**Relative Placements**

Having the opportunity to live with someone he knows and where he feels safe can mitigate the child's feelings of loss that are part of any placement. The use of a relative placement-at the point where placement is first

considered, as well as a possible permanent plan-should be evaluated from the beginning of agency involvement.

The following questions should serve as guidance in considering both the pitfalls and benefits involved with relative placements:

•Have the relatives been carefully evaluated? Is there a written home-study?

•What are the parent's thoughts and wishes in reference to this relative?

•Will the parents create problems with the placement, or compromise the child's safety?

•Will the relative be able to protect the child from hostile or inappropriate parental behavior?

•Will the relative be able to be positive about the parent to the child?

•Will this relative support the present service plan?

•If the plan changes, will the relative support the change?

•How will visitation be accomplished?

•Are the relatives able to understand and cooperate with agency expectations?

•Have the relatives of both parents been considered, regardless of the removal home?

•Is the placement with relatives a way we can protect the child's roots in his community?

•Will placement with a particular relative mean the child must leave the community?

•Will placement with a particular relative mean that the child will lose

other important relative ties?

•Will a relative placement mean that the child will have to endure another move? What losses will the child experience if another move is required?

•Have we considered sibling attachments, as well as any "toxic" sibling issues?

•Is this potential caretaker related to all the siblings?

•Is this relative able and willing to take all the siblings?

•Will placement with the siblings be positive for this child?

•Will this placement support the child's ethnic and cultural identity?

•Do the potential caretakers see this as permanent?

•Are there issues the same issues, in the extended family, that existed with the parents?

•What will be the on-going relationship with the parents?

•Will there be lifelong conflicts with biological parents?

•Will there be an "unofficial" return to the biological parents?

•What pre-placement relationship existed?

•Does the child have any attachment to these relatives?

•Have the child's wishes been considered?