

APPENDIX I: ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RESOURCE FAMILY UNIT

Topic Areas	Questions
Background	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are your current roles? 2. What are you responsible for? 3. How do you spend your time now (if you were to break it down)?
Recruitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. How many staff work in this area? Strengths/weaknesses? 5. How do recruiters spend their time day-to-day? What are their responsibilities? 6. What kind of supervision is available? 7. What does locality do to recruit new foster parents? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What targeted recruitments efforts? - What child-specific recruitment efforts? (or does that fall to adoption?) 8. How do you monitor what recruitment works? 9. What kind of training do recruiters receive? 10. Are there any plans or ideas to improve this area of work?
Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. How many staff work in this area? Strengths/weaknesses? 12. How do trainers spend their time day-to-day? What are their responsibilities? 13. What kind of supervision do they receive? 14. What kind of training are they responsible for? (e.g. in-service, pre-service) 15. Which curricula do the trainers use? 16. How many trainings per month (all types)? 17. Are there any plans or ideas to improve this area?
Intake	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. How many staff work in this area? Strengths/weaknesses? 19. How do they spend their time day-to-day? What are their responsibilities? 20. What kind of supervision do they receive? 21. How many calls per day come in? 22. What happens after hours? 23. How are calls routed? How are they divided? 24. How is your work tracked? What follow-up occurs? 25. Are there any plans or ideas to improve this area?
Home Studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. How many staff work in this area? Strengths/weaknesses? 27. How do they spend their time day-to-day? What are their responsibilities? 28. What kind of supervision do they receive? 29. What is expected? How long does it take to complete a homestudy? 30. Which homestudy method do you use?

Topic Areas	Questions
	31. How are homes assigned? 32. What are the biggest barriers to completion and how are they addressed? 33. Are there any plans or ideas to improve this area of work?
Ongoing Support Staff & supervision	34. How many staff work in this area? Strengths/weaknesses? 35. How do resource home workers spend their time day-to-day? What are their responsibilities? 36. Are any staff specialized? How are support duties divided? 37. What kind of training and supervision do resource home workers receive? 38. What are their biggest challenges? 39. Are there any plans or ideas to improve this area of work?
Ongoing Support Services	40. What are the top 3-5 problems that cause your foster families to leave? 41. What do resource home workers do to address those issues?
Ongoing Support Home visits	42. When are support visits done and what is their purpose?
Ongoing Support Respite	43. What respite care options exist and how frequently are they utilized?
Ongoing Support Recertification process	44. How long does the recertification process take and what can slow it down?
Overall	45. How long, on average, does the approval process take? 46. How long does it take, on average, for a home to be approved: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intake to orientation 2. Orientation to training 3. Training to homestudy 4. Homestudy to approval 47. Why are staff divided as they are? 48. Do you have the right number of staff per unit? (Is there a sense of the right number of staff per unit?)
Vision	49. If you had a magic wand and could make three changes to improve the areas of work you are in charge of, what would they be? 50. What changes to you think would have the greatest impact? 51. How would you define success for these areas of work?

APPENDIX II: RECIPE FOR A SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT PHONE INTAKE

Ingredients for phone line staff

- a live person answers the phone
- after hours provisions are in place
- provisions are in place for callers who speak various languages

Mixing it up during the call with the prospective family

- the caller is thanked for calling
- the tone of the call is friendly, welcoming, strength-based and family-focused
- no jargon is used
- the caller is asked about his/her interest or reason for calling and is able to dictate the direction of the conversation
- the caller is able to ask all his or her questions
- the caller is asked only his/her contact information for follow-up purposes but nothing to attempt to screen him/her out
- the caller is invited immediately to an orientation and given information about the event
- the caller is given accurate information about the system and the children and families in the system (i.e. number of kids, average age)
- no promises are made
- no negative talk about birth parents or children
- the caller is given other ways to get more information (websites, etc.)
- before the call ends, the caller is given the worker's name and number for follow-up
- the caller ends the call with a sense of clarity about what the next step should be

After the call – the icing on the cake!

- there is follow-up to remind the caller to attend orientation
- there is further follow-up if the caller misses the orientation
- the follow-up includes both phone and mail outreach
- the caller is tracked to trigger the follow-up and to measure the time between first phone call and attending orientation (as well as further tracking from orientation to training to certification)

System Considerations

- actual and prospective foster families have been involved in approving the process
- secret shopper quality assurance processes are in place to ensure that intake calls are handled appropriately
- tracking is done to determine which methods are successfully generating callers

APPENDIX III: SECRET SHOPPER TEMPLATE

Intake Phone Calls

Agency called: _____

Date of call: _____

Please rate your answers from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

For yes/no answers, 1 means no and 5 means yes.

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS : (1 for strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree)
1. A live person answered when I called the first time.	<div>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</div> <div>Strongly Disagree (NO) Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (YES)</div>
2. The person with whom I spoke was welcoming and friendly.	<div>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</div> <div>Strongly Disagree (NO) Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (YES)</div>
3. The person with whom I spoke thanked me for calling.	<div>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</div> <div>Strongly Disagree (NO) Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (YES)</div>
4. The person with whom I spoke asked if I had questions before beginning to ask me questions.	<div>1-----2-----3-----4-----5</div> <div>Strongly Disagree (NO) Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (YES)</div>


5. I was invited to an orientation with a specific date.	1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Strongly Disagree Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (NO) (YES)
6. The person with whom I spoke was well-informed.	1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Strongly Disagree Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (NO) (YES)
7. The person with whom I spoke asked me more questions than I asked him/her.	1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Strongly Disagree Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (NO) (YES)
8. The person with whom I spoke seemed rushed.	1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Strongly Disagree Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (NO) (YES)
9. The person with whom I spoke represented the agency well.	1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Strongly Disagree Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (NO) (YES)
10. The person with whom I spoke was able to give a clear description of what I could expect from orientation.	1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Strongly Disagree Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (NO) (YES)
11. The person with whom I spoke presented foster care/adoption in a positive light.	1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Strongly Disagree Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (NO) (YES)
12. The person with whom I spoke presented the children in a positive light.	1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Strongly Disagree Disagree Don't know or N/A Agree Strongly Agree (NO) (YES)

APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONS FOR PROSPECTIVE RESOURCE PARENTS

- What happened when you first called to ask about becoming a foster or adoptive parent? Did you reach a live person?
- What was your feeling during the first phone call?
- How were you treated during your phone conversation?
- What information did they ask from you?
- What information did they give you?
- What was the next step after that phone conversation and how long did it take?
- What information was presented at orientation? What information was useful? What information was not helpful? What information would you like to have had presented?
- Did you feel encouraged or discouraged by the orientation?
- Describe your homestudy experience. Did the social worker assist you in completing the paperwork? Gathering documentation?
- Describe your training experience. What information was useful? What information was not helpful? What information would you like to have had presented? Do you think that the trainers provided a balanced view of resource parenting?
- Tell us about your experience with the placement of children in your home.

APPENDIX V: INTAKE TALKING POINTS



Intake Guidance	Sample Talking Points
<p>Opening</p> <p><i>Greet the caller warmly.</i></p>	<p>“Thank you so much for calling. I’m sure you have lots of questions. Where would you like to start?”</p> <p>“My name is.....”</p> <p>“What made you call? How did you hear about us?”</p>
<p>Sample Question Areas</p> <p><i>Let the caller guide the conversation with their questions.</i></p> <p><i>Use some locality-specific examples to talk about children.</i></p> <p><i>Talk through basic steps in becoming a foster parent, but don’t overwhelm the caller.</i></p> 	<p><i>Main topics to address depending on caller interest:</i></p> <p><u>Locality’s children</u></p> <p>-For example: “In Virginia City, we have 250 children enter the child welfare system every year. About half of these kids are able to go back home to their families within 12 months, but the rest of the children need a permanent family. The average age is 12 years old, there are more boys than girls, and about 75% of the children are African-American.”</p> <p><u>Basic eligibility information:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can be married or single -Can rent or own your home -Can work—you must have own income <p><u>Basic steps in the process:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Home visits to help us get better acquainted -Information gathering such as application, references -Safety inspection to help you prepare for the child -Background check to document your stability -Training to help prepare you for foster/adoptive parenting

<p>Get Basic Information</p> <p><i>Obtain name, address, phone number and/or e-mail address.</i></p>	<p>“Would you like me to send you a packet of information that prospective parents find helpful?”</p>
<p>Invite to the Next Orientation</p> <p><i>Provide the date/time/location of the next orientation.</i></p> <p><i>Offer other dates/locations if next is not convenient.</i></p> <p><i>Complete intake form.</i></p>	<p>“Orientation is an information sharing session where you can get additional information and have an opportunity to meet staff.”</p> <p>“We would love for you to attend one of our upcoming information sessions.”</p> <p>“We welcome everyone to orientation because it is a chance to understand more about foster parenting and adoption, and learn more about our kids.”</p> <p>“I’m sure you’ll have a lot more questions once you review the materials I’m sending you.”</p>
<p>Ending the Call</p> <p><i>Thank the caller for their interest.</i></p> <p><i>Give your name and contact number again, in case of additional questions.</i></p>	<p>“Thank you so much for calling! We can’t wait to see you at the orientation!”</p> <p>“If you want to talk with someone again, my name is _____ and my direct number is _____. Please feel free to call me with any other questions.”</p>

APPENDIX VI: SAMPLE INTAKE FORM

Sample Intake Form

Applicant Name(s): (include spouse if married)		
Home Phone:		Other Phone:
Mailing Address:		
City	State	Zip _____ - _____
Physical Address, if different:		
E-mail address:		County or City of Residence:
Referral Source: (select and specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Another foster/adoptive parent <input type="checkbox"/> TV <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Church <input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Recruiter <input type="checkbox"/> Ad/Article <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
Child Specific Request (if applicable):		
Comments or Observations:		
Information (letter, brochure, e-mail) sent date:		
Follow-up contact date:		
For office use:		
Entry #		Date of call:
Worker	Worker #	

APPENDIX VII: SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP COMMUNICATIONS

RICHMOND CITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

TO:

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www.aecf.org

Foster Care & Adoption in the City of Richmond



THINKING ABOUT FOSTERING OR ADOPTING?

- ☐ Learn more about the need for foster/adoptive families
- ☐ Consider if fostering or adopting from the foster care system is for you
- ☐ Explore the process, determine your next steps



A WORD

OF THANKS . . .

I would like to personally thank you for your interest in learning about becoming a Foster/Adoptive parent for the City of Richmond Department of Social Services. We need you, and others like you, to take on the challenge of loving, protecting and nurturing children who have been abused or neglected.

There are over 500 children in the custody of the Richmond Department of Social Services who need caring adults in their lives to provide guidance and stability. We strongly believe that children belong in families, and we rely on foster and adoptive parents to fill this need. While the challenge may be great, the reward will be greater.

I hope that you will decide to join us and become a foster/adoptive parent. Thank you for exploring this opportunity.

With appreciation,

Anne Kisor

Anne Kisor, PhD
Interim Director

Attend
Orientation

Talk with
family

Attend
training

Complete
application &
fingerprinting

Family
Assessment
(Homestudy)

Determine
placement
preferences

THE STEPS TO FOSTER CARE/ADOPTION:

Learn more about foster care and adoption, the unique needs of children in care, and the requirements for approval.

Talk to everyone in your home about fostering or adopting—including any children you already have. This is a commitment that involves the entire family.

Attend pre-service training, called “PRIDE” (Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education). This is a nine-week series; we will provide you with a schedule of our next training.

Complete an application and the required background checks. For children’s safety, this includes fingerprinting of all adults and checking Virginia’s Abuse and Neglect Central Registry.

Undergo a homestudy. During this process, you will have a Family Development Specialist from the agency who works directly with you, answers your questions and helps guide you through the process.

Consider your family’s strengths in determining what children you would be most successful with; complete a placement preferences and contacts form that will be used when your family is being considered for children who come into care.

At any point, if you decide that fostering or adopting is not right for you or your family, you can withdraw from the process with our appreciation for your time and interest. There are many other ways to support children and families through Richmond Social Services!

What is foster care? How does adoption work?

Today's foster care system is designed to protect and nurture children and support *permanency*—most often this is return home, but can also be adoption, placement with relatives, or living independently but connected with a family. Children in foster care have been removed from their homes because of abuse, neglect, or special family circumstances. Even though this is for children's well-being, it is still a difficult time for them. Foster families provide not only a home, but also caring, understanding and guidance. When returning home is not possible, adoptive families provide the permanency every child deserves—a "forever family" to call their own.

Who are the children in foster care?

In Richmond, children in the foster care system and/or available for adoption are of all ages, with a large percentage of youth between 11 – 18. Some have special needs, medical issues, or academic challenges. All of them are unique individuals with potential, who need an "everyday hero"—maybe you—to help them. Like all children, they need a safe, stable and nurturing family.

Is fostering or adopting just like raising my own children?

Raising a child who is or was in foster care is different from "regular" parenting. It can be more challenging; kids in care have experienced many hardships. It can be more complex, but foster and adoptive parents are supported as a part of a team; they receive special training, help to meet children's individual needs, access to medical care for the child and reimbursement for certain expenses. Good foster and adoptive parents know that, above all, this is about selecting families for children who need them, not just about putting children into families who want them. It takes a village to raise a child—our village, more than ever, needs families to help do this.

Building Successful Resource Families: A Guide for Public Agencies | www.aecf.org

**"Children are the world's
most valuable resource and
its best hope for the future."**

John F. Kennedy

A NOTE FROM THE FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION TEAM:



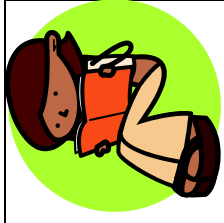
UPCOMING ORIENTATION:

6:00 – 8:00 p.m., at

RICHMOND CITY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

900 East Marshall Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Phone: (804) 646 KIDS



Am I Ready to Be a Foster/Adoptive Parent?

Circle “T” for true or “F” for false, for each statement below. This questionnaire will help determine if you may be eligible or ready to become a Foster/Adoptive Parent.

1. I HAVE ENOUGH ROOM IN MY HOME FOR A FOSTER/ADOPTED CHILD. T / F

You must have adequate bedroom space for a foster/adopted child. A foster/adopted child may share a bedroom with another child of the same sex but the child cannot share a bedroom with anyone over the age of 18 years old.

2. I AM READY TO HAVE A SAFETY INSPECTION OF MY HOME DONE NOW. T / F

It is important that your home is safe and free of hazards. During the family assessment (“homestudy”) process, a checklist is completed that includes a safety inspection of your home. You must have working smoke detectors and a fire extinguisher; a fire inspection will be completed by the Fire Marshal.

3. I AM IN GOOD PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH. T / F

Being a parent can be demanding. You must be healthy and emotionally stable to care for children who are in foster care or who are available for adoption. Part of the assessment process includes verification of your physical health as well as a check for certain communicable diseases (like a “TB test”).

4. I HAVE NEVER HAD A FOUNDED ABUSE OR NEGLECT CASE WITH AN AGENCY. T / F

If you have had a founded Child Protection case, you may not be able to become a Foster/Adoptive Parent. We will review our records as well as any other state where the applicant(s) resided.

5. I HAVE ADEQUATE INCOME TO MEET MY CURRENT FAMILY’S NEEDS. T / F

You do not have to be rich to become a Foster/Adoptive Parent; however, you must have enough income to meet your own family’s needs. During the assessment process, you will be asked to provide proof of income and to review family expenses.

6. I AM LEGALLY SINGLE OR LEGALLY MARRIED. T / F

Foster/Adoptive Parents can be single, married, divorced or widowed, but may not cohabitate.

7. NO ADULT IN MY HOME HAS EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME. T / F

If you or any adult residing in your home has been convicted of certain criminal offenses, you cannot become a Foster/Adoptive Parent. Each household member over the age 18 will be fingerprinted. To learn more about which crimes are prohibited, please call us at 646-KIDS, attend an orientation, or send us an e-mail.

8. I AM READY TO BEGIN THE HOME STUDY PROCESS NOW. T / F

You may be ready to begin the assessment/homestudy process if your life and home are stable. “Stable” means that you are not about to move or undergo major renovations, and are not having financial, marital or emotional difficulties or will be making any major life changes in the near future.



IF YOU ANSWERED “TRUE” TO ALL OF THE STATEMENTS, you are ready to begin the process of becoming a foster/adoptive parent! Contact us at Richmond Department of Social Services at 804-646-KIDS (5437) to get started!

IF YOU ANSWERED “FALSE” TO ANY STATEMENT, it will be helpful to talk with one of our foster care training or adoption specialists at Richmond Department of Social Services, 804-646-KIDS (5437), who can give more information or answer questions you may have about the approval process.



Foster/Adoptive Parent Informational Booklet

This public document is published at a total cost of \$518.96. Five hundred copies of this public document were published in this first printing at a cost of \$518.96. The total cost of all printings of this document including reprints is \$518.96. This document was published for DSS, Office of Community Services, 627 N. Fourth St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802 by the Office of State Printing, 950 Brickyard Lane, Baton Rouge, LA to be used as a recruitment tool for Foster/Adoptive Families under special exception by the Department of Administration. This material was printed in accordance with standards for printing by State Agencies established in R. S. 43:31.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES



Foster/Adoptive Parent INFORMATIONAL BOOKLET

A LETTER FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY MARKETA GARNER GAUTREAU

I would like to thank you for your interest in learning about becoming a Foster/Adoptive Parent. We need you, in fact we need hundreds of Foster/Adoptive Parents, to take on the challenge of loving, protecting and nurturing children who have been abused or neglected.

There are many children in Louisiana's custody, especially sibling groups, who need caring adults in their lives to provide guidance and stability. Foster/Adoptive Parents, who include relative care-givers, can help meet that need and become true heroes in a child's life.

The decision to parent someone else's child or children can be difficult, especially combined with your own family responsibilities. Children in custody need to remain in their neighborhoods, schools, churches and near their friends. Our belief is that children grow best in families; if not their own, then with their relatives or in foster/adoptive homes. I hope you will decide to join us and support our children and families to build stronger communities and promising futures for our children.

If you need more detailed information about our program please call the local Home Development intake line listed in the back of this booklet.

I applaud your decision to explore the opportunity of being a Foster/Adoptive Parent.

With Appreciation,

Marketa Garner Gautreau
Assistant Secretary

Upcoming Orientation Dates/Locations For Prospective Applicants

Note from Worker

**Welcome from the
Department of Social Services
Office of Community Services**

Thank you for your interest in the Foster Care and Adoption Programs. The enclosed information will help you understand the programs, the agency and the Foster/Adoption certification process. If you have any questions after reviewing this booklet, please call the local Home Development intake line, or visit our website at www.dss.state.la.us. The phone number for your region is located at the back of this booklet.

Mission Statement

The provision of foster care services is based on the belief that every child has an urgent need and the right to a safe and permanent family of his own. Therefore, the mission of the foster care program is to maintain the child in a safe environment which is supportive of his development and to assist his parents in resuming responsibility and custody or in attaining an alternative permanent placement for the child as soon as possible.

Our Beliefs:

1. Parents/legal caretakers have the right and responsibility to raise their own children unless it is determined that they cannot do so in a manner consistent with the safety of the child.
2. Children have the right to grow and develop in an environment which is free of serious abuse and/or neglect and free of factors that present a substantial risk of serious harm.
3. If a child cannot remain with his family, the substitute living arrangements must be safe, capable of meeting his basic emotional and physical needs, and be time limited.
4. Substitute placements must be in the least restrictive (most family-like), most appropriate setting available, and consistent with the needs of the child.

**THE NEED FOR FOSTER CARE AND
ADOPTION IN LOUISIANA**

Children come to the attention of the agency because of concerns from a teacher, police officer, family member, friend, doctor, neighbor, or mandated reporter. Any one can make a referral that they suspect a child has been abused or neglected. Referrals that meet the criteria for a report of child abuse or neglect will be investigated. If the agency finds a family needs help, every effort is made to provide services to help the family resolve their problem and prevent the removal of

the children from their home. Only if reasonable efforts fail, will the agency seek authorization from the court to remove children from their family.

FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION

What Is Foster Care?

Foster care is a protective service for children and their parents who must live apart because of child abuse, neglect or special family circumstances requiring the need for out-of-home care. Foster care is intended to provide temporary/short-term care for a child. The goal of the foster care program is to maintain the child in a safe and nurturing environment, which is supportive of his development while assisting his parents in resuming responsibility and custody or until an alternative permanent placement for the child is found.

The first goal of foster care is to reunite the child with his or her biological family.

What Is Adoption?

Adoption is the method provided by law to establish the legal and social relationship of parents and children between persons who are not related by birth with the mutual rights and obligations that exist between children and their birth parents. Adoption is one of the case plan goals of the Foster Care system within the Office of Community Services.

What Is Dual Certification?

This certification means that a family is certified to foster and adopt. A family may specify that they only wish to foster or only wish to adopt, but they will still be certified for both. Dual certification is the certification offered by the State of Louisiana.

Who Are The Children Needing Foster and Adoptive homes?

The agency receives custody of children ranging in age from infants to teenagers. They may have an emotional or physical illness, have been neglected, abused, or abandoned, or have experienced a breakdown in the family, or the death of a parent.

The children are of different races and religions. They identify with their own cultures and need help with maintaining their identities, staying connected to their birth families, and learning how to feel lovable, capable, worthwhile and responsible.

Some of the children waiting for a permanent home are older, have medical, emotional or intellectual problems, or are part of a sibling group that needs to be placed together. The important thing to remember is that all children deserve a family.

Steps To Foster Care/Adoption Certification

1. Orientation- Informational meeting to provide an overview of the agency and the foster/adoption programs.

2. Application- The application is the beginning of the certification process and is required to proceed through the process.
3. Fingerprinting – Every applicant and adult (over the age of 18) in the home will be fingerprinted.
4. Pre-Service Training - Training generally consists of 7 sessions- 3 hours each. **All spouses must complete pre-service training to be certified. CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED AT TRAINING.**
5. Homestudy – This process occurs while you are completing your training. This includes a series of interviews, home visits, a safety and fire inspection, and additional paperwork. During this process you will become familiar with the Home Development Worker.
6. Placement- After you are certified, a child or children will be placed in your home. This may happen immediately or may take longer, depending on what age and type of child you are able to care for. The agency will try to place children with you that match your strengths and preferences. You can always refuse any placement you are offered. During the certification process you will explore what age(s), gender(s), race(s), number and type(s) of child(ren) you are able to care for and you will be certified accordingly.

5. I now have legal custody of a child but want to become their foster parent instead. Will the agency take custody back?

NO. OCS will not assume custody of the child. In rare cases, an individual can petition the court who may determine that a high risk or hardship situation exists and may grant custody to OCS.

6. I am caring for a relative's child and in the process of becoming a Foster/Adoptive Parent. Can I get financial assistance now?

YES. You may receive financial assistance and a Medicaid card by applying for Louisiana Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) or Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP) from the Office of Family Support (OFS).

7. If I foster one child, can I foster another?

YES. Often individuals who become foster parents for a specific child find the experience rewarding and open their home to other children. This can be done by talking with your Home Development Worker so that your home may be assessed for other foster children.

8. I am a relative with legal custody, can I adopt the child?

YES. You need to contact your local court system to proceed with the process.

What Do Foster/Adoptive Parents Do?

Foster/Adoptive Parents do everything that birth parents do, and sometimes more. They open their hearts and homes to children who have been abused or neglected, nurture these children and

provide support and stability in their lives. Foster/Adoptive Parents are responsible for advocating for the child, meeting with teachers, attending school conferences, scheduling and transporting the child to all doctor, therapy and other appointments, and to visits with the child's parents and siblings. Because of their unique role, involvement, and direct care of the child, it is also critical that they attend and participate in case planning meetings and court hearings. Foster/Adoptive Parents must also work with the agency by being available to meet with the child's worker at least once a month to discuss all issues regarding the child.

Once a child has been adopted, the Adoptive Parent is considered the child's legal parent and possesses all the same rights and responsibilities as any parent. It is a relationship that lasts a lifetime. Once the child is adopted, the agency is no longer involved and the Adoptive Parents make all decisions for the child.

What Are The Requirements to Become a Foster/Adoptive Parent?

Anyone interested in being a Foster/Adoptive Parent is welcome to call for more information and to attend an orientation session. Applicants must be at least 21 years of age, have sufficient income to meet their own basic needs, and be in good physical, emotional and mental health. A Foster/Adoptive Parent can be single, married, divorced, or widowed.

Foster/Adoptive Parent applicants must be committed to provide the child with positive forms of discipline and cannot use physical punishment of any kind.

Is There Financial Help To Foster and Adopt?

A daily board rate is paid to certified Foster/Adoptive Parents to assist with the child's monthly expenses. The board rate is intended to help with clothing, food, personal hygiene products, a personal allowance for the child and gifts for the child for occasions like birthdays.

Foster/Adoptive Parents are not paid. The board rate is for the child's needs. The agency provides for the medical needs of each child, therapy expenses, and evaluations. The child's worker or supervisor is available to address problems 24 hours a day.

Financial assistance may be available for families adopting children with special needs because of age, race, handicap, intellectual, emotional or medical problems, or for members of a sibling group who are adopted together.

Several support services are available to Foster/Adoptive Parents, because we know that parenting our children can be demanding and different from other parenting experiences due to the special needs and histories of each child in the foster care system. A few support services include in-service training, frequent contacts from the Home Development Worker, reimbursement for mileage to required activities, and membership in a local Foster/Adoptive Association.

Can Relatives and Friends Do This Too?

1. If I am a relative of a child who needs care, can I apply to be their Foster Parent?

YES. If the child is in the custody of the State of Louisiana, you may make an application to foster/adopt the child.

2. Since I am a relative, do I have to meet all of the qualifications to become a Foster/Adoptive Parent?

YES. Anyone becoming a Foster/Adoptive Parent must meet the same eligibility requirements as non relative Foster/Adoptive Parents. The pre-service training hours required may vary.

3. Can I adopt a relative's child?

YES. If the child is in foster care and the birth parents' rights have been terminated by the court or the parents have surrendered their rights, you may make application to the agency to adopt the child. You must meet all of the requirements for adoption as specified by the Office of Community Services (OCS).

4. If I have Legal Custody, can I become the child's foster parent?

NO. Legal custody means that you have been given custody of the child and OCS is no longer legally responsible for the care of the child. However, you may be eligible to receive various forms of help through the Office of Family Support (OFS), and Department of Health & Hospitals (DHH). These options may Include: Louisiana Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP), Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP), a Medicaid Card or financial assistance from the Social Security Administration. To apply, you must contact each agency and complete their application process.

IF YOU ANSWERED "TRUE" TO ALL OF THE STATEMENTS, YOU ARE READY TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENT!

IF YOU ANSWERED "FALSE" TO ANY STATEMENT, PLEASE CALL THE HOME DEVELOPMENT STAFF FOR MORE INFORMATION

What Is The Next Step To Foster/Adopt?

If you are interested in becoming a Foster/Adoptive Parent you can attend an orientation session where more information is given about the program, becoming certified, the children available for placement, and the training and homestudy process. If you like what you hear and are ready to proceed with certification, you will be invited to the pre-service training.

**Am I Ready To Become
A Foster/Adoptive Parent?**

This questionnaire will help you to determine if you are eligible to become a Foster/Adoptive Parent. Circle "T" for true or "F" for false, for each statement below.

1. T/F I have enough room in my home for a Foster/Adoptive child.

You must have adequate bedroom space for a foster/adoptive child. A foster/adoptive child may share a bedroom with another child of the same sex but the child cannot share a bedroom with anyone over the age of 18 years old except in approved circumstances. You cannot move out of your bedroom and sleep on the sofa to make room for the child. The child must have his/her own bed. The room must have at least 75sq.ft. for one child and an additional 55sq.ft. for each additional child. However, some exceptions are possible.

2. T/F I am ready to have a safety inspection of my home done now.

It is important that your home is safe and free of hazards. During the homestudy process, your Home Development Worker will conduct a safety inspection of your home. You must have working smoke detectors and a fire extinguisher.

3. T/F I am in good physical, emotional and mental health.

Being a parent can sometimes be demanding. You must be healthy and emotionally stable to care for foster/adoptive children. Everyone in your home must provide a medical statement completed by a physician indicating they are free of communicable diseases. All household members will be interviewed by the Home Development Worker.

4. T/F I have never had a valid case with an agency due to abuse or neglect.

If you have had a valid Child Protection case, you may not be able to become a Foster/Adoptive Parent. This includes validated cases of abuse or neglect or if your own child was placed in foster care or adopted. We will review our records as well as records in any other state where the applicant(s) resided.

5. T/F I have adequate income to meet my current family's needs.

You do not have to be rich to become a Foster/Adoptive Parent; however, you must have enough income to meet your own family's needs. During the homestudy process, you will be asked to provide proof of income and to review family expenses.

6. T/F I am legally married or legally single.

Foster/Adoptive Parents can be single, married, divorced or widowed.

7. T/F No adult in my home has ever been convicted of a crime.

If you or any adult residing in your home has been convicted of certain criminal offenses, you cannot become a Foster/Adoptive Parent. Each adult member in your household over the age 18 will be fingerprinted. If you have specific questions regarding which crimes are prohibited, please call the Home Development Unit.

8. T/F I am ready to begin the homestudy process now!

You are ready to begin the homestudy process if your life and home are stable. "Stable" means that you are not about to move and are not having financial, marital or emotional difficulties or making any major life changes in the near future.

APPENDIX VIII: MONTHLY INTAKE CALL TRACKING FORM

FOSTER/ADOPT INQUIRY

Date of Inquiry: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number (Between the Hours 8:30AM-5:00PM) _____

Contact Number (After Hours): _____

Email Address: _____

Date Invited To Orientation: _____

I/We heard about children needing foster/adoptive homes through (check all that apply):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio/TV | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper/Magazines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Mailing | <input type="checkbox"/> Churches/Faith based organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (School) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Specific Request | |

Date Information Mailed Out/ Emailed/Faxed: _____

Comments: _____

Worker Name/Number Completing Inquiry: _____

APPENDIX IX: SAMPLE PROSPECTIVE PARENT TRACKING SYSTEM

[illegible]

APPENDIX X: COMPREHENSIVE HOMESTUDY TEMPLATE

FOSTER/ADOPTION HOMESTUDY

PARENTS

Father:
DOB:
SSN#:
Race:

Mother:
DOB:
SSN#:
Race:

CHILDREN IN THE HOME

Name, DOB, Race

ADDRESS

Street Address
City, State, Zip

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Home:
Father's Work:
Father's Cell Phone:
Mother's Work:
Mother's Cell Phone:

E-MAIL ADDRESS

Father's E-mail Address:
Mother's E-mail Address:

TRAINING/PREPARATION

Client's Name contacted Name of Agency for the purpose of having a Foster/Adoption Homestudy completed to adopt type of child or specific child.

Parents submitted their application on Date of application and attended the required meetings/visits. During the homestudy process, the issues of foster parenting and adoptive parenting, children with special needs, separation and loss, birth parents, adoption as a life long experience, sexual, physical, emotional abuse, developmental disabilities and issues related to waiting children were addressed.

Adoption Only: Adoptive Parents Names were advised of the fee policy (Sec 5.1-A.4). The Adoptive Parents Names state they have or have never been rejected as prospective adoptive parents. The Adoptive Parents Names state they have or have never been the subject of an

unfavorable homestudy. information regarding a previous adoption would be inserted here and the date of the final order of the adoption

AGENCY CONTACTS

Date type of contact, home visit, office visit, who participated

TYPE OF CHILD DESIRED

child's, age, gender, siblings, race, specific physical, mental and emotional needs they can accept, family background issues, behaviors they can and can't accept, degree: mild, moderate, or severe, activity level and personality, at risk placement, acceptance of previous relationships with foster and/or biological parents, family background issues such as drugs /mental illness, attitudes/awareness of cultural or racial differences and how will they assist their child in feeling positively about themselves and their culture (if applicable)

FAMILY BACKGROUND AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

FATHER

Father's age, height , has eye color eyes, hair color hair, and weighs Weight in lbs. pounds. He is described by his wife as Wife description of husband. He states others would describe him as Others would describe him.

Father's Name enjoys Activities father enjoys.

Father was born Date of birth in Birth city, Birth state. Father is the Birth order child born to his parents, Father's Mother's Name and Father's Father's name. Father's father was/was not employed if employed describe Father's father's employment. Father describes his father as father describes own father. Father's mother was/was not employed if employed describe father's mother's employment . Father describes his mother as father describes own mother.

Father describes his parent's relationship as description of parents relationship Father describes his childhood as Description of childhood

Father learned the values of values learned. Conflicts in his family were handled how conflicts were handled. Communication about feelings was style and openness .Describe expressions of affection. Discipline was usually administered by who administered discipline and included what was included in discipline. Father feels the discipline he received was feelings regarding discipline received.

if siblings; names, relationship growing up, strengths/ stressors of the relationship now, where they live, how often they see, attitude toward placement/birth parents how they will support the placement, who will have a relationship with the child

same information about parents

significant life events, past personal losses, how coped and who offered support, problem solving style, what the person identifies as his needs and how individual meets those needs

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

dates and places of graduation, degrees, extracurricular activities, feelings about education

Father's Name (served, did not serve) in the military. military services, dates and type of discharge

current employment and feelings about job

MEDICAL

Father's Name was seen by Doctor's name on date seen by doctor who assessed Father's Name to have (normal life expectancy, to be free from communicable disease and to be in health status physical and mental health to assume responsibility for the care of a child or ____children

additional medical information

When asked if he had a history of substance abuse, mental illness, sexual or child abuse or domestic violence, even if it didn't result in an arrest or conviction, Father's Name stated, "response".

ADOPTIVE MOTHER

Mother's Name is a age year old female who stands Height of Mother tall, has eye color eyes, hair color hair, and weighs Weight in lbs. pounds. She is described by her husband as Husband description of wife. She states others would describe her as Others would describe her.

Mother's Name enjoys Activities mother enjoys.

Mother's Name was born Date of birth in Birth city, Birth state. Mother's Name is the Birth order child born to her parents, mother's mother's name and mother's father's name. Mother's Name father was employed Mother's father's employment. Mother's Name describes her father as mother describes own father. mother's Name mother was employed mother's mother's employment. Mother's Name describes her mother as mother describes own mother.

Mother's Name describes her parent's relationship as description of parents relationship

Mother's Name describes her childhood as Description of childhood

Mother's Name learned the values of values learned. Conflicts in her family were handled how conflicts were handled. Emotions were emotions. Discipline was usually administered by who administered discipline and included what was included in discipline. Mother's Name feels the discipline she received was feels discipline was.

if siblings; names, relationship growing up, strengths and stressors of the relationship now, where they live, how often they see, and how they will support the placement, their attitude toward placement and birth parents, who will have a relationship

same information about parents

significant life events, past personal losses, how coped and who offered support, problem solving style, what the person identifies as his needs and how individual meets those needs

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

dates and places of graduation, degrees, extracurricular activities, feelings about education

Mother's Name (served, did not serve) in the military. military services, dates and type of discharge

current employment and feelings about job

MEDICAL

Mother's Name was seen by Doctor's name on date seen by doctor who assessed mother's name to have normal life expectancy, to be free from communicable disease and to be in health status physical and mental health to assume responsibility for the care of a child or ___children

additional medical information

When asked if she had a history of substance abuse, mental illness, sexual or child abuse or domestic violence, even if it didn't result in an arrest or conviction, Mother's name stated, "response".

MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIPS

discuss previous marriages, verify dates and location of previous marriage and divorce, why marriage ended, what they learned about themselves in the marriage, children from previous marriage, who has custody, relationship with children, how often seen

Mr. and Mrs. Couples last name met in place they met, dated for length of time dated and were married on date married in city married in ,state married in. Father's Name says he was attracted to Mother's Name. Mother's Name says she was attracted to Father's Name.

Mother's Name describes their marriage as wife's description of marriage. Father's Name describes their marriage as husband's description of marriage.

more description of marriage

CHILDREN

name and describe children, how they came into the family, date of birth, temperament, height, weight, interests, school, special needs, expectations, children's activities, involvement of parents: for children not in the home; feelings about foster care and/or adoption, current relationship and how they were parented

Child's name was seen by Child's doctor's name on date child seen by doctor and found to be in good health, current on immunizations and free from communicable disease.

OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

name, DOB, relationship with family, length of time in home, special needs, gender, CPS, Criminal Record, TB test, ideas regarding adoption, involvement with child

FAMILY LIFE/PARENTING SKILLS

experience with children, any training or classes, views on child rearing, each person's feelings on discipline techniques to be used, expressions of affection, ability to delay gratification

Statement about who will care for child in the event of the adoptive parent(s) incapacity or death

FINANCES

Income:

Father's Name

Salaried gross annual income husband gross annual income

Verified by Income verification

Other Income Other Income

Mother's Name

Salaried gross annual income wife's Gross annual income

Verified by how is income verified

Other Income Other Income

Total Monthly Income: Total Monthly Income

Savings: Savings
Savings

Value of home: Value of home Amount owed: Amount owed

Health Insurance: Health Insurance

Life Insurance

Father's Name amount of Life Insurance

Name of Company Name of Company

Mother's Name amount of Life Insurance

Name of Company Name of Company

Expenses:

Rent Rent /Mortgage /Mortgage

Loans: Loans

Credit Cards: Credit Cards

Utilities: Utilities

Car: Car

Other : Other

statement stating that based on the information provided the family appears to live within their means.

HOME ENVIRONMENT

The Couples last name reside in city or county. Their home has number of and type of rooms, describe child's room and if they will share a room and with whom Housekeeping standards are excellent, adequate, not adequate. description of neighborhood regarding age and ethnicity, describe fire safety plan, where smoke alarms are located and if there are fire arms where they are kept and locked Include info. on fire inspection. The Couples last name home is within distance to community resources of all community resources. There is sufficient space for # of family members family members. This home meets the standards and regulations of the Commonwealth of Virginia in regard to adequate space, safety and health.

CLEARANCES

Filed in the case record is verification that Father's Name is not listed in the Central Registry of the Virginia Child Abuse and Neglect Information System.

Father's Name Criminal History Record Report was requested and received, according to Virginia Code, and is filed in the case record.

Father's Name submitted a copy of his driving record from the Division of Motor Vehicles and he has a poor/fair/excellent driving record: if poor - explain and indicate any DUI infractions driving record.

Filed in the case record is verification that Mother's Name is not listed in the Central Registry of the Virginia Child Abuse and Neglect Information System.

Mother's Name Criminal History Record Report was requested and received, according to Virginia Code, and is filed in the case record.

Mother's Name submitted a copy of her driving record from the Division of Motor Vehicles and she has a poor/fair/excellent driving record: if poor - explain and indicate any DUI infractions driving record.

REFERENCES

3 non-relative references

Number of references references were received regarding the Couples last name They have known the Couples last name for minimum years to maximum years years.

Father's Name is described as parenting skills, how they interact with children, how they show affection, equally committed, acceptance of extended family, stability of marriage

Mother's Name is described as parenting skills, how they interact with children, how they show affection, equally committed, acceptance of extended family, stability of marriage

Based on observation, interviews and written materials, Name of worker concurs with the assessment of the references.

MOTIVATION TO FOSTER/ADOPT

Each person's reason for wanting to foster parent and/or adopt, process they went through before calling the agency, what they expect to receive from the child, what they expect the child to get from them, infertility issues addressed if applicable, experience with adoption, awareness of adoption as a life long experience, understanding of separation and loss and/or abuse and neglect, understanding of early deprivation and related disabilities, understanding of risks associated with adoption, readings, questions they feel their child will have, how to tell child about his/her adoption, feelings about counseling, feelings about search

IMPRESSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

summary of strengths, concerns if any, has/have participated in all of the required meetings and interviews necessary for a foster/ adoptive homestudy. Based upon the above gathered information, interviews and observations Agency name recommends Couples last name as foster/adoptive parents for age, gender, number, age range, special needs agency is willing to provide supervision of the placement as required or requested.

DATE OF RECOMMENDATION:

On this date **Date**, Couples last name are approved as foster/adoptive parents by **Agency name**.

Prepared by: Name of worker

Approved by: Approved by

APPENDIX XI: TRICKS OF THE TRADE – MOVING THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS ALONG

1. When you are on a home visit, schedule the next visit with the family at that time... no calling back and forth to schedule!
2. Carry an extra set of blank forms and documents with you in case the applicant needs more, lost theirs, or has made a mistake.
3. Encourage the applicant to use tools like “Get Started Now” and the “Certification Roadmap” to help them be actively engaged in certification.
4. Go over the forms with the family during the first home visit. If anything needs to be addressed, let the family deal with it before your second visit.
5. Use a printout of the homestudy as a guide to take notes during home visits.
6. Provide the family with medical forms at the first home visit to give them time to get a doctor’s appointment. Write each household member’s name in big letters on a form. That way the applicants won’t get the forms confused.
7. Be proactive—don’t wait for the applicant to call you! Call them first!! They may have questions.
8. Use checklists to keep track of returned forms and documents.
9. Try to identify any history of mental health issues early on because the records can take a while to come.
10. Use your desk or computer calendar to write yourself reminders on any documents that are outstanding. Call and remind your families what they still need to submit weekly or biweekly.
11. As a last resort, you can refer to the monthly case count control forms to see when a case is coming due if you lose track.

APPENDIX XII: SUMMARY TRACKING SYSTEM EXAMPLE

INTAKE TRACKING FORM (MONTHLY) --DRAFT--

PURPOSE

To track the calls coming in and to track worker follow-up

INSTRUCTIONS

Review tracking forms filled out by intake staff on a monthly basis. *Use data from the previous month to fill out this form.*

PROCESS

Send an electronic copy to _____ by end of month.

WEEK OF _____

Incoming Calls	
How many welcome calls were logged this month?	
How many calls came in after hours?	
How many callers were scheduled for an orientation? (in percent)	

Follow-up	
What percentage of last month's callers were mailed an information packet?	
What percentage of last month's callers received follow-up phone calls or letters?	

FORM COMPLETED BY _____

APPENDIX XIII: STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT PLAN TEMPLATE

Task:

The overall goal of this plan is to help each locality develop a comprehensive recruitment plan informed by 1) local data and 2) best practice.

First, the plan will ask you to gather local data regarding recruitment and retention in order to develop a snapshot of the children in your locality. The snapshot should help you be able to better identify areas of recruitment need.

Second, the plan will review best practice strategies for three types of recruitment—general, targeted, child-specific—and offer guidelines of how to structure your recruitment campaigns.

Finally, the plan will ask you to develop a local-specific recruitment campaign for your jurisdiction. Your campaign plan will detail the activities that the recruitment team will undertake over the course of the year. Each activity will have a defined goal, potential partners, and a proposed timeline and budget.

Section I: Data Analysis

In this section, you will be using local data to develop a better picture of the children and families in your system and to guide you in the best way to meet their needs through resource family recruitment and support efforts.

Breakdown of Children in Care

Age Group	# of children (in out of home placement)	Gender Breakdown	Racial Breakdown	Placement Breakdown
All Ages	___# of children	___# Male ___# Female	___# African-American ___# Caucasian ___# Bi-Racial ___# Hispanic ___# Other	___# Unrestricted homes ___# Restricted homes ___# TFC ___# Residential/Group Home ___# Other
0-4	___# of children ___% of total # of children <i>(# of children in age group divided by total # of children)</i>	___# Male ___# Female	___# African-American ___# Caucasian ___# Bi-Racial ___# Hispanic ___# Other	___# Unrestricted homes ___# Restricted homes ___# TFC ___# Residential/Group Home ___# Other
5-9	___# of children ___% of total # of children <i>(# of children in age group divided by total # of children)</i>	___# Male ___# Female	___# African-American ___# Caucasian ___# Bi-Racial ___# Hispanic ___# Other	___# Unrestricted homes ___# Restricted homes ___# TFC ___# Residential/Group Home ___# Other
10-14	___# of children ___% of total # of children <i>(# of children in age group divided by total # of children)</i>	___# Male ___# Female	___# African-American ___# Caucasian ___# Bi-Racial ___# Hispanic ___# Other	___# Unrestricted homes ___# Restricted homes ___# TFC ___# Residential/Group Home ___# Other

15-17	____# of children ____% of total # of children <i>(# of children in age group divided by total # of children)</i>	____# Male ____# Female	____# African-American ____# Caucasian ____# Bi-Racial ____# Hispanic ____# Other	____# Unrestricted homes ____# Restricted homes ____# TFC ____# Residential/Group Home ____# Other
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Based on the data above, what are three general observations about your locality's child welfare population?

(e.g. "We see that 70% of our children are over 15.")

1.

2.

3.

Based on your observations above, what do you consider to be the key child populations you need to recruit for (e.g. teenagers; young children; boys ages 10-12)? Why? Is there any other population not measured here that you would consider a key population for recruitment (e.g. drug addicted infants)?

(e.g. "Since most of our kids are over 15, we need to concentrate on finding families who will care for teens.")

Breakdown of families in the system

Year	# of Children in Placement	# of Foster Families		# of Foster Homes Closed		# of New Foster Families	
		Restricted	Unrestricted	Restricted	Unrestricted	Restricted	Unrestricted
2007							
2006							
2005							
2004							

Based upon the above resource family data, what are a few trends that stand out to you?
(e.g. “Every year for the last three years we have certified more restricted homes and fewer unrestricted homes.”)

Based upon the trends you’ve observed above, what actions do you plan to take?
(e.g. “As we certify more and more restricted placements we will have to find ways to support our kin families.”)

Section II: Recruitment Plan Guidance

This section provides a foundation to build your recruitment plan. There is information and guidance regarding the three major recruitment strategies (general, targeted, and child-specific) so that you can structure a complete recruitment campaign.

Strategy #1: General Recruitment

Guidance:

It is recommended that general recruitment take up only about 15% of your budget and recruiters' work time. While reaching the largest audience, general recruitment is the least effective method of bringing in families who make it through the certification process.

Most media appearances and press coverage can be arranged for free. Rather than purchasing ads or paying for booth space at a fair, recruiters are encouraged to partner with local newspapers and provide them with profiles of children in care who can be publicized, or to partner with local organizations to arrange for a booth to be sponsored or for a speaking engagement at the event, rather than booth space. Recruiters are encouraged to make radio and television appearances on local shows and to use any and all opportunities to reach audiences.

Strategy #2: Targeted Recruitment

Guidance:

It is recommended that targeted recruitment take up about 60% of your budget and the recruiters' work time. Targeted recruiting requires creativity to reach all possible connections. It is an extremely effective method of bringing in families who continue all the way through the certification process, and who are dedicated and willing to work with some of the populations most in need.

Remember, there are people who are eager to connect to even our most difficult-to-place child populations (even if not for a placement, at least as a permanent connection). Often these people are already working with similar children in a professional or volunteer capacity.

Strategy #3: Child-specific Recruiting

Guidance:

It is recommended that agencies spend about 25% of their budgets and the recruiters' time using this method. Child specific recruiting is a slower process in that it's a one-by-one solution, but it is the most effective method in finding a specific child's need for the right family.

Remember, efforts should include both intensive searching for any previous or ongoing connections in the child's life that could provide a permanent loving home, as well as extensive work in tracking down the right match who could be a stranger to the child.

Recruitment Plan Guidance Chart

Recruitment Strategy <i>(Definition)</i>	Goals of Strategy	Potential Activities	Potential Partners
General Recruitment <i>General recruitment is intended to reach as many people as possible.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise public awareness of the need for foster and adoptive parents • Build a positive image of fostering and adopting in the community • Bring in new families interested in fostering or adopting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively pursuing press coverage by reaching out to radio, television, newspaper and magazines with story ideas, articles and information • Creating and placing advertisements in various media including yellow pages, radio, television, and newspapers, billboards and free publications • Distributing information at community events including fairs parties and in public spaces • Speaking at clubs, organizations and community groups to provide general information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local media of all kinds • Local businesses, organizations and community partners who can donate services, goods or advertising space or allow the agency to reach their employees • Local Foster Parent Association
Targeted Recruitment <i>Targeted Recruitment seeks to find homes for specific populations of children that are especially high-need (e.g. teenage boys or mother-child placements).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing in new families for the specific populations of children most in need of homes • Raising community awareness about the need for homes for specific populations of children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same activities as above, though they should be focused on finding families for specific, high-need child populations • Forming recruiting partnerships with those who can help the targeted population (e.g. foster parents who currently care for a child from high-need population and can speak about their experiences) <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising in a nursing magazine or at a hospital using advertisements specifying the need for foster families for medically fragile children • Attending an autism awareness event with information about autistic children in need of homes • Speaking at the opening of a new youth recreation center if the targeted population is teenage boys 	<p>Same as above PLUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource parents who are already working with children from the targeted population (their networks of friends, coworkers and acquaintances) • Formal and informal community organizations who will partner with us (schools, churches, hospitals, service providers, clubs, social groups, fraternities, sororities, clubs, gathering places including barbershops, restaurants, etc.)
Child-Specific Recruitment <i>Child Specific Recruitment seeks to find adoptive families for specific children (or siblings) whose parental rights have</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a permanent home for every child in need • Matching children with families who will best support their needs (locally or nationally) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a dynamic, strengths-based profile of the child to be shared publicly through AdoptUSKids, MARE and brochures • Recruit and partner with key identified people based on the child's personality and interests (e.g. if the child loves animals, connect with veterinarians, zoo workers, volunteers at the animal shelters, dog groomers, breeders and others who will spread the word) • Recruit and partner with key identified people based on the child's needs (i.e. if the child is deaf, talk to and connect locally and nationally with interpreters, staff at schools for the deaf, support groups, and deaf 	<p>Same as above PLUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any connections already in the child's life (e.g. networks of friends, coworkers and acquaintances even if they cannot themselves become a permanent home for the child) • National organizations with any relationship to the child's needs or interests

<i>been terminated</i>		organizations)	
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Regional Recruitment Plan

This is an example of an outline for a recruitment plan that will guide your locality's recruitment activities over the next six months, at which time you should revisit these plans and make changes as necessary. Remember, to do great targeted recruitment, you will need to be creative, detail oriented and you will need to follow up with the contacts you make by keeping track of them.

Targeted Population of children	Who is likely to connect with these children?	Where do we find such people?	Specific Places and People	Recruiting Partners and connections	Planned Activity and Timeline When/how often will event take place?	Budget How much will event cost? For what?	Goal Number
<i>10 to 14 year old boys</i>	<i>People who already work with teenagers</i>	<i>Schools: Coaches Counselors Teachers Principals Secretaries</i>	<i>Georgia Middle School Holy Cross Day School</i>	<i>Mr. McIntire Mrs. Blackwell Sister Anne</i>	<i>Monthly speaking spot at PTA meeting, Monthly visits with school liaison</i>	<i>Free</i>	<i>15 new families</i>
<i>15 to 18 year old boys with a court history</i>	<i>Military families who may be able to help with structure</i>	<i>Military Bases Local ROTC leaders Veterans Associations</i>	<i>Fort Tom wives club American Legion Youth Clubs</i>	<i>Mrs. Hanks Cpt. Smith Mr. Wilkes.</i>	<i>Quarterly events at military base</i>	<i>100 dollars each time to pay for coffee, donuts and juice for 25 attendees</i>	<i>8 new families</i>

APPENDIX XIV: RECRUITMENT: RECOMMENDED READING

- *Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention: The State of the Art in Policy and Practice*, published by the Child Welfare League of America.
- *Making Relative Search Happen: A Guide to Finding and Involving Relatives at Every Stage of the Child Welfare Process*, published by Child-Focus.
- The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) website, <http://www.nacac.org/adoptalk/adoptalkarticles.html#recruitingfamilies> – articles on recruiting foster families
- Reports by the Evan B Donaldson Institute

Adopt Us Kids — Training and technical assistance on recruitment and retention

<http://www.adoptuskids.org/professionalResourceCenter/aboutTTA.aspx>

- **Annie E. Casey Foundation** — Order free publication on recruitment and retention; <http://www.aecf.org/OrderPublications.aspx>
- **Child Welfare League of America** – Order publication about recruitment and retention; <http://www.cwla.org/pubs/pubdetails.asp?PUBID=5769>

National Adoption Information Clearinghouse — Information about supporting families

http://www.childwelfare.gov/supporting/support_services/

- **National Foster Parent Association** — Order recruitment tool box; <http://www.nfpainc.org/content/index.asp?page=PRODUCTS&nmenu=4>
- **National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning** – Resources and publications on recruitment and retention of foster parents http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/recruitment-and-retention.html

APPENDIX XV: SAMPLE RECRUITING REPORTS

Sample Regional Recruitment Plan

In this section, you will outline the recruitment plan that will recruitment activities over the next six months, at which time we will revisit these plans and make changes as necessary. Remember, to do great targeted recruitment, you will need to be creative, detail oriented and you will need to follow up with the contacts you make.

Targeted Population of children	Who is likely to connect with these children?	Where do we find such people?	Specific Places and People	Recruiting Partners and connections	Planned Activity and Timeline When/how often will event take place?	Budget How much will event cost? For what?
10- to 14-year-old boys	People who already work with teenagers	Schools Coaches Counselors Teachers Principals Secretaries	McIntire High School Georgia Middle School Holy Cross Day School	Mr. McIntire Mrs. Blackwell Sister Anne	Monthly speaking spot at PTA meeting, Monthly visits with school liaison	Free
15- to 18-year-old boys with a court history	Military families who may be able to help with structure	Military Bases Local ROTC leaders Veterans Associations	Fort Tom wives club American Legion Youth Clubs	Mrs. Hanks Cpt. Smith Mr. Wilkes.	Quarterly events at military base	100 dollars each time to pay for coffee, donuts and juice for 25 attendees

Weekly Recruiting Plan

Name:

Region:

Dates this report spans:

Child Specific Recruiting:

List all children for whom you are recruiting and note activities planned.

Targeted Recruiting:

List all groups for whom you are recruiting and note activities planned (i.e. medically fragile, teen boys or etc.).

Events/Outreach/General:

List all events in the community or at the agency that you will be attending and note activities (orientations, staffings, mini-exchanges, speaking engagements, community fairs, etc.).

Tracking Results:

Track inquiry phone calls received this week and specify what prompted the call. Also note any other results from previous recruiting (i.e. as a result of a church presentation, three families attended orientation, etc.)

Budget:

Note all that was spent from your budget and on what.

Monthly Recruitment Report

General Recruitment:

Targeted Recruitment:

Child Specific Recruitment:

Use of Media:

New Techniques Utilized:

Lessons Learned:

Partnerships established:

Local Offices Visited:

Orientations:

Budget:

Data:

Populations to be targeted in future plans:

Tracking:

APPENDIX XVI: RECRUITER OUTREACH EXERCISE

Regional Scavenger Hunt

Task	Date Completed	Notes & Details	Next Steps
Generate a list of the neighborhoods within your region.			
Visit each neighborhood and walk around it, taking notes on the character of the neighborhood, the central areas and the hotspots.			
Find three places where people in the neighborhood seem to gather (a coffee shop, a barbershop, a bar, a church, etc.)			
Find resources for teens in the community: gyms, after school programs, programs for pregnant teens, mentoring, tutoring, sports programs, etc.			
Generate a list of the churches in your region.			
Visit at least one of the churches and get information about programs they offer and how the church fits into the neighborhood. Introduce yourself to the relevant people and begin the conversation about working with them.			
Generate a list of the schools in your region.			

Visit at least one school or school meeting and get information about the programs they offer and how the school fits into the neighborhood. Introduce yourself to the relevant people and begin a conversation about working with them.			
Find or create a community calendar that includes upcoming block parties, fairs, neighborhood events, shows, raffles, etc.			
Find three places where people in the neighborhood seem to go for help (a church, an agency, a food pantry, a school, etc.)			
Generate a list of all the resource parents in your region.			
Interview 3 resource parents in your region about their community resources and connections. Begin compiling a list of organizations and groups with which they are affiliated.			
Contact the District Police Station in assigned region. Introduce yourself to the Watch Commander and other officials.			
Visit the Fire Departments in your region. There may be several. Explain the purpose of your visit and what you are doing.			
Go to the FIA in your district. They may be a valuable source in familiarizing you with the neighborhoods in the region.			

APPENDIX XVII: SAMPLE RECRUITER JOB DESCRIPTION

Recruiter Job Description/Requirements

This exciting unclassified position, in a priority program area, provides general, targeted and child-specific recruiting regionally while serving a function in planning and coordinating state-wide recruiting. Incumbent is subject to broad review from the Home Development Administrator as well as additional supervision and collaboration with his or her region's Home Development Supervisor.

Incumbent will perform the following duties:

30%

Recruit certifiable homes

- Targeted recruiting for hard-to-place children, according to the region's needs.
- Child-specific recruiting as necessary.

15%

Raise public awareness and improve the agency's reputation through general recruitment

- Community work
 - Develop community resources
 - Develop and lead local advisory group
 - Work with local direct mail/advertising associations
- Public speaking
 - Present on radio/television
 - Present at group meetings/churches/events
- Writing
 - Draft press releases

20%

Create regional recruitment plans and ongoing evaluation system

- Plan, implement and continually assess recruitment efforts, including special time-limited projects, ongoing projects, community groups, public education efforts, media contacts, etc.
- Participate in recruitment workgroup in central office
 - Work as part of a group to develop recruiting strategies and to create the regional recruitment plans.
- Manage budget
- Develop strategic plan, tracking, quotas
 - Institute data tracking system to track outreach and successes

25%

Represent a region and coordinate with that region

- Work with the regional staff in cooperation

- Assist in coordination of foster parent appreciation and adoption activities
- Participate in creating individual recruitment plans with adoption staff Hold quarterly meetings with local staff to update them.
- Take on responsibility for intake phone calls and/or orientation as needed.

10%

Staff development

- Attend mini exchanges
- Attend MAPP process
- Attend trainings
- Research recruitment and retention practices to stay current with best practices

Further information:

The recruiter uses public relations and marketing techniques as well as social work knowledge to find foster and adoptive families for children in care. The recruiter's main duties involve connecting to resources throughout the community. Thus, the recruiter must be friendly, personable, a good communicator and culturally competent. In this case, cultural competence requires that the recruiter can work respectfully and effectively with people from all backgrounds, cultures, classes, races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientation, mental and physical abilities, ages and appearances. The recruiter must be open minded to recognize the potential worth of any prospective applicant and must use strength-based techniques.

This is an exciting position. It's unlike any previous recruiting position in the agency. It will be hired as an unclassified position for a year-long appointment. If the work is successful, the position will be expanded.

This position requires the ability to travel up to 75% of time. The recruiter will be responsible for covering the entire region and may be in office rarely.

This position requires the incumbent to work non-standard work hours. The recruiter must be available in evenings and on weekends.

The recruiter will be responsible for developing a creative, thorough, researched and practical recruitment plan and working with in-region supervisor to get it approved.

The recruiter will get additional supervision from Level 5 position at the state office.

The recruiter position will be a "spec 3" position due to the need for extensive travel, highly specialized skills, extensive trainings and self-motivated further education/research and because the recruiter will be working non-standard hours.

APPENDIX XVIII: GENERAL RECRUITMENT IDEAS

Many of the following ideas come from USDHHS, 1995.

No Cost/Free General Recruitment Ideas

- Television public service announcements or community interest stories.
 - To obtain posters, PSAs, and other promotional materials developed by the Ad Council in cooperation with AdoptUsKids and the US Department of Health and Human Services, go to <http://www.adcouncil.org> or <http://www.adoptuskids.org>.
 - The Dave Thomas Foundation has also made available a host of materials that can be used in the recruitment of adoptive parents. See <http://www.davethomasfoundation.org/Adoption-Resources/Free-Materials>.
- Information booths at events, foster care/adoption fairs, and events.
- Ask select churches to put a short announcement in the worship service bulletin each Sunday in the months of May (Foster Care Month) and November (Adoption Month) about the need for families. Include your contact information in the announcement and then be available after one or more services to answer questions about fostering, adoption, and volunteering.
- Speakers' bureau, scheduling presentations at churches, civic groups, etc.
- Notices in community bulletins
- Television and newspaper feature stories
- Adoption day in court (a ceremony to celebrate children's formal adoptions)
- Messages on business marquees
- Adoptive mother and father of the year
- Door-to-door canvassing
- Appearances on interview programs, including your county's public access TV station
- Surveys or flyers in shopping malls
- Write an ongoing newspaper column concerning the plight of children and the need for adoptive and foster families. This should include both major daily newspapers and local weekly newspapers. Ongoing columns have been effective because of their predictability.
- Provide information about fostering and adopting on websites

Using Community Marquees

Laura Chintapalli, from Chatham County, North Carolina DSS

My favorite pastime is scouting out roadside marquee signs. It's great free advertising. A billboard would cost us \$800 for six months. I have had success with churches, community message signs, and local businesses such as oil and gas companies, gas stations, etc. If someone has a marquee, I will go and ask if we can use it. We usually ask to have the sign up for two weeks, but will take a week if this is more plausible. One company had it up for a month.

Our messages were simple: "Foster Parents Needed! Please call 642-6956" and "Be a Foster Parent! Call 642-6956." You want your message to be short, eye-catching, and easy to read as someone is driving by.

As for tips I would pass on to other agencies: don't be afraid to ask businesses for their help. The worst thing they can say is "no," and that's OK. Recruitment of resource families is not only an agency need, it's a community need. If agencies can involve the community, you not only find folks who want to help, but your recruitment efforts will be more effective.

Low-Cost General Recruitment Ideas

- Posters, flyers, and brochures could be developed for distribution throughout communities through churches, clubs, and other organizations and to doctors' offices, hospital and clinic waiting rooms, libraries, beauty parlors, barber shops, laundromats, community centers, etc.
- Business cards. In addition to providing each DSS employee with a business card, some agencies also provide generic business cards to foster and adoptive parents, who can then give them out to people interested in learning more about becoming a resource parent.
- Banners hung on main street or a prominent building; perfect for annual events such as National Adoption Awareness Month (November) or Foster Parent Month (May)
- Host a table at local farmers' markets
- Decals
- Theme night activities
- Puppet shows
- Giveaways: place slogans or themes with your agency name and phone number on bookmarks, pencils, balloons, key chains, rain hats, t-shirts, seed packets, bottles of cold water, travel mugs, sewing kits, bandage kits, beach balls, balloons, pens, bandanas, fold up flyers, paper fans, etc.
- Displays in store windows and libraries
- Placemats in restaurants
- Flyer attached to pizza boxes
- Flyer attached to drug store bags
- Bill inserts
- Calendars
- Newsletters

- Special events, carnivals, or fairs
- Picnics and ice cream socials
- • Welcome wagon packets for new residents distributed through the appropriate organization (e.g., Chamber of Commerce)
- Awards programs
- Appreciation nights and banquets
- Open houses
- Radio spot announcements

Mid-to-High Cost General Recruitment Ideas

- Bus and taxi cab placards
- Direct mailing and ad coupons
- Display ads in the phone book
- Recruitment videos/films
- Ads in newspapers
- Customized videos
- Billboards
- Rent space at a local mall or shopping area where you can leave posters and adoption information for everyone passing by.

Sources: The Rural Adoption Recruiter (Adoption Exchange, 2008)

Adapted from *Treat them Like Gold, A Best Practice Guide to Partnering with Resource Families*, North Carolina DSS, Child Welfare Service Section; Raleigh, North Carolina, January 2009.

APPENDIX XIX: TARGETED RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES

How to Do Targeted Recruitment

STEP 1: Describe the children in care

Develop a profile of the children in care in your agency: how many are there in total? How many are in each category when broken down by age group, ethnicity, and special needs (sibling group, medical, educational, or emotional needs, etc.)?

STEP 2: Describe the homes currently available to them

Develop a profile of the foster homes and beds: how many are there in total? How many are in each category when broken down by ages of children accepted in the home, ethnicity, and willingness to care for special needs?

STEP 3: Make a plan to fill the gap

Identify and reach out to families who can care for the children most in need of homes. Here are some questions to guide you in identifying where to focus your efforts:

- 1) Where might you find people who reflect the children in need of care? Use census data for your city or county to inform your efforts (www.census.gov/index.html). Consider neighborhood schools, day cares, faith communities, businesses, voting precincts, and civic or community organizations where you could focus your efforts.

Your Current Families Can Help

In many cases, you can engage successful resource families in targeted recruitment simply by saying, “We appreciate all you do, and we need more resource families like you! How can we find them?” Resource families can:

- Reach out to their own friends, family and neighbors
- Advise you on how to be culturally sensitive in your outreach
- Tell you about the newspapers they read, radio and TV stations they tune in to, and places they shop so that you can target your community education efforts

- 2) What professional or civic organizations might be well suited to caring for the children in need of care? For example, schools, hospitals, and medical and mental health associations have people experienced in caring for special needs or medically fragile children. Area support groups and advocacy organizations have people motivated to care and lobby for children with special needs.
- 3) What current resource families might do well caring for these children with additional encouragement, training, and support? Here are some questions to guide you in planning how to reach out to the groups identified:

- What agency staff or resource parents are from the targeted community or belong to the targeted group? A community member can help you decide where and how to target your message, and can help with follow-up over time.
- What specific data can you use in your recruitment materials to highlight the need for resource families? For example, how many children are placed in foster care from that particular community and how many licensed homes are currently in that community? How many teens are in need of care and how many are placed out-of-county or in group placement due to a lack of family foster placements?
- How will you do your initial outreach/public information? What materials will you use (posters, brochures, flyers, business cards, etc.)? Where will you place them?
- What follow-up will be done and who will do it? Will a staff person make follow-up calls to select churches or schools? Will a resource parent speak to their civic group or PTA? Who will be responsible for maintaining contact with groups that agree to partner with you in recruitment and/or volunteer efforts? Remember that it's not just about a one-time effort: targeted recruitment often requires maintaining ongoing relationships with important leaders or organizations.

Source: Casey Family Programs, 2002

Examples of Targeted Recruitment for Teenagers

- 1) Develop current resource parents:
 - a) Have licensed families provide respite or mentoring for teens in care so they can develop relationships with them
 - b) Have teens and their resource parents speak to MAPP/GPS classes and participate in activities and events for resource families
 - c) Provide or refer families to training that prepare them for parenting teens, such as managing common teen behaviors and adolescent development
- 2) Target community groups that have experience with teens, including:
 - a) High School groups: PTAs, athletic events, teachers associations, etc.
 - b) Community groups: Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, church youth groups, teen community service organizations
 - c) Professionals: group home staff, mental health associations, etc.
 - d) Senior groups: civic and church organizations that have high numbers of empty-nesters or retirees
- 3) Ask teens:
 - a) Have ongoing discussions with teens individually and in groups about permanency: a goal of long-term support, stability, and a “home base” for every youth

- b) Ask teens to talk and write about related questions, such as: Who do you consider family? What does family look like? What would you look for in a family? What would you bring to a family? How can you combine birth and adoptive family connections in your life? What do other teens in foster care need from foster families?

Examples of Targeted Recruitment for Sibling Groups

Siblings can be comforters, caretakers, role models, spurs to achievement, faithful allies, and best friends. No matter how close they are, most brothers and sisters share years of experiences that form a bond, a common foundation they do not have with anyone else (Viorst, 1986). If parents are unable to provide the necessary care, sibling attachments can be even closer (Banks & Kahn, 1982).

Brothers and sisters separated from each other in foster care experience trauma, anger, and an extreme sense of loss. Research suggests that separating siblings may make it difficult for them to begin a healing process, make attachments, and develop a healthy self-image (McNamara, 1990). Indeed, because of the reciprocal affection they share, separated siblings often feel they have lost a part of themselves.

For these and other reasons, child welfare policy in North Carolina directs child welfare agencies to place siblings together whenever possible, unless contrary to the child's developmental, treatment, or safety needs. To do this successfully, agencies must recruit and prepare resource families willing to take sibling groups. The following suggests ways child welfare agencies can ensure they are sibling-friendly.

Sibling-Friendly Agencies and Practices Keep Children Together

By Regina M. Kupecky, LSW

Reprinted, from the June 2001 issue of Recruiting News, published by the North American Council on Adoptable Children, 970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106, St. Paul, MN 55114; 651-644-3036; info@nacac.org; www.nacac.org

Although the child welfare field emphasizes birth family reunification and kinship adoption, the significance of sibling ties is often glossed over.

However, when a joint placement is in the children's best interests, placing siblings together not only reduces the children's losses and preserves kinship ties, it also reduces stressed agencies' adoption costs. Siblings can help each other process the past, remember experiences, and move into the future together.

Creating a Sibling-Friendly Agency

Part of recruitment is having a sibling-friendly agency. First, educate the entire staff about the importance of sibling connections – everyone from the adoption recruiters and workers to the pre-service trainers, supervisors, intake workers, subsidy staff, administrators, foster care departments, and support staff. A clear understanding of sibling connections could eliminate problems that result from separation and lack of

visitation in foster care. Everyone must be on board, whether from a sense of child-centered practice, or simply from the fact that placing four children in one home is cheaper than recruiting, educating, and providing post-placement services to four families.

Next, recruit for siblings all through the adoption process:

- Intake: That first telephone call from a prospective parent is key to setting up a friendly working relationship. The staff person should mention siblings as an option. Families need time to process new ideas.
- First mailing: When information packets go to families, do they mention siblings? Send a few child-specific flyers, at least one featuring a sibling group. For later education packets, the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse (www.calib.com/naic or 888-251-0075) has a useful article or Three Rivers Adoption Council (312-471-8722) can share a pamphlet I wrote, called Siblings are Family, Too.
- Pre-service training: If you don't have a section on siblings, fold it into sections about loss, birth families, or attachment. Be sure that parent panels include at least one family that adopted or fostered a sibling group.
- Also consider these ongoing sibling-friendly practices:
- If your office displays posters of waiting children, are some of them sibling groups? Newsletter articles should also mention the need for homes for siblings.
- Do all staff members recruit, including secretaries, administrators, and janitors? If they go to churches, YMCAs, stores, or libraries, have they hung sibling-friendly posters?
- When recruiters go out to malls or fairs, do they always post pictures of sibling groups on their display?
- Are workers who complete family assessments talking about sibling groups in a positive way? Do they remind parents that few people adopt one child – families usually come back for more? By taking two or three at once, families eliminate extra paperwork.

No one wakes up one morning, calls an agency, and says “Do you have a sibling group of four children that includes three boys, ages 8–14?” The only way to successfully recruit families for specific children is specific recruitment.

- Siblings need a recruitment plan. List who is doing what and when. Ensure the plan's timely execution.

- A great picture of the sibling group together is a powerful tool. When separate pictures of each child are shown, it gives parents a feeling they can pick and choose whichever child they want (usually the youngest).
- Sibling groups almost always get the most calls when presented in the media. Feature sibling groups often in newspapers, television features, agency newsletters, posters, or wherever your agency recruits.
- Pre-service training groups are a great place to recruit homes for siblings—all the parents are there because they want to care for children. Ask the trainer if you can have five minutes to present a sibling group. Pass out flyers and show a video of the children together.
- Don't eliminate singles or childless couples. They don't disrupt any more than married or repeat parents.
- Make sure recruiters know about available subsidies. Many parents feel they can't adopt a group because of costs and are reassured to learn of financial assistance.
- When an event such as a recruitment picnic is planned, buy each sibling in the group the same shirt so that prospective parents can spot them all in the crowd. Make sure they eat at the same table or play together.
- Measure success in terms of events, not time. Agencies separate children because "we haven't found a family in five months." But have you tried every recruitment idea once, then again? If so and still no response, then reassess the recruitment plan.

Some sibling groups cannot be placed together. Prior to recruitment, sibling groups' attachments to each other and their primary caretakers as well as their safety when in the same home should be assessed. But with lifebook work and careful pre-placement preparation, many more sibling groups can be together than are presently. We have 117,000 children waiting in the United States. If we place them two by two that is only 58,500 homes – if three by three only 39,000 homes. So make your life easier and the children happier. Create a sibling-friendly agency and recruitment practice.

Ms. Kupecky has spent more than 25 years in the adoption field and frequently presents workshops about siblings, attachment, and preparing children for adoption. She co-authored *Adopting The Hurt Child: Hope for Families with Special Needs Kids* and works at the Attachment and Bonding Center of Ohio. Contact her at 440-230-1960 ext. 5 or reginaku@msn.com.

Source: <http://www.nacac.org/adoptalk/targeted.pdf>

Adapted from *Treat them Like Gold, A Best Practice Guide to Partnering with Resource Families*, North Carolina DSS, Child Welfare Service Section; Raleigh, North Carolina, January 2009.

Child Specific Recruitment Case File Review Tool

CHILD'S NAME _____

DATE _____



COMPLETED BY _____

Created by Denise A. Goodman, PhD and Scott Lee, State of Tennessee, 2006

INTRODUCTION

Purpose: This tool is designed to assist the social worker when reviewing the child's and family's case record for potential placement resources or individuals who would assist in identifying placement resources.

In addition, the tool collects information helpful in the development of the child's lifebook, background information for formal presentations, full disclosure forms and subsidy documents.

Therefore, a single thorough review of the child's and family's case records can serve to satisfy several case management responsibilities. More importantly, after a meticulous review of the case record, the social worker knows the child better and is able to identify a family to meet the child's lifelong needs.

Directions:

1. Obtain the child's and family's case record.
2. In an organized fashion, review each piece of paper in the case record.
3. As critical information is uncovered, record it on the appropriate page in this tool.
4. Once the case record review is completed, analyze the tool and identify potential placement resources or individuals who could be utilized as members of the recruitment team.

Child's Placement History

Dates resided	Placement Name	Address	Phone
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

Birth Mother's Background Information

Name _____ aka _____ DOB _____

Addresses known to reside _____

Birth Mother's Relatives:

name	relationship	address	phone number
------	--------------	---------	--------------

Other Individuals Connected to the Birth Mother:

name	relationship	address	phone number
------	--------------	---------	--------------

NOTES:

Birth Father's Background Information

Name _____ aka _____ DOB _____

Addresses known to reside _____

Birth Father's Relatives:

name	relationship	address	phone number
------	--------------	---------	--------------

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Other Individuals Connected to the Birth Father:

name	relationship	address	phone number
------	--------------	---------	--------------

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

NOTES:

SIBLING INFORMATION

name	DOB	relationship	address	phone number

SCHOOL INFORMATION

SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

Name of School	Dates Attended	Address	Phone Number	Important People to Child*

*Important people to consider: teachers, coaches, program aides, lunchroom staff, bus drivers, clerical, principal, tutors, maintenance staff, guidance counselors, music/art teachers, etc.

Health Information

	CURRENT PRIMARY DOCTOR	DENTIST
Name Address City, State Zip Phone number Date of service	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	PAST DOCTORS	EYE DOCTOR
Name Address City, State Zip Phone number Date of service	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	SPECIALIST	PT/OT/SPEECH THERAPIST
Name Address City, State Zip Phone number Date of service	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
NOTES:		

MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION

	CURRENT THERAPIST	RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____
City, State Zip	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____
Date of service		
	PAST THERAPIST	RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____
City, State Zip	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____
Date of service		
	PAST THERAPIST	HOSPITALIZATION
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____
City, State Zip	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____
Date of service		
	PAST THERAPIST	HOSPITALIZATION
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____

City, State Zip	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____
Date of service		

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY CONTACTS		
	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS	BIG BROTHER/BIG SISTER/MENTOR
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____
City, State Zip	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____
	VISITING FAMILY/RESPITE CARE	GODPARENTS
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____
City, State Zip	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____
	SPORTS/RECREATION/CAMPS/SCOUTS	FRIENDS
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____
City, State Zip	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____
	FRIENDS	EMPLOYER
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____
City, State Zip	_____	_____

Phone number	_____	_____
NOTES:		

SOCIAL SERVICES CONTACTS		
	SOCIAL WORKER	PAST SOCIAL WORKER
Name Address City, State Zip Phone number	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
	GUARDIAN AD LITEM	CASA
Name Address City, State Zip Phone number	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
	RECRUITER	CONTRACT AGENCY SOCIAL WKR
Name Address City, State Zip Phone number	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
	INDEPENDENT LIVING SPECIALIST	OTHER STAFF*
Name Address	_____ _____	_____ _____

City, State Zip	_____	_____
Phone number	_____	_____

NOTES:

*Other staff may include clerical, transportation, training, etc. who may have had contact with the child

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACTS OR POTENTIAL LEADS FOR THE CHILD:

APPENDIX XXI: EXAMPLES OF CHILD-SPECIFIC RECRUITMENT

There are different types of child-specific recruitment:

Child-Specific Publicity

Agencies provide to the public a photo and written profile of a child free for adoption. NC Kids Adoption and Foster Care Network can provide assistance to agencies on writing profiles. “Child-specific publicity has two goals. First...it stimulates prospective parents’ interest in a child and results in adoption. Second—and more commonly—it builds public awareness about the need for parents and generates resources for other children in the system” (Zemler, 2000). Following are some common venues for child-specific publicity:

- **Photolisting Book of Waiting Children***
In North Carolina, this service is provided by NC Kids Adoption and Foster Care Network through the Photo Adoption Listing Service (PALS)
http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/adopt/pals/NC_KIDSLINKBUTTONS.pdf
- **Internet Listings***
NC Kids Adoption and Foster Care Network photolisting website (<http://www.adoptuskids.org/states/nc/index.aspx>) and many individual agency websites feature photographs and brief descriptions of waiting children, along with agency contact information. As more people turn to the Internet as a primary source of information, such listings become more and more important.

*Under the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA), all children free for adoption must be registered with NC Kids to participate in these recruitment efforts.

- **Print and Television Campaigns** such as “Wednesday’s Child”
Each week a child or sibling group is featured, with photograph, description, and agency contact information. Suggestions for how to begin (Ortiz, 2001; cited in Casey Family Programs, 2003) include the following:
 - Send a press kit that includes a fact sheet and press release about your agency, a sample campaign item (photograph and profile of a child) and a letter to the features editor or the editor of the section most appropriate for the column.
 - Follow up with a phone call.
 - Pitch your idea: for example, a front-page feature profiling a child, a foster family, and a successful adoption that leads to announcing the regular column.
 - Meet with the reporter you’ll be working with.
 - Be sure to make their deadlines so the column is not a burden for them. NC Kids can help you develop a Wednesday’s Child program. Call them toll free at 1-888-NC KIDS-5.

- **Heart Galleries**

Professional photographs of waiting children become part of a traveling exhibit at high-profile locations. A description of the child and agency contact information accompanies each photograph. NC Kids has a list of professional photographers around the state willing to provide this service for free to county DSS agencies.

- **Adoption Parties/Matching Events**

Waiting children and potential adoptive families come together for organized activities and, in some cases, facilitated conversations. The families are able to review children's profiles before and after the events.

Child-Centered Recruitment

Youth take a leading role in deciding how to describe their strengths, needs, and interests, and in designing recruitment materials. This process often helps teens in resolving concerns about adoption and preparing them to accept new permanency goals.

A Youth-Directed Recruitment Resource

Under One Sky, a nonprofit based in Western North Carolina, has developed a new program to help North Carolina's children find adoptive families. What makes its approach unique is the extent to which it is directed by the youth themselves.

At the core of Under One Sky's efforts is Passages, a two-year, co-educational, camp-based mentoring village for youths aged 12 to 18 who are in foster care and free for adoption. The camp provides a supportive, honest, respectful place to explore the possibility of adoption.

Youths who choose to pursue adoption create their own promotional materials. Working with experienced professionals and their instructor-mentors, youths develop recruitment plans that may include a video, written profile, and radio public service announcement. The youth themselves act as creative directors of these projects and decide how the materials will be used.

The written profiles developed at Passages are 12-page booklets called 'Zines. Youths control each development stage. After pictures are taken they choose which shots to use. After the interview is transcribed, they select excerpts to appear in the 'Zine. They also do the final layout. The result gives prospective adoptive parents a vivid impression of the child's interests and spirit.

Youths participating in Passages also get to say where their promotional materials will be used. For example, one girl requested that her photograph not be shown in her community's newspaper.

Under One Sky is not itself a child placing agency. Instead, it works with public and private agencies to provide a community of support for youth.

For more information about Passages, including eligibility guidelines, costs, and registration information, contact Under One Sky (828/251-9703; e-mail: info@under1sky.org; www.under1sky.org).

Identifying Potential Caregivers from a Child's Life

- Children and teens are asked specifically and repeatedly about important people in their lives, even before they come into care. As the Casey Breakthrough Series Collaborative (Casey Family Programs, 2005) recommends, “Ask early and ask often.”
- Case records are reviewed in detail to identify significant support people in the child's or birth family's history.
- Every Child and Family Team Meeting is an opportunity to identify, engage, and support potential caregivers for a child. Be sure to include professionals from other systems who are working with the child or family, such as schools, mental health providers, or juvenile courts. They may know of additional support people to bring into the planning.

Sources: Casey Family Programs, 2003; Zemler, 2000

Making the Most of Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTs)

- Carrie Lauterbach from Appalachian Family Innovations' Adoption Plus program uses a team approach to help with child-specific recruitment. Here are some suggestions based on what has worked for them:
- Cast a wide net to build your team. The core team of agency staff generates a contact list of other folks who know and care about each specific child. Invite them all to team meetings. The more people spreading the word in their own personal communities, the better.
- Share leadership on the team.
- Do “in-team training.” This is critical, as it ensures all team members are using the same language, know how a recruitment plan is built and implemented, are sharing appropriate information, and have clarity about follow-up.
- Identify who the contact person will be for any interested families that come forward. Families can get lost in the process without clear guidelines.
- Immediate follow-up is critical.
- Teams review all outreach materials for accuracy and the right message.
- Never say “We are going to find your forever family.” Don't make promises you not sure you can keep!

APPENDIX XXII: WRITING PHOTO LISTINGS

A good photo of the child can hook a prospective family's interest but it is the description that reels them in. A good description can transform the child into a real person in the reader's mind. The description has to speak effectively on the child's behalf to connect the right child with the right family. Key rules of writing a description include:

1. Know the child

- Take the time to meet and interact with the child.
- Take the time to talk to people close to the child for additional information (teachers, foster parents, residential staff, therapist, extracurricular activity leaders, caseworkers, etc.)
- Use your interview with the child to give details that make the child come alive
- Whenever possible use the child's own words in the write-up.

Old version: "Ivan watches movies for hours."

Rewrite: "Ivan believes that laughter is the best medicine. He says he has gotten through hard times in his life by watching Eddie Murphy and Dave Chapelle. He hopes to be able to make others laugh through his own stand-up routine someday."

2. Celebrate what makes the child unique

- Observe the child's special hobbies, dreams, background and quirks
- Ask the child why they like what they like and why they do what they do.
- Don't rely on clichés or say that the child is a "normal five year old"

Old version: "Lesha is a normal teenager who hangs out at the mall."

Rewrite: "Lesha loves fashion—she reads fashion magazines, studies changing styles and always gives her friends advice on how to update their looks. She loves shopping – though her allowance doesn't let her buy much – she just likes looking at the new styles. Lesha hopes to find a job at the mall this summer."

3. Write about the child as you would write about someone you care about

- Balance the ups and downs truthfully but optimistically.
- Note their needs in a caring way – this means do not generalize but give examples of a behavior problem and what causes it.
- Never write anything that would hurt the child if they read it now or in the future, or if their classmates read it.
- Don't give any personal information about the nature of the abuse suffered or any family information. These will be public documents.

Old version: "Due to his history of physical abuse, Dewan acts out with violent behavior against younger kids."

Rewrite: "Dewan has struggled to feel loved and to get attention. We hope to find him a home where he can be the baby because younger children make him feel threatened and anxious, resulting in some behavior problems."

4. Use the child's own words and voice

- Let the child speak for him or herself. It will be more compelling.

Old version: "Jaime would do best in a home with a loving family."

Rewrite: "Jaime says 'I want parents to come home to after school and tell all about my day.'"

5. Don't use diagnoses – describe the child's specific behaviors

- Describe THIS child's specific behaviors. All children with ADHD do not look the same.

Old version: "Allison is diagnosed with ADHD and may require medication."

Rewrite: "Allison has trouble concentrating in class. She's such an active child that sitting still can be quite tedious for her. Her dance classes after school are a favorite time for her and she is both graceful and energetic."

6. Make sure write-up is reviewed by a supervisor

- Get a second opinion on the write up before finalizing it.
- Double check the facts and the spelling of the child's name.

APPENDIX XXIII: SAMPLE UTILIZATION STUDY

Thank you for helping to collect information on the status of foster and adoptive homes. This review helps ensure the accuracy of information about families for use, identifies foster/adoptive families who can no longer be used, identifies placement resources that have been unused but that could be available, and identifies possible placements for children being “stepped down” from institutional care.

1. Complete the empty cells for each family. Please note that under “Recommended Capacity,” indicate the **actual maximum number** of children that you recommend could be cared for by the family (if there are specifics to the recommendation regarding age, race, etc., please note). This number may be different from the number for which the home is approved.
2. Refer to “*Possible Reasons for “Not Used” Foster Homes*, to assist with “Current Family Status” (see examples below). The list does not give every reason; please use your own additional reasons as needed.
3. Under “What is needed for usage?” please make a note of the development plan to work with the family, *assign and timeline this task*, and estimate when they will be available.
4. Return to your Resource Family Specialist. Thanks for your help!

FAMILY NAME	APPROVAL DATE	FOSTER CARE? ADOPTION? DUAL?	APPROVED CAPACITY OF HOME?	RECOMMENDED CAPACITY (specify any sex/race recommendations)	AGE RANGE ACCEPTED	SPECIAL NEEDS? (that family can manage in children)	REFUSED PLACEMENTS? (if known, list # times refused in past year)	CURRENT FAMILY STATUS? (see below for specifics)	WHY HOME IS NOT BEING USED?	WHAT IS NEEDED FOR USAGE? (family development plan)
ABC	3/12/04	Dual	3	1 (F/Cau)	0-1 yrs	None	Yes-3	Open	No reason	Counsel family to expand usage, provide training on older age groups to possibly expand capacity
DEF	2/14/03	Dual	5	3 (M-F/Any)	6-12 yrs	Mild, MR/DD, some health issues	No	Family hold	Illness of foster parent	Check with family in 1 month
GHI	7/14/02	Foster Only	2	2 (female/any)	12-18 yrs	Moderate, behavioral, school issues, sexual abuse	No	Agency hold	Rule violation for supervision	Complete Corrective Action Plan
JKL	8/16/01	Dual	2	1 (M-F/AA)	5-12yrs	Mild, ADHD, bedwetting,	No	Adoptive Placement	Data error-adoption subsidy only	N/A—close in system

Possible Reasons for “Not Used” Foster Homes

Family Development and Usage Family in need of further training and education Family available for respite only Family available for short-term, emergency placements only Family only wants to adopt-does not want to foster at all Family has adopted from another source-no longer interested Family should never have been certified-we will not use them Unable to contact/locate family Family’s certification has expired-want to continue Family’s certification has expired- want to discontinue	Case Closure Family desires to close-change in circumstances Family desires to close-lost interest Family desires to close-will use another agency Family “On Hold” Status: Closing = family is in process of selecting out <i>or</i> agency is closing the home (please note which) Not in use = agency does not use this family Not viable = family is not a viable resource for the children who typically come into agency care Family Hold = family circumstances have changed (e.g., a family member is ill), home is at maximum capacity, family has requested a hold for personal reasons (working through financial issues, for example) Agency Hold = <i>Options may include:</i> Abuse/neglect allegation-investigation pending Abuse/neglect allegation-investigation completed-corrective action plan needs to be completed
---	---

AGENCY NAME: _____

PERSON COMPLETING INFORMATION: _____

PAGE ____ of ____

(add pages as needed)

DATE DUE and/or FOLLOW-UP WITH FRS: _____

FAMILY NAME	APPROVAL DATE	FOSTER CARE? ADOPTION? DUAL?	APPROVED CAPACITY OF HOME?	RECOMMENDED CAPACITY (specify any sex/race recommendations)	AGE RANGE ACCEPTED	SPECIAL NEEDS? (that family can manage in children)	REFUSED PLACEMENTS? (if known, list # times refused in past year)	CURRENT FAMILY STATUS? (see below for specifics)	WHY HOME IS NOT BEING USED?	WHAT IS NEEDED FOR USAGE? (family development plan)

APPENDIX XXIV: CREATIVE APPROACHES TO RESPITE CARE

INFORMAL – these respite activities are family-based	COMMUNITY-BASED – these respite activities are found in the community	FORMAL – these respite activities are highly structured and are provided by trained professionals or arranged through OCS/FRC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •spending time with extended family of the caregiver •visitation with birth parents •visitation with birth family members such as grandparents, aunts/uncles, cousins •visitation with siblings in their placement •having a babysitter come to the home or take child on activity •spend time with former foster parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •sporting programs such as Little League, soccer, basketball leagues •camps (YMCA, church, sports, science, computer, cheerleader, band, etc.) •faith based programs such as vacation bible school, youth groups, etc. •volunteer opportunities at hospitals, libraries, humane society, nursing home, assisted living facilities, etc. •jobs-jobs-jobs! for teens •YMCA/YWCA/Girls & Boys Club programs •dance, art, music programs •4-H, Future Farmers of America •Big Brothers/Big Sisters, youth mentors •school sponsored activities such as cheerleading, sports, choir, band, clubs, theater, yearbook, newspaper •Ethnic/Cultural activities, movies, concerts •tutoring programs •community center programs for cooking, sewing, woodworking, etc. •Boy/Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, •spend night with friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •scheduled respite with specialized foster family •swapping respite time with another foster family (“You watch mine, I’ll watch yours!”) •contracted respite with a nursing professional •contracted respite with a trained person for children with mental health issues •specialized camps (juvenile diabetes, Camp To Belong for siblings, MR/DD, etc.) •therapeutic programs (such as horseback riding, ADHD, autism, etc.) •using approved adoptive applicants to provide short term respite care (babysitting during training, for a few hours or up to 3 days) <p style="text-align: right;">Source: Denise Goodman</p>

APPENDIX XXV: SUPPORT VISIT FORM

Foster/Adoptive Family Support Home Visit Report Form

To be completed during the visit

Parent Name:

Worker Name:

Date:

Purpose of Visit (check one)

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 st visit after new placement | <input type="checkbox"/> Disruption |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Intervention | <input type="checkbox"/> Support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Information Discussed: (check all applicable boxes and explain)

- ☐ Certification/Compliance Issues:
- ☐ Training Needs:
- ☐ Capacity/Occupancy/Placement Issues:
- ☐ Agency Policies Reviewed:
- ☐ Foster/Adoptive Family Needs:
- ☐ Support Needs/Resources/Respite:
- ☐ Other Issues/Concerns Discussed:

Next Steps/Agreements:

What?	Responsible Party	By When?

Please sign below at the conclusion of the home visit. DO NOT SIGN if the form has not been completed during the visit.

_____	_____
Foster Parent	Date

_____	_____
Foster Parent	Date

_____	_____
Worker	Date

_____	_____
Other	Date

APPENDIX XXVI: SAMPLE ANNUAL RESOURCE PARENT SURVEY

Please read each item carefully and circle the number that most accurately represents your level of satisfaction with the service you have received in the past year in the area described.

1. In-Service Training							
a.	I am very satisfied with the in-service training offered through my agency.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
b.	To improve my skills as a foster parent, I would like training or information on the following topics: -----						
2. Pre-Placement Arrangements							
a.	Prior to placement, I was given complete and accurate information on the child(ren) being placed in my home.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
b.	I am satisfied with the arrangements the agency made for pre-placement visits before the child was placed in my home.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
c.	The agency and others did a great job identifying and addressing the child(ren)'s behavioral needs before the placement occurred.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
d.	The agency did a great job preparing me to work with the child(ren).	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
3. Staff Consultation and Support							
a.	Program staff visit my home often enough.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
b.	When they visit my home, I want my visits with program staff to be longer.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
c.	Program staff visits to my home are helpful to me in working with the child(ren) in my home.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
d.	I am satisfied with the extent to which program staff reach out to me (e.g., through phone calls) to see how I am doing or to follow up regarding the care of the child(ren).	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
e.	Program staff generally return my phone calls in a timely manner.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
f.	I am very satisfied with my agency's on-call crisis support services.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
g.	In general, I get excellent help/guidance from program staff.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
h.	Program staff fully understood and responded to the needs of the youth(s) I have worked with this year.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A

i.	Program staff demonstrate genuine concern for me, my family, and for my success as a foster parent.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
j.	Program staff demonstrate clearly that they genuinely value my skill and effort as a foster parent.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
k.	Program staff do an excellent job supporting me as I work with others (schools, Courts, birth families, etc.) regarding the child(ren) in my home.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
l.	I am satisfied with the amount of the monthly reimbursement I receive as a foster parent.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
m.	I am satisfied with the promptness with which I receive my monthly reimbursement payments.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
4. Support Services Overall							
a.	The agency is meeting my overall needs as a foster parent.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
b.	The agency is sensitive to issues of race and culture in working with me and the child(ren) placed with me.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
c.	The agency is meeting the needs of the child(ren) in my home.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
d.	I am satisfied with my overall experience as a foster parent.	1 Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Disagree	N/A
e. List three ways the agency could improve its support to you in your work as a foster parent: ----- ----- -----							
f. List the biggest challenge you currently face as a foster parent: -----							
5. About this Event							
a.	Would you have been able to attend tonight's event even if child care was not offered?	<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>					
b.	Given the choice of a catered meal here at the agency or going to Golden Corral, which would you prefer for next year's banquet?	<div>Catered meal at agency</div> <div>Golden Corral</div>					

Adapted from *Treat them Like Gold, A Best Practice Guide to Partnering with Resource Families*, North Carolina DSS, Child Welfare Service Section; Raleigh, North Carolina, January 2009; and adapted from Schooler, J. & Jorgenson, K. (2000.) *A system in transition: examining foster parent recruitment and retention in the new millennium*; Gig Harbor, WA: National Foster Parent Association

APPENDIX XXVII: RESOURCE PARENT EXIT SURVEY EXAMPLE

On the average, with any placement, how would you grade the following?

Information received about the child	A	B	C	D	F
Availability of child's worker to answer my questions/concerns?	A	B	C	D	F
Services to support the child are readily available and arranged.	A	B	C	D	F
I am kept updated and informed about the case plan, court hearings, meetings, etc.	A	B	C	D	F
I am invited to participate in meetings, court hearings, etc. in a timely fashion.	A	B	C	D	F
My phone calls are returned promptly	A	B	C	D	F
Regular home visits allow me to talk with the child's worker	A	B	C	D	F
I can get a "live person" when there is a crisis, 24/7	A	B	C	D	F

About Home Development Staff:

My HD worker is available to me when I need them.	A	B	C	D	F
My HD worker will help work through the system if I need help	A	B	C	D	F

In general, how do you rate the agency?

I feel appreciated and valued as a caregiver	A	B	C	D	F
The agency provides me all the necessary resources to do a good job	A	B	C	D	F
Meetings and training is made convenient for me	A	B	C	D	F

Have you ever thought of quitting? Why?

What has a social worker or Home Development worker done to support you that you believe should be done for every foster parent?

What other supports could be offered to foster parents to assist them in the care of the children?

Please rank the top10 most useful supportive practices below in terms of how potentially useful to you as a foster parent they would be:

1. Monthly support groups _____
2. More regular training on foster parenting issues _____
3. Regularly scheduled recreation activities for children _____
4. Discounts at local stores _____
5. Regular home visits with the Home Development Worker _____
6. Resource guide to services in the community _____
7. Mentor or Buddy family to help new families _____
8. 24/7 hotline for crisis situations _____
9. Complete child information at the time of placement _____
10. Policy that phone calls must be returned with 1 working day _____
11. Assistance locating respite care _____
12. Greater teamwork with agency staff _____
13. Formal support when there is an allegation _____
14. Foster Parent Manual with policies/procedures _____
15. Class for new foster parents reviewing policy/procedures _____

APPENDIX XXVIII: RESOURCE FAMILY BEST PRACTICES

<i>Category</i>	<i>Best Practice location and description</i>	<i>Tracking method and measured outcomes</i>
Example	New York City: fingerprinting is all done by clerical staff – which saves time for Home Development workers and is free for prospective parents; also avoids sending prospective parents to police station for fingerprinting	No tracking method in place but anecdotal reports of more fingerprinting compliance.
Intake phone call	<p>Louisiana: revamped 1st phone call to be user-friendly and customer directed. Only ask for name and address.</p> <p>Guilford/Wake NC) and Cleveland: all intake calls are recorded in a data base and tracked from that call through to licensure. All three data bases allow for reporting on each cell of the intake page, so that for instance they can find out how many calls from folks calling due to a church presentation got licensed.</p> <p>Cleveland: sends out <i>small booklet</i>, well organized with essential information</p> <p>New York: Centralized “Wishline” accepts inquiries and refers families to private foster care agencies; staff can follow up to assist families with barriers encountered. Community coalitions are now being engaged to support families in the inquiry/licensing/assessment process.</p>	<p>Use tracking tool</p> <p>Maintain tracking tool and produce monthly reports. Use computer based tracking system.</p> <p>Tracking system in place for use by all foster care agencies to track families in the process from inquiry to licensing. Monthly reports provided to each agency and to each local coalition. Relatively new system, anecdotal info that families are less likely to become “lost”.</p>
Orientation session	<p>Denver: Orientations held more often in the community and in Spanish. Partnerships with community collaboratives.</p> <p>Louisiana: Revised orientation talking points. Orientation done by dedicated recruiters.</p> <p>Anchorage: Have totally revamped their orientation process to make it more participant focused and friendly.</p> <p>New York: Several orientations each week in varied locations throughout the city, some in Spanish.</p>	<p>Use tracking system. Increase of homes in targeted neighborhoods.</p> <p>Maintain and track attendees. Certified 750 new homes in one year!</p> <p>Staff report that they enjoy it more and so do the participants!</p> <p>Attendance now tracked in inquiry to licensing data system.</p>
Pre-service training	<p>Phoenix: 100% privatized foster care system using same MAPP standardized curriculum. Have integrated F2F values and practices into curriculum. Foster care agencies just beginning to work together to share training opportunities.</p> <p>Denver: Revised pre-service curriculum and added a separate track for relative caregivers. Use youth as speakers in training. Now offering training on Saturdays.</p>	<p>Evaluations of training very positive!</p>

	<p>Cleveland: Conduct trainings in community, with foster parent co-trainers and use youth and birth parents in training as speakers. Complete electronic fingerprinting at training for participant convenience.</p> <p>Louisiana: Reduced pre-service training hours to make it more user-friendly to participants. Have separate special training for relatives, conveniently scheduled.</p> <p>Cleveland & Wake Co, NC: One on one interviews during pre-service training to answer any personal questions about requirements. Hold sessions in community and invite local community partner to present about community services available to children and families.</p> <p>Sacramento, CA: Includes Parent Leaders in PRIDE training.</p>	
Homestudy	<p>Denver: Have a homestudy unit where all home studies are completed. Use private contractors for overflow.</p> <p>Louisiana: Streamlined the homestudy process and simplified paperwork. Revised reference form and added an adult child reference.</p>	<p>Use tracking data system. Have increased the number of homestudy completions in the past year.</p> <p>750 new families licensed in past 12 months!</p>
Other parts of certification process	<p>Louisiana: Extended recertification to 3 years for foster families in good standing.</p> <p>New York: City is providing assistance to the private provider agencies in the form of additional pre-service sessions, access to automated fingerprint systems, locations to obtain medical exams.</p>	<p>Tracked in data system.</p>
Support visits	<p>Denver: Specialized support unit makes monthly visits to foster families. Conducts geo-based support groups in 4 communities.</p> <p>Macomb, Co. Michigan: Assigns all prospective foster parents moving through the licensure process to a foster parent mentor.</p> <p>Louisiana: Have begun making visits to new foster parents getting their first placement within days of placement.</p> <p>Cleveland: Has a foster home resource management unit that sole purpose is to support foster parents. Make regular visits to foster homes, attends local support groups, plans appreciation events. Visits foster family within 4 days of placement.</p> <p>New York: Has reinvested savings from reductions in congregate care to fund foster parent supports by private providers.</p>	<p>Have a very high inquiry to licensure rate.</p> <p>Verbal reports state that parents and staff find these helpful.</p>
Flexible funding	<p>Guilford CO, NC: Has a nice fund they can funnel all community resources into so that staff can access for</p>	

	foster parents for any variety of needs.	
Appreciation events	Sacramento County, CA: An appreciation dinner honoring foster parents and a family oriented summer picnic are held annually to thank foster parents for their contribution to children.	
Successful placement process	<p>Cleveland: Social worker is interviewed by placement staff to gather information about child prior to selecting family. Info is shared with family and used to determine level of care.</p> <p>Guilford, Co. NC: Implemented a clinical review team process for all children being considered for a non-family setting.</p>	<p>Children's placements are tracked. Most children have a single placement while in care.</p> <p>(This process is new but they have already prevented at least one residential placement)</p>
General recruitment	<p>Arizona: The state assumes responsibility for all general recruitment. Messages are consistent statewide and a centralized 800 number is used.</p> <p>New York: Recruitment/retention targets established and monitored for all private provider agencies.</p>	<p>Monthly reports to all agencies; newly developed retention reports.</p>
Targeted recruitment	<p>Phoenix: Foster care is privatized. Recent RFP required private providers to do targeted recruitment only and are given geo info, types of children and racial/ethnic groups to recruit homes. Recruitment plans must be approved by the district recruitment liaison.</p> <p>Denver: Denver County has 7 community collaboratives who partner with the county to do targeted recruitment in their geo area. Staff recruiters are assigned to specific geo areas to work with community collaborative.</p> <p>Anchorage: Have targeted the Alaska Native community and partnered with tribal organization.</p>	<p>Private providers must track and share info with state.</p> <p>Have had a net increase of over 50 native homes.</p>
Child specific recruitment	<p>Phoenix: District I has contracts with 5 private providers to partner on targeted recruitment with their dedicated staff units. Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter is working well with the District.</p> <p>Louisiana: Staff recruiters partner with child's social worker to do child specific recruitment.</p> <p>Denver: Have 2 staff child specific recruiters for all units. Work to develop plans with child's social workers.</p> <p>Anchorage: Have formed a child specific recruitment task force with community partners. Have held their first Heart Gallery and are planning their second!</p> <p>New York: Wednesday's Child television feature is also available online; weekly waiting child electronic newsletter; Heart Gallery</p>	<p>Setting up tracking mechanism. But anecdotally have made some great placements.</p> <p>Each of the 9 Regional recruiters tracks their children on monthly reports. Have had limited success.</p> <p>Track children on database. Had a record number of adoptions in 2007.</p>

Recruitment is EVERYBODY'S Business (All staff supporting Resource Families)	<p>Louisville, KY: Meet and Greet! The recruitment, licensing, training and placement unit has a meet and greet for all new staff in the agency 2x's per year. It is a mandatory meeting, the purpose of which is to orient all staff as to what the unit does and how to support the work including and most importantly supporting foster parents. The meeting is co-hosted by the Regional Administrator and the F2F Coordinator</p> <p>Louisiana: Have conducted a statewide campaign to train and motivate staff to support resource families. Created job role cards with specific suggestions to support foster parents. Designed and produced posters for all offices to remind staff to support foster parents.</p> <p>Phoenix: Developed a workgroup to plan a program to encourage staff to support resource families.</p>	<p>They keep records to insure every that is supposed to attend does attend</p>
ICEBREAKERS	<p>Los Angeles County, CA: Created a document clearly identifying participant roles in Icebreaker meetings.</p> <p>Placer County, CA: Icebreaker Brochure – the brochure includes information about why the meeting is important, the benefits to all involved and the participants roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Santa Clara County, CA: Icebreaker Brochure – the brochure outlines the meetings purpose, focus and includes information about what will be discussed.</p> <p>New York: Icebreaker Meeting newly required as part of the city's reform initiative which will eventually involve all private providers. Training and technical assistance provided to private agencies.</p>	