

Family

The following definitions relating to family will assist you in your efforts in determining who family members might include. These definitions are global enough that they will allow you to work with the family to discover family members as the child and family defines family. Whenever possible, using these definitions as a framework, best practice relates that you should always first attempt to engage family members to discover how they define family, as this assistance could lead to more culturally-sensitive connections and supports.

Pennsylvania Definitions:

- Relative:
 - "...someone related within the first, second or third degree to the parent or stepparent of the child who may be related through blood or marriage and who is at least 21 years of age". Pending Administration of Children and Families (ACF) feedback, this definition may be expanded to include relatives to the fifth degree (great-great-great grandparents and first cousins once removed (children of first cousins)).

Note: A first degree relative is "Any relative who is one [level] away from a particular individual in a family." (Genetics Home Reference, September 9, 2009). Based on this definition, to identify relatives by degree, begin with the child (who is the individual of focus) and count one degree each time you move one generation up, down, or over (in the case of siblings) any existing caregiver/child relationship.

- Examples of Meeting the Three Degrees of Consanguinity include:
 - Start with the child. The child's parent is one degree. The parent's parent (child's grandparent) is two degrees. Any grandparent's child/father or mother's brother/sister (child's aunts and uncles) would be three degrees.
 - Start with the child. The child's parent is one degree. The parent's parent (child's grandparent) is two degrees. The grandparent's parent (child's great-grandparent) would be three degrees.
- Fifth degree relatives include, but are not limited to "great-great-great-grandparents and first cousins once removed (children of first cousins)".
- Kin:
 - Relative of the child through blood or marriage;
 - God parent of the child, as recognized by an organized church;
 - Member of a child's tribe or clan; or,
 - Significant positive relationship with the child or the child's family.

(Sources: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, February 2008, and University of Pittsburgh, May 2006).

Family Finding Model Definition of Connectedness and, in Essence, Family:

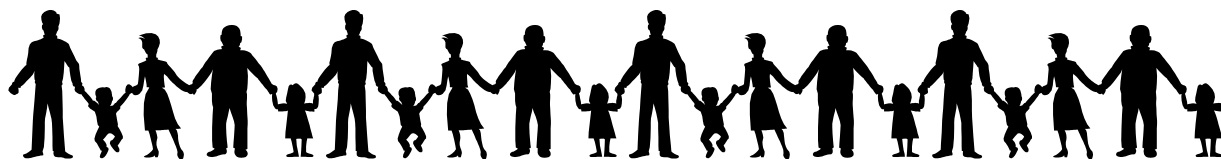
- Beings connected by heart, mind, body, or soul. (Campbell, Kevin, Connectedness Mapping Training: Levels of Connectedness).

(Family Finding Source: Detter, Trafalski & Winesickle, 2010.)

Family (Cont'd)

To begin thinking about what locating, involving and empowering family in case planning and service provision involves, first consider how you define “family” – in order later to consider how others define the family that you attempt to locate. In your pair/small group, find out who is part of your partner’s/ partners’ family currently, how big their family is and to whom they feel connected. Write the names of the individuals as well as their relationship(s) to the person(s) on the lines below. Try to be as inclusive as possible.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____



(Adapted from Detter, Trafalski & Winesickle, 2010.)