

# Relative Search

## Background Notes

The State of Oregon as well as the federal government recognizes the importance of relatives in children's lives. There was a law passed, [413-070-0060](#), which states that relatives are the placement of preference for children. In addition in 2010 a stronger policy, I-E.1, Search for and Engagement of Relatives, was developed which focuses on searching for and engaging relatives throughout the life of the case not just for placement but to allow children to maintain connections. DHS policy expects staff shall consider relatives as the placement of preference, but in making placement decisions be guided by the best interest of the child. It is the *consideration* of relatives as the placement of choice that is mandated by federal law, not the actual placement with relatives that is required. Note the development of a relative, as an emergency placement resource will be covered separately in the activity guide.

## Tasks / Assignments:

- Review the policy on working with relatives. I-E.1. [Search for and Engagement of Relatives](#).
- Find out who is good at locating relatives in your branch and what techniques they use. Ask them about their positive experiences with relatives and why they value placing with relatives.
- Find out what the branch practice is for making an initial decision about relatives as emergency placement resources. Participate in a case consultation regarding the determination to place a child in an emergency placement with a relative. What considerations were discussed?
- Review the Relative Search packet in the appendix. Find out who is responsible for this tracking and how it occurs in your branch.

## Discoveries:

- *What techniques are useful in locating relatives?*
- *What can you do if a parent refuses to identify their relatives?*
- *What is positive about placing with relatives?*
- *Who tracks the Relative Search process?*
- *What did you learn is successful in engaging relatives?*

