

## CHILDREN'S LEGAL SERVICES

### “TRANSITION PLANNING”

WHY US? It is our duty to ensure children change homes in a thoughtful and healthy way.

WHEN? From the time a child comes into care until the case is closed.

HOW? Ask the right questions to the right people and advocate for thoughtful transitions in court using the information received.

#### **Reunification from the start**

Has there been regular, frequent contact between the child, siblings and parents beginning immediately after removal? (Visits, letters, calls, skype)

Have the out-of-home caregivers had an opportunity to meet with the parents to discuss their child immediately after removal? Phone contact at a minimum.

Does the case plan contemplate specific steps that if successful will lead to a recommendation for less restricted visitation?

Are the out-of-home caregivers practicing co-parenting and are they encouraging reunification and nurturing the child's attachments?

Are the parents involved and engaged in medical and educational decisions?

Are the parents cooperating with the out-of-home caregivers?

Are the visitations positive? If the answer is no: Is modification of the case plan necessary? Has there been an assessment of the parenting skills completed by a therapeutic professional?

#### **Reunify?**

Has there been a gradual and orderly transition plan put in place that involves the parents, out-of-home caregivers, GAL, child's attorney, child, child's therapist, parent's therapist?

Is the child 5 years old or younger or is the child disabled? If yes: Has there been a “Reunification Staffing”?

Have the parents successfully spent extended periods of time together including unsupervised overnight and weekend visits without further abuse or neglect?

Were the out-of-home caregivers consulted for their input and is it being considered? Note: Best Practice is to contact the out-of-home caregivers directly.

Is there a plan to say goodbye to the out-of-home caregivers and children in the home?

Where will the transition happen?

Who will take the child home?

Is there anything going on in the home that would suggest waiting for a day or two?

What is the educational plan for the child? If the child has to transfer schools can the transition wait until school is out?

Are there any medical concerns for the child going home? Medical appointments being followed up on?

Are the child's services transitioning with the child?

What are the child's thoughts about going home and the transition?

Is there a plan for continued contact with the out-of-home caregivers after the transition?

### **Interim Home Transition**

Has there been a gradual and orderly transition plan put in place that involves the current and transitioning out-of-home caregivers, GAL, child's attorney, child, child's therapist?

Have the new out-of-home caregivers and the child successfully spent extended periods of time together including unsupervised overnight and weekend visits without further abuse or neglect?

Were the current out-of-home caregivers consulted for their input and is it being considered?

Note: Best Practice is to contact the out-of-home caregivers directly.

Is there a plan to say goodbye to the out-of-home caregivers and other children in the home?

Where will the transition happen?

Who will take the child home?

Is there anything going on in the home that would suggest waiting for a day or two?

What is the educational plan for the child? If the child has to switch schools can the transition wait until school is out?

Are there any medical concerns for the child going home? Medical appointments being followed up on?

Are the child's services transitioning with the child?

What are the child's thoughts about moving?

Is there a plan for continued contact for the child with the current out-of-home caregivers and children in the home after the transition?

