Diligent Recruitment

What is Diligent Recruitment? Plan for the recruitment of resource families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom homes are needed.

Diligent Recruitment Efforts Include:

- Description of the characteristics of waiting children
- Specific strategies to reach all parts of the community
- Diverse methods of disseminating both general and child-specific information
- Strategies for assuring that all prospective parents have access to the home study process, including location and hours of service that facilities access by all members of the community
- Strategies for training staff to work with diverse cultural, racial, and economic communities
- Strategies for dealing with linguistic barriers
- Non-discriminatory fee structures
- Procedures ensuring a timely search for prospective parents awaiting a child, including the use of exchanges and other interagency efforts, provided that such procedures ensure that the placement of a child in an appropriate household is not delayed by the search for the same race or ethnic placement

To learn more about diligent recruitment and ways to implement strategies for general, targeted and child-specific recruitment, click on the link to the recruitment tools section of the CFSTC website or the link below:

http://und.edu/centers/children-and-family-services-training-center/rr-tools.cfm

Adopt US Kids and the Ad Council continue to produce wonderful commercials showcasing the need for caring adults to adopt from the foster care system. The PSA ads are television, radio, and print format and can now be localized to include your agency’s or coalition’s contact information!

To see a sample of the ads or to request material for your use, go to:

http://Adoptuskids.adcouncil.org
Strategies to Recruit and Retain Families

The support that kinship, foster and adoptive parents receive from their agencies after placement is critical for many reasons. The quality of support influences their ability to meet the needs of the children and youth in their care, and can also have an impact on the success that their agency has in maintaining the needed pool of foster and adoptive families. When families are well-supported, they are more likely to continue partnering with the agency, thus reducing the agency’s need to recruit additional families. Satisfied caregivers are also more likely to speak well of their agency in the community and to encourage others to foster or adopt. The flip side is also true: families who are not well-supported may leave service and may share their negative experience with others, deterring prospective foster and adoptive parents.

The July E-Notes (see right) highlights resources to assist agencies in meeting the needs of their caregiving families. Following is an excerpt from a resource entitled, “Develop and Support Families”:

For years, the child welfare field has talked about “retention” of foster and adoptive families, but the idea of retention has focused mainly on the needs of agencies rather than the needs of families. We recognize that many child welfare systems such as yours are concerned about retaining families in order to have a large enough pool to pull from for children and youth in foster care, but there is a better approach.

We encourage you to focus on actively developing and supporting both prospective and current foster and adoptive families, rather than focusing on retaining them. By meeting a family’s needs, you increase their ability to address each child’s unique needs, while also strengthening their relationship with your child welfare system. The traditional view of retention suggests passively holding onto families, whereas development and support involves building and nurturing a relationship with families so that they continue to feel equipped to meet the needs of children and youth.

The idea of developing and supporting families is a significant departure from the old approach of retaining families. The information below highlights ways to shift from a “retention” approach to a “development” approach.

What does developing a family mean? To learn more about his concept, you may view the rest of this article at: www.nrcdr.org/develop-and-support-families