



Illinois "Best Interest" Definition

705 ILCS 405/1-3(4.05) (2011)

Whenever a 'best interests' determination is required, the following factors shall be considered in the context of the child's age and developmental needs:

- a. The physical safety and welfare of the child, including food, shelter, health, and clothing;
- b. The development of the child's identity;
- c. The child's background and ties, including familial, cultural, and religious;
- d. The child's sense of attachments, including:
 - I. Where the child actually feels love, attachment, and sense of being valued (as opposed to where adults believe the child should feel love, attachment, and a sense of being valued);
 - II. The child's sense of security;
 - III. The child's sense of familiarity;
 - IV. Continuity of affection for the child;
 - V. The least disruptive placement alternative for the child;
- e. The child's wishes and long-term goals;
- f. The child's community ties, including church, school, and friends;
- g. The child's need for permanence, which includes the child's need for stability and continuity of relationships with parent figures and with siblings and other relatives;
- h. The uniqueness of every family and child;
- i. The risks attendant to entering and being in substitute care; and
- j. The preferences of the persons available to care for the child.