

HOW CAN PARTICIPANTS SUPPORT THE PROCESS?

Participants in the BIS process provide information and feedback about the child and families being considered. It is important to remember that different participants may have different opinions about what is in the best interest of the child.

It is helpful for participants to be aware of their own personal prejudices and biases and to make attempts to put those aside to make professional decisions based on the child's needs. Participants shall not share confidential information outside of the BIS.

WHO ELSE MAY PARTICIPATE?

Other participants in the BIS may include the child's CASA, therapist, teacher, other service providers, the placement resource (if there is not a conflict of interest), adoptive family workers and appropriate supervisors.

If appropriate, the child may also be invited to attend. These attendees share information and provide input to support the BIS Team in making a decision about the adoptive placement for the Child Welfare Case Management (CWCMP) Program Director or designee to authorize.

CONSIDERATIONS IN THE BIS

There are many factors to consider in selecting an adoptive family for the child:

- The child's relationship to the prospective adoptive parents
- The age of the child
- The cognitive ability of the child to understand changes

- The degree to which the child has accepted the fact that they will not be returning to their birth parents
- The child's willingness to be adopted and the child's preferences all need to be taken into account.
- Children are often adopted as a part of a sibling group, so the adoptive family needs to commit to adopting all of the siblings for those who are to be adopted together.
- The child's contact with relatives or others who are important connections in their lives is also a consideration.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE BIS?

The family selected reviews the child's file and makes a decision to adopt the child. Visitation and planning for the adoptive placement begins. Once the family selected has committed to adopting the child, the other families considered (if any) are notified that they were not selected.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

DCF CONTACT INFORMATION

1-888-369-4777
www.dcf.ks.gov

Appendix 5S
Best Interest Staffing
REV-Jan 24

BEST INTEREST STAFFING

FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

Adoption from Foster Care is a service to the child

Prevention and Protection Services

Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas

WHAT IS A BEST INTEREST STAFFING?

When children in the custody of the Secretary of the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) are available for adoption, a meeting is held to make decisions about the family who will adopt them. This meeting is called a Best Interest Staffing (BIS), as the goal is to meet the best interest of the child by selecting the family who can best meet the child's needs.

Required participants are the child welfare case management provider, and another individual who knows the child well.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The criteria for selection is the adoptive family's understanding of and commitment to meeting the present and future safety, well-being and permanency needs of the child and the child's acceptance of this family as his/her family. Relatives are given preference per state and federal law.

MEPA/ ICWA

The Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) as amended, and the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) are federal laws that direct children to be placed as soon as possible with families who can meet their needs.

MEPA, as amended, indicate placements are not to be delayed or denied due to race, color or national origin, or because there is not suitable family in the geographic area.

The ICWA requires that Indian tribal membership be addressed when looking for adoptive placements.

STEPS IN THE ADOPTIVE HOME SELECTION PROCESS

If a family who has a connection to the child has expressed an interest in adopting the child, an adoptive family assessment and preparation study is completed (often a relative or foster family).

Families who already have an adoptive family assessment and are listed on the Adoption Exchange are considered for those children who do not have an adoptive resource.

Participants review the child's social history and the adoptive family assessments prior to the BIS. Any gaps in information are addressed.

The BIS is facilitated by the Child Welfare Case Management Provider and the child's best interests and the strengths and needs of the prospective families are discussed.

The BIS team selection, along with supporting documentation, is sent to the CWCMP Program Director or designee for authorization.

