

Placement with Relative or Kin: Questions to Consider

Living with someone the child already knows and feels safe with can mitigate the child's feelings of loss, which are part of any placement. The use of a relative or kin placement should be evaluated from the beginning of agency involvement. The following questions should serve as guidance in considering both the pitfalls and benefits involved with kin and relative placements:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the relatives/kin been carefully evaluated? Is there a written home study? • What are the parents' thoughts and wishes in reference to this relative? • What will be the ongoing relationship with the parents? • Will the parents create problems with the placement or compromise the child's safety? • Will the relative be able to protect the child from hostile or inappropriate parental behavior? • Will the relative be able to be positive about the parent to the child? • Will there be an "unofficial" return to the biological parents? • Will this relative support the present service plan? • If the plan changes, will the relative support the change? • How will visitation be accomplished? • Are the relatives able to understand and cooperate with agency expectations? • Have the relatives of both parents been considered, regardless of the removal home? • Is placement with relatives a way we can protect the child's roots in his/her community? • Will placement with a particular relative mean that the child must leave the community? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will placement with a particular relative mean that the child will lose other important relative or kinship ties? • Will a relative placement mean that the child will have to endure another move? • What losses will the child experience if another move is required? • Have we considered sibling attachments, as well as any "toxic" sibling issues? • Is this potential caretaker related to all the siblings? • Is this relative able and willing to take all the siblings? • Will placement with the siblings be positive for this child? • Will this placement support the child's ethnic and cultural identity? • Is this seen as permanent by the potential caretakers? • Would this relative consider adoption? • Are there the same issues in the extended family that existed with the parents? • What preplacement relationship existed? • Does the child have any attachment to these relatives? • Have the child's wishes been considered?
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