

How Concurrent Planning Can Have a Positive Impact on CFSR Outcomes

Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

Item 5: Foster care re-entries

Concurrent planning models include many family centered practices such as team decision making on a regular basis to discuss progress on the case plan as well as any barriers to movement towards successful reunification. Parents are encouraged to help determine what will best help their family achieve success and a plan for post-reunification is developed.

Concurrent planning foster parents are encouraged to maintain a relationship with the child and birth family after reunification occurs so they often provide support and respite to the birth parent.

(Additionally, if the reunification fails, the Concurrent Planning Foster Parents are available to have the child back so that even though a re-entry is occurring, the impact on the child is greatly reduced.)

Item 6: Stability of foster care placement

Concurrent planning is based on the premise that no child will have more than two placements- the initial or emergency one and, if a more appropriate one is needed based on the concurrent planning assessment, the child is moved to the permanency home within months of case opening. Additionally, the facilitation of birth parent/foster parent relationships has helped foster parents have a better understanding of the child's needs and are then better able to meet those needs and less likely to be unable to maintain the child in their home. Children who do not have to "choose sides" and can love both their foster and birth parents will also have less anxiety and less acting out behaviors.

Item 7: Permanency goal for child

The primary and alternative, (if necessary), permanency goals are established at the time of the concurrent planning assessment which should occur around 60 days into placement.

Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives

See items 5, 7 and 15

Item 9: Timely adoption

Concurrent planning children are living in the home that will become their permanent placement so the adoption process can occur more timely. In fact, some of the compiling of paperwork can be done concurrently with reunification efforts. Also, many states that practice Concurrent Planning also have a dual licensure procedure.

Item 10: Other planned permanent living arrangements

Concurrent planning processes will decrease the number of children who fall into this category.

Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children

Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement

Concurrent planning models encourage community based recruitment of foster homes so children can have more frequent visitation and maintain as many of their connections as possible, including school, church and any other community places and people. Additionally, birth parents are encouraged to disclose information on relatives as well as close family friends who may be placement and/or support resources.

Item 12: Placement with siblings

Since concurrent planning foster families have to have a lot of contact with the birth family, most of them only take on one family at a time which means they are more likely to be able to take a sibling group vs. a traditional foster home that may only have room for one more child because their other beds are full.

Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care

See also item # 16 and 11

Visitation between children and their siblings is one of the ways that connections are preserved for children in a concurrent planning model.

Item 14: Preserving connections

See item # 11 and item # 16

Item 15: Relative Placement

Diligent search for and involvement of maternal and paternal relatives and kin is a major component of concurrent planning practice. Relatives are assessed early on as to their appropriateness as permanent placement resources as well as supportive resources for the child and family.

Item 16: Relationship with child in care with parents

One of the components of concurrent planning is frequent visitation to promote reunification. Additionally, concurrent planning foster parents are encouraged to include the birth parents in activities such as school functions, doctor's appointments etc.

Concurrent planning also encourages post adoption contact for children with appropriate parents and relatives.