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Your submission for this review:

I have the pleasure of being a foster carer. The most important change I would like to see coming out of the review is that the government encourages and requires non-government providers to facilitate children moving to permanency, as required by legislation. For example, we started fostering our non-indigenous child when she was a new-born. At the time she was removed she was never to be returned to her parents. Although there was discussion of adoption from the age of 3 months old, we still have not adopted her, and she is about to turn six. The process is taking so long that it is harmful and traumatic in and of itself for the children, carers and biological parents. The privatized companies make their money from fostering, not adoption. The government needs to improve how it engages with these companies so that it encourages moving appropriate children to permanency and punishes those that fail to do so. Setting up processes that expedite appropriate permanency would be worthwhile. Research has highlighted that permanency is of great value to children. It also has the advantage of saving the government money. The funding for carers covers only the basic costs of care. As a consequence of how long the adoption process is taking our child is now seeing a therapist. We receive funding for this from the agency but were also advised that there is a limited amount of funding available for all kids. This is concerning as therapy should be a default requirement for foster kids and should be provided. We tend to be out of pocket on health and medical services as these are not covered by the agency eg our daughter had major surgery last year which we paid for. We are required to do 6 monthly dental and medical appointments which we then pay for ourselves. This could well be prohibitively expensive for some carers.