

Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries, Inc. (ACAM)  
 Association for Family and Community Integrity, Inc.  
 Behavioral Health Alliance of Texas  
 Bering Omega Community Services  
 Care for Elders  
 Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.  
 Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston  
 CHILDREN AT RISK  
 Children's Defense Fund  
 Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris Co., Inc.  
 Coalition of Behavioral Health Services  
 Collaborative for Children  
 Communities In Schools  
 Community Family Centers  
 Community Health Choice, Inc.  
 Covenant House of Texas  
 DePelchin Children's Center  
 Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance Greater Houston (DBSA)  
 Easter Seals of Greater Houston, Inc.  
 Family Services of Greater Houston  
 Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse, Inc.  
 Good Neighbor Healthcare Center  
 Greater Houston Healthconnect  
 Harris County Healthcare Alliance  
 Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston  
 Houston Area Association for the Education of Young Children  
 Houston Area Community Services  
 Houston Area Women's Center  
 Houston Food Bank  
 Houston Methodist Hospital  
 IntraCare Behavioral Health  
 Jewish Family Service  
 League of Women Voters Houston  
 Legacy Community Health, Services Inc.  
 Lesbian Health Initiative  
 March of Dimes  
 Memorial Assistance Ministries (MAM)  
 Memorial Hermann Healthcare System  
 Mental Health America of Greater Houston  
 NAMI Greater Houston  
 National Association of Social Workers-Houston  
 Neighborhood Centers, Inc.  
 New Hope Housing, Inc.  
 Northwest Assistance Ministries  
 Phoenix Houses of Texas, Inc.  
 Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast  
 Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services  
 Santa Maria Hostel, Inc.  
 SEARCH Homeless Services  
 Spaulding for Children  
 Spring Branch Community Health Center  
 Springfield College School of Human Services  
 St. Joseph House  
 Texas Children's Hospital  
 Texas Health Institute  
 Texas Hunger Initiative  
 The Arc of Greater Houston  
 The Council on Alcohol & Drugs Houston  
 The Immunization Partnership  
 The Living Bank  
 The Network of Behavioral Health Providers  
 The Rose  
 The Walk for Mental Health Awareness-Houston  
 The Women's Home  
 United Way of Greater Houston  
 Vita-Living, Inc.  
 Wesley Community Center  
 Worklife Institute  
 YMCA of Greater Houston



**Children and Youth**  
**Support for Relatives Caring for Children in Foster Care**

**Position Statement Approved by One Voice Texas: December 10, 2014**

**Issue/Concern:**

Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) is a legal guardianship that can be conferred on a number of parties including the state itself. If reunification with parents or adoption is not possible for a child in foster care then PMC to a relative is often a preferable option to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and the courts. These cases do not involve relatives who want or qualify for the Permanency Care Assistance program through which relatives become licensed foster parents.

Unfortunately, many relatives report that *they don't understand the legal rights that come with PMC, they don't have the support that would come with adoption, they weren't conferred all the necessary rights to parent the children in their care, and in some cases they weren't even asked to be present to sign the final order granting them PMC.*

**Specific Policy Recommendations:**

- The court shall ensure that the difference between adoption and PMC is fully explained to the relative including that:
  - Adoption conveys rights of a parent while PMC only conveys what rights the judge gives the relative,
  - Parents can request visitation,
  - Parents can petition the court for PMC of their child,
  - Other provisions that the court deems relevant;
- Children for whom the courts grant PMC to a relative should be able to receive adoption benefits if they later become available for adoption, meet adoption benefit criteria, and are part of a finalized adoption;
- DFPS and the courts should ensure kin who take PMC of a relative child should be eligible for services similar to those available in post adoption services;
- The court should ensure final orders for PMC include, but not be limited to:
  - Authorization of medical, dental, psychological, surgical, immunizations and any other treatment that requires consent,
  - Ability to secure health and automobile insurance for the child,
  - Authorization to enroll child in child care or any form of school and/or extra-curricular activities including athletics and social activities,
  - Authorization for child to receive a learner's permit, driver's license, state issued ID,
  - Permission for child to obtain appropriate employment,
  - Authorization to receive public benefits for or on behalf of the child,
  - Authorization to obtain legal services and or sign legal documents/contracts,
  - Any other rights the relative needs to care for the child and/or the judge deems appropriate;
- The courts should ensure that relatives sign the final order for PMC.

**What Can Be Accomplished?** Stable and long-term relative placements ensure more positive outcomes for children and relative supports increase opportunities for strong and stable placements.

**How Will This Impact State Funding?**

Stable relative placements ensure that children do not have to be placed in more expensive foster care settings. In addition, research has shown that children who are placed with family have more positive outcomes than their peers in foster care.

**Supporting Facts/Research Resources:**

- ✓ Redding, R.E., Fried, C., & Britner, P.A. 2000. Predictors of Placement Outcomes in Treatment Foster Care Implications for Foster Parent Selection and Service Delivery. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*. 9(4): 425-447. Chang, Janet, Liles, R., Hoang, T. 2006 *Factors affecting premature termination in kinship care*. California Social Work Education Center. Available at: [http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/Liles\\_Module.PDF](http://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/Liles_Module.PDF).
- ✓ Worrall, J. (2001). Kinship care of the abused child: The New Zealand experience. *Child Welfare*, 80, 497-512.

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