

## ABSTRACT

### THE PERSPECTIVES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN KINSHIP PROVIDERS ON PERMANENT PLACEMENTS IN FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Most children placed in kinship placements are African American. Studies show that many of these children remain in kinship care longer than children of other ethnicities. There is little research about the perceptions of African American kinship providers on permanency options such as adoption and guardianship. To address this knowledge gap, six African American kinship providers were interviewed to address how cultural factors influence their decisions regarding permanency and how their decisions affect the children in their care. Results of this study suggest permanent placements are not necessary for children to experience feelings of love and belonging. Implications for social work practice and policy are discussed.

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