



IMPROVING PERMANENCY FOR TAY

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PERMANENCY COMMITTEE TAY PERMANENCY PROJECT

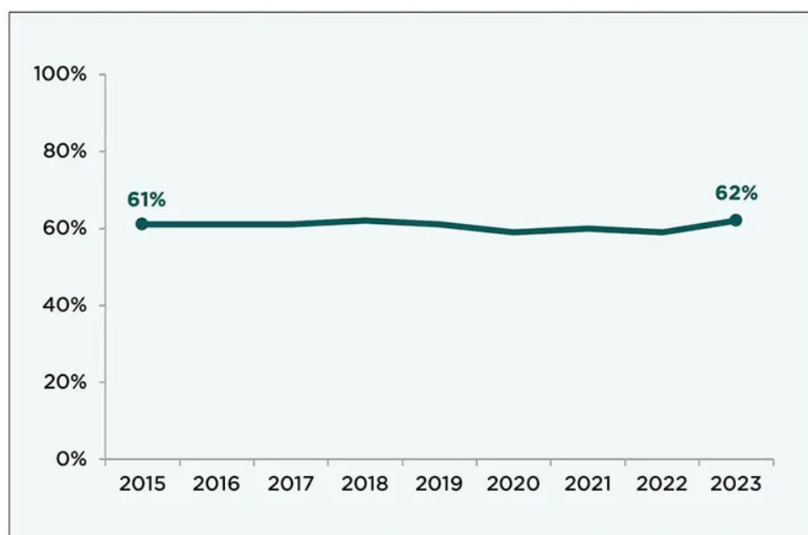
GOAL: To identify best practices, policy solutions, and measurement strategies to create and monitor progress towards meaningful permanency and relational wealth for TAY to ensure their successful transition to adulthood.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PERMANENCY FOR TAY?

- The term permanency has evolved from its initial definition of solely legal outcomes, reunification, guardianship and adoption, developed in the last century.
- In the beginning of this century, advocates and research identified that a legal permanency outcome was not necessarily permanent, and that a much larger subset of youth were isolated and homeless despite the permanency outcome.
- The term "relational permanency" became recognized and included in the federal definition of permanency, as Transition-Age youth spoke about the urgent need for an enduring network of support regardless of whether a legal outcome of permanency had been attained.
- Enduring networks of support have long been associated with better health, happiness and longevity no matter the age or population.

RATES OF PERMANENCY REMAIN LOW AMONG OLDER YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

- Recent Child Trends analysis of Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data finds that only 62% of youth ages 14-21 in the United States exited foster care to legal permanency in 2023.
- For children ages 13 and under exits to legal permanency was 98%



Child Trends analysis of AFCARS data on exits to legal permanency for youth ages 14-21

California 2025 AFCARS Exits to Permanency by Age

0-10 yrs	99.5%
11-16 yrs	96.9%
17 yrs	83.5%
18+ yrs	2%

DEFINING & ACHIEVING PERMANENCY AMONG OLDER YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

Study published in *Child youth Services Review* in April 2018 surveyed almost 100 older youth in care, ages 14-20:

77% had an informal/relational permanency goal. Only 6.7% had achieved this goal.

Top themes from analysis of youth's identified permanency goals:

- Connecting with and supporting loved ones and strategies for maintaining connections
- Starting their own family
- Having family to support education/career goals
- Developing skills to have healthy relationships

In shifting from adoption or reunification to preparing to live independently, permanency work drops off.



25%

former foster youth who experienced homelessness after exiting care in the CaYouth Study

25%

former foster youth who experienced homelessness after exiting care in the CalYouth Study

The odds of homelessness were **44% lower** for youth who reported that they had enough people to turn to for tangible support.

ROLE OF PERMANENCY IN DISRUPTING THE FOSTER CARE TO HOMELESSNESS PIPELINE

In 2017, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness identified **permanent connections** as one of the four federal outcomes for addressing youth homelessness, alongside stable housing, social and emotional well-being, and employment or education as the **cornerstone of the Federal Framework to End Youth Homelessness**.

“Permanent Connections include ongoing attachments to families, communities, schools, and other positive social networks. Connections support young people’s ability to access new ideas and opportunities that support thriving and they provide a social safety net when young people are at risk of re-entering homelessness.”

PROMOTING PERMANENCY FOR OLDER YOUTH IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE

March 2025 Children's Bureau Bulletin highlighted the need to promote both legal permanency and relational permanency for older youth in care, identifying the following strategies:

- Prioritizing Authentic Youth Engagement
 - Building trusting relationships
 - Taking a strength-based approach
- Strengthening Reunification Services
- Holistically Planning for the Transition to Adulthood
- Exploring Relational Permanency
- Understanding Youth Development and Permanency
- Helping Youth Maintain Relationships with Kin and Supporting Kin Caregivers
- Offering Guardianship as an Option
- Recruiting Nonrelative Foster and Adoptive Families to Meet Children's Specific Needs
- Focusing on Supports Before and After Permanency
- Leaning into Community and Cross-System Partnerships
- Strengthening the Workforce to Support Youth Permanency

PROMISING APPROACHES TO OLDER YOUTH PERMANENCY

- **Children's Bureau Youth At Risk of Homelessness (YARH) Demonstration Project: Thrive@25**
 - Enhanced Youth Transition Planning (E-YTP) - Family Finding coupled with youth engagement strategy (Achieve My Plan (AMP))
 - Only YARH project with an intervention embedded in local child welfare agencies
- **A Way Home Canada Family & Natural Supports (FNS) Framework** – framework for youth experiencing homelessness to find, build, and maintain meaningful relationships so they can rely less on professional supports
- **Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative's SOUL Family Framework** – framework recognizing permanency as the cornerstone to successful transition to adulthood, but that existing legal permanency options often don't work for young people. Forms an additional permanency pathway for 16+ with a primary legal relationship while maintaining legal relationships with biological family and establishing other long-term caring relationships.



By supporting youth to mediate conflicts, strengthen and rebuild relationships, and nurture natural supports, they are better able to move forward with their lives, stay in school or access training and employment, and transition successfully into adulthood.

- FNS Framework

INITIAL COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

Permanency for TAY is not always about new relationships, but about repairing and rebuilding lost and severed relationships.

Strengthening social networks is a proven public health strategy that can be leveraged for TAY youth.

We must recognize the importance of chosen family, including among peers.

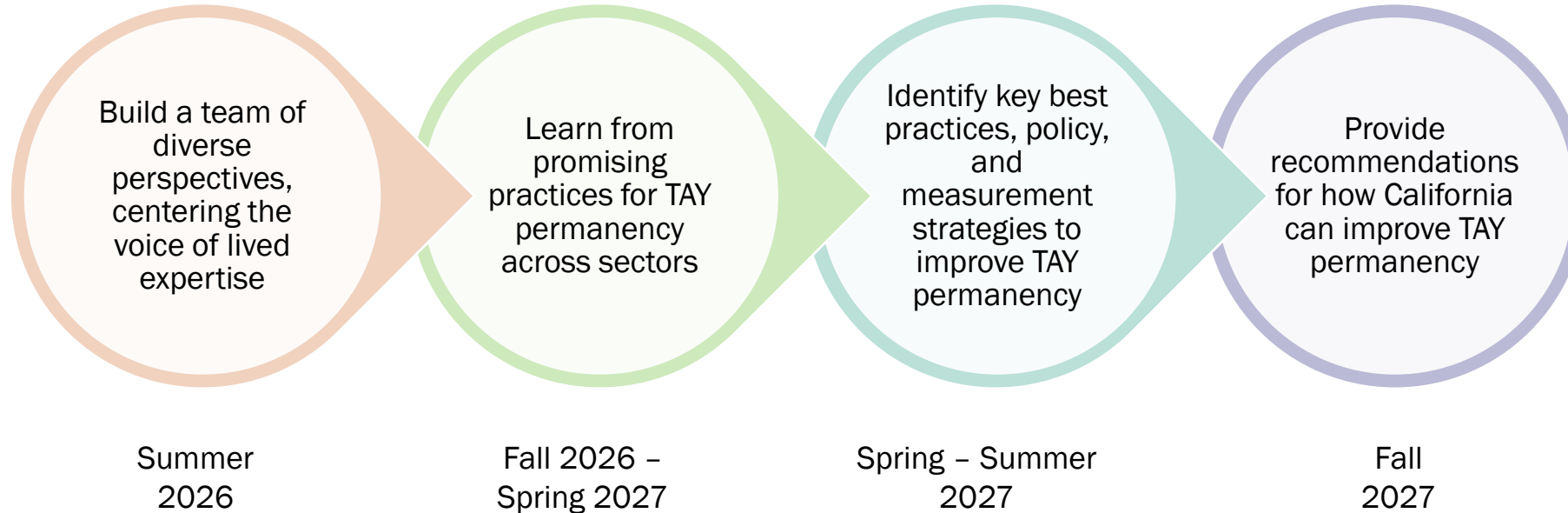
Any work to improve TAY permanency must be deeply informed by those with lived expertise.

Opportunities to support TAY permanency exist in the Tiered Rate Structure, High Fidelity Wraparound Implementation, Integrated Core Practice Model, Concurrent Planning & System of Care work

We must recognize the limitations of legal permanency for TAY.

TAY must be able to have and *know* they have a say in who is at their table.

PERMANENCY COMMITTEE TAY PERMANENCY PROJECT PLAN & TIMELINE



WE NEED YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS & INPUT!

- People with Lived Expertise are essential to the success of this project. Please encourage those with lived expertise to be involved.
- The issue of relational wealth impacts every committee's work—let's learn from each other.
- Please discuss how your committee can be involved.

The Permanency Committee is creating a virtual TAY Permanency Resource Repository. Please review and add resources at:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kQEsD5qX5E0uJZt2V6HBilq7hkdzOrZI?usp=sharing>



**REFLECTIONS OR
CURIOSITIES?**

RESOURCES

- <https://cwig-prod-prod-drupal-s3fs-us-east-1.s3.amazonaws.com/public/documents/promoting-permanency-for-older-youth.pdf>
- <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/rates-permanency-older-youth-foster-care>
- <https://acf.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/afcars>
- <https://cwig-prod-prod-drupal-s3fs-us-east-1.s3.amazonaws.com/public/documents/promoting-permanency-for-older-youth.pdf>
 - <https://cwig-prod-prod-drupal-s3fs-us-east-1.s3.amazonaws.com/public/documents/belonging-matters-helping-youth-explore-permanency.pdf>
 - <https://www.childwelfare.gov/resources/conversations-relationships-engaging-teens-permanency-planning/>
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5978934/>
- <https://www.chapinhall.org/research/calyouth/>
 - https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/CY_YT_RE1214-1.pdf
 - https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/CY_YT_RE0516.pdf
 - https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/CY_YT_RE0518_1.pdf
 - https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/CY_YT_RE1020.pdf
- https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Chapin-Hall_VoYC_Child-Welfare-Brief_2019-FINAL.pdf
- <https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Defining-permanent-connection-to-center-and-strengthen-informal-supports-2023.pdf>
- https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/PDF/CY_PH_IB0520.pdf
- <https://www.usich.gov/guidance-reports-data/federal-guidance-resources/federal-framework-end-youth-homelessness>
- <https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/Measuring-Up-Youth-Outcomes-Project-Youth-Collaboratory-Chapin-Hall-Final-v8.pdf>
- <https://cascw.umn.edu/youth-connections-scale>
- <https://achieveyourplan.pdx.edu/why-amp>
- <https://homelesshub.ca/blog/2023/what-family-and-natural-supports-fns-approach-preventing-and-ending-youth-homelessness/>
- <https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/FNS%7Breport1%7D1.5.pdf>
- <https://www.youthreachmd.com/content/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/YRMD-Foster-Youth-Policy-Paper.pdf>
- https://cwlibrary.childwelfare.gov/discovery/fulldisplay/alma991000313869707651/01CWIG_INST:01CWIG
- <https://www.aecf.org/blog/soul-family-permanency-option-for-older-youth-in-foster-care>
- <https://jlc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2019-02/2018-YFCPermanencyToolkit-FINAL-DIGITAL.pdf>