**Section 315.45 The Need for a Permanent Home**

a) The Department recognizes that the best interest of children require that they have safe, permanent, secure, and nurturing homes for healthy psychological and physical development in order to mature to stable adulthood. Whenever it is determined to be in the best interest of the child, the Department will make reasonable efforts to preserve family life and to stabilize children's homes and to assist in the solution of problems that are likely to result in the abuse, neglect or exploitation of children.

b) When children must be removed from a parent to reduce or prevent harm to the children and the other parent is not a placement option, the Department will make reasonable efforts to reunite families as quickly as is consistent with the children's best interests, safety and well-being. When children and parents cannot be reunited because the parents are unable or unwilling to care for the children and therefore cannot achieve the minimum parenting standards, the Department will make reasonable efforts to find other permanent homes for children in a timely fashion consistent with the child's sense of time and need for physical safety and emotional security.

c) When placing a sibling group, priority shall be given to a placement, whether related or unrelated, that can accept all of the members of the sibling group.

d) When placing a child who has siblings who are in substitute care, or were adopted or placed in private guardianship from the Department's care, priority shall be given first to placement with the child's siblings who are still in substitute care or who are in an adoptive placement or private guardianship.

(Source: Amended at 40 Ill. Reg. 743, effective December 31, 2015)