

The Permutations of Permanency

By Richard Delaney, Ph.D.

In this slim volume, Dr. Delaney offers a precise yet educational introduction to the process of making sensible and sensitive placement decisions. Attention to the twelve placement principles listed in this book will reduce the chances of making inappropriate placement decisions and lead to the individual optimum permanency for each child.

Use For:

- Child welfare professionals

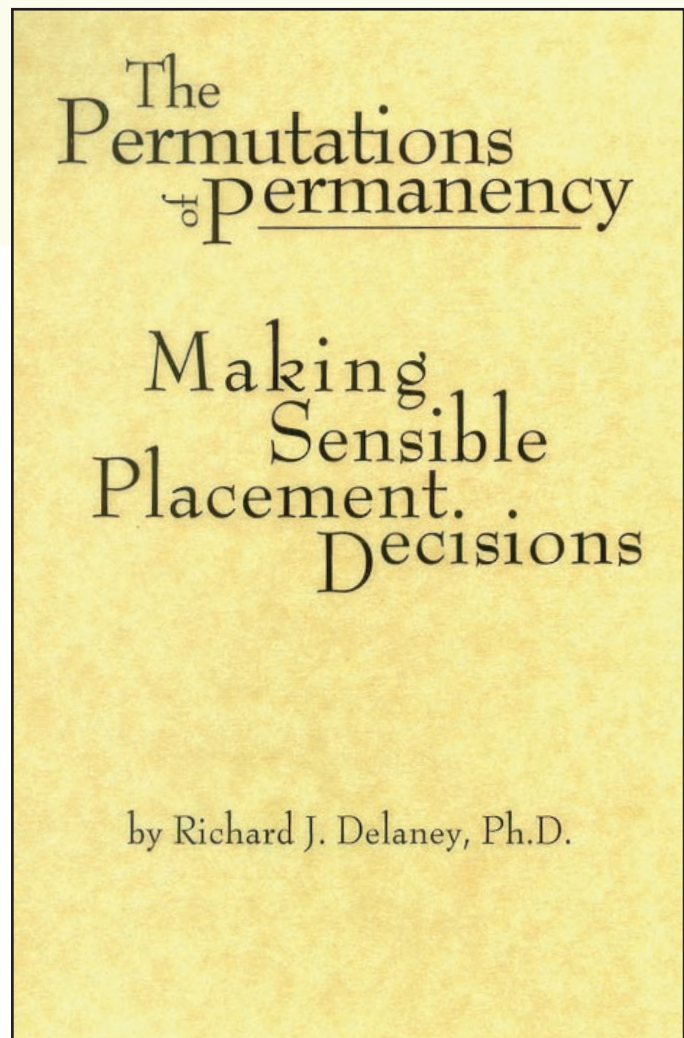
Sample from The Permutations of Permanency:

Introduction

In the afterglow of the passage of Public Law 105-89, a.k.a. The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, those who work with foster care, treatment foster care, and adoptive programs experienced a mixture of sentiments. Of course, many of us had been pressing for legislative and regulatory changes which would address the historic problems of "children in limbo," e.g. youngsters languishing in foster care indefinitely and children deprived of a chance for permanency. The new law, many in this field felt, was a welcome, long overdue step toward improving the lives of children in suspended animation. Unfortunately, while the overall thrust of the law is sensible and even laudatory, the devil is in the details.

Many ardent supporters of getting kids to permanency feel an obligation to raise caveats now about the bedeviled details which can be the undoing of a law that has such great promise to benefit children in out-of-home care. This paper will outline and address fundamental concerns and caveats about P.L. 105-89, but first, a sobering anecdote:

Recently, a single foster mother who had raised a sibling group of four young children for five years, was distressed when she was given an ultimatum by the county adoption unit. She must adopt the four children or they would be removed and placed with a family who would be willing to adopt them. The foster mother, who had raised these children during the protracted court battles over termination of parental rights, and who had developed a secure home for these youngsters, had legitimate financial concerns. She was worried about making ends meet on her meager salary, and was apprehensive about the year-to-year approval of adoption subsidies. Although committed to raising these youngsters as her own until they emancipated, her hesitancy was branded as indicative of wavering commitment and/or a self-serving preoccupation with financial reimbursement. Fortunately, an enlightened judge saw the legitimacy of her concerns and permitted a guardianship arrangement which was acceptable to this woman and which provided the children with "individual optimum permanence."



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