

# Children's Justice Act Task Force Relative Placement Project

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# CJA Relative Placement Assessment

- Review of best practices and other jurisdictions
- Statewide judicial and participant survey
  - Court observations
  - Review of legal files
  - CRB data collections
  - Participant interviews

# Why relatives?

- Safer than regular foster care
- More stable
- More likely to result in permanency and life long connections
- More likely to be culturally and community connected

# What should we offer?

- Identification
- Location
- Engagement

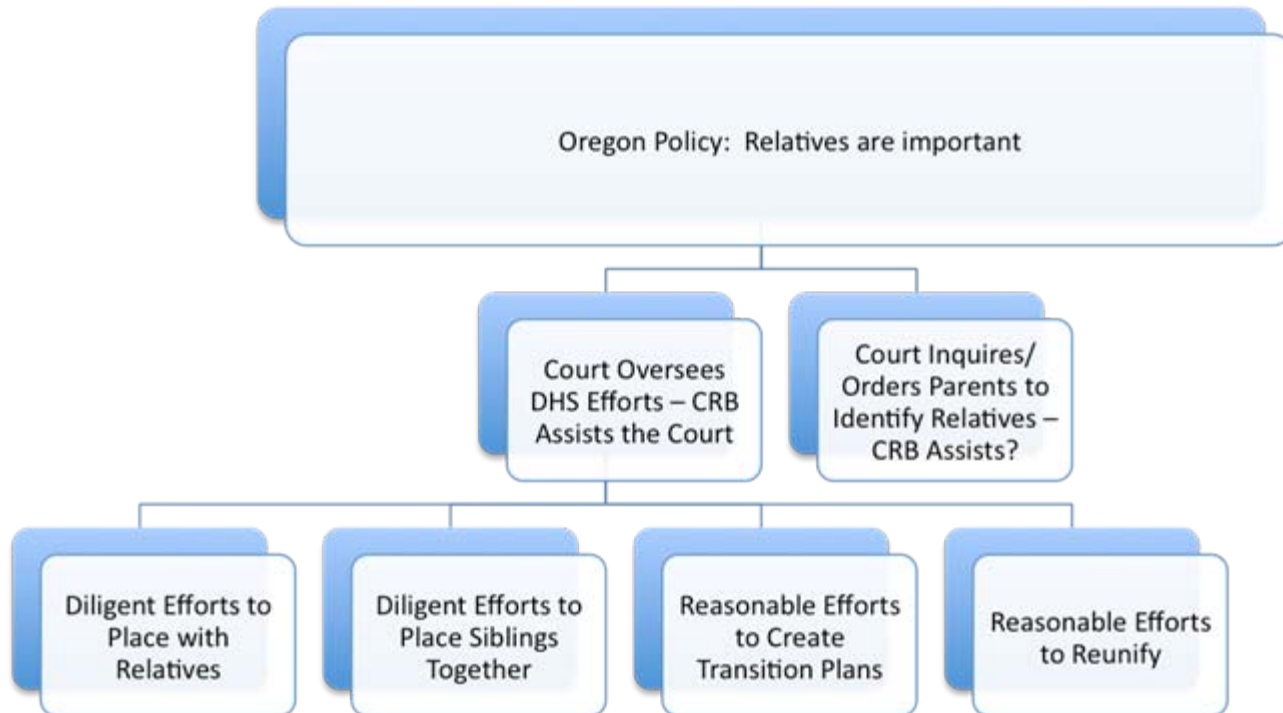
# Engagement

- Opportunity to be placement – short term and long term
- Opportunity to help in other ways
- Information
- A place at the table
- More support than we offer community foster care

# Statutory Framework for Working with Relatives

- Reasonable efforts to prevent removal or reunify
  - Preference for relative placement
- DHS reports on diligent efforts to place with relatives and siblings
- DHS reports on efforts to create transition plans for youth 14 and over
  - ICWA compliance
  - Court makes findings
    - Court provides community leadership
  - Reinforces message that family can help

# Statutory Framework for Court Oversight



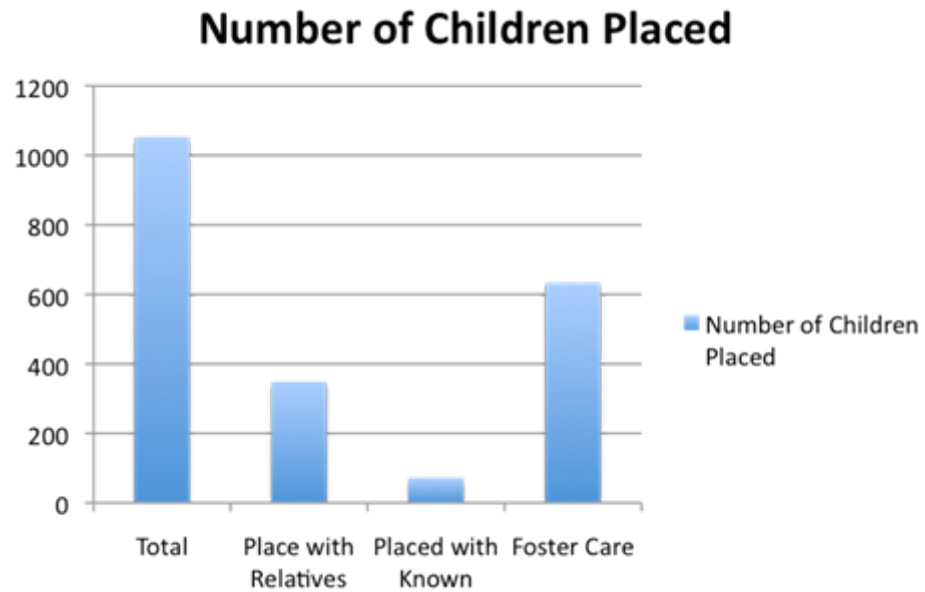
# Shifting Standard for Diligent Efforts

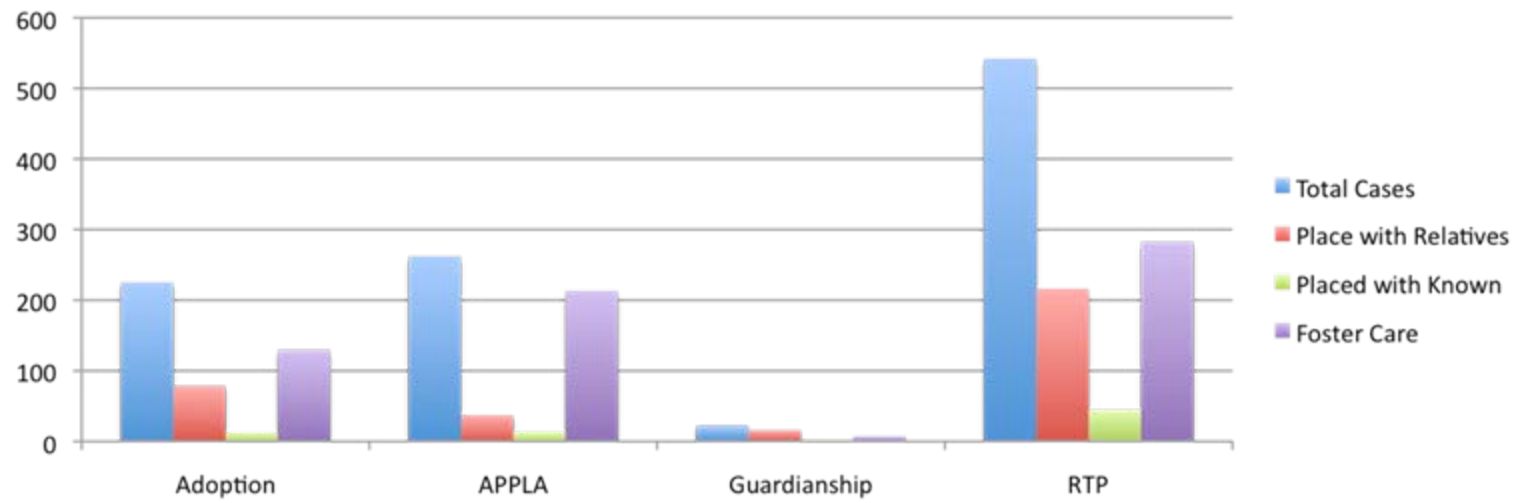
Current OARs	July 2010 OARs
Restrictive definition of relatives – related by blood or adoption	Expanded definition of relatives
Obligation to search and notify.	Obligation to search, notify and engage.
Diligent search within a limited time frame	Search throughout the life of the case
Focus on placement	Expanded role for relatives – placement, life long connections, safety service providers

# Checking the box.....

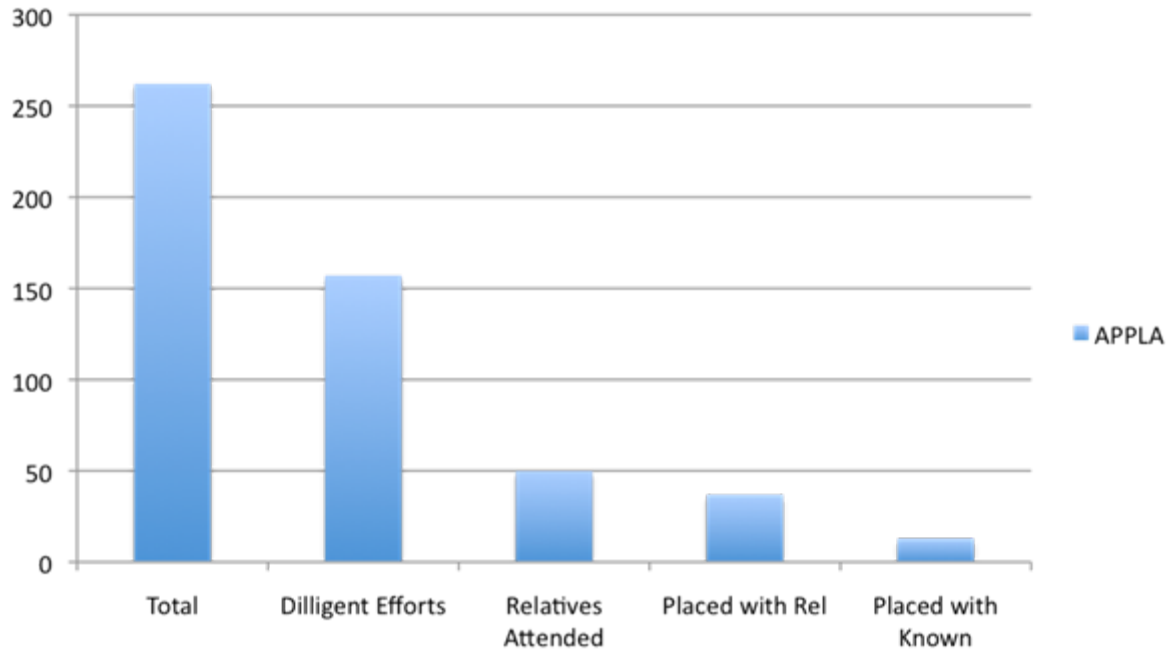
- ✓ Court and CRB make diligent efforts findings in almost 100% of hearings where required.
  - ✓ DHS reports on efforts to place children with relatives since the last hearing at 69% of CRB hearings.
- ✓ Relatives are present at 34% of CRB hearings.

# Is it working?





# APPLA



# Is it working?

262 APPLA kids

- 37(13%)placed with relatives)
- 13 (5%) place with people they knew before DHS was involved
- 213 (81%) placed with neither

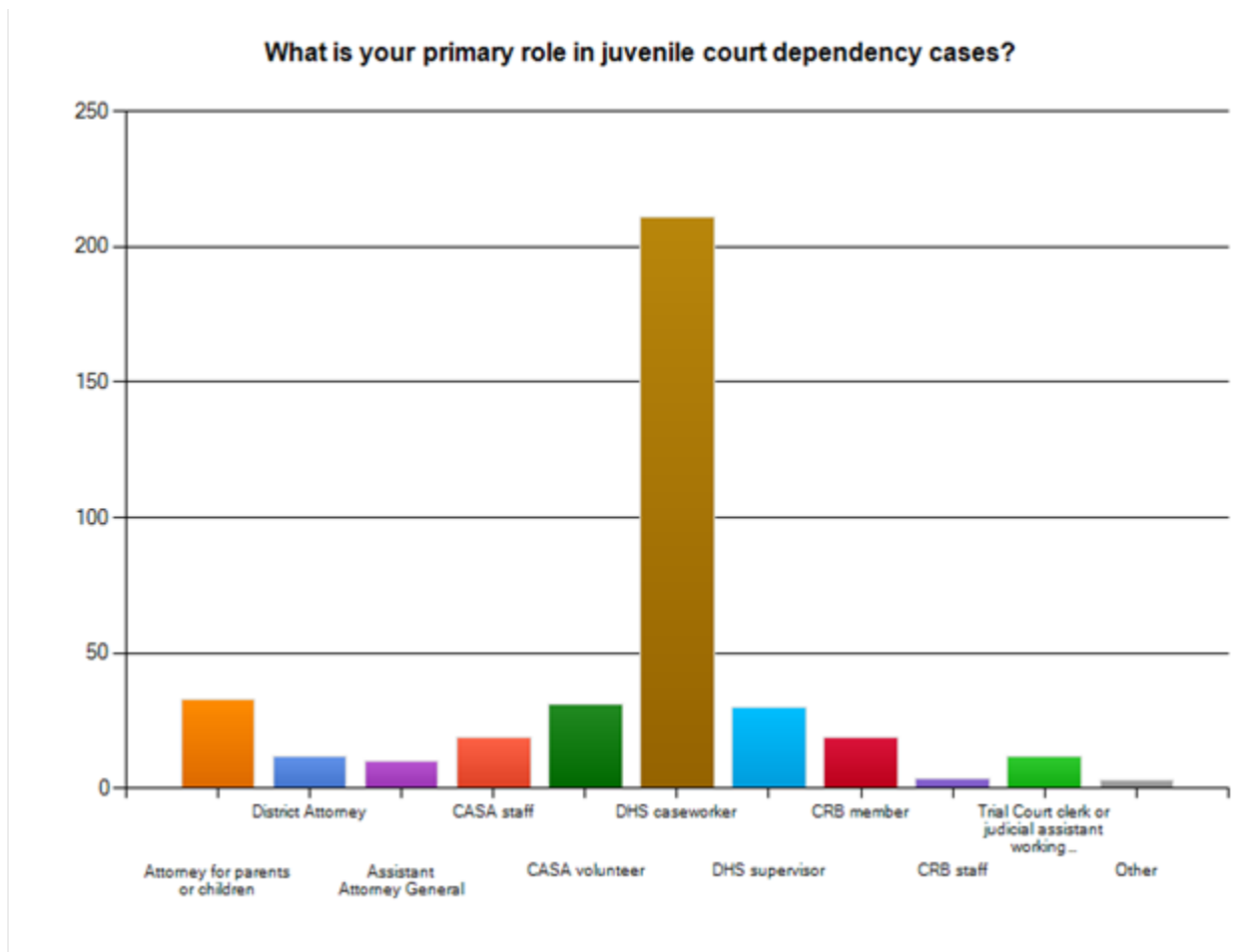
# 86 kids

- no relatives at the review
- not placed with relatives
- placed with people paid to care for them
- no one looked for family since last hearing

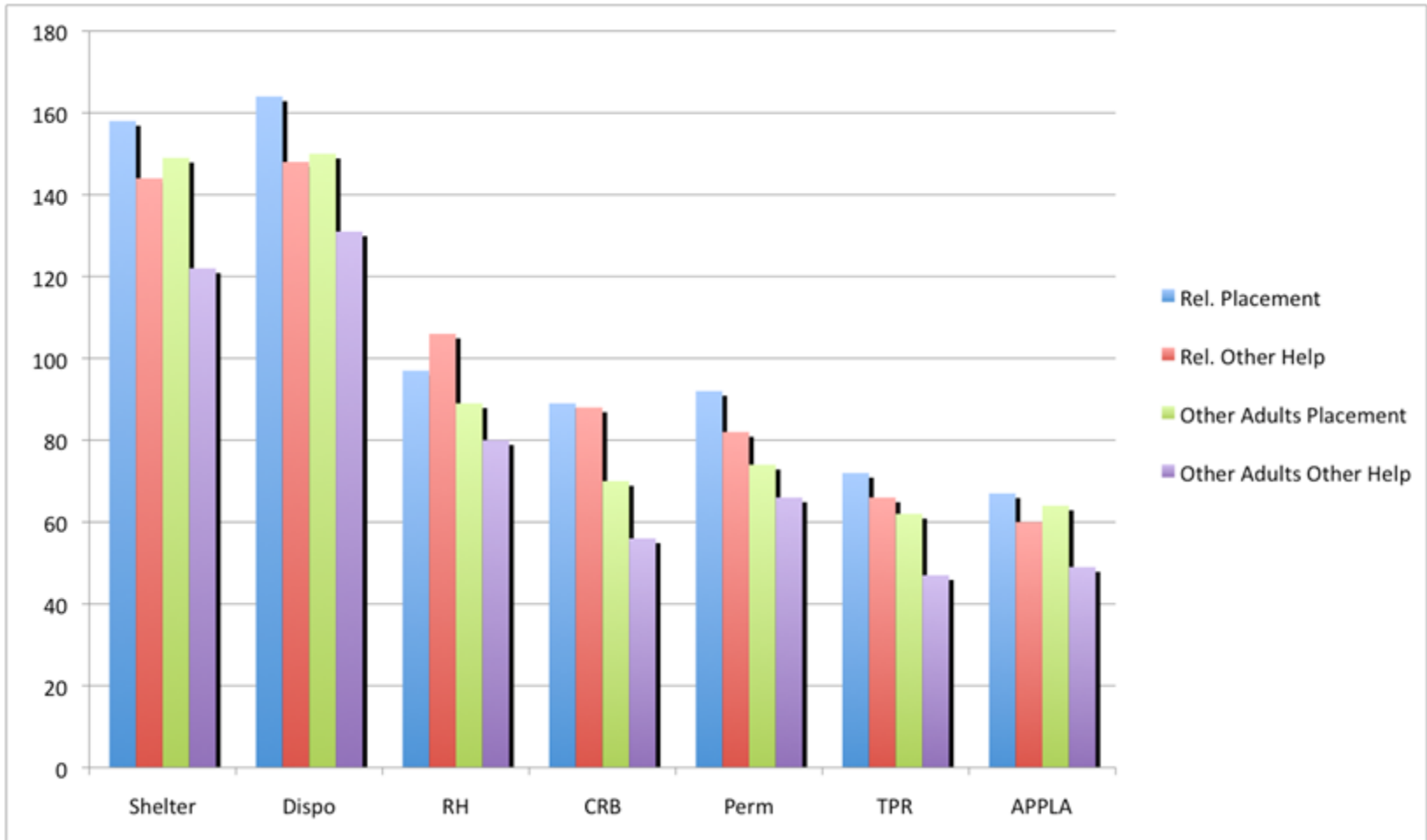
# What are we doing?

Survey results

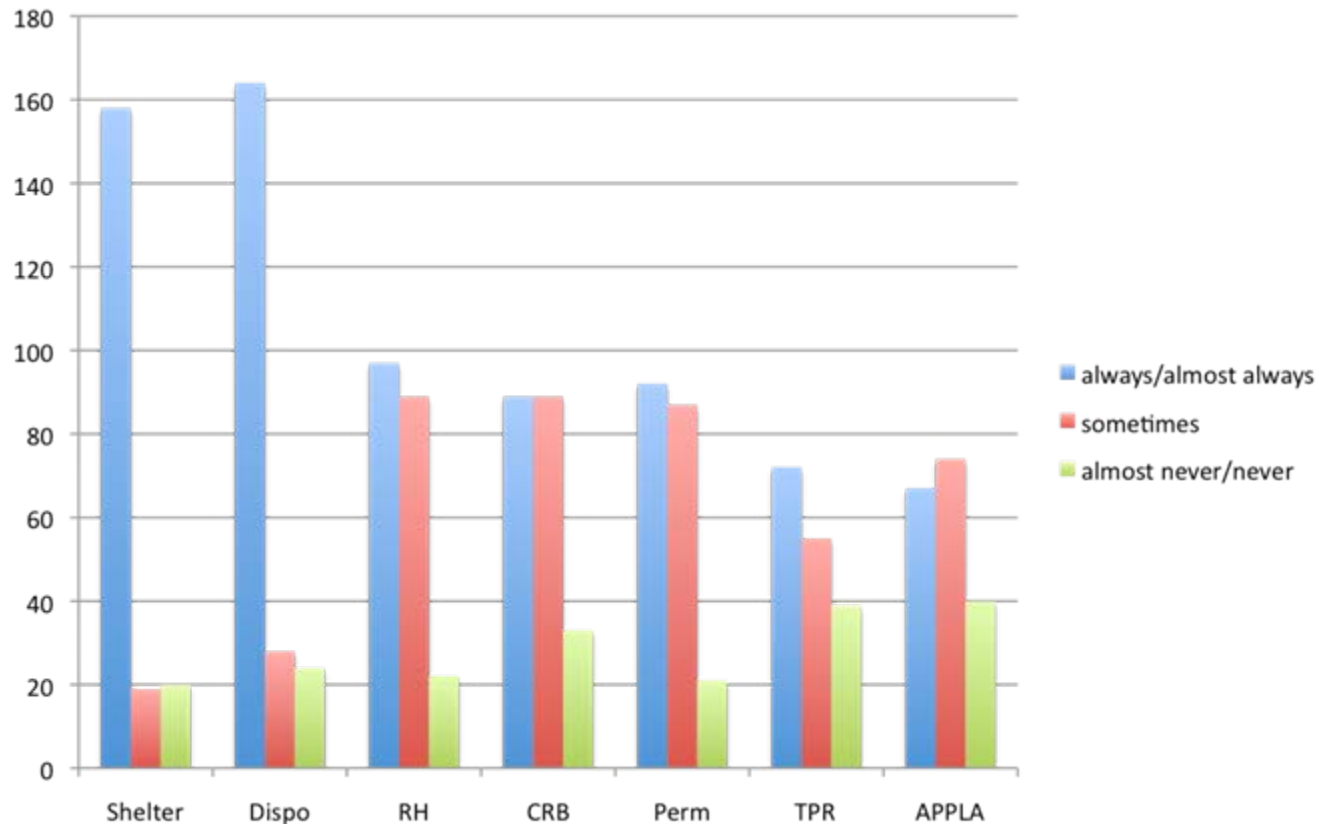
# Survey Response by Profession



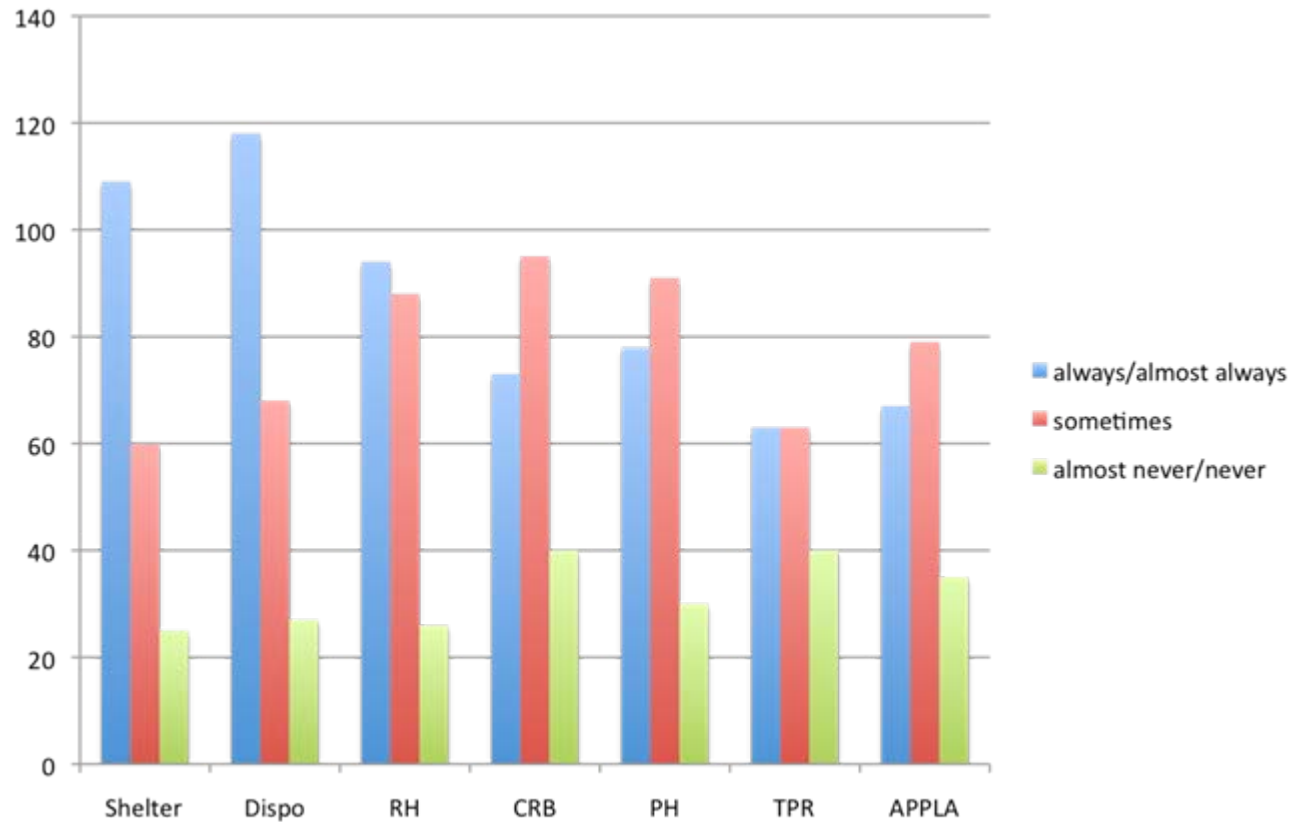
# The Relative Glide Path



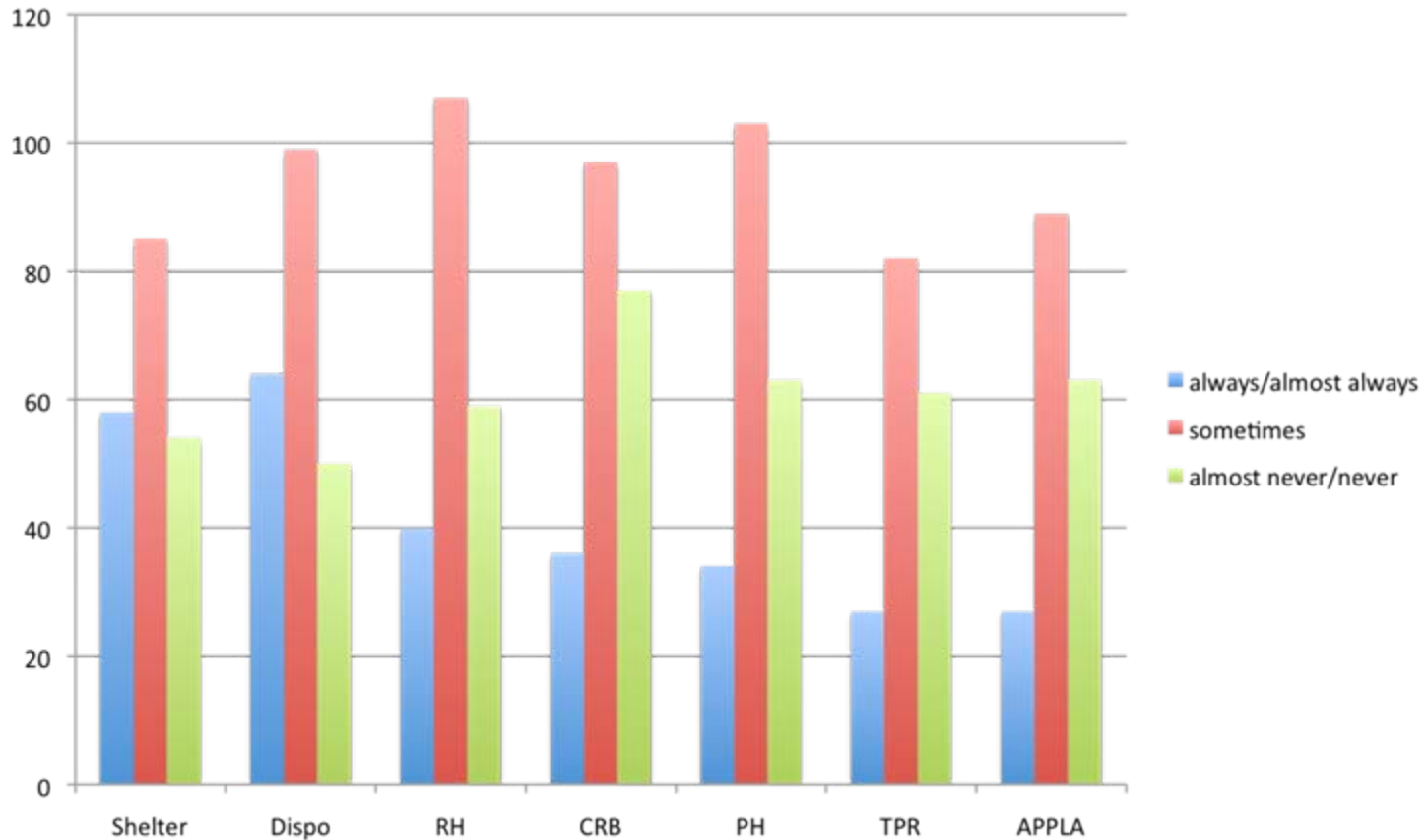
# How often do you ask parents about relatives who could be a placement?



# How often do you ask children who are able to communicate about relatives or other people important to them?



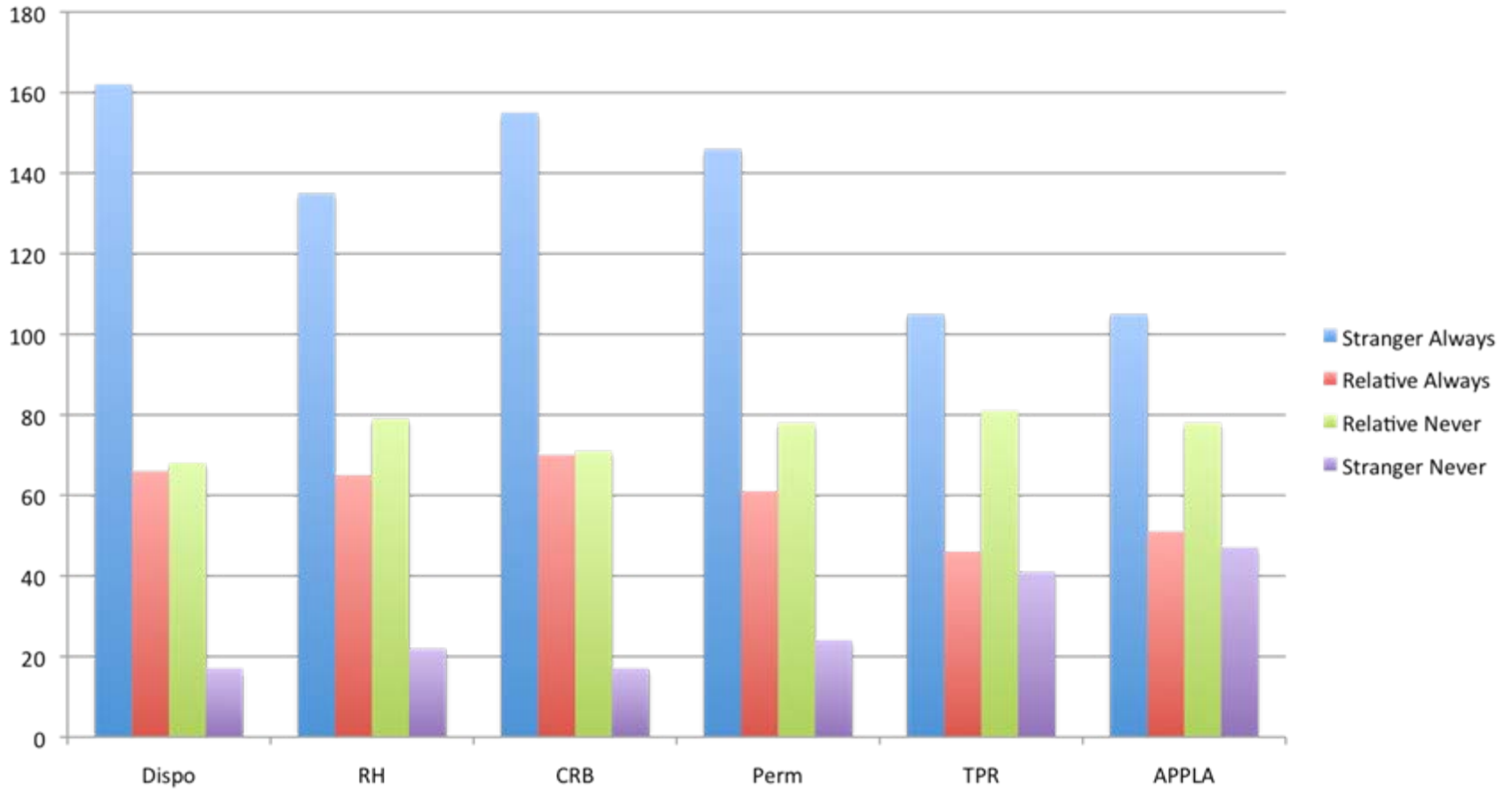
How often do you ask collateral contacts (i.e., teachers, treatment providers, neighbors) about relatives or other adults who are important to the family before:



# Barriers to Relative Participation

- Identification/Location
  - Certification
  - Geography

# Search for relatives throughout the life of the case.



# Anecdotal

- All the good ones move away.
- We are investing too much time and energy on marginal relatives. If we have to offer services to relatives, should they be providing foster care?
  - Our kids are happy in permanent foster care, why would we look for relatives?

# Barriers

Location

Certification

Child's needs

# Questions -

How does your local court community need to change to engage relatives?