

A PARENT FOR EVERY CHILD

NYS OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES DILIGENT RECRUITMENT PROJECT

Funded through a Cooperative Agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, Grant #C025776



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- The use of innovative recruitment strategies to find permanent families for freed foster care youth with emotional, behavioral and developmental challenges that require residential treatment.
- Designed as a randomized study to compare the outcomes for children assigned to the intervention group and those assigned to a control group.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- NYS Office of Children and Family Services
- Hillside Children's Center
- Parsons Child and Family Center
- You Gotta Believe!
- Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

TARGET GROUP

- **Freed foster care youth in the care of:**
 - NYS Office of Mental Health
 - NYS Office of Persons With Developmental Disabilities
 - OCFS Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth;

Or

- **Freed foster care youth with a goal other than adoption who reside in a:**
 - Residential Treatment Center

VULNERABLE TO “FOSTER CARE DRIFT”

- Termination of Parental Rights
- In foster care for many years
- Multiple moves
- Residential placements
- Older teens
- Limited or no permanency work
- Likely to age out of foster care

“FALLING BETWEEN THE CRACKS”

“Children in the care of the disabilities agencies are denied the permanency protections assured them if they were served by the child welfare system”.

“A waiting child’s age is the most crucial characteristic affecting his or her likelihood of being adopted”.

“Each year in the US, over 25,000 young people age out of the foster care system.”

PROJECT STAFF

- Project Director and five Permanency Specialists all experienced in working with older foster care youth
- Training:
 - 6 Steps to Family Search and Engagement - NRC
 - Web-based Database - provided with laptops for timely entry of data while in the field
 - Photo-listing strategies
 - Genograms-Robert Tocco MFT,CASAC
 - Family Finding-Kevin Campbell
 - Various Adoption Competency workshops
 - Permanency Pact: Supporting Lifelong Connections - Foster Club Model

STRATEGIES

- Record mining
- Family Finding (Family Search and Engagement)
- Project Brochure
- Project Website
- Adoption Chronicles
- Matching Events
- Ad Campaign
- Cross systems meeting and trainings

LESSONS LEARNED

- Visibility Matters
 - Youth need to attend Permanency Hearings
 - Distance from home district has an impact on finding permanency.
 - Youth panels and matching events provide families a chance to get to know youth.
 - Adoption Chronicles increase exposure.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Visibility Matters
 - Family Finding (Family Search and Engagement) is effective.
 - Photo listings, when updated, are a gateway for families to inquire.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Adoption Competency
 - Record Mining is a skill. Youth with long term placements benefit from someone who can develop a relationship history with them.
 - Family Search and Engagement skills allow for workers to engage family who have been out of the picture.
 - Hearing the voice of the child and the ability to “unlock the no” are important skills.
 - Understanding that Permanency has many faces allows workers to venture outside of traditional solutions.

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What impact, if any, did the PFEC program have on rates of permanency for the intervention group?
- What types of recruitment strategies, if any, were associated with positive permanency outcomes?

RECEPTIVENESS TO ADOPTION

		Attitudes at Project End			
<u>Willing at Start</u>					
	Total Willing at Start	Willing at End	Refuses at End	Indifferent at End	UAD at End
Intervention	35	29	4	2	0
Control	36	14	16	2	4
<u>Refuses at Start</u>					
	Total Refusing at Start	Willing at End	Refuses at End	Indifferent at End	UAD at End
Intervention	10	4	6	0	0
Control	26	0	25	0	1

FAMILY RECRUITMENT RESULTS

Recruitment Method	Family Outcome			
	Became matched with a youth but no permanency achieved	Became matched with a youth and achieved legal permanency	Became matched with a youth and achieved alternative permanency	Did not become matched with a youth
	Count			
Adoption Chronicles (n=25)	21	1	2	1
Family Search (n=22)	14	2	6	0
General Recruitment (n=17)	11	1	0	5
Internet Photo Listing (n=16)	15	0	0	1
Targeted Recruitment (n=15)	15	0	0	0
Other (n=27)	23	4	0	0

CHILD OUTCOMES

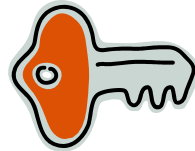
	Intervention Group		Control Group	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Finalized Adoption	6	8%	3	3%
Finalized Legal Guardianship	1	1%	2	2%
Finalized Alternative Permanency	11	12%	0	0%
Youth still in care and adoption is pending	5	6%	0	0%
Youth still in care and legal guardianship is pending	1	1%	1	1%
Youth still in care and alternative permanency is pending	1	1%	0	0%
Youth still in care	38	43%	53	60%
Exit (Youth left care with no permanency arrangement in place)	25	28%	30	34%
Total	88	100%	89	100%

Partners for Forever Families Cuyahoga County, Ohio

Things That Went Well

- Community Recruitment Strategies
- Agency Recruitment Methods (CCR, WWK, Digital Me, Heart Gallery)
 - Family Search and Engagement
- Sustaining permanency efforts through agency infrastructure
- Evaluation Plan shows some significant change results

Making Diligent Recruitment Work



- Providing neighborhood agencies with basic adoption information and recruitment strategies was a needed step
- Trusted community agencies welcome potential resource families in a non-threatening manner
- Enlisting youth into the recruitment process impacts the event in a positive manner



Retention of Foster Parents

- Retention of foster parents is everybody's job
- Good customer service is essential and impacts retention of resource parents
- 70% of adoptions are happening by foster families

Key Findings regarding our targeted population

- More kids from the targeted neighborhood left foster care for adoption vs. the comparison neighborhood (year four and year five respectively)
- Older youth permanency efforts need to begin when they enter care
- Older youth recruitment efforts require the genuine engagement of those youth needing families in unique ways

What will we sustain?

- Community Collaborations
- Family Search And Engagement: incorporating this into the front end of services and all along the way
- Concurrent planning practices
- Youth Speak Out can be sustained through the training department where their voices are shaping new worker training and all staff through departmental meetings
- Basic tenets of customer service have been articulated and have been integrated into expectations of staff
- Ensuring that the review process for all youth includes key permanency related questions for a checks and balances
- Ensuring older youth remain a focus
 - Lending a Hand
 - NRCYD
 - Jim Casey
 - Foundation interest: St. Vincents, St. Lukes- invited to submit proposals

Bridge to the Future



A collaboration between the Oklahoma Department of Human Services
Child Welfare Services & the University of Oklahoma's Center for Public
Management



Things that went well

- Great partnerships (internal and external)
- Process improvements (approval process, support for parents)
- Sustainability (built into a strategic plan)
- Dissemination (Conferences, articles, awards)
- Data collection with staff and families
- Leadership support
- Stability of two senior project staff positions (Director and Lead Evaluator)

Key Findings - Diligent Recruitment

- Social media/website for families
 - For 2012, there were 52,837 website hits, more than 3 previous years combined. Since its launch, website hits have increased more than 600%.
- Faith-based recruitment
 - In 2011, 60% of faith-based inquiries through 111 Project completed the approval process in comparison to the typical 30% completion rate of traditional inquiries.

Key Findings - Retention

- Customer service
 - Findings include a 6% improvement in overall customer service experience and an 11% increase in the number of families reporting a consistently positive relationship with DHS staff.
 - Since 2011, the average timeliness of initial contacts increased by 12% for foster care staff and 37% for adoption staff. Currently, timeliness of initial contacts for foster care and adoption staff are at 81% and 93%, respectively.
- Process Improvement
 - Improvement solutions to address communication problems and frustration of families were fully sustained statewide in 2012

Sustaining Key Components of the Project

- The Bridge to the Future Grant project is integrated into the state's child welfare strategic plan
 - Continue all of the project services, contracts, training, data collection and evaluation
 - How to address some of these findings and lessons learned as a part of the overall improvement to the system
 - Continued need for process improvement
 - Solution actions taken by Tulsa County staff and leadership

Integration of Project Components into Policy/Practice

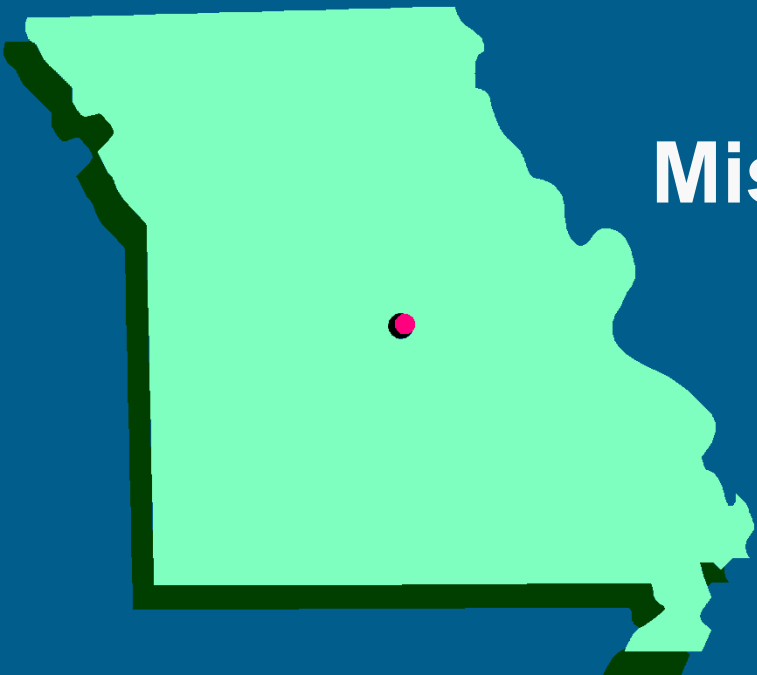
- Continued information feedback loop with the Legislature, Governor, DHS Director, advisory groups, DHS officers, resource parents, and DHS staff before, during and after the 2012 strategic plan
- Grant staff participated in the strategic planning process and data collected as a part of evaluation was heavily incorporated

Activities Providing Support to Sustain Components of the Project

- Continuous data collection with Resource Parents and DHS staff
- Faith-based partnerships
- Continuous Quality Improvement unit in CWS
- Website for families
- Bridge Resource Support Center
- Continued partnership with OUCPM

Extreme Recruitment

Missouri's Collaboration to
Provide Permanency



THINGS THAT WENT WELL

- Private Investigator model = high numbers of discovered relatives
- High interest, based on national publicity
 - Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition grant partner provided training on Extreme Recruitment model across Missouri, throughout the US and in Canada
- Increased focus on the value of relative care
 - Local agencies increased family finding efforts

KEY EVALUATION PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

FINDING #1:

At 12 months, intervention youth were more likely to pick a relative as a social support than youth in the control group.

- This preliminary finding suggests that the ER program has a beneficial impact on relatives becoming recognized as social supports over time;
- It is possible that youth in the intervention group are more connected to relatives than are youth in the control group.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS (con't)

FINDING #2:

Over time, the intervention group showed improved functioning in several CAFAS domains (School, Home, Behavior, Mood, Substance Usage, Self-Harm, Thinking and Total CAFAS score). Both groups displayed improved functioning in the School domain over time.

- This suggests that intervention group membership may have a positive impact of youth functioning.

SUSTAINABILITY

- The Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition grant partner:
 - Launched a new program in 2012 utilizing private investigators/family finding for children entering out of home care
 - Will continue the Extreme Recruitment program
 - Continues to train other organizations in the model
- Missouri created a Governor's Task Force on Recruitment & Retention of Foster Homes
 - A key initiative is expansion of Extreme Recruitment



PERMANENT FAMILIES RECRUITMENT PROJECT: AN ADOPTION OPPORTUNITIES GRANT

PRESENTATION BY DR1 TO DR2



WHAT WENT WELL? ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP BUILDING





(New) RECRUITMENT STRATEGY - HOME PARTIES

THREE KEY FINDINGS ADVANCING DR

- Use of racial/ethnic community specific liaisons provided faster access to key community leaders and utilized the formal and informal community infrastructures to inform each community about the need for foster/adoptive families.
- Family engagement and recruitment home parties (word of mouth) advances diligent recruitment.
- It takes time! We do know that the decision to apply to become a foster or adoptive parent is made over time. In a survey of 84 people who applied for a foster care license in 2009, 72% heard about the opportunity to apply for a license more than 1 year ago, compared with 5% who had heard about it in the last three months. This suggests that there is a gap between when most potential applicants first hear about the opportunity and the decision to act.

FINDINGS SUPPORTING RETENTION

- Good Customer Service and effective training by former or current foster/adoptive providers are two keys to retention. This also includes providing support as well as honest and regular communication with foster/adoptive families by agency staff.
- Foster/adoptive parents will attend training – and want additional training – if it is offered in a supportive, culturally responsive manner (i.e., providing child care and food) and community based location).

FINDINGS: PLACING TARGET POPULATION IN PERMANENT FAMILIES

- Recruiting and placing children of color with relatives is one effective way to assure pool of families reflect the children's ethnic/racial diversity.
- Good Customer Service/Culturally Sensitive are needed to achieve permanency in a timely manner.
- DR is required to be constant and ongoing to meet demand for permanent resource families due to turnover in the pool.

KEY COMPONENTS TO BE SUSTAINED: INTEGRATION INTO POLICY PRACTICE

- CUSTOMER SERVICE- STANDARDS
- CPP – PRACTICE AND POLICY
- LARS (PRE-LICENSING DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM)
- FOSTER/ADOPTIVE CUSTOMIZED CURRICULUM
- COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR DR
- YAG, DFPC, LATINO ADVISORS

ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED PROVIDING SUPPORT TO SUSTAIN COMPONENTS

- Planning for sustaining some components of the project occurred from the onset.
- Collaborative practice between front end and back end staff was fully implemented into day-to-day practice.
- Designed and implemented automated data collection system to track pre-licensing outcomes and analyze barriers.
- Met with Division Director – proposed key elements to be sustained and provided rationale.
- Followed up with Manager of Foster Care and Adoption to advocate for sustainability key items requiring funding.
- Created a customized curriculum for training foster/adoptive families. Met with staff from MN. Department of Human services (DHS) to discuss their interest in replicating the training curriculum statewide.
- Met with the MN. DHS to discuss their interest in ways to disseminate our youth's illustrated art and Tip Sheets for foster/adoptive parents and CW staff.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:



- Contact Carolyn Smith, Project Manager, at 651-266-4526 or via email at: carolyn.smith@co.ramsey.mn.us

Denver's Village

Resource Family Participation – *“Nothing About US Without US”*

- Focus Groups
- Committees (CSLT, KAAN, Advisory Committee, DCRRAAF)
 - Kinship Program
 - Recruitment, Training, and Certification

Community Engagement

- Relationship Building
- Responsiveness
 - Summits and Town Hall Meetings

Recruitment of Families

- CBRT Recruitment Events
 - Meet & Greets
 - Fosterware Parties
 - Neighborhood Events

What Went Well

Overall net increase of 101 resource family homes

Net increase by type

- Foster Families n=15
- Dual Licensed Families n=165
- Adoption Only n=370

Increased % of Foster/Dual Licensed Homes

- African American 16% → 25.6%
- Latino 19% → 21.5%

Expedited Adoption Project – 800+ by year's end

Child Specific Recruitment – 33 Waiting Children

Key Findings

Community Engagement

- Community Based Resource Teams
- Community Outreach Workers

Recruitment Strategies

- Meet & Greets
- Fosterware Parties
- Neighborhood Events

BRAND Yourself then PROMOTE Yourself

- Stand Up For Me
- www.standupforme.org – website
- Facebook/Twitter
- Stand Up For Me Hotline - 720.944.4000

Kinship Advocacy Advisory Network

- Kinship Unit
- Annual Kinship Celebration

Customer Service Leadership Team

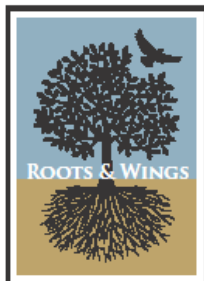
- Customer Service is a way of Life!
- Streamlining Certification Process

Key Strategies

Roots & Wings-Santa Cruz, CA

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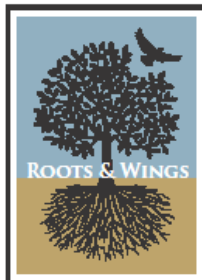
- What went well?
 - ▣ Community Engagement
 - Advisory Committee-including key staff, community partners, key stakeholders and resource families
 - Ad Hoc work groups-from members of the Advisory Committee
 - Systems Improvement Committee-incorporated key aspects of the initiative into our Systems Improvement Plan and reported progress to the Committee



Roots & Wings

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- What went well?
 - ▣ Community Engagement
 - Co-Presenters at recruitment presentations-from Advisory Committee and the other community members
 - Developed relationships with local businesses



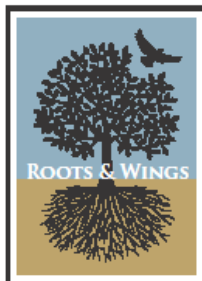
Roots & Wings

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□ What went well?

▣ Agency Involvement

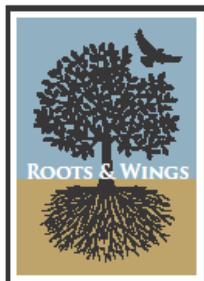
- Operations Meetings-bi-monthly meetings with key staff to communicate information and promote integration among Family and Children's Services and contracted staff.
- Permanency Workgroups/Trainings-involving all staff members
- Bi-Monthly Newsletter-informing staff on project accomplishments and results



Roots & Wings

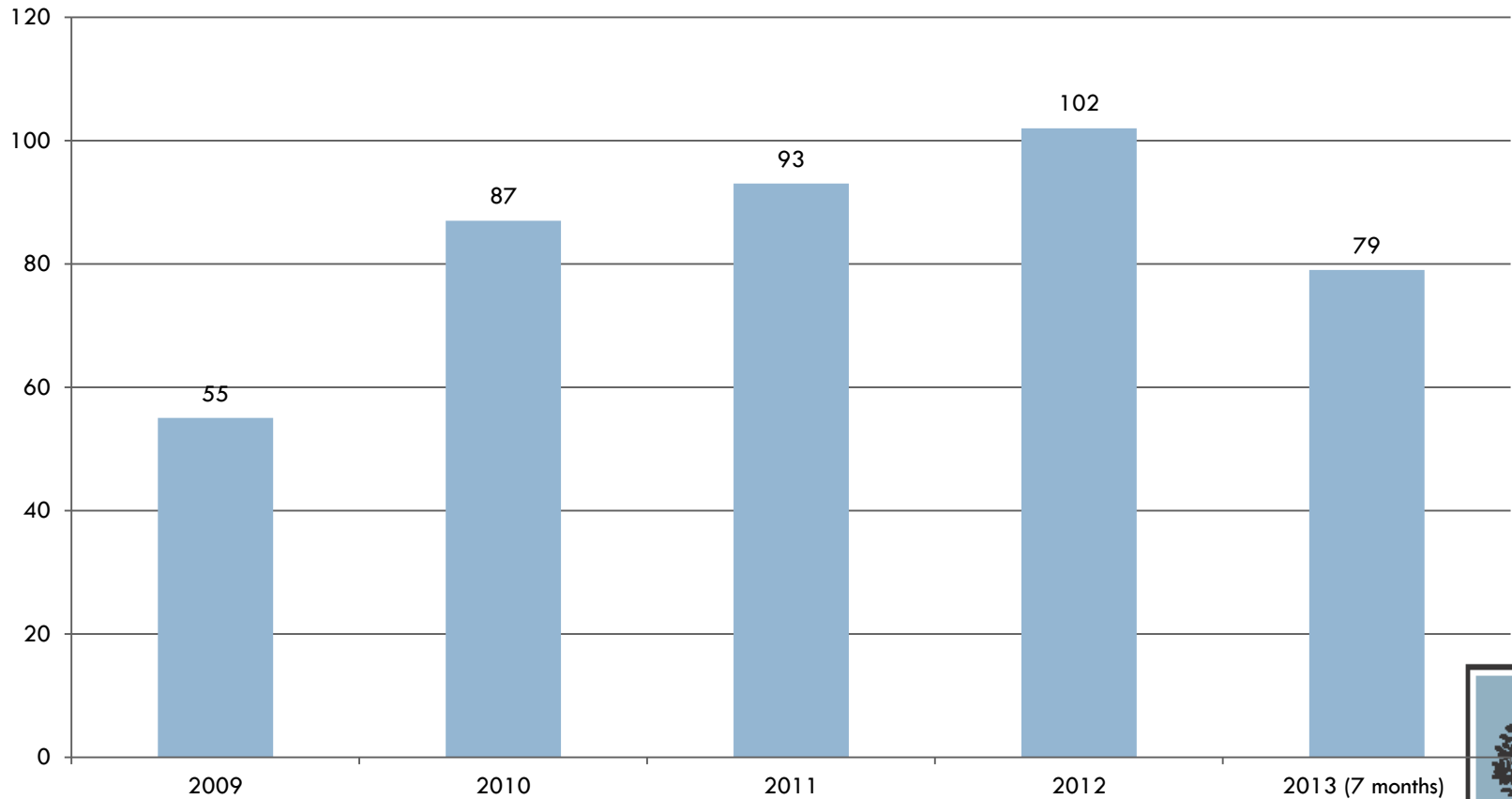
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- Key Findings-Diligent Recruitment
 - ▣ Increase in attendance at orientations
 - Orientations held in the community
 - Website redesigned
 - Incentive program for foster parents
 - Using connections for recruitment presentations



Households attending orientations by calendar year

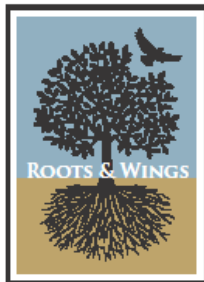
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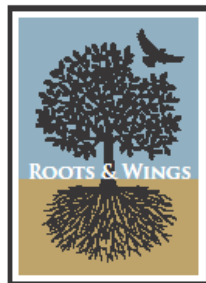
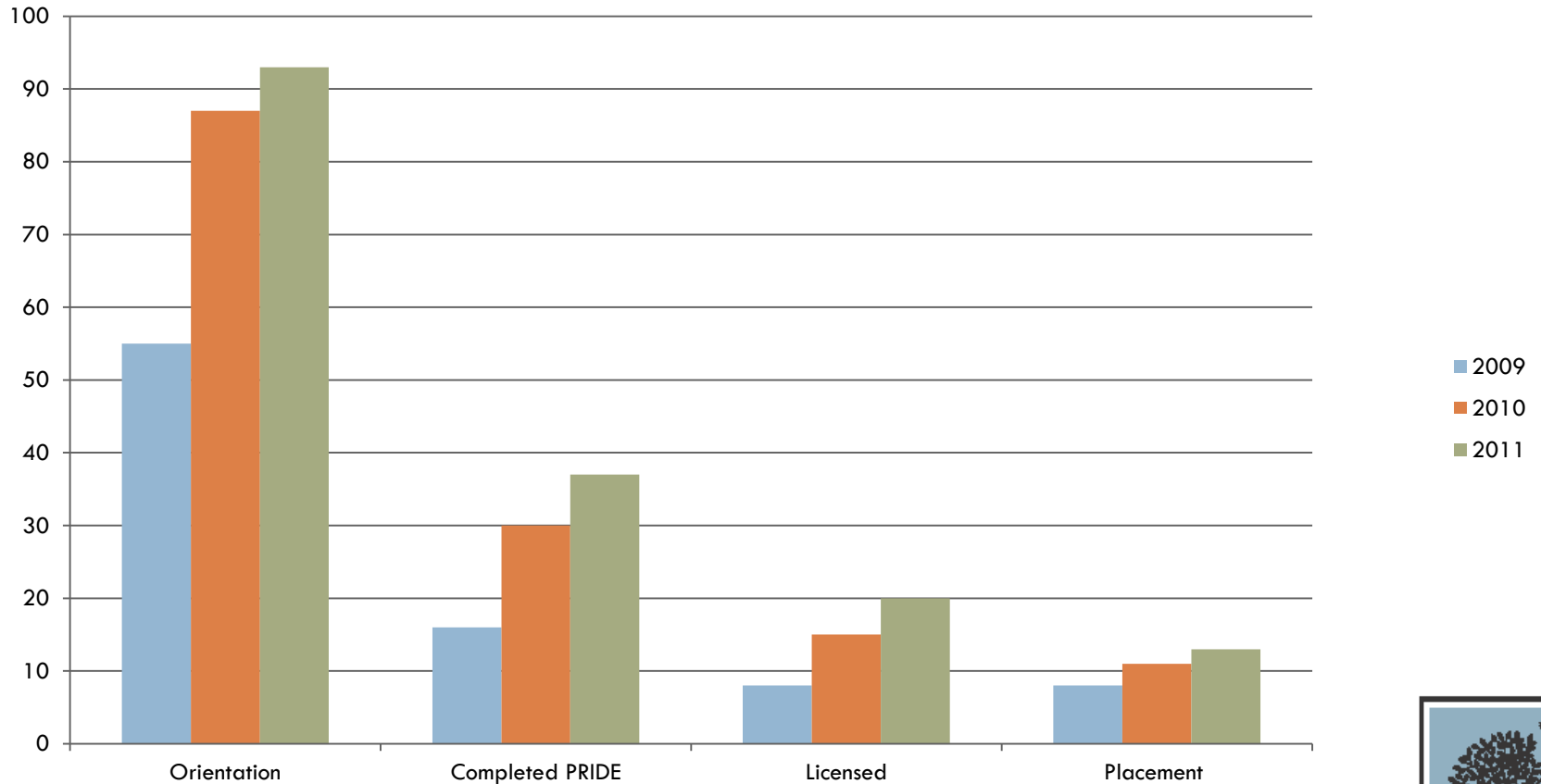
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- Key Findings-Diligent Recruitment
 - ▣ Increase in people processing through the licensing process
 - One point of contact
 - Foster Parent Cultivation Policy
 - Specialized support and one on one assistance



Heads-of-household processing through to licensure

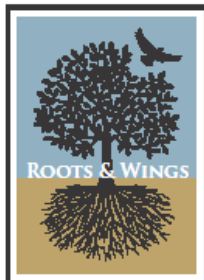
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Roots & Wings

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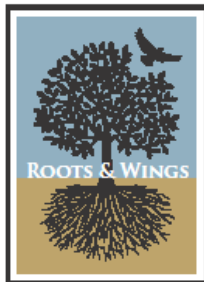
- Key Findings-Retention
 - ▣ Increase in resource parent satisfaction
 - Family Resource Liaisons located in Family Resource Centers supporting resource families by providing individualized assessment of needs, linkages to services and parenting support.



Roots & Wings

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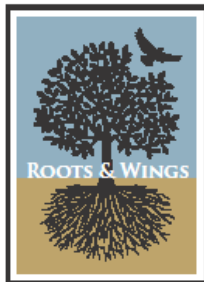
- Key Findings-Retention
 - ▣ Dramatic jump in resource parent satisfaction during the first year of implementation (according to our yearly resource parent satisfaction survey)
 - ▣ Satisfaction in most areas continues to be higher than in the baseline year of 2009



Roots & Wings

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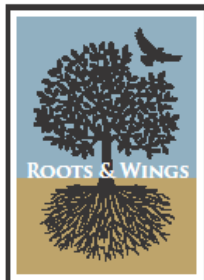
- Key Findings-Permanency
 - ▣ Permanency Partner conducting child specific recruitment with youth ages 11 and over who have been in care 18 months or longer and do not have a viable permanent plan
 - ▣ Permanency workgroups and trainings with staff and community stakeholders-developed a set of permanency guiding principles, had values discussions and emphasized the philosophy of working on permanency from the first day that children enter the child welfare system



Roots & Wings

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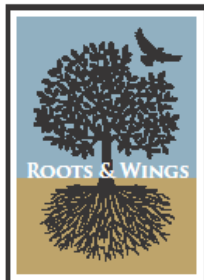
- Key Findings-Permanency
 - Video Project-incorporating the voices of youth into their child welfare records and ultimately into their recruitment efforts; helps prepare youth for permanency
 - Child Available-developed for all children/youth when services are terminated to their parents and no permanent plan is identified



Roots & Wings

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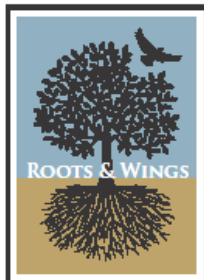
- Improvements since the implementation of Roots & Wings in long-term outcomes:
 - The percent of children in care 24+ months attaining a permanent home within 12 months
 - The percent of children ages 13 and older in care 24+ months attaining a permanent home within 12 months
 - Highest proportion of exits to a permanent home for youth ages 13-17 that has ever been achieved since measurement began in 1998
 - Highest number of adoptions this past year



Roots & Wings

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- Sustainability
 - ▣ Recruiter
 - ▣ Liaisons
 - Incorporated into the county budget
 - ▣ Permanency
 - Integrated into practice and policy
 - Restructuring our permanency services



Project Match Kentucky

DR1 Presentation

Project MA  **CH**
Making Appropriate & Timely Connections for Children

What WENT WELL: In General

- Positive relationships built within and outside the public CW agency
- Shared responsibility and accountability of caring for children in Out of Home Care
- Enhanced focus on permanency

What Went Well: Specific to Interventions

- Child Specific recruitment using the Family Finding Model.
- Alternative Caregiver Training for potential resource parents awaiting approval
- Mix and Match Meetings of public and private child welfare staff and community partners

Key findings

- Market segmentation data and the employment of diligent recruitment specialists yielded very few new homes to date.
- Significant variance in implementation of interventions and commitment to the project was observed across the four intervention regions

Preliminary Evaluation Findings

- Preliminary analyses of aggregate data indicators demonstrated a few statistically significant differences favoring the intervention regions
 - Perm 1 Children have permanency and stability
 - Perm 1B Quality of casework around placement stability
 - Permanency 1C % Children with a Permanency Goal
 - Number of new homes approved
 - Number of new homes approved within 0-6 mths
- Downward trends in formerly promising data expected due to significant decline in implementation activities over the final project year

Key Findings: Lessons Learned from Process Evaluation

- Sustained buy-in of high level leadership is critical and change in leadership typical in public child welfare can seriously impact implementation
- Changes in key project staff often results in a loss of project history, commitment and focus that is difficult to recover from.
- Projects should focus on one or at most two interventions—not five.

Key Components to Be Sustained

- Policy changes will be made to reflect promising practices learned through the following:
 - Family Finding
 - ACT
- Tools and training has been developed related to Market Segmentation and Diligent Recruitment for staff
- Some regions will integrate collaborative meetings modeled after Mix and Match