



Session 2-D

Transition, Becoming an Advocate, Mandated Reporting & Community Resources

H.A.N.A.I. Pre-Service Training

Hawai'i Assures Nurturing and Involvement
For Children in the Hawai'i State Department of Human Services
Child Welfare Services Foster Care System

Training Agenda

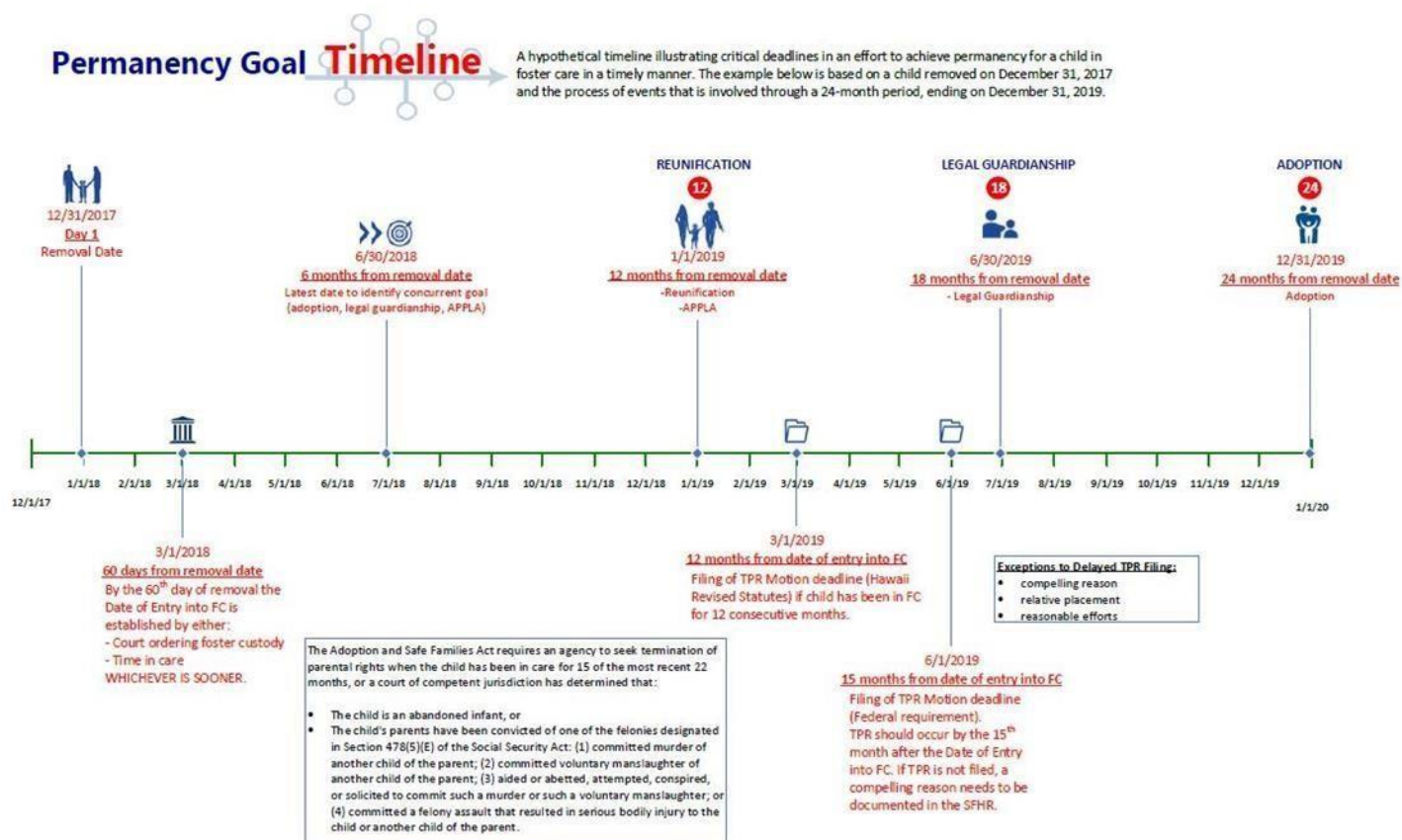
1. Welcome Back	10 Minutes
2. Why Youth Transition	30 Minutes
3. How to Have a Successful Transition	35 Minutes
4. Becoming an Advocate	20 Minutes
5. Resources	30 Minutes
6. Questions?	10 Minutes

Competencies and Objectives

- Resource Caregivers will be able to understand the types of transitions that youth may experience.
- Resource Caregivers will understand how to assist youth in transition planning and preparation.
- Resource caregivers will learn how to use their new skills to become an advocate and provide resources for all youth in care.

Why Youth Transition

Video: Keep Showing Up: To Recovery and Reunification (12:47)



Out of the Resource Home:

There are many reasons why youth leaves a resource home.

- Reunification
- Adoption
- Legal Guardianship
- Aging out of the welfare system
- Into another foster home

Reunification

The goal of Child Welfare Services is to reunify the youth in care with their birth families if it is safe to do so. After the birth parents complete their case plan and demonstrate they can create a safe environment for the youth and meet the needs of the youth, reunification is possible. During this process, support from resource caregivers will help the success of reunification.

Helping a Youth Transition to an Adoptive Home

What do adoptive families need?

- Visits and contact before the placement to help them get to know the youth.
- Information about the youth's placement history, relatives, and family.
- Continued contact with the past resource caregiver at least for a while, which means getting the family's phone number and a promise of continued support from the past resource caregiver. Resource caregivers can extend offers to care for the youth through babysitting or having weekend visits to support the adoptive family.
- Time to claim the youth and start the process of becoming a family. Adoptive families need the support of the past resource caregiver to encourage, talk to youth, and gradually let go.
- Information about the youth's history, including:
 - A social history (what is the youth's personality, their "buttons" of fear, anger; who are their friends in the old neighborhood, cultural needs, any background on birth parents that can be shared with youth now or later)
 - A medical history (known allergies, recent treatments, or schedule of upcoming assessments, instruction in special procedures)
 - Daily routine patterns (what does the youth like to eat, what are their bedtime rituals) ○ The youth's life book with pictures and mementos.

Transitioning to Legal Guardianship

A transition to legal guardianship is the process in which an adult or caregiver becomes legally responsible for a youth. This is a court-appointed title that gives an adult the decision-making ability for a youth. This can include responsibility for medical care and education. Caregivers can consider this option if the parental rights of the birth parents have been legally terminated.

Youth Who Transition into Adulthood

Resource caregivers, who are taking care of teens, need to support the youth in the development of the necessary skills they will need to be successful in adulthood. Many youth who transition out the child welfare system are faced with great challenges, including finding employment, housing, medical care, positive support networks, and taking care of many of their other basic needs. These youth need assistance with everyday living skills, such as financial literacy, learning to cook, organizational skills, and more. Resource caregivers need to be aware of the support that can be offered to youth and encourage them to accept the support.

VIDEO: Imua Kakou

Discussion: What is one thing you learned?

Becoming an Advocate

Caregivers are now a significant member of the child welfare team. As a team member, speaking up for the rights and needs of the youth in their home is paramount. Consistently learning through new training and community resources can increase the quality of care that can be provided to the youth. The way to extend healing-focused care into all dimensions of the youth's life is through the sharing of skills and knowledge with other community members.

How to become an advocate:

- Help others understand the impact trauma can have on youth
- Share techniques for identifying and managing trauma responses
- Promote the importance of safety (physical and psychological)
- Help others identify and appreciate strengths and resilience in youth
- Offer support to positive and stable relationships in the youth's life
- Spread the word about the importance of trauma-specific services
- Help normalize access support services by sharing experiences

Beyond the youth in their home, caregivers can use these advocacy techniques to speak up for all youth in the community. Paired with the mandating reporting guidelines, resource caregivers can have a more active role in promoting child welfare by educating those around them about the implications of trauma and how to increase resiliency in the community.

ACTIVITY: What Do Transitioning Youth Need?

In the State of Hawai'i, all youth in child welfare should have an Independent Living Transition Plan (ILTP) completed by the age of 16. This plan is developed by the youth's social worker and outlines the plan for their transition into adulthood. Resource caregivers should work with the Child Welfare Team to ensure that this plan is developed. In addition, youth 16 and older, have access to a service that assists them as they plan for their transition to adulthood. This program is called "Youth Circles". All youth in care have access to this service and it can help create community support and positive interactions for the youth.

Youth transitioning out the child welfare system have access to various programs and services to further assist with their transition into adulthood:

- Higher ED/Educational and Training Voucher
- Independent Living Programs
- Skills Programs
- Housing Services
- Geist

Bill of Rights

This bill was signed into law as Act 105 by Governor Ige on July 5, 2018. This was an ongoing collaboration, commitment, and dedication by Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Services, Family Court, the Attorney General's office, foster youth, and partnering agencies for almost two years. The purpose was to update and change the former existing guiding principles.

Video: "Know your Rights: Foster Care Youth Rights in Hawaii" (2 min. and 34 sec.)

DISCUSSION

Rights of Youth in Foster Care

- To live in a home, free from physical, psychological, sexual, and other abuse
- Receive food, shelter, and clothing
- Receive medical care, dental services, corrective vision care, and mental health services
- Be enrolled in a health insurance plan and, within forty-five days of out-of-home placement, be provided with a health assessment and recommended treatment
- Have regular, supervised or unsupervised, in-person, telephone, or other forms of contact with the child's parents and siblings while the child is in foster care unless the contact is either prohibited by court order or is deemed to be unsafe by the child's child welfare services worker, therapist, guardian ad litem, or court-appointed special advocate. Withholding visitation shall not be used as punishment.

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- Receive notice of court hearings, and if the child wishes to attend the hearings, the department or authorized agency shall ensure that the child is transported to the court hearings.
 - Have in-person contact with the child's assigned child welfare services worker
 - Have the ability to exercise the child's own religious beliefs, including the refusal to attend any religious activities and services
 - Have a personal bank account if requested and assistance in managing the child's personal income consistent with the child's age and development, unless safety or other concerns require otherwise
 - Be able to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities; provided that if a childcaring institution or resource caregiver authorizes the participation, the authorization shall be in accordance with the reasonable and prudent parent standard
 - Beginning at age twelve, be provided with age-appropriate life skills training and a transition plan for appropriately moving out of the foster care system, which shall include reunification or other permanency, and written information concerning independent living programs, foster youth organizations, and transitional planning services that are available to all children in foster care who are twelve years of age or older and their resource caregiver
 - If the child is fourteen years of age or older, have the right to be involved in developing a case plan and planning for the child's future
 - If the child is fourteen years of age or older, receive the child's credit report, free of charge, annually during the child's time in foster care and receive assistance with interpreting the report and resolving inaccuracies, including, when feasible, assistance from the child's guardian ad litem
 - If the child is seventeen years of age, receive prior to aging out of care certain personal records, such as an official or certified copy of the child's United States birth certificate, a Social Security card issued by the Commissioner of Social Security, health insurance information, a copy of the child's medical records or information to access the child's medical records free of charge, immigration documents, and a driver's license or civil identification.

Video: Youth Circle: Planning for Your Future (05:50)

How to Have a Successful Transition

As resource caregivers, you will be helping a youth to cope with all the changes that accompany being placed into the child welfare system. Caregivers will also need to prepare the youth for reunification.

The first and most important step in preparing a youth for this transition is to support the permanency plan. This includes attending all court hearing, speaking respectfully about the birth parents, and supporting connections to the birth parents (through 'ohana time, phone calls, emails, letters, etc.). Resource caregivers must develop a relationship with the birth parents if it is safe to do so, which facilitates open communication. Open communication between the birth parent and the resource caregiver is ultimately beneficial for the youth. This will also help ease some of the tension for birth families and increase the success of reunification.

Just like when the youth transitioned into care when a youth is transitioning out of a resource home, empathy needs to be expressed for all team members. Caregivers must meet the emotional needs of the youth, the receiving family, and other family members. Unmet emotional needs could lead to a more difficult transition. Caregivers can support team members by

Perspectives during the Transition

Resource caregivers need to support youth and their families through the changes and transitions they will be experiencing. It is important to understand that during the time of reunification, each person involved, including caregivers, will have different perspectives and feelings that will come up during the time of transition.

Youth Perspective:

- Youth will have questions about the transition and will need answers.
- Some youth may want to have a say in when they should go home or leave the resource caregiver home. All members of the team need to understand this and be able to communicate the transition to the youth.
- Many youth may want their resource caregivers and birth parents to assist them with getting ready for the move and during the moving process. It is important to have this discussion with youth during the transition process, as well as, ensuring that all adults involved take the time to plan the moving process
- Youth may want to keep in touch with the resource caregiver upon reunification. They may want to continue to participate in activities (birthdays, holidays, traditions, sports, or other extracurricular activities) that they participated in with or at the resource caregiver home.

Resource caregiver Perspective:

- Many resource caregivers feel that it is appropriate for the social worker to explain the transition to the youth. Resource caregivers will also want to have enough information to provide the youth placed into their homes with answers about the transition process.
- Resource caregivers may want to have a say on when the youth goes home. It is important to remember that ultimately the judge makes this decision, with input from the GAL and the social worker. The resource caregiver can work closely with the social worker and the GAL to provide information as it pertains to the transition of the youth.
- Resource caregivers may believe that it is solely their role to prepare the youth for the transition, with packing up the youth's belongings. However, with good relationships established the help of the birth parent can be included with the packing and moving of a youth.
- Resource caregivers will want to keep in touch with the youth upon their reunification. It is ultimately up to the birth parent if the youth will be able to communicate after reunification.

Birth Parent Perspective:

- Birth parents may feel that it is solely their responsibility to explain the reunification process to their child. This allows them the opportunity to explain to the youth that they have received the help that they needed to take care of their child again. In some cases, they may want the social worker and the resource caregiver to assist them in communicating the transition.
- Birth parents may want to decide when a youth returns home. However, reunification is contingent on their compliance with the service plan, and their ability to keep the youth safe.
- Birth parents may want to participate in the packing and moving of their child, as they return home.
- Birth parents may want their child to keep in communication with the resource caregivers.

Social Worker Perspective:

- The social worker will want to discuss the reunification with the youth, the resource caregiver, and the birth parent. They will work with the birth parents and other members of the team toward the reunification process.
- The social worker will make recommendations to the court about when it is time for reunification. As mentioned earlier, it is ultimately up to the judge, when the youth will return home.
- The social worker will want the resource caregivers and the birth parent to work together with the youth to assist with the packing and moving process.
- The social worker will allow the birth parent to determine if contact after reunification is appropriate. They may encourage the relationship, as a source of support for the birth parent; however, this will depend on the relationship between the birth parent and the resource caregiver.

All parties on the team, resource caregivers, birth parents, social workers, and others, need to be prepared to explain the transition to the youth. There should be open communication amongst all parties to ensure that

they can minimize the trauma of the transition while continuing to meet the various needs of the youth. Resource caregivers must reach out to birth families early in the process as a source for support. This will be extremely beneficial for the youth throughout the placement. Also, discussions about communication after the transition should occur before the transition occurs.

How Can Resource Caregivers Help Transition?

- Provide information- share any information about the youth's new schedule. Share any photos or memories made while they were in your home.
- Increase availability- before the youth transitioning out of the home, make time to give the youth individualized attention. Give opportunities to allow the youth to share their thoughts and feelings about transitioning.
- Watch for the normal signs of grief
- Facilitate and support remaining visits
- Address any concerns promptly- bring any concerns to the attention of the social worker as they occur so transition planning can be changed if necessary

Youth in care need help from resource caregivers to prepare for their transition. Caregivers can work with the birth families or adoptive families to establish post-placement contact between the resource caregiver and the youth. Symbols of the youth's time in the resource home can be commemorated through photo albums and celebrations. Caregivers must continue to meet the needs of the youth in care during the transition, as well as new needs that may arise during this time.

Mandated Reporting

What is it?

Any mandated reporter who has reason to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or that there exists a substantial risk that child abuse or neglect will occur in the reasonably foreseeable future must report to CWS or the police department.

Who Is Mandated to Report Child Abuse or Neglect?

1. Licensed or registered professionals of the healing arts and any health-related occupation who examines, attends, treats, or provides other professional or specialized services including, but not limited to, physicians, surgeons, optometrists, chiropractors, podiatrists, pharmacists, and other health-related professionals;
2. Employees or officers of any public or private school;
3. Employees or officers of any public or private agency or institution, or other individuals, providing social, medical, hospital, or mental health services, including financial assistance;
4. Employees or officers of any law enforcement agency, including, but not limited to, the courts, police departments, correctional institutions, and parole or probation offices;
5. Individual providers of childcare, or employees or officers of any licensed or registered child care facility, resource home, or similar institution;
6. Medical examiners or coroners;
7. Employees of any public or private agency providing recreational or sports activities.
8. Commercial film and photographic print or image processors;
9. Computer technicians; and
10. Members of the clergy or custodians or records therefore; provided that a member of the clergy shall not be required to report information gained solely during a penitential communication. When a clergy member receives reportable information from any other source, the clergy member shall comply with the reporting requirements of this section, regardless of whether the clergy member received the same information during a penitential communication. For the purpose of this paragraph, "penitential communication" means a communication, including a sacramental confession, that is intended to be kept confidential and is made to a member of the clergy who in the course of the discipline or practice of the applicable religious organization is authorized or accustomed to hear those communications, and under the discipline, tenets, customs or practices of the applicable religious organization has a duty to keep those communication secret.

Any of the above-named persons who knowingly prevents another person from reporting knowingly fails to provide an initial oral report followed as soon as possible by a report in the writing to the department, or fails to provide additional information upon demand of the department or any police department, shall be guilty of a petty misdemeanor. A person who has been convicted of a petty misdemeanor may be fined or sentenced to imprisonment for a definite term which shall be fixed by the court and shall not exceed thirty (30) days.

How Do I Make A Report?

Call the Child Welfare Services at the following numbers below:

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT	PHONE	FAX
OAHU	(808) 832-5300	(808) 832-5292
TOLL-FREE NEIGHBOR ISLANDS	1-888-380-3088	1-888-988-6688
HUMAN TRAFFICKING	PHONE	FAX
OAHU	(808) 832-1999	(808) 832-5292
TOLL-FREE NEIGHBOR ISLANDS	1-888-398-1188	1-888-988-6688

In case of an immediate threat of violence, call 911.

What information will I need?

- Name and address of child/victim and their parents' other person responsible for child
- Child's age or date of birth
- Name of others who live with child and relationship if known
- Nature and extent of abuse or neglect
- Date, time, location of incident
- Child's current location and condition
- Identity of alleged perpetrator (whereabouts or history)

What if you are unsure?

- You do not need to prove that abuse and neglect occur, if a child discloses abuse and neglect to you then make a report.
- Consult with intake worker

Activity: Mandated Reporter

Zoey Locke (8 yr. old) hasn't been at school for a couple of days and when she returns she seems to be withdrawn and distant from everyone in class. Your daughter, Tiara plays with Zoey during recess and hangs out with her after school until you pick her up. When you arrive at school to pick up your daughter, Tiara you happen to notice that Zoey had a black eye. When you asked Zoey what had happened she mentioned that it was her mom's boyfriend who hit her. She had asked you not to say anything so she doesn't get in trouble.

Do you make a report?

Resources

Resource caregivers have access to additional resources to assist them in caring for the youth in their homes.

Statewide Warm Line

Phone:

Oahu: (808) 545-1130

Neighbor Islands: 1-866-545-0882 toll free

8:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Support, information, and referrals for resource caregivers.

References

- Keeping Showing Up: To Recovery and Reunification (12:47)
- Know your Rights Training Video: Epic `Ohana, Inc
- Youth Circle Training Video: Epic `Ohana, Inc
- Supporting material, bill of rights, and information provided by Department of Human Services and Epic `Ohana, Inc