

CONCURRENT PLANNING INFORMATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Concurrent planning is a process of working towards one legal permanency goal (typically reunification) while at the same time establishing and implementing an alternative permanency goal and plan that are worked on concurrently to move children more quickly to a safe and stable permanent family. It is described as “a process which involves concurrent rather than sequential permanency planning efforts.” (Source: National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections)

In its report, “Results of the 2007 and 2008 Child and Family Service Reviews,” the U.S. Children’s Bureau noted that one of the principal concerns regarding Permanency Outcome 1 (“Children have permanency and stability in their living situations”) was states’ “lack of effective concurrent planning (especially when goals of reunification and adoption are identified).” The report also noted for those jurisdictions that were found to successfully achieve timely permanence, “effective and meaningful concurrent planning” played a key role.

Although DHHS has policy that allows for and, under some circumstances, requires concurrent planning, Nebraska was one of the states in which lack of its use was noted as a weakness during the 2008 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). In the Program Improvement Plan, developed with input from a large number and variety of stakeholders, increased use of concurrent planning was recognized as a priority. One of the identified needs is training for DHHS staff, judges, attorneys, and other stakeholders. In response, and in collaboration with DHHS, Nebraska’s Court Improvement Project has included concurrent planning as a topic for its Spring Lecture Series for 2012. The presenters will be representatives from the National Resource Centers for Permanency and Family Connections and Legal and Judicial Issues with expertise and a national perspective on concurrent planning.

Participation in this training is highly recommended for all CFS staff, including case managers, supervisors, and administrators. More details about this training and the easy-to-use registration “form” can be found at the Through the Eyes of the Child website at: <http://www.throughtheeyes.org/>.

** (Policy for Concurrent Planning is found in the “Case Management for Child Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Guidebook,” pp. 22-26, at http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Guidebooks/Case%20management%20for%20Child%20Abuse,%20Neglect%20and%20Dependency%20Guidebook.pdf)

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