

Elizabeth Black

Elizabeth Black was appointed to the position of Executive Director, Office of Child Permanency in March 2004. She oversees the Foster Care, Adoptions & Kinship Care, Permanency Planning, Child Placement and Private Providers and Community Partnerships and Support Services Divisions. The Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) is the public child welfare system in the State of Tennessee providing services and protection to abused and neglected children including prevention and custodial services to support children within their own families.

Prior to this appointment, she was both the Kinship Care Program Coordinator and the Family to Family Co-Coordinator for the Tennessee Department of Children's Services. Ms. Black also co-coordinated implementation of a child welfare reform effort known as Family to Family with the assistance, support, and guidance of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Prior to her work at DCS, Ms. Black coordinated a collaborative effort to support kinship families in Nashville, Tennessee between the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program, Family and Children's Services, and the Vanderbilt University Law School. Ms. Black was accepted into Teach for America in 1993, and completed her two (2) year commitment to teach school in an under-resourced public school system as a special education teacher at Borgnemouth Elementary School located outside of New Orleans, Louisiana.

Ms. Black has spoken extensively on the benefits of children being cared for within their own families and communities as well as the challenges that many kinship families face each day when involved with the public child welfare, welfare, judicial and educational systems.

Ms. Black completed her undergraduate studies at Millsaps College and her graduate studies at the University of Tennessee.