



Bridging Transitions for Safe Passage

Four principles to help youth safely make and thrive through transition.

Brenda Ursel, M.S. Alaska Center for Resource Families

1. Prepare and Support the Children
2. Prepare and Support the Parents
3. Tend to the Transition
4. Cultivate Connections-Foster Familiarity

A photograph of a rustic wooden log bridge crossing a river with white water rapids. The bridge is constructed from many logs laid across each other. The water is turbulent and white with foam. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the river and surrounding environment.

Safe Passage Activity

You have to cross this bridge.

What questions might you have?

~~What would you want to be in place before you take the first steps?~~

Prepare the Kids

What is it like being taken away?

In Their Own Words

- *What did they want to know?*
- *What did they believe about themselves?*

Please place answers in the chatbox



When Do You Start Preparing a Child for Permanency



Point of removal



NOW!

THE 3-5-7 MODEL

A PRACTICE APPROACH TO PERMANENCY

*Stories of Hope & Healing for
Children, Youth and Families*

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3 Tasks

5 Questions

7 Skills

Three Tasks are;

- Clarification of Life Events
- Integration – Assigning Meaning to Life Events
- Actualization: Claiming and Belonging

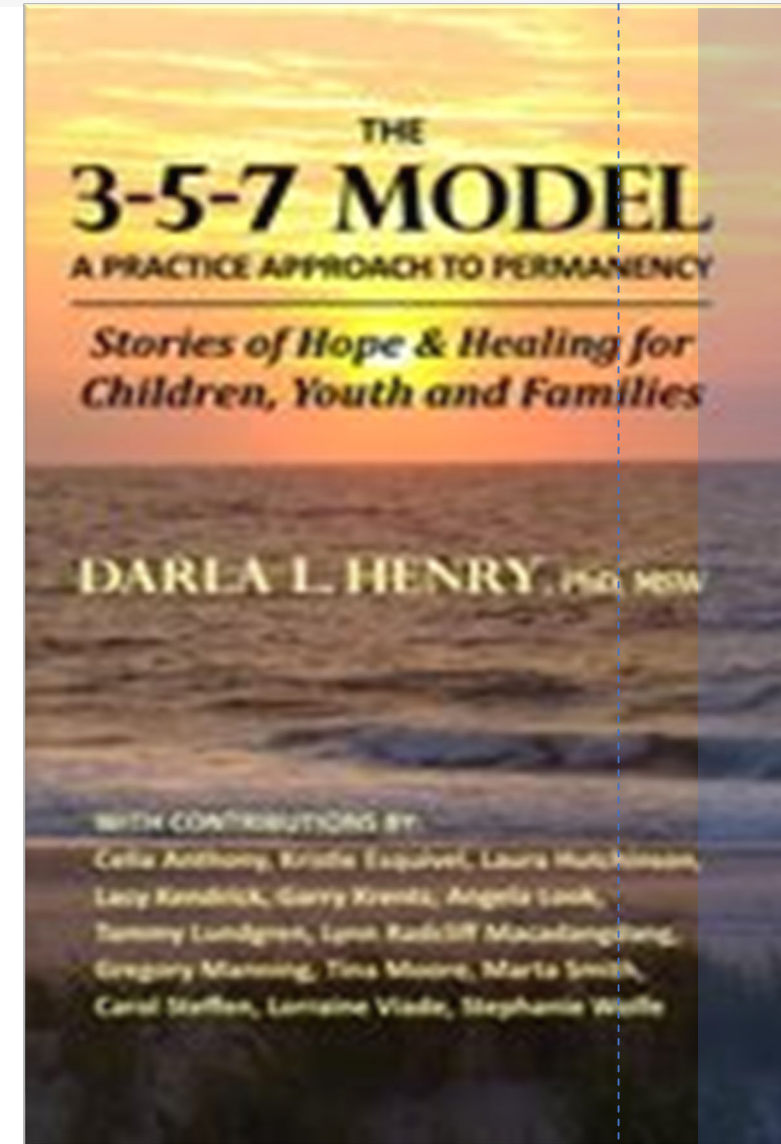


The FIVE W's Prepare Youth for a Move

- Who am I? (Identity)
- What happened to me? (Loss)
- Why is it happening?
- Where am I going?
- When will I go?

Bonus:

How will I know when I belong





Seven Skills:

- Engage the child in the process
- Listen to the child's words
- Speak the Truth
- Validate the child's life story
- Create a safe space for the child to do the work.
- It is never too late to go back in time.
- Pain is part of the process.

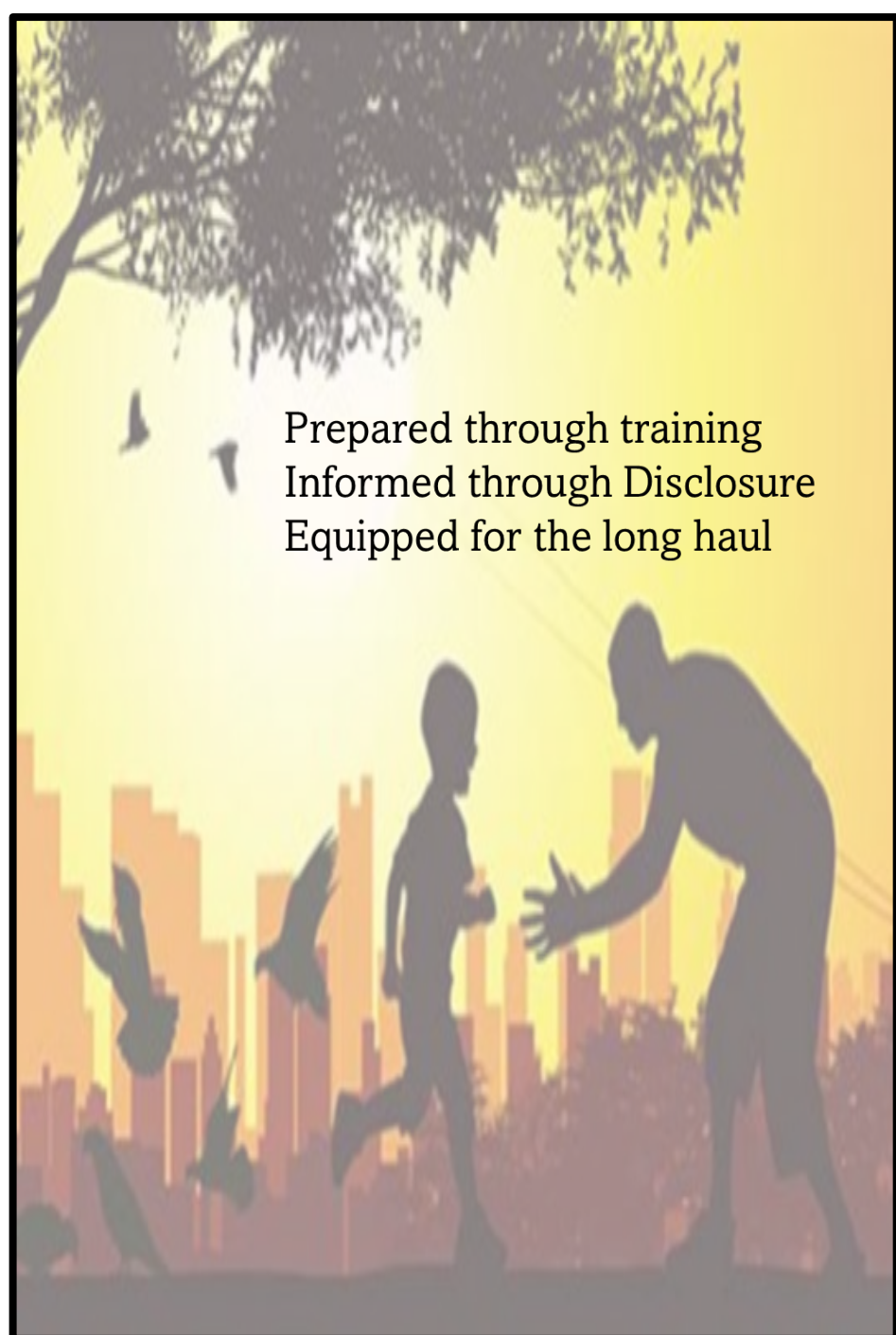
2. Prepare the Parents: Sending and Receiving

All families who are caring for a child experiencing a major life transition benefit for training and support. Understanding the unique needs and history of the child and partnering with one another to ensure a safe, gentle transition for a child is essential .

Tools & Resources

- Training and Support
- Disclosure (Full Information)
- A Clear Transition Plan
- Support through Grief

- ACRF Support and Training
- Transition Packet
- Parent to Parent Form
- Signaling and Claiming Handout

A silhouette illustration of a parent and a child running together against a sunset city skyline. The parent is on the right, leaning forward with arms outstretched, and the child is on the left, running towards the parent. The background features a city skyline with various building shapes and several birds in flight. The sky is a warm yellow-orange color, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The entire scene is framed by a thin black border.

Prepared through training
Informed through Disclosure
Equipped for the long haul

An illustration of a family walking across a suspension bridge. A man and a woman are walking together, and a child is sitting on the bridge railing. The background is a light blue sky with white clouds.

The Alaska Center for Resource Families

Preparing and Supporting Families and Teams for Success

Personalized training paths

Support

Assistance

Resources

We will equip and partner with you in your efforts to care and nurture the children. Caring for children from hard beginnings is different, we help families understand the process and honor the story and experience of the child to bring authentic healing .

- **Distance, on site and virtual training options**
- **Support for all kinds of permanency outcomes**
- **Extensive training options for child who have experienced trauma**
- **Assistance with transitions and resources**
- **Case Management- Crisis Management**
- **Resource Centers statewide**
- **Guidance**
- **Support Groups**
- **We will answer the call**

Email: acrf@nwresource.org

In Alaska call toll free: 1-800-478-7307

www.acrf.org

Disclosure Information and Tools

- Placement History
- Birth Family History
- Tribal Connections/Affiliation
- CDIB Card
- Evaluations
- Neuropsychological Tests
- Family Contact Expectations
- Mental Health History
- Educational Needs
- Permanency Plan
- Important connections/activities
- Parent to Parent Form
- Universal Disclosure Form Orca (06-9673)
- Written Narrative
- Heart Gallery Referral
- Guardian Ad Litem
- Birth Family/Relatives
- Tribal Members
- Current Foster Family
- Teachers



3. TEND TO THE TRANSITION

- *NO RIP AND DROPS WHY?*
- Foster Familiarity
- Cultivate Connections
- Minimize Additional Trauma



Resilience vs. Survival

“Resilient children are made, not born”

The time between birth and five years old has been referred to as “The Critical Years.” (Durrell, 1984) It is these early years when a child’s brain is most sensitive and affected by experiences, good and bad. It is during this time that resiliency can be created in a child through the repetitious cycle of nurturing, predictable experiences. Unfortunately, it is also during these early years that the child’s brain can be transformed by traumatic experiences such as ongoing abuse, neglect, terror and a chaotic environment. In these situations, often the only predictable factor in the life is the failure of adults to care for, protect or help him. (Keck and Kupecky 1995)



Rip & Drops = Trauma

Children are fragile, they will not “be fine”
Children are *survivors*, at great cost to their trust and development”

- *They will be in shock*
- *Destroy/ Damage fragile connections (roots)*
- *Trouble Putting down new roots*
- *Disrupts Growth and Development*
- *Season of withering*
- *Depression- Disconnection- Despair*
- *Attachment and Trust Ruptures*



4. Foster Familiarity

Building the bridge between
sending and receiving families

Belongings • Routines • Relationships • School

Think Multi-Sensory

- *Sights*
- *Sounds*
- *Smells*

- *Tastes*
- *Textures*



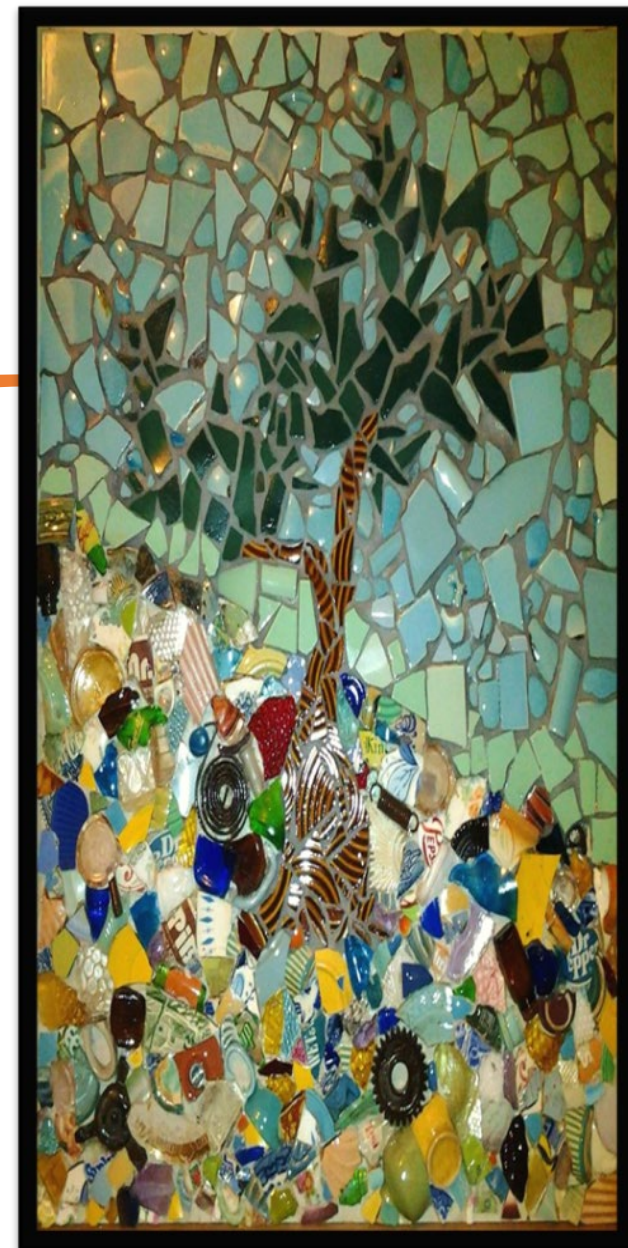
Grounded in Relationships

Recognizing and Protecting Their Roots

Bridging the Gap from *Who Am I-* to- *I Belong*

- Ethnically
- Culturally
- Biologically
- Spiritually
- Historically

Who are the lifelong connections?





THRIVE THROUGH TRANSITIONS

- Partner with the Process
- Honor the Efforts
- Bridge the Gap

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