

Practice Guide for Supervisors

Placement Planning

MITEAM COMPETENCY

The placement planning process is a methodology to ensure that children are placed in the most appropriate, least restrictive living arrangement consistent with their needs. This placement would ideally enable the child to maintain connections to family and friends and receive assistance with any special needs and stay in the same school. This process is critical to ensuring that family connections are maintained through appropriate visits when the child, his or her siblings and/or parents are temporarily living away from one another, unless compelling reasons exist for keeping them apart.

FIDELTY MEASURES

Observation:

- Prepares family team members (informal or formal) for participation on the team.
- Facilitates Teaming.
- Asks the individual(s) how s/he can be of assistance to the family.
- Inquires about individual(s)'s perspective on the child(ren)/youth's safety (both physical and psychological).
- Inquires about individual(s)'s perspective on the child(ren)/youth's well-being (both physical and psychological).
- Asks individual(s) about their perspective on the parent's ability to keep the child(ren)/youth safe.
- If child(ren)/youth is not residing with custodial parent: Asks individual(s) their perspective on the caregiver's ability to keep the child(ren)/youth safe.
- If child(ren)/youth is not residing with custodial parent: Inquires about the caregiver's perspective on the impact of traumatic events on the child.
- Requests individual(s) input regarding living arrangement options for the child(ren)/youth.
- Inquires about individual(s)'s perspective regarding how the living arrangement options impact child(ren)/youth connections.
- Inquires about the individual(s)'s perspective on the safety of all family/household members (both physical and psychological).

Documentation:

- A team that provides support to the child(ren)/youth and family has been formed.
- The worker prepares the family team members (informal or formal) for participation on the team.
- Documentation indicates the worker maintained contact with the family and support person(s) between in-person meetings.
- The parent's ability to keep the child(ren)/youth safe was documented.
- The impact of trauma and resiliency on parent's ability to keep child(ren)/youth safe was documented.
- There is evidence in the documentation that the child's living arrangement has been fully assessed and determined safe.
- There is evidence in the documentation that the child(ren)/youth current living arrangement supports the permanency plan.
- There is evidence in the documentation that the worker noted 2 or more of the following: the condition of the home, attitude of the family members, behaviors of family members, or relationship patterns between family members.

Interview:

- The individual(s) was able to identify helpful activities of the worker.
- The individual(s) described specific examples where his/her input was utilized in decision making.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The individual(s) reports the worker addressed the potential impact of trauma to the child. <p><u>In Supervision:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The worker was able to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is most important to the individual/family. How trauma is addressed in the case plan. How the parent participates in the process of change. If the current living arrangement meets the well-being needs of the child(ren)/youth. How the current living arrangement is helping build resiliency. How the child's current living arrangement ensures the child's physical and psychological safety. How he/she educates the family about the importance of teaming. How committed the family's team is to support the family's plan.
<p>POLICY REQUIREMENTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain children in their own homes whenever safely possible. Give preference to placement with a relative, if all requirements are fulfilled, when children must be removed from their home. Place children in the most family-like setting and keep siblings together whenever possible. Preserve and encourage permanent connections with siblings and caring and supportive adults. Choose a placement that helps facilitate and support a return home if the plan is reunification. Consider a placement with a view toward preparing the child for permanency.
<p>KEY CASEWORKER ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>WHERE IN THE LIFE OF THE CASE</p> <p>PRACTICE GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES</p>
<p>KCA 21 PLACEMENT PLANNING</p> <p><i>Assess whether potential relative or kin caregivers are willing and able to safely care for children and youth.</i></p>	<p>Throughout the life of the case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement tools to support caseworker assessment of potential relative/kin caregivers to safely meet the needs of children/youth and to support identified permanency goals. Review placement decisions and their supporting logic and facts with caseworkers and provide feedback on improving placement choices moving forward. Observe and provide feedback to caseworkers on how they engage and communicate with relatives and kin regarding their ability and willingness to care for their relative's children. Engage MDHHS leadership on the barriers relatives/kin are confronted with (i.e. unemployment, criminal histories of adults in the home, needed home repairs or furnishings) when willing to care for and support their family members involved with child welfare and participate in developing solutions.
<p>KCA 22 PLACEMENT PLANNING</p> <p><i>Work closely with members of the family team to make initial placement decisions, support those placements</i></p>	<p>Throughout the life of the case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review case documentation and provide feedback on steps taken by caseworkers to support placements once made to ensure stability and achievement of permanency goals. Educate, model and coach caseworkers to have frequent, targeted communication with team members regarding decisions to be made, their implications and status and ways they can be active and positive in the placement process. Monitor placement transitions for all children on assigned caseloads. During supervisory meetings discuss caseworker status with the plan and if the plan is working, and discuss strategies to further promote positive placement transition.

<p><i>and plan for transitions.</i></p>		
<p>KCA 23 PLACEMENT PLANNING</p> <p><i>Use assessment information to match children and youth to the most suitable placements.</i></p>	<p>Throughout the life of the case.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate, model and coach caseworkers on key variables to consider for matching children to placements that will best meet their needs and support permanency. Encourage them to use assessment information to support their decision. • Encourage caseworkers to actively listen to parents and children and their wishes and concerns regarding placement options and transitions.
<p>KCA 24 PLACEMENT PLANNING</p> <p><i>Use visits to preserve connections, strengthen relationships and make progress on identified goals.</i></p>	<p>Throughout the life of the case.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate, model and coach caseworkers to prioritize and conduct quality visits (child-parents; sibling; caseworker-caretaker; caseworker-parents; caseworker-child) as a critical strategy for maintaining placement stability and productive relationships and as a means to support achievement of case and permanency goals. • Observe and provide feedback to caseworkers on technique and content of their visits to support the maintenance of relationships and achievement of goals.
<p>KCA 25 PLACEMENT</p> <p><i>Facilitate parent involvement with their children.</i></p>	<p>Throughout the life of the case.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodically discuss with a sample of parents the extent and type of involvement they have with their children on a daily basis and what additional involvement they would like to have and how it would support their success. During supervision, discuss these findings with caseworkers and their potential for implementation. • Educate, model and coach caseworkers to identify, structure and facilitate opportunities for parents to interact with and be actively involved daily in decisions affecting their children, when safe. • Monitor the distance from placement to their parents and discuss with caseworkers how they plan on supporting parent involvement.
<p>KCA 26 PLACEMENT PLANNING</p> <p><i>Help children stay connected to their siblings.</i></p>	<p>Throughout the life of the case.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review sibling visitation plans with caseworkers, ensuring appropriateness and feasibility. • Monitor sibling visitation to ensure that it is consistently occurring as planned and discuss with caseworkers strategies to improve visitation plan compliance and quality.