

Permanency Pathways

Open adoption



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.

RESTORATION

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

OPEN ADOPTION¹

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

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.

¹ Adoption is not the preferred option for Aboriginal children

Open adoption

Adoption orders are legal decisions from a Court that give children a caring home for life as a member of their adoptive family. The law says that the relationship between a child and the adoptive parent is the same as if the child had been in the family from birth.

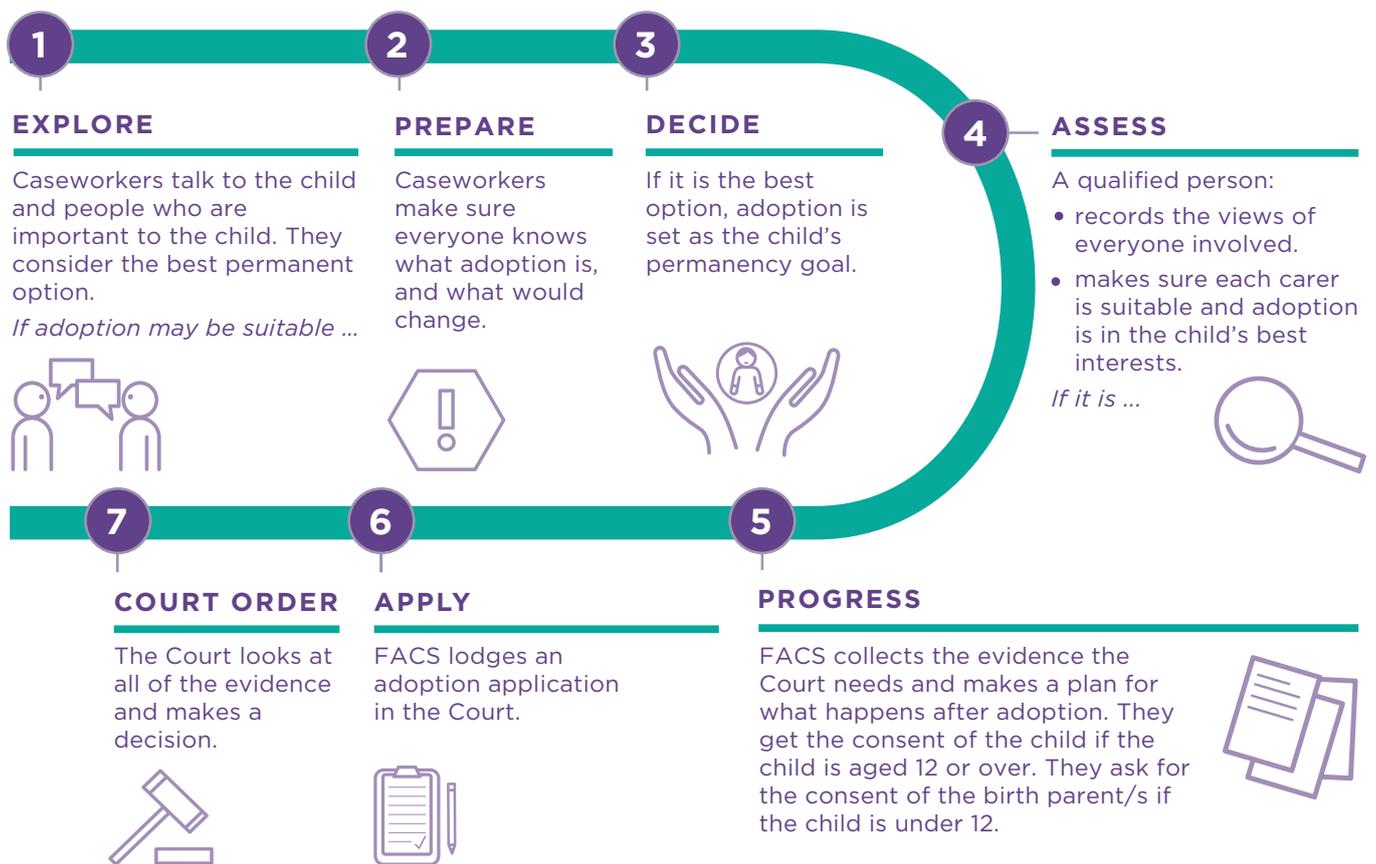
Open adoption will only happen if it is not safe for a child to be with their family, and if adoption meets the needs of the child. No one can decide on adoption on their own. Everybody who is important in the child's life has a chance to share their views. The child's needs are more important than anything else, and a child can express their feelings about adoption. A young person aged 12 or over can give legal consent to their own adoption. This means that they can agree to the adoption even when their parents do not agree.

All children should feel good about who they are and where they come from. In an open adoption, children

know as much as possible about who they are and the family they come from. Adoption is called 'open' because it does not close the connection between children and their birth families. They continue to meet with people from their birth family. They exchange messages and information. They learn about their family background, including their culture.

Adoptive parents help them to do this by following an agreed plan. The plan shows how they will help the child to stay in contact with their birth family and culture.

Here's how adoption 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

For more information about the Permanency Support Program, visit www.facs.nsw.gov.au/psp

