Definition of Permanency

Permanency for youth is defined as having a relationship with at least one adult that is characterized by these five points:\(^1\):

1. Parenting
2. Life-Long Intent
3. Belonging
4. Status (*legal and social*)
5. Unconditional Commitment (*by the adult*)

It is important to note that *achieving Permanency isn’t about securing a safe placement for the youth*. While the process may begin by finding an appropriate, stable living situation, it must continue until the young person is solidly connected to a caring, lasting, family-oriented relationship with an adult as described above.

Although there are different forms of Permanency, during the Roundtable consultations, the “gold standard” is achieving *legal Permanency* for youth in one of the following ways:

- ✔ Reunification
- ✔ Adoption
- ✔ Legal Guardianship

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\(^1\) Adapted from: Sue Hoag Badeau; Robert Lewis and Maureen Heffernan; and California Permanency for Youth Project