

# Permanency Pathways Guardianship



## About the Permanency Support Program

**In NSW, the government and the law help to protect children from harm and keep them safe. Keeping a child together with their family safely is the priority. If home isn't safe for them, we have to find somewhere that is.**

We are making changes to how we support children and young people when they are not safe at home. The name for the changes is the Permanency Support Program (PSP).

'Permanency' means children and young people live in a safe, permanent home and are cared for. It also means staying involved with friends, family, community and culture. Permanency gives children a better chance at living happy and independent lives as adults.

We are working hard to support children to have permanency. These changes will make sure they don't miss out on the good things that come with a caring, permanent home. FACS caseworkers and caseworkers from other organisations will work together. The program helps meet a child's individual needs.



## What it means for children & young people



We want to make sure children and young people are safe and feel happy. We want to give them a caring home. The best way to do this is to make a plan with them to get a permanent home. This is called a 'permanency goal'. A permanency goal helps give children and families certainty about where a child will live in the future. A permanent home will be different for each child depending on what they need.

Caseworkers will work on the permanency goal with children, families, and other people who love the child. Children and young people will be involved in making the decisions. Everyone will work together.

## Ways to a permanent home

There are different ways a child can have a safe and caring home. These are called pathways. The permanency pathways are:

### FAMILY PRESERVATION

This means keeping a child with their parents, family, or kin, when it is safe.

### OPEN ADOPTION<sup>1</sup>

This is where a child becomes a legal member of another family for life.

### RESTORATION

This means returning the child to live with their family when it is safe to go home.

### GUARDIANSHIP

This is when a person or people other than the parent has the legal responsibility of caring for a child until they reach adulthood.

### LONG-TERM CARE

This is where a child lives in a long-term care arrangement (e.g. with a foster carer or relative).

Family preservation or restoration are always the preferred pathways when it is safe. The pathway chosen will depend on the individual child and what is in their best interests.

<sup>1</sup> Adoption is not the preferred option for Aboriginal children

# Guardianship

The Children’s Court makes a guardianship order when it decides that a child cannot live safely with their parents. Guardianship orders may also be made when both parents agree. Guardianship orders help to make sure children have a safe home, and keep in contact with their family and culture.

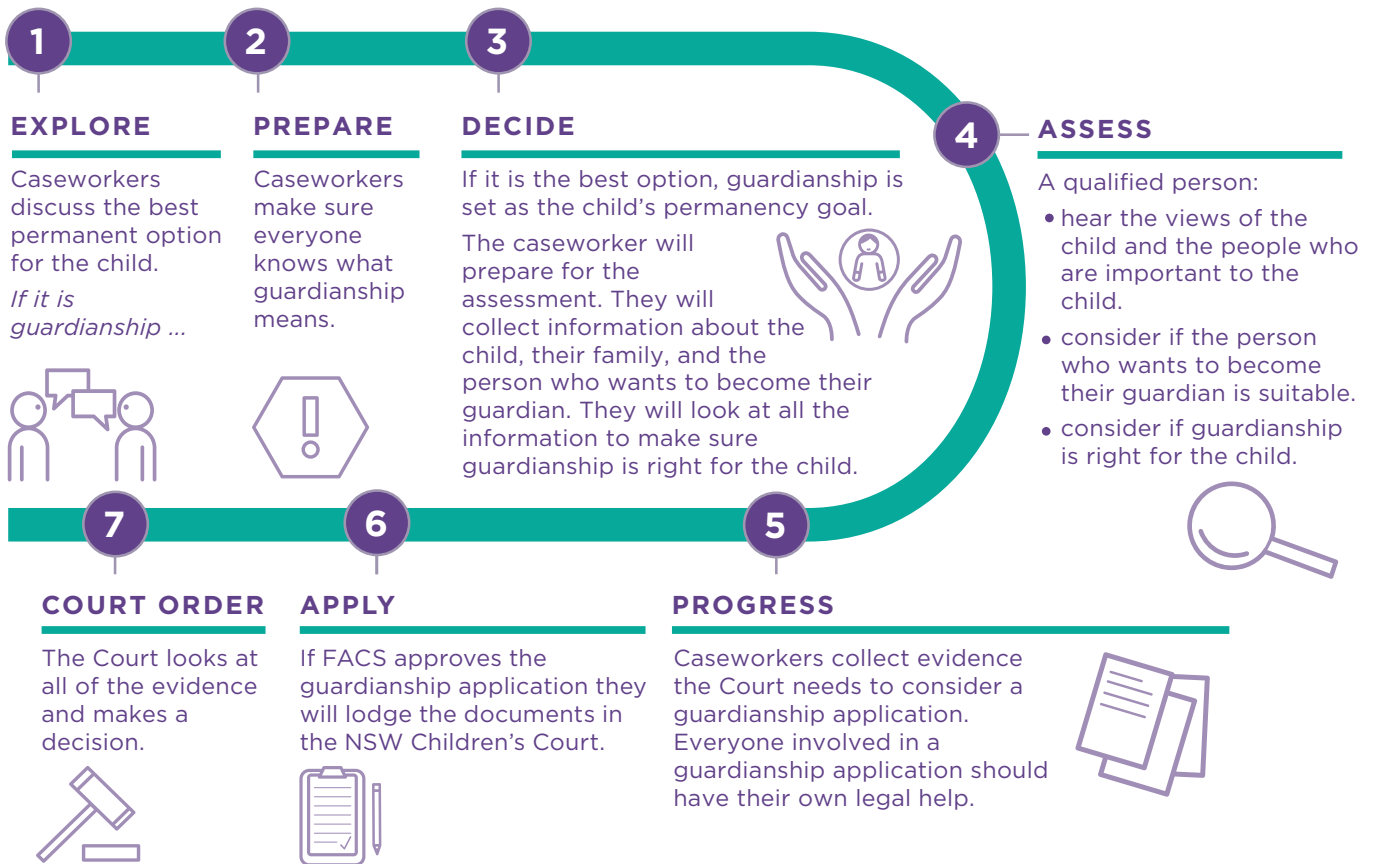
Under a guardianship order a child is in the care of a guardian. A guardian is a person who gives a child a caring and safe home until they are at least 18. A guardian has an existing and positive relationship with the child or young person. A guardian could be a family member, a family friend, or someone who has been a child’s carer.

A guardian makes decisions about all aspects of a child’s care including health and school. They are

required to arrange visits between the child and their parents. A guardian will also make sure the child joins in with activities and events from their culture and their community.



## Here’s how guardianship happens



## Questions and help

For any questions about permanency and the different pathways, speak to a caseworker. Caseworkers can provide advice and help. They are there to support children, families and carers.

Email [permanency.support@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:permanency.support@facs.nsw.gov.au)

For more information about the Permanency Support Program, visit [www.facs.nsw.gov.au/psp](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/psp)

For more information about guardianship, please call **1300 623 416** or email [guardianshipinformation@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:guardianshipinformation@facs.nsw.gov.au)