

# Welcome!

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# Support Matters: Strategies for Implementing Family Support Services

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Webinar | August 13, 2015

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*Family Support Team at AdoptUSKids*

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NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR  
**DILIGENT RECRUITMENT**  
*at AdoptUSKids*

# Welcome and Introductions

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Kathy Ledesma, Project Director  
AdoptUSKids

## Webinar Overview

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Jill Marshall May, Director

National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment at  
AdoptUSKids (NRCDR)

[jillmay@adoptex.org](mailto:jillmay@adoptex.org)



# Housekeeping

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- This webinar is 90 minutes long, including time at the end for questions and answers.
- We will record this webinar and have it available on the NRCDR website.
- Your lines will be muted during the presentation.
- This webinar is interactive—you can ask questions and interact with us using the chat function and by participating in the polls.
- We are seeking your feedback—there will be an evaluation at the end of the webinar.

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# Agenda

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- Welcome and introductions
- Planning for family support:
  - making the case for support services
  - assessing the community's needs
  - understanding types of support services
- Selected examples of programs
- Tribal family support services

## Agenda (cont.)

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- Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections
- Implementing family support services
- Resources to strengthen family support
- Questions and answers



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# Planning for Family Support and Selected Program Examples

Mary Boo  
Family Support Team  
AdoptUSKids

# Making the Case for Support Services

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Support services can:

- Help families understand the needs of children and youth who have experienced trauma and how they can meet them
- Help keep families together—preventing disruptions or moves
- Increase parenting skills and family functioning
- Help children and youth heal and reduce problem behaviors
- Enable parents to remain committed even when their children's issues continue
- Decrease isolation and stress—for parents, youth, and children

# Making the Case for Support Services

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Support services help administrators:

- Ensure safety, permanency, and well-being
- Recruit families for children in care and meet recruitment goals
- Keep families engaged in foster care or adoption
- Be responsible stewards of government funds

# Assessing the Community's Needs

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- There are different ways you can assess families' needs—  
surveys, focus groups of parents and youth
- Survey parents to help determine their needs, what services they are using and valuing, and what service gaps there are
- Seek community input about available services

# Types of Survey Questions

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- Specific issues or diagnoses the children or youth have
- How the family is functioning; what the stress points are
- What services the families need and are using; if they've helped
- What they've needed but not been able to find
- What they've used that hasn't been helpful

				If you <i>did</i> use the service, please rate it:		
	Didn't need or use	Needed service but it wasn't available	Needed service but didn't use it	Service was <i>helpful</i>	Service was neutral ( <i>didn't help and didn't hurt</i> )	Service was <i>harmful</i>
Counseling for child						
Counseling for family						
Marriage or family therapy						
Day treatment (mental health treatment for your child during the day at specialized location)						
Residential treatment or psychiatric facility						
Other out-of-home placement (like treatment foster care placement)						

# Focus Group Questions for Parents

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1. What are the top three challenges facing your adoptive, foster, or kinship family as you attempt to meet your child's needs?
2. What types of support or services have you used in the community?
3. Which support or services have been most helpful to your family? Why?
4. What support or services did you use that were not helpful? Why weren't they of use to your family?
5. What support or services have you needed but have not been able to access?
6. What barriers kept you from using those services?

# Focus Group Questions for Youth

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1. What are the three best things about your adoptive, foster, or kinship family?
2. What are the top three challenges you face as a child in foster care or a kinship placement, or as an adoptee?
3. What do you think would best help you face those challenges? Why?
4. What do you wish your adoptive, foster, or kinship care parent knew? How would that make a difference for you?
5. Are there programs or services that you think would help you or your whole family?
6. Do you have connections with other children and youth in adoption, foster care, or kinship care?



# Poll Question

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# Support Services—Types of Services

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Basic services:

- Child or youth assessment
- Information
- Navigation, advocacy, and referral
- Training and other development
- Birth family mediation and adoption search

# Support Services—Types of Services

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## Enhanced Services

- Peer support (parents and youth)
- Mentoring (parents and youth)
- Other services for children and youth
- Case management
- Educational support and advocacy
- Respite
- Camps or retreats
- Financial or material supports

# Support Services—Types of Services

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More intensive services:

- Therapeutic services, including in-home and community-based services and access to residential treatment
- Crisis intervention

# Poll Question

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## Selected Examples of Programs

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- Midwest Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition, Missouri
- Yakama Nation Kinship Support Program
- Placer County Permanency Support Services
- Seminole Tribe's Family Services Department

# Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Association

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Serves foster, adoptive, and kinship care families with:

- Advocacy and support
- Parent mentoring
- Youth mentoring
- Respite care
- Support groups
- Training
- Newsletter and email information
- Support with clothes, toys, school supplies, etc.

# Yakama Nation Kinship Support Program

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Serves children, youth, and caregivers in court-approved kinship care with:

- Support groups
- Kinship navigation and advocacy
- Caregiver events and respite
- Camps
- Youth activities
- Material supports
- Educational support
- Lending library



# Placer County Permanency Support Services

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Serves families of children and youth adopted from foster care or placed in kinship care in Placer County, California with:

- Individual therapy
- Information and referral
- School consultation
- Skills training and coaching
- Crisis services

## Seminole Tribe of Florida

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Serves children in out-of-home care who have an open case with Florida DCF with:

- Assessments through Children’s Center for Diagnostics
- Partnership between Family Services Department, Health Department, and Education Department to meet children’s needs
- Enhanced case management
- Positive Indian Parenting curriculum

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## **Tribal Family Support Services**

Rebekah “Becky” Main  
Tribal Child Welfare Specialist  
National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment at  
AdoptUSKids

# Family Support Services for Native Children

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- Increase stability for adoptive, foster, and kinship care families
- Enhance families' ability to meet their children's varied needs
- Ensure children have access to needed, culturally relevant services

# How Support Services Encourage Recruitment

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- Recruitment
- Developing resource families
- Supporting resource families

# Enhancing Partnerships and Engagement with Agencies Within and Outside of a Tribe

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- Adjusting services and support depending on the family's background and needs
- Identifying and utilizing resources
- Navigating opportunities for partnership

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# Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections

Deb Finley  
APAC Program Director  
Children's Aid Society

Connie Rogers  
Program Supervisor  
Alabama DHR, Family Services Division, Office of Adoption

# APAC— Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections

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CHILDREN'S AID  
SOCIETY



NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR  
**DILIGENT RECRUITMENT**  
*at AdoptUSKids*



# APAC— Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections

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- Created in 2001 as a collaborative effort between the Alabama Department of Human Resources and Children’s Aid Society
- Pre/post adoption services to support and maintain families and help prevent disruptions



CHILDREN'S AID  
SOCIETY



# The People APAC Serves

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<p style="text-align: center;">Adoptive Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DHR</li><li>• Private</li><li>• International</li><li>• Kinship guardianship</li><li>• Adult adoptees</li><li>• Siblings</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Foster Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Waiting children</li><li>• DHR</li><li>• Therapeutic foster care</li><li>• Residential group care</li></ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">Professionals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social workers</li><li>• Teachers</li><li>• Counselors</li><li>• Other service professionals</li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Courts</li><li>• Schools</li><li>• Agencies</li></ul>

## Services Currently Available

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- Individual family counseling
- Adoptive family support groups
- Adoptive parent mentoring
- Educational trainings
- Lending library
- Special events for adoptive families
- Camp APAC
- Recruitment of adoption resources for children with special needs

# Information and Support

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**“If we don’t have the answer, we’ll help you find it!”**

Statewide help line: 1-866-803-2722

Statewide inquiry line: 1-866-4AL-KIDS

Website: [www.childrensaid.org/apac](http://www.childrensaid.org/apac)

Regional offices

Quarterly newsletters

# Adoptive Family Support Groups

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**“No one understands like another adoptive parent!”**

- Licensed therapists facilitate AFGs with an adoptive parent co-facilitator
- Separate groups for adults and children
- Education and social interaction
- Sharing experiences and receiving support
- Children form relationships that normalize adoption
- Childcare provided
- Meals provided for the whole family

# Introducing Our New Facebook Group! APAC Adoption Support Network

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This closed (private) Facebook group, sponsored by APAC and Children's Aid Society, is available for all adoptive parents living in Alabama.

**For more details, visit our website:**

**[www.childrensaid.org/apac](http://www.childrensaid.org/apac)**

## Free Family Counseling Sessions Available for:

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- Families with a child who was legally adopted—whether through DHR or privately
- Families with a child in foster care placed in the home with an active plan for adoption by that family
- Families approved for adoption, awaiting child placement

# Family Adjustment / Crisis Counseling

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- Marital adjustment to adoption
- Children's adjustment to permanency
- History of abuse or neglect
- Behavior management problems
- Outside stressors on the family
- Questions about birth family
- Grief and loss issues
- Problems with school, friends, and family
- Threat of disruption



## APAC Mentors

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- New adoptive parents matched with more experienced mentors
- Focus on rural areas that cannot easily access adoptive family support groups

# Regional Special Events

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- Informal networking opportunities for adoptive families
- Increased awareness of APAC services

Examples: Holiday gatherings, picnics, family fun days, brief respite (every parent needs it!!)



# Lending Library Resources: Topics

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## “NO late fees – Postage PAID!”

- Alcohol- and drug-exposed children
- Before you adopt
- Birth families
- Child abuse and trauma
- Children’s books and games
- Developmental disorders
- Grief, loss, and separation
- Interracial adoption issues
- Kinship care
- Open adoption
- Single parenting



# Poll Question

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# Educational Trainings

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For parents and professionals (social workers, counselors, teachers):

- Strengthening the Family Connections
- Grief, Loss, and Attachment
- Let's Talk About It (Adoption)
- Impact of Trauma on Child Development
- Stress Management
- Listening to and Learning from Adult Adoptees
- Secondhand Trauma
- The Sexualized Child

# Academic Accreditation and Trained Therapist Network

All Social Work and Counseling CEUs will be emailed within two weeks of a training event.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CONTACT VERIFICATION	
<i>TO BE COMPLETED BY SOCIAL WORK LICENSEE</i>	
LICENSEE'S NAME:	_____
MAILING ADDRESS:	_____ _____
SOCIAL WORK LICENSE NUMBER:	_____ LICENSEE'S SIGNATURE: _____
EXPIRATION DATE OF LICENSE:	_____ X _____
<i>TO BE COMPLETED BY INSTRUCTOR, OR SPONSORING AGENCY/GROUP</i>	
On this date, _____ (specify calendar date) I certify that the Social Work Licensee named above attended a workshop, program, or inservice training session or completed a course of study on _____ (specify topic covered, or program title),	
for a total of _____ contact hour(s) of instruction – not including registration time, refreshment break time, or meal break time.	
I further certify that the topic(s) covered on this date is/are relevant to social work practice and is/are not related to the specific administrative procedures of any single agency or organization.	
NAME OF INSTRUCTOR (please print) Or AGENCY SPONSOR/REPRESENTATIVE: _____	
TITLE OF INSTRUCTOR/SPONSOR/REPRESENTATIVE: _____	
SIGNATURE OF INSTRUCTOR/SPONSOR/RESPRESENTATIVE: _____	
X _____	
IF LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER, SPECIFY LICENSE NUMBER: _____	
THANK YOU!	
<small>THIS FORM SHOULD BE RETAINED BY THE SOCIAL WORK LICENSEE AND SUBMITTED WITH RENEWAL APPLICATION FORM AND FEE AT THE TIME OF THE NEXT RENEWAL APPLICATION. THIS FORM MAY BE REPRODUCED LOCALLY. EXTRA COPIES OF THE FORM MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE BOARD OFFICE AT 334/242-5860, or by our Web page: <a href="http://www.socialwork.alabama.gov">www.socialwork.alabama.gov</a></small>	

# Camp APAC

**Our most popular annual special event!**



Adoptees, siblings, and waiting children ages 9-18 get the ideal summer camp experience, with the safety of APAC staff who understand adoption issues. Fees are waived for DHR associated families.

# Recruitment for Forever Homes for Waiting Children

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Special needs definition:

1. Children five or over whose parental rights are terminated
2. Sibling group of two or more being placed together
3. Children with significant emotional, behavioral, physical, mental, and/or other cognitive special needs.

How to refer families that **ONLY** want to adopt special needs children

(and not foster):

1-866-4AL-KIDS



# Adoptive Home Resources for Waiting Children

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- Recruitment response team
- Group preparation and selection training (GPS) for “adoption only” families
- Home study preparation
- Matching assistance for families/children
- Support throughout journey
- Child-specific caseload recruiter

# Staffing

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## Post-adoption staff

- 14 full-time, 3 part-time

## Pre-adoption staff

- Equivalent of 6.5 full-time employees

# Outcomes and Evaluations

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Based on 2012-2013

- 13,505 units of service  
(4,444 clients)

Post-adoption support

- 12,070 units of service  
(1,371 foster and adoptive parents served)

Pre-adoption supports

- 1,435 units of service  
(283 clients – 178 families)

# AFG Outcomes

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## Adoptive family groups

- 2546 session units provided
- 335 parents in adult support groups
- 268 youth in child support groups
- 224 children in childcare socialization

93% of adoptive family members attending an adoptive family support group and responding to a survey reported receiving emotional support and improved family functioning as a result of attending an adoptive family support group.

# Challenges

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- Reaching families to inform them of services
- Lack of understanding of service limitations
- Cutbacks due to economic constraints
- Impact of contract cycles
- Geographic factors

# Connect with Us

From [www.childrensaid.org](http://www.childrensaid.org) you can connect with CAS on



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# Implementing Family Support Services

# Partnering with Community-Based Organizations

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## Types of partnerships

- Public/public
- Public/private

## Benefits of partnerships, especially public/private

- Shared responsibility
- Better ideas and reach
- Specific roles for each partner
- Increased likelihood of sustainability



# Poll Question

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# Steps to Building Partnerships

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- Know your goals
- Determine structure
- Identify partners
- Establish trust, vision, values
- Clarify roles and expectations
- Nurture the partnership

# Considerations in Implementation—Planning

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- Creating an implementation team, including those doing recruitment
- Addressing implementation drivers
  - Competency
  - Organization
  - Leadership

# Considerations in Implementation— Reaching Families

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Assessing readiness to engage families in various areas by asking questions about different aspects of the work:

- Administration and program planning
  - Is there a written strategy to engage families?
  - Do staff and volunteers value the role of parents and youth?
  - Have staff and volunteers received training in key issues in adoption, foster care, and kinship care?
  - Have leaders talked about how supporting families can help meet recruitment goals?

# Considerations in Implementation— Reaching Families (cont.)

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## Outreach

- Are there varied outreach strategies?
- Do parents and youth who have been affected do outreach?
- Does the agency have a strategy to reach families early (before placement, but definitely before crisis)?

# Considerations in Implementation— Reaching Families (cont.)

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## Service delivery

- Do service providers include parents and youth who experienced adoption, foster care, and kinship care?
- Is there a formal process to assess families' strengths and needs?
- Are services offered at flexible times or locations ? Do they begin from the first call and continue as needed?
- Are services designed to meet changing and unique needs?

## *Outreach*

<b>Family Engagement Strategy</b>	<b>Rating or Response</b>
Staff encourage families to join support groups or participate in other services before a placement is finalized.	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement
Outreach is conducted by parents or youth who have personal experience with adoption, foster care, or kinship care.	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement
The agency has a successful strategy to reach families before they are in crisis.	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement
Service providers have access to the names of all foster care, kinship foster care, guardianship families, and families receiving adoption assistance to conduct program outreach.	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement
The organization offers regular social events to families to keep them connected to the service provider and one another.	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #00aaff;"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Needs improvement

# Poll Question

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# Considerations in Implementation— Evaluation

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- Tracking services
- Evaluating outcomes
  - Assessment tools
  - Collection of case data
  - Surveys of parents and youth
  - Focus groups
  - Randomized control groups
- Assessing program operation and strategy
- Sharing results with the people served

## Contact the NRCDR

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To learn more about how we can help:

[www.nrcdr.org](http://www.nrcdr.org)

[nrcdr@adoptuskids.org](mailto:nrcdr@adoptuskids.org)

(303) 726-0198

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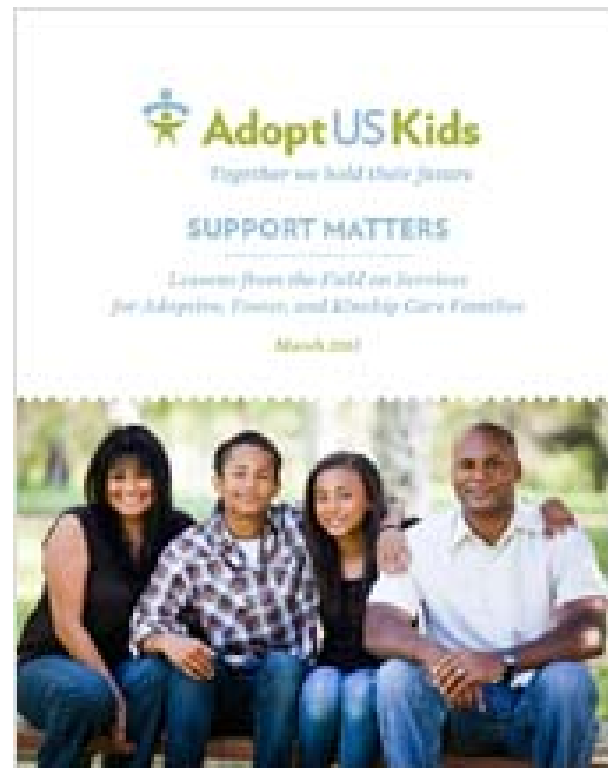
# Resources to Strengthen Family Support

# Publications

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*Support Matters: Lessons Learned from the Field on Services for Adoptive, Foster and Kinship Families*

[http://nr cdr.org/\\_assets/files/AUSK/support-matters/support-matters-resource-guide.pdf](http://nr cdr.org/_assets/files/AUSK/support-matters/support-matters-resource-guide.pdf)



# Customer Service Resources

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- *Using Customer Service Concepts to Enhance Recruitment and Retention Practices*

[http://nr cdr.org/\\_assets/files/using-customer-service-concepts-to-enhance-recruitment-and-retention-practices.pdf](http://nr cdr.org/_assets/files/using-customer-service-concepts-to-enhance-recruitment-and-retention-practices.pdf)

- Archived webinar: *Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Family Engagement: Using Customer Service Concepts to Recruit and Develop Resource Families*

<http://www.nr cdr.org/news-and-e-notes/story?k=customer-service-webinar>

# Data Resources

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- *Data-driven Recruitment: Key Data Elements on Foster and Adoptive Families*

[http://www.nrcdr.org/\\_assets/files/NRCDR-org/data-driven-recruitment-110514.pdf](http://www.nrcdr.org/_assets/files/NRCDR-org/data-driven-recruitment-110514.pdf)

- Archived webinar: *Data-driven Diligent Recruitment: Partnering and Prioritizing to Strengthen Your System's Use of Data*

<http://www.nrcdr.org/news-and-e-notes/story?k=NRCDR-Webinar>

# Additional Resources

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- These and other resources available on the event webpage for this webinar  
<http://nr cdr.org/news-and-e-notes/story?k=support-matters-webinar>
- Many more resources on recruiting, developing, and supporting families on our website  
[www.nr cdr.org](http://www.nr cdr.org)
- Upcoming webinar on diligent recruitment implementation on Thursday, September 24.  
Save the date! Details coming soon!

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# Questions and Answers





# Adopt US Kids

*Together we hold their future*

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