

Multi Ethnic Placement Act

Background Notes

The Multi Ethnic Placement Act and the Inter Ethnic Adoption Provision are federal laws that guide practice in placement decisions. The philosophy of the law is that any discrimination, delay or denial of a placement on the basis of the race/color or national origin of the child or potential placement resource is harmful to children. Policies that allowed such discrimination caused many children to spend too much time in foster care and left many children without permanent homes. A number of practices existed prior to MEPA/IEPA which delayed placement of children. These included statutes or policies that:

- Established time periods during which only a same race/ethnicity placement search would occur.
- Established orders of placement preferences based on race, culture, or ethnicity.
- Required caseworkers to specially justify transracial placements.
- Had the effect of delaying placements, either before or after termination of parental rights, in order to find a family of a particular race, culture, or ethnicity.

Tasks / Assignments:

- Complete the PSU NetLink entitled MEPA: Multi Ethnic Placement Act. Go to the DHS Learning Center <https://dhslearn.hr.state.or.us> to sign up for the NetLink.

Discoveries:

- *What are the challenges you can foresee in transracial placements?*
- *What resources can you identify for families in your community who might be considering transracial care?*
- *Are there any values you have personally which this federal law challenges?*

