



SENECA

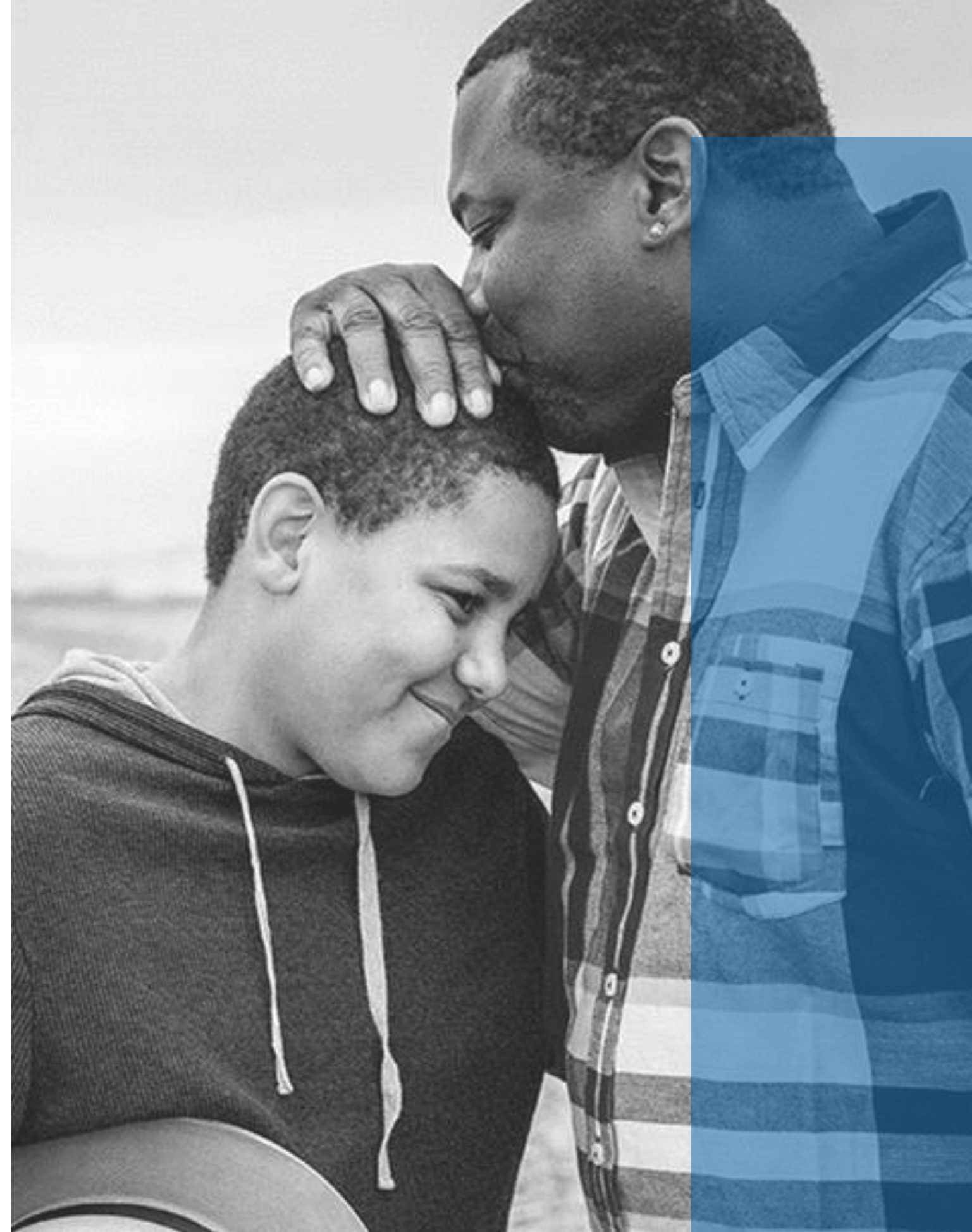
FAMILY OF AGENCIES | UNCONDITIONAL CARE

National Institute for Permanent
Family Connectedness

Deepening the understanding of “Family Finding and Engagement”

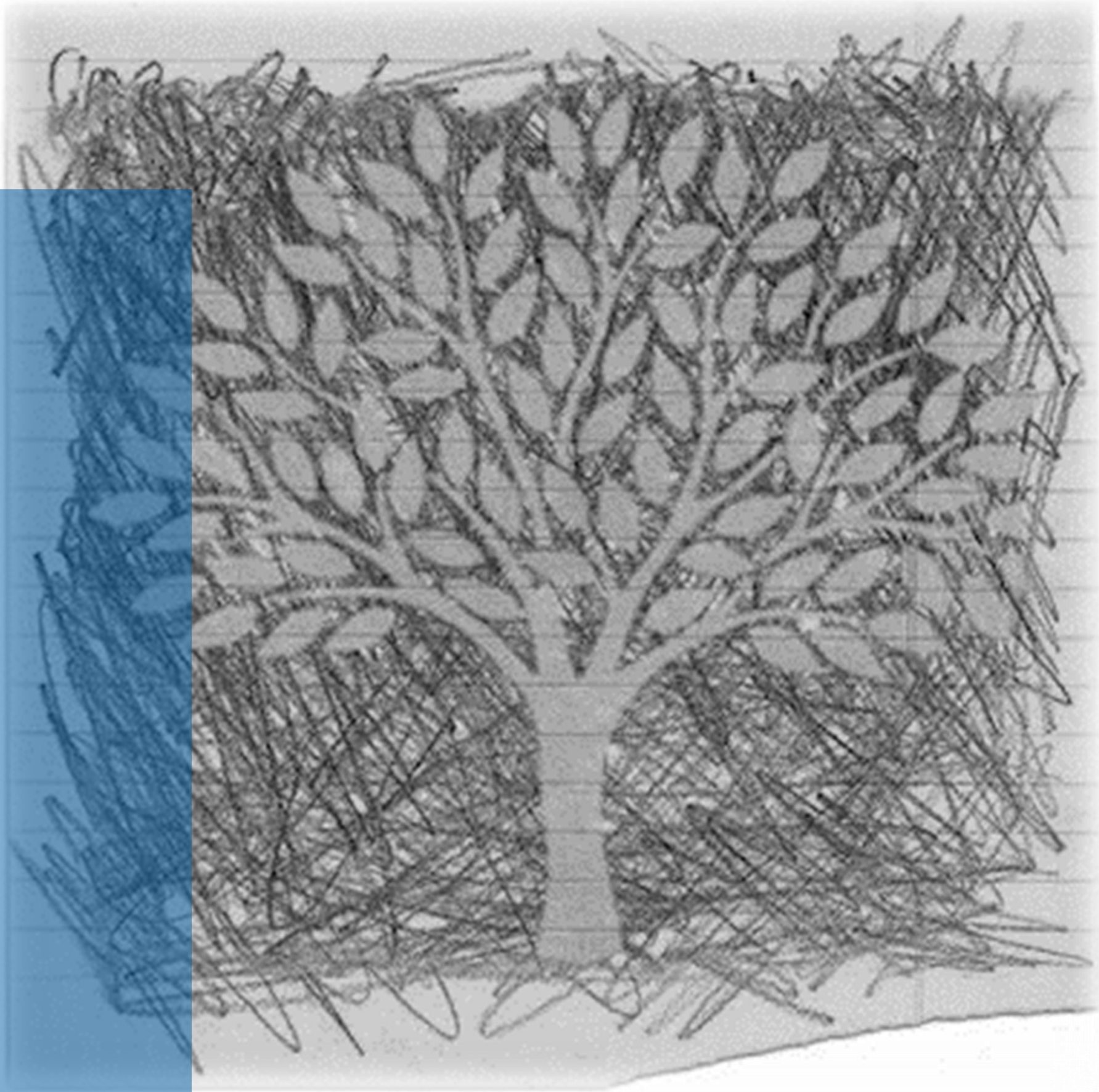
JUNE 2022

Child Welfare Council



We are rapidly shifting nationally from a model designed to protect children *from* their families to one that *helps* families to keep their children *safe*.





The primary intervention to promote healing to repair trauma is the consistent and sustained development of relationally-rich networks.

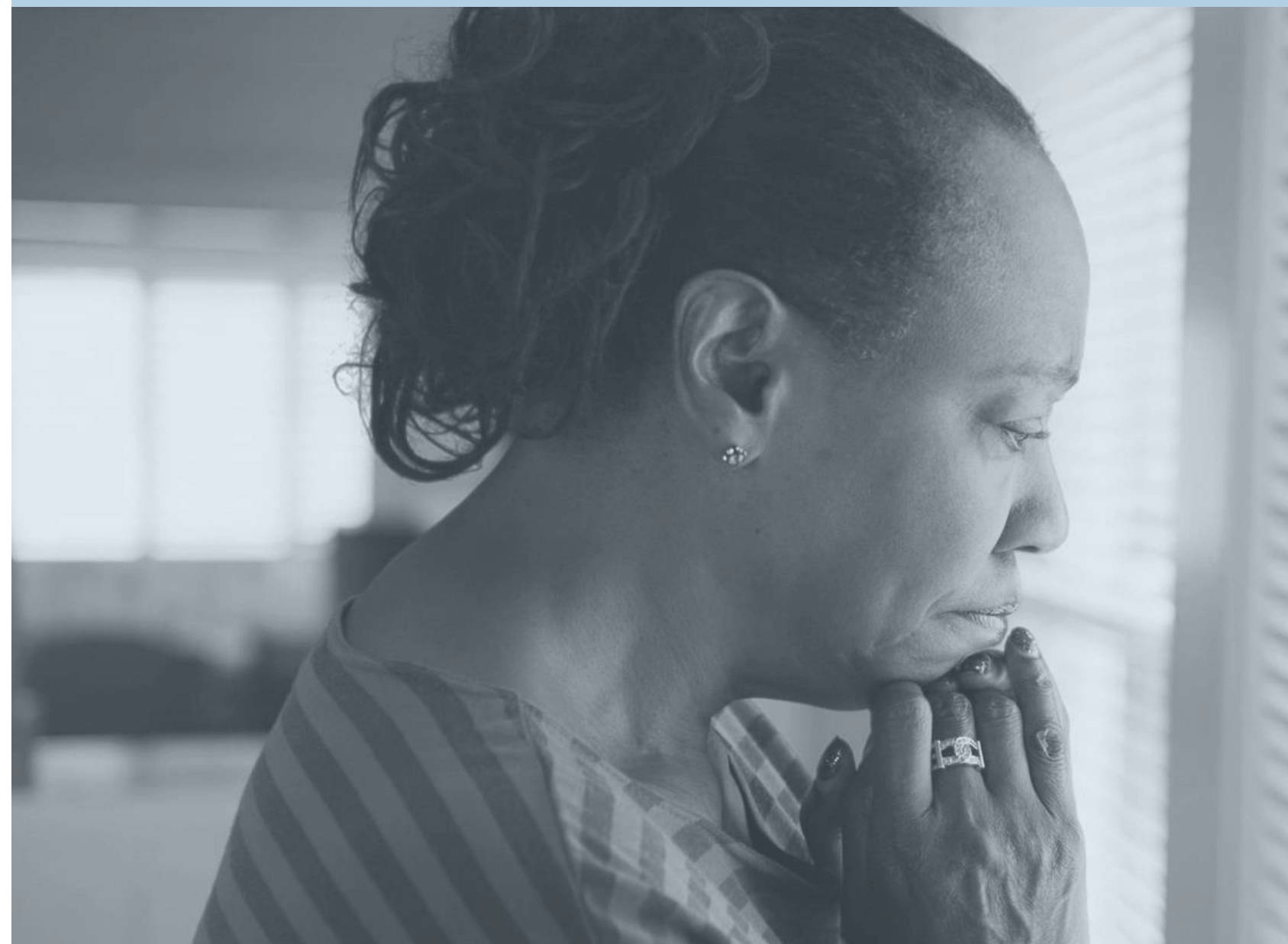
The Children's Bureau is strongly advocating that child welfare systems **STOP** recruiting families to raise other people's children, and **REPLACE** foster care as its primary intervention with in-home or temporary out of home care, utilizing resource-parents in a shared parenting role



Therefore, all processes, policies, procedures and practices that have intentionally or unintentionally isolated or disconnected children from their families must be revisited, including how those decisions are being made, and who is making them.

Otherwise, we are knowingly perpetuating harm to those we are committed to serve.

If you were temporarily incapacitated and unable to raise your children, which people would you designate to determine what should happen and who would temporarily parent during your absence?



Purpose of Family Finding Interventions

The central purpose of this practice is to establish an enduring network of support which leads in determining the plans and supports necessary for the youth to attain permanency and exit the system

Family Finding to identify placements can be damaging and ineffective when continuing business as usual practice
Systemic changes are required to adapt to and integrate shift in practice

System alignment within agencies, between agencies, and with the family is the most important factor to success

What if child welfare agencies and all systems partners adopt and consistently align to the values and principles that:

- 1. Families, beginning with parents, are the primary asset needed for the health and safety of their children**
- 2. Families, beginning with parents, are the foremost experts in their own lives, and the lives of their kin**

Therefore, all decision-making about family must include those family experts, beginning but not limited to, parents.

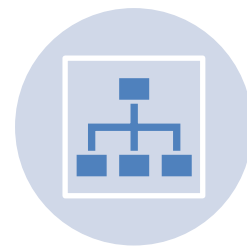
Key Roles in Attendance	Percent of Meetings (n=99,939)
Child Welfare Social Worker	88.7%
Bio Mother	56.3%
Child	46.9%
Resource Parent	38.7%
Bio Father	28.9%
Other Family	23.9%
Sibling	12.8%

Child and Family Teaming

Data shows us that we have opportunities for more robust involvement and engagement of the parent, child, caregiver and other important family supports

Adaptive Leadership

According to Eicholz¹, there are 5 dimensions to increase the adaptive capacity of organizations:



Purpose –the organization’s soul



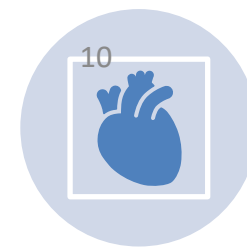
Strategy—the organization’s brain



Structure—the organization’s skeleton



Culture—the organization’s blood



Talent—the organization’s heart

1. Adaptive Capacity-How organizations can thrive in a changing world, Juan Carlos Eichholz, 2nd edition LID Publishing, 2017

What can the courts do?

- Within their own judicial systems with their judges, advocates and officers.
- Help catalyze and potentially lead this transformational process.
- Establish consistently and accountability to these practices and principles that ensure families are consistently involved in all decisions about their kin.





ACYF-CB-IM-20-09, Issuance date 1-5-2021
Achieving Permanency for the well being of
Children and Youth: Conclusion p23

Child welfare systems have a high duty and legal responsibility to achieve and support improved permanency outcomes for children and youth in foster care.

The first step toward improvement requires that stakeholders agree that family relationships and connections are key to child wellbeing, family relationships and connections directly influence a child's sense of permanency, and that more meaningful efforts toward reunification should be an urgent priority.

**ACYF-CB-IM-20-09,
Issuance date 1-5-2021
Achieving Permanency for
the well being of Children
and Youth: Conclusion p23**

Child welfare systems must center all work on preserving and creating such relationships as a critical component of child and family well-being.



ACYF-CB-IM-20-09, Issuance date 1-5-2021 Achieving Permanency for the well being of Children and Youth: Conclusion p23 Continued

We strongly encourage all title IV-B/IV-E agencies to commit to the practices that ensure the preservation and continuity of family relationships and connections for all children and youth in foster care.

Prioritizing those efforts will ensure that we achieve permanency for children in a way that strengthens their connections, healthy attachments, and sense of belonging to support lifelong thriving.



To implement this approach successfully, agency and court leaders must mobilize service providers, attorneys, and resource families in every community to promote this view of permanency. We must make every effort to protect and preserve connections for all children and youth in foster care.



National Institute for Permanent
Family Connectedness

On behalf of the Permanency Committee

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