

# Permanency Pathways

## Long-term care



### 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

## Long-term care

Long-term care is usually for children who can't live safely with their own parents. Long-term care means the child or young person is in care for more than two years.



In long term care, a person known as a carer looks after a child. This person may be called a 'foster carer' or 'relative carer'. Carers take on the role of a parent to provide a safe family environment. Caseworkers try to find a member of the child's family to be their carer, if possible.



Sometimes, children and young people with complex needs require extra services and support. They may be cared for by the Intensive Therapeutic Care program.



Children stay in out of home care until it is safe to go home or another home can be found, or until they turn 18. The length of time can be different for each child.

## 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 resources and information for young people about out of-home care visit [www.you.childstory.nsw.gov.au](http://www.you.childstory.nsw.gov.au)

