

Rethinking Permanency

JCIP Model Court Summit – August 7th, 2018

The Letter and the Spirit of the Law

The Letter

Legal Permanency: A legally established relationship through reunification, adoption or guardianships

- *Relational permanency:* An emotional attachment between the youth and caregivers and other family members and kin
- *Cultural permanency:* A continuous connection to family, tradition, race, ethnicity, culture, language and religion

Source: University of Iowa School of Social Work, National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice. (2009). *Improving Outcomes for Youth in Transition*.

The Spirit

Creating life long connections

Youth and Alumni Perspectives

Adoption

Foster care gave me a
better life. I paid (in pain) up
front and now life is better.
Being adopted means that
you were →

CHOSEN

Sibling Connections

My sister was my family,



Once everyone else was gone.

Connection to the Past



Stability and Sense of Self



Identity Theft is a Crime

Imagine the nightmare of losing your:

**Home, Family, Friends, and Belongings...
and having to start your life over from ZERO!**

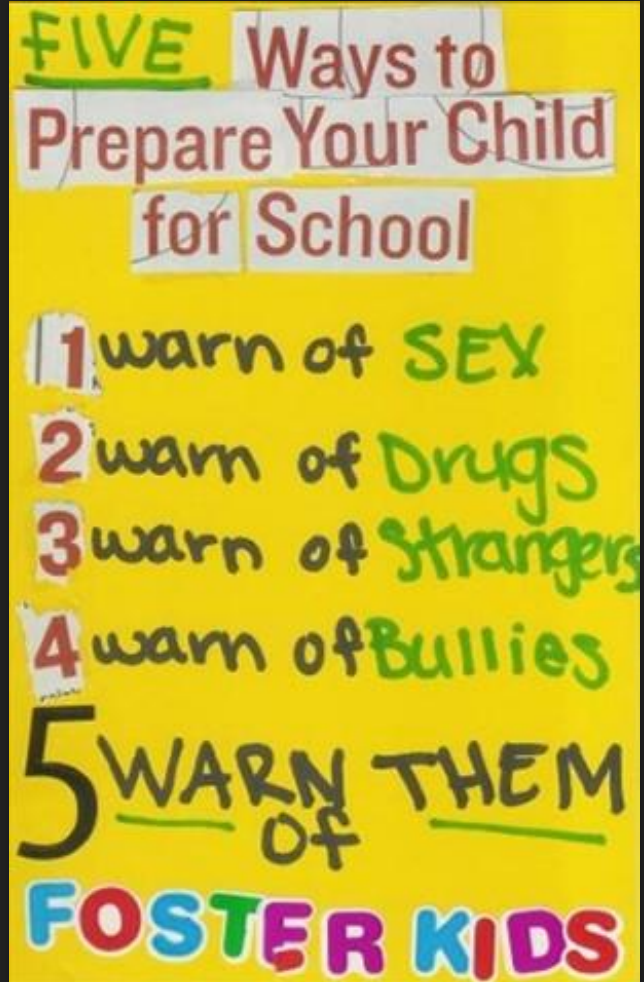
Adults - don't worry!
*When it happens to you it's
a crime punishable by law.*

Kids - you're screwed!
*When it happens to you it's
called being a Ward of the State.*

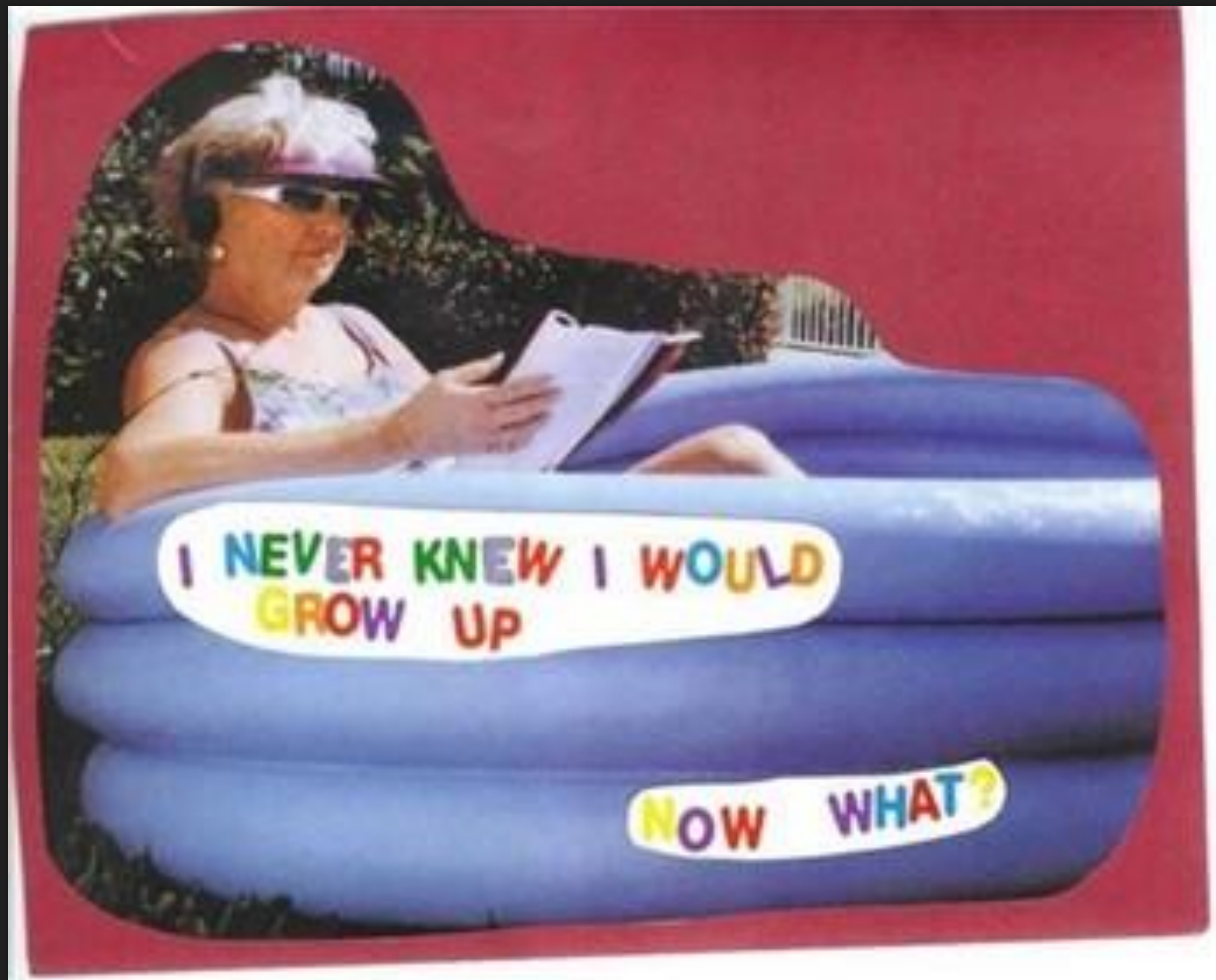
One Significant Adult



School Stability



Vision for the Future



Normalcy



Connection with Others Like Us



Resilience

- “A resilient child is one who bounces back from adversity and continues to function reasonably well, despite continued exposure to risk” Gilligan, 1997
- Resilient youth share:
 - Self-esteem and self confidence
 - Sense of self-efficacy - a belief in their ability to affect their own lives
 - A range of social, problem solving approaches
 - One significant adult
 - External support system

Shifting Our Perspective

Moving from thinking of the “Child Welfare SYSTEM to thinking of the Welfare of Children



Annie Blackledge,
Executive Director
The Mockingbird
Society
[annie@mockingbirdso
ciety.org](mailto:annie@mockingbirdso
ciety.org)