ABA Permanency Barriers Project

The ABA Permanency Barriers Project works with you to reduce the time children spend in foster care before achieving permanency.

Principles

1. Permanency begins on Day 1.
2. Small steps add up to change.
3. Full stakeholder engagement is key to realize and maintain system reform.

Project Approach

1. **Focus on System Change**

ABA staff help local stakeholders develop individualized local action plans. The action plans are based on a thorough assessment of needs, which includes:

- Case file review
- Data analysis
- Court observation
- Focus groups with stakeholders

2. **Locally-Driven, Locally-Owned**

Each jurisdiction encounters unique challenges. We form a local Advisory Board and issue-based subcommittees made up of lead decisionmakers, including:

- Child welfare agency administrators and staff
- Juvenile and family court judges
- Agency, parent, and children’s attorneys
- Behavioral health providers
- School administrators
- Others, as identified by locality

3. **ABA as Neutral Facilitator and Strategic Partner**

ABA staff are on site monthly working to develop and implement reforms.

- Our attorneys bring extensive firsthand knowledge and national perspective to guide your jurisdiction.
- We ensure all stakeholders join the effort as equal partners.
- We focus on system barriers and engagement between the legal and nonlegal communities at both the local and state level.
- We provide individualized attention, which can include refining court and agency procedures, providing legal analysis, and conducting trainings.

4. **Improved Outcomes**

At the end of this two-year project, you will see:

- More efficient and effective pathways to permanency for every case;
- A reduction of time in foster care for children in your jurisdiction; and
- Improved communication, network building, and stakeholder collaboration.

Measurable Results

At the end of the two-year project each jurisdiction receives a final project report with results and recommendations to sustain system change. To date, the project has:

- served **55** different counties in **four** states,
- reduced the time children spend in foster care in all four states by an average of **nine months**,  
- realized a positive impact on **more than 3,000** children,
- saved counties and states over **$30 million** in foster care costs.

Targeted Technical Assistance

As an alternative to the two-year model, we provide targeted technical assistance on permanency matters through on-site trainings, developing local protocols, facilitating meetings, and other solutions to address local challenges. ABA technical assistance can range from a one-day training to a multi-month engagement.

Get Started Today

The ABA Permanency Barriers Project can work with your jurisdiction to promote permanency for children in foster care.

For more information about getting started and how to fund the project, including the possible use of Title IV-E funding, contact:

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