Ways to achieve permanency

• Reunification with the birth parents
• Adoption by relative, foster parent, non-relative (certified to adopt by courts).
• Title 8 Guardianship
Adoption and Title 8 Guardianship

- **Adoption:**
  - Parental rights are terminated/relinquished
  - Adoptive Parents make all the legal and social decisions for a child
  - No further court involvement
  - A new birth certificate issued to the adoptive parent
  - Children qualify, based on their needs, for adoption subsidy which is a federally funded program.
  - Adopted children who qualify for adoption subsidy will receive AHCCCS coverage until age 18, high school diploma, GED or up to age 22 whichever occurs first.
  - Annual review of adoption subsidy case

- **Guardianship:**
  - Title 8 guardianship is considered to be permanent
  - It is intended to last until the child is 18 years of age.
  - Emotional relationship should last a lifetime
  - Permanent guardianship can only be undone by a court action
  - Guardians have to reapply for AHCCCS medical coverage yearly
  - A first year paper review of the case through the court after guardianship is granted.
  - Annual review of Guardianship subsidy case
DCS Subsidy Overview

• There are approximately 34,916 children/23,529 families in the Adoption Subsidy Program.
  • An average of 150-200 new children are adopted each month.
• There are approximately 2890 children/1746 families in the Guardianship Subsidy Program.
  • An average of 50 new children have permanency through Guardianship each month.
• There are 21 Subsidy Specialists and two Behavioral Health Support positions that provide case management and support to the families.

**data is as of February 2021 from the Subsidy End of Month Reports and the MOOR report**
DCS Subsidy Services and Supports

- The Department of Child Safety (DCS) provides Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy to families in an effort to support permanency for children in care.
- **Adoption Subsidy** provides:
  - Medical coverage through AHCCCS/MEDICAID
  - A monthly maintenance subsidy
    - Amount is determined based on needs of the child
  - One-time reimbursement of non-recurring adoption expenses
  - Special services subsidy as needed
    - This includes case management
    - Reimbursement of respite services
    - Out of home services/supports
  - Case management support to assist in connecting to community supports
- **Guardianship Subsidy** provides:
  - Medical coverage through AHCCCS (first year caregiver must re-enroll each year)
  - A monthly maintenance subsidy that must be updated each year
  - Case management support to assist in connecting community supports
DCS Subsidy Services and Supports

In 2019, the Department created two Behavioral Health Support Positions to assist families who were having post permanency challenges. These positions offer statewide support.

- Attend Child and Family Team meetings providing advocacy to the family.
- Locate and work with family to identify community supports in their area
- Partner with behavioral health services to ensure that the child and families behavioral health needs are being met.

The Department is in the process of developing a Scope of Work/Contract for Post-Permanency Subsidy Services. The goal is to engage adoption/guardianship families in services through the Positive Parenting Program system, also known as Triple P.

- Services will be provided for approximately 90-120 days with the following goals:
  - Promote the independence and health of families through enhancing the families knowledge, skills, confidence and self-sufficiency
  - Promote the development of non-violent, protective and nurturing environments for children;
  - Promote the development, growth, health, and social competence of young children;
  - Reduce the incidence of child maltreatment and behavioral/emotional problems in childhood and adolescence;
Any Questions?

• To learn more about foster care or watch an online orientation go to: https://dcs.az.gov
• Check out Children’s Heart Gallery for children legally free for adoption at: https://www.childrensheartgallery.org/
• For more information you can reach the Warmline at 1-877-543-7633 option 3 or you can email FosterAdoption@azdcs.gov