

“Permanent Resolutions: Questions to Consider

There are only two truly permanent resolutions: return to parents and adoption. These resolutions are most possible when the following questions can be answered and the underlying issues they suggest have been dealt with.

| Return to Parents | Adoption |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have issues that brought the child into care been addressed by the agency? • Have the parents made the changes that the child protection agency requested? • Has the child protection agency caseworker observed and documented a reduction of risk? • What have the visits we observed told us about the parents' ability to care for the child? • Have we considered recommending a trial placement as a way to observe actual changes in childcare? • Have new issues that relate to risk been observed and addressed? • Has the child protection agency changed the rules or “raised the bar” in reference to expectations that are not related to risk? • Would the child protection agency remove this child today? • Is this a multiproblem family that is likely to relapse? • What services can be put in place to prevent relapse? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are we ready to proceed with a termination of parental rights (TPR) case? • Do legal grounds exist? • Have we also considered the best interest issues that must be presented to the judge? • How long will the court process take? • Have the parents been asked to release the child for adoption? • Is the child already living with caretakers who are willing and able to adopt? • Are there relatives who are available to adopt? • How soon can the child be placed? • Who can help the child through the placement process? • Have we assessed and evaluated the child's particular needs and strengths? • What is the child's relationship with his/her siblings? • Should the child be placed with siblings? Can the child be placed with siblings? • Have the child's ethnic and cultural needs been considered and addressed? |

- Have the legal and/or biological fathers been identified?
- Have we recognized the child's grief and need to reconnect to the family of origin?

- Are we holding up the child's placement waiting for a specific type of family?
- Are the child's needs so severe that finding appropriate parents is unlikely?
- Is the child able to accept "parenting"?

Materials created by Jane Malpass, consultant, North Carolina Division of Social Services, and Jane Thompson, attorney, North Carolina Department of Justice. Used with permission. Volunteer Training Curriculum, The National CASA Association