

## The Need

Most children who exit foster care either return home to their birth parents or exit into the custody of biological relatives.

Yet, there is a huge gap in post-reunification services available to help sustain birth families. Many of these families face continued generational adversity and often lack the relational support that all families need in order to navigate the challenges of life.

At the same time, most foster parents are eager to continue a safe and supportive role in the child(ren)'s life post-reunification. They wish to see the birth family achieve safe and stable permanency and can be a unique relational support to the whole family.

## Overview of Partners in Permanency

Partners in Permanency helps families build safe and stable permanency after reunification through ongoing, committed relationships between birth parents and foster parents in order to best care for the children they love.

By providing critical tools for a healthy family foundation as well as sustainable connections and lifelong mentorships, Partners in Permanency aims to break cycles of generational adversity which will help families stay together.

## Layers of Support

Our Partners in Permanency initiative provides ground-level & extended holistic support to children and families who are beginning to move from foster care to permanency. We do our best to provide leveled support that matches the needs and desires of the families we serve.

## LAYER ONE - ENTRY-LEVEL SUPPORT (OPEN TO ALL)

**Birth Parents:** We equip reunifying families with needed items from our Resource Centers. When it's time for children to return home, parents can request car seats, cribs, clothing, and much more. We have served birth parents since 2016 and continue to grow this layer of support yearly.

**Foster Parents:** We provide monthly training, tools, & resources through our Partner Parents Support Group. This group is designed for foster parents committed to supporting safe, sustained permanency with a focus on healthy relationship-building with birth parents.

## LAYER TWO - PIP: EXTENDED HOLISTIC SUPPORT (MUST APPLY FOR THIS LEVEL OF SUPPORT.)

This layer of support includes resources for both birth parents and foster parents as they **commit to partner together toward permanency**. In order to participate, birth parents & foster parents must apply together and be accepted into the program.

Our extended holistic support includes:

Access to our centrally-located, home-like facility where foster families and birth families can **meet for mentor sessions and holistic support**. Our **innovative, therapeutic Play Studio** is designed for guided, supervised visitations and **trauma-informed therapy sessions**.

Assistance in **navigating community resources**, as well as guided financial support for critical needs, transportation and childcare barriers, and job security, ensuring a safe and stable environment for the children.

Guidance from **a team of experienced and trained professionals** to equip foster parents and birth parents with tools to work together to build a strong, stable, healing foundation for their family.

## REFERRAL PROCESS FOR LAYER TWO SUPPORT

Foster families from our Partner Parent Support Group may refer birth families to the PIP application process.

## APPLICATION PROCESS FOR LAYER TWO SUPPORT:

To be eligible to be part of Partners in Permanency you must:

- Have children who are currently placed in foster care
- Have a current permanency goal of reunification
- Have a positive relationship with the current foster family who desires to be a partner in the reunification process



To determine if you're eligible, there are three basic steps:

### STEP 1



#### Complete an Interest form

An [initial interest form](#) will evaluate your eligibility to be part of Partners in Permanency. If able, please fill out the form with your partner parent (current foster family) to help begin the conversation about what partnership could look like for your families.

### STEP 2



#### Attend at an Info Session

During this one-hour visit at our north Resource Center, we'll review the program components and tour our home-like facility. This tour is intended for you to learn about Foster Village, ask questions, and decide if PIP fits your family's needs. It is required as part of the application process in order to provide a face-to-face connection with our Foster Village team. Both the birth family and foster family are included in this visit.

### STEP 3



#### Complete an Interview

If after the first two steps you and your partner parent decide PIP is a good fit for your families, the final step is to [submit an application](#) (background check included) to be reviewed at your interview. We look forward to hearing your story & connecting with your families.

After the above three steps are completed and you are determined to be eligible, we will follow up to schedule an orientation meeting.

## Program Design & Principles

Partners in Permanency is an approach which values authentic, long-term relationships that are willing to adapt, change, and grow. We believe healthy, long-term families are built through connection and a village of support, and we value relationships over programming.

Our unique model includes the foster family as a hands-on, relationally-invested partner in the reunification process. Through this partnership between birth and foster families, as well as individualized support and accountability from our team, PIP aims to help families build a strong, stable, healing foundation toward a life of family permanency.



# Our Principles of Partnership

Partnership is a process which includes:

- **Sharing power & honoring everyone's strengths**
  - Share important information with one another that could help the child(ren) thrive.
  - Believe that everyone has something to offer
- **Showing respect**
  - Respect each other's right to some privacy while sharing relevant family and child history.
  - Respect each other's boundaries and develop mutually agreed upon plans for communication and information sharing.
  - Speak positively about each other to model partnership and decrease confusion and anxiety for children.
  - Keep appointments and stick to schedules to ensure consistency and predictability for the child(ren).
- **Listening & Learning**
  - Ask good questions & aim to understand
  - Participate in and come prepared for support group meetings
- **Handling conflict kindly and directly**
  - Address partnership challenges with each other in a respectful and solution-focused manner.
  - Ask for help early and often - we're in this together!

## Commitment Statement(s)

*For Birth Family*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to an ongoing partnership and participation in PIP. I will be an active participant, working toward health, stability, and connection for the whole family including our partner family.

*For Foster/Partner Family*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to an ongoing partnership and participation in PIP. I will be an active ally to the whole family, working toward health, stability, and connection for the whole family.

