

**Ensuring Due Diligence for Children in Foster Care:
Legal Requirements and Best Practices in Cross Border Child Welfare
ISS-USA Training Outline**

TRAINING GOALS

- *Laws, Responsibilities, and Resources*
 - Understanding relevant state, federal, and international laws that have an impact on family finding, family notification and family engagement
 - Knowing what is each actor's role in family finding and family engagement
 - Knowing what resources are available to help you when dealing with cross border family finding, family assessment, family engagement and permanency decisions
- *Best Practices and Cooperation*
 - Learning how to better identify children with families outside of the United States
 - How to accomplish permanency planning and fostering connections with family in other countries
 - Improving communication between agencies, and between countries
 - Overcoming fears and concerns

SESSION ONE:

CREATING CHILD CENTERED BEST PRACTICES IN INTERNATIONAL FAMILY FINDING & ENGAGEMENT

Child Welfare Crossing Borders: The who, what, when and why

- The "What": Families separated across borders
- The "When": Children separated from their families
- The "Why": Family Connection Benefits
- All Families are Potentially Transnational
- The "Who": Which kids are we talking about
- In Numbers: Family connections across borders
- New Jersey – The numbers

Permanency Options and Barriers to Permanency

- Which Permanency Option is Best
- Barriers to Interjurisdictional Kinship Placements
- By the Numbers: What worries us
- Now that we know the situation, what do we need to know?

Questions and Discussion

SESSION TWO: LAWS, TREATIES, COMPACTS, AND POLICIES

When things go wrong: Identifying gaps and lessons learned

- Case Example: Ariana falls through the cracks

Domestic Laws and Compacts



Protecting Children and Connecting Families Across Borders

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- The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997
- The Uniform Child-Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act
- Fostering Connections Act of 2008
- The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
- Proposed Legislation
- NJ Laws Relating to Placement and Notification

What is your role? Shared responsibility, separate activity

- The Role of the Parent's Attorney
- The Role of the Agency Attorney
- The Role of the Judge/Judicial Officer
- The Role of the Child's Attorney, CASA, GAL
- The Role of the U.S. Department of State

International laws and treaties: A Brief Overview

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (Hague Abduction)
- ICARA: Establishing concurrent jurisdiction
- The Hague Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption (Hague Adoption)
- Convention of 19 October 1996 on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children (Hague 1996)

Placement of Children Who Lack Parental Care with Relatives in Foreign Countries

- Kinship Placement does not Necessarily Fall under Hague
- What More Do We Need to Know to Manage These Inter-jurisdictional Cases?
- Steps to Improve Outcomes for Children: Policy
- Steps to Improve Outcomes for Children: Communication
- Steps to Improve Outcomes for Children: Cultural Sensitivity
- How to get Started

When Things go right: following policy and law for a positive outcome

- Case Example: Lucas finds his way home

Questions and Discussion

SESSION THREE:

MAKING DECISIONS ON CROSS BORDER CASES: BEST PRACTICES, RESOURCES, AND PROTOCOLS

Thinking outside the box: Setting the stage

- Even E.T. managed to phone home



- The Moral of the E.T. story
- The message is...

The “FEET” model: A conceptual model for achieving permanency

- The FEET Model
- Family Finding and Engagement: A best practice
- The FEET Model – Finding Families
 - What does this mean?
 - Things to consider
 - Actions to take to ensure due diligence
 - Resources available to you
- The FEET Model – ENGAGING Stakeholders
 - What does this mean?
 - Things to consider
 - Actions to take to ensure due diligence
 - Resources available to you
- The FEET Model – ENCOURAGING the Process
 - What does this mean?
 - Things to consider
 - Actions to take to ensure due diligence
 - Resources available to you
- The FEET Model – Tracking Outcomes
 - What does this mean?
 - Things to consider
 - Actions to take to ensure due diligence
 - Resources available to you

Outcomes for children who never found a permanent family

- What Happens When Children Have No Family Connections
- Outcomes for Children Who Age Out With No Family Resources

Wrapping up: Where do I start?

- The Simple Message
- How to Get Started
- ISS-USA Can Help With...
- Contact Us...

Questions and Discussion

