

Cultural Competence

Plummer's Permanency Mediators represent the diversity of the population of children and families served. The program is designed to match the needs of families and children with a mediator's cultural and linguistic expertise.

Qualifications of Permanency Mediators

All mediators have received a minimum of 30 hours of basic mediation training, and a minimum of 30 hours of specialized Permanency Mediation Training and mentoring on at least one permanency mediation case. Additional qualifications are required to ensure the competency of each mediator in the areas of child abuse and neglect, separation and loss and permanency planning. Mandatory individual and group supervision help to insure high standards of program services and positive outcomes.

Training/Consultation

Plummer provides Permanency Mediation Consultation services and training in both the Family Consultation Team and Cooperative Permanency Planning approaches. Training and consultation are available to outside agencies, organizations and communities.

Referral Process

Referrals are made through the Juvenile and Probate & Family Court. For more information call Program Director:

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Permanency Mediation Services

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**Permanency
Mediation Services**

www.PlummerYouthPromise.org



What is Permanency Mediation?

Permanency mediation is an alternative to a contested court proceeding for children who are involved in the foster care system.

It is a specialized alternative dispute resolution approach that addresses the unique issues involved in care and protection trials, guardianship trials and “dispense with the need for parental consent to adoption” trials (TPR).

The model uses an independent third party to facilitate a child-centered approach to permanency planning. By giving parents an opportunity to help develop cooperative plans for their child’s future, permanency mediation both empowers and preserves families.

The following characteristics define Plummer’s Permanency Mediation Services:

- ▶ **CHILD-CENTERED AND FAMILY-FOCUSED** Identifies the child’s specific needs, the parental strengths and characteristics needed for any adult to successfully parent a particular child.
- ▶ **COLLABORATIVE** Unites parents, extended family, kin, caregivers and professionals in a cooperative planning process, recognizing that all have a contribution to make on behalf of the child.
- ▶ **STRENGTH-BASED** Empowers family members through participatory planning and decision-making on behalf of their child.

- ▶ **NEUTRAL FACILITATOR** Assures that the process is child-centered, has no decision-making authority and no stake in a specific outcome.
- ▶ **RELATIONSHIP BUILDING** Provides an important opportunity for all adults who are significant in a child’s life to plan together and develop positive relationships that can be sustained over time.
- ▶ **OUTREACH MODEL** Mediation services are scheduled at the convenience of families within their homes and communities.

Two approaches to Collaborative Decisions and Timely Outcomes

1 | Family Consultation Team (FCT)

Is used when the child’s goal is still reunification. Incorporates features of Concurrent Planning by addressing what needs to occur to return a child home while simultaneously exploring an alternative permanent plan.

Incorporates principles of Family Group Conferencing through participatory planning that honors the primary role played by a child’s family in decision-making and ensuring safety, permanency and well-being.

Unites parents, family members, social workers, attorneys and service providers in a nonadversarial process to resolve case-related issues and concerns.

2 | Cooperative Permanency Planning (CPP)

Averts the need for a contested trial where the child’s goal is adoption or guardianship.

Collaborates with attorneys and custodial agency staff to define a child’s specific needs when developing an alternative permanent plan.

Allows parents to plan for their child’s future even when they are unable to be full time parents. Facilitates relationship-building between parents and permanent parents by bringing them together to design a child-specific plan for open adoption or guardianship.