

# Home Study Review and Placement Considerations



This document is to be used in conjunction with a Selection Committee or when only one family is being considered.

It is vital that the best interest of the child or youth is always at the forefront when making lifelong decisions as to a child or youth's permanent home. The best interest for any child or youth must be considered for both the present and the future.

When considering a permanent placement for a child or youth, all relatives and suitable other placements must be evaluated and considered before any other type of permanent placement. If a Selection Committee includes a relative or suitable others placement in addition to other types of placement, please review Policy 4527(5a) and evaluate:

- Their previous relationship with the child or youth.
- Their ability to protect the child or youth from risk of harm posed by the birth parents, while not negatively portraying the birth parents.

Process for Selection Committee members and caseworkers identifying a permanent home:

1. When considering permanency with one family, or utilizing the Selection Committee process when there are multiple families, thoroughly review all home studies and any documentation provided by the caseworker regarding the child or youth. These documents may include a Foster Care Assessment Program (FCAP), educational assessments, mental health evaluations, medical, etc.
2. Recommendations for a prospective adoptive placement must always be in the best interest and be the best match for the child or youth. Consider the following when determining best interest:
  - The prospective adoptive family's ability to meet the child or youth's cultural, linguistic and religious needs. A prospective adoptive family does need not to be the same ethnic background as the child or youth to meet their needs. Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) employees must not select a prospective adoptive placement solely based on **race or ethnicity**.

- The child or youth's behaviors when they pose a danger to other children. In this situation, the prospective family must not have other children in the home or only children older than the child or youth being placed.
- The availability of the caregiver for medical or counseling appointments when placing medically fragile, severely disabled or children or youth with other special needs.
- The degree to which the family is willing to initiate and participate in medical or therapeutic treatment.
- The experience, skill level and training of the prospective adoptive parent and their capacity to meet all of the child or youth's identified or future needs.
- The compatibility between the child or youth's personality and behaviors, and the expectations of prospective adoptive family.
- The resources available in the family's community to meet the child or youth's needs.
- The prospective adoptive family's willingness to provide long-term contact with the child or youth's siblings, birth relatives, former foster families or other individuals when contact is in the child or youth's best interest.
  - If the prospective adoptive parent is the current or previous caregiver or foster parent, evaluate the bond or relationship with the child or youth.
- If Indian Child Welfare (ICW) applies, refer to the ICW Manual Chapter 8 ([www.dcyf.wa.gov/indian-child-welfare-policies-and-procedures/8-adoption](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/indian-child-welfare-policies-and-procedures/8-adoption)) for additional placement considerations.

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*If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations (1-800-723-4831 | 360-902-8060, [ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov)).*

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