

# Family Finding Model



## What is the Family Finding Model?

Family Finding is an approach that seeks to build and maintain a natural support network for children and youth disconnected from their home and community. It helps children and youth in care connect or reconnect with, create, and maintain relationships with adults who are important to them. These people can include parents or guardians, siblings, past caregivers, extended family members, adult siblings from previous placements, teachers, daycare providers, or anyone else they have had significant relationships with in the past. These relationships are important for children's well-being, allowing them to know who their family is and where they come from, to know their cultural or religious heritage, and to establish supportive connections into their adulthood.

## How is this shifting practice within Children's Services?

- By challenging the way we have always done things to consider better ways to engage with families and keep children connected to important people in their lives
- By redefining permanency beyond the legal definition to include relational, physical, cultural and naming them 4 areas of connection
- By building natural support networks that ensure sustainable long-term safety for children and youth

## How will this impact child intervention work in Alberta?

As workers strive to ensure meaningful, lifelong connections for children and youth, expected outcomes are:

- Increased reunification rates
- Improved physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of children, youth and families
- Greater placement stability
- Sustainable transitions out of the child intervention system
- Decreased numbers of children and youth returning to the child intervention system
- Children feeling a stronger sense of belonging and unconditional love

## How can you help support this work?

- Actively participate in and support case and cultural planning. Help to meaningfully connect the child or youth with immediate and extended family members, kin, previous caregivers, adult siblings from previous placements and other important adults in their lives in ways that help meet their emotional, cultural, developmental, religious, and spiritual needs.