



Clyde L. Reese, III, Esq., Commissioner

Georgia Department of Human Services • Family & Children Services • Rachelle Carnesale, Director
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MEMORANDUM

TO: County and Regional DFCS
RBWO Child Placing Agencies and Child Caring Institutions

FROM: Kathy Herren, Centralized Social Services Director *KSH*

DATE: October 20, 2011

RE: Supporting Connections for Children Every Day

Two child welfare goals that sometimes appear to conflict in our work are acclimating children to placement in foster care while concurrently pursuing permanency. Both are critical to a child's well-being and neither goal can be sacrificed in order to focus on the other. We must make efforts to achieve both simultaneously.

Supporting connections for children in foster care is important from day one to lessen the impact of trauma resulting from removal. Removal from the home of origin often triggers children's feelings of fear, abandonment and rejection that can manifest in difficult to manage behaviors. Facilitating contact with parents and siblings early and often can serve as an aid in the adjustment to foster care placement as well as a support in the reunification process when appropriate.

It should be noted that approximately 52% of children entering state's custody have a case plan goal of reunification. All case plans are court approved with consideration given to the safety and well-being of children. For these reasons, no formal or informal DFCS or RBWO practice may restrict, inhibit or otherwise delay children's contacts or visitation plan. Neither DFCS nor RBWO providers may have policies or practices that seek to acclimate children to placement by denying, prohibiting, restricting or otherwise delaying connections or visitations established in the permanency case plan.

As always, we appreciate your care and safekeeping of children and youth and thank you for partnering with us to expedite permanency on their behalf.

cc: Ron Scroggy, Chief of Staff
David Kelley, Director, Field Operations
Dianne Yearby, Director, Office of Provider Management