Reducing Barriers to Permanency: A Resource For Legal Professionals

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The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption emphasizes the **critical role legal professionals play in achieving permanency** for children and youth in foster care—especially those most at risk of aging out, such as **youth 9+, children with special needs, and sibling groups**. Legal professionals are encouraged to adopt practices that directly influence permanency outcomes, including:

Recommended Actions for Legal Professionals

- **Advocate for evidence-based recruitment** approaches proven to increase adoptions for high-needs youth.
- **Believe that all children are adoptable**, regardless of age or background.
- **Prioritize legal permanency** rather than relying solely on placement stability.
- **Support the role of biological family** in permanency planning when appropriate.
- **Understand youth reluctance** toward adoption and address their concerns with empathy and information.
- **Recognize that youth are never too old for a family** and deserve lifelong connections.

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