DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT
TO PERMANENT LIFELONG CONNECTIONS
FOR FOSTER YOUTH

As members of the Child Welfare community of New England, we recognize the crisis that exists for youth in foster
care, particularly those between the ages of 11-21, who lack a permanent connection with an adult or family. We
hereby declare our commitment to support and achieve permanent lifelong connections for all children and youth; and

We are deeply concerned that nearly 28,000 children are in foster care in New England, some of whom are unable to
return to their families, and who thus rely on the foster care system to provide them with a family and a sense of
permanent belonging; and

More than 50% of Youth in foster care in New England are between 11 and 21 years of age and need the same
permanent connections to a committed adult or family as youth in the general population; and

A committed adult provides a safe, stable and secure type of parenting relationship; love; unconditional commitment;
and lifelong support in the context of family reunification, legal adoption, guardianship or some other form of
committed lifelong relationship; therefore

We commit to work within our state, agencies, and communities and through the growing permanency
for foster youth movement to support and promote these objectives by doing the following:

Promote recognition of and respect for the urgent need to ensure every foster youth has at least one lifelong
permanent relationship;

Educate all we come into contact with about the need, urgency, and promising practices for achieving permanence
for foster youth;

Support local, state and New England wide projects and efforts to raise awareness, recommend policy changes,
increase funding for and provide assistance to improve older youths’ opportunities to develop a lifelong connection
with a committed adult before leaving foster care;

Initiate change within our state and foster and adoptive parent organizations to support youth permanence and
lifelong connections; and

Fortify our common commitment to the permanence of foster youth and to reconnect youth with extended family
members whenever possible as an obligation of the entire child welfare and human community to the children in our
foster care system.

New England Foster Care Association Conference, October 20, 2006

New England Commissioners and Directors

[Signatures]

Connecticut

[Signature]

New Hampshire

[Signature]

Maine

[Signature]

Rhode Island

[Signature]

Massachusetts

[Signature]

Vermont

New England Presidents of Foster and Adoptive Family Associations

[Signatures]

Connecticut

[Signature]

New Hampshire

[Signature]

Maine

[Signature]

Rhode Island

[Signature]

Massachusetts

[Signature]

Vermont