests of the child?
- What does a positive experience of care actually look like?
- If you had one wish, what would you wish for to make the care system better for children and young people?

Thank you for listening!

Do you have any questions?

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