

The Collaboration to AdoptUsKids

Training & Technical Assistance E-Notes

August, 2008

Recruitment Works/Retention Matters

The Value of Adoption Subsidies: Helping Children Find Permanent Families is a new publication from North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC), authored by Madelyn Freundlich.

The report states this premise early on:

“Adoption subsidies make it possible for children with special needs to be adopted by loving families who require additional resources to help them thrive. Subsidies also save public dollars because adoption is less expensive than long-term foster care and results in positive outcomes that reduce youth’s need for public services.”

It goes on to outline:

- How subsidies help children find and stay in permanent families
- How subsidies enable families to adopt
- How investing in supported adoption helps public agencies
- Reforms that are needed to expand adoption subsidies and better serve vulnerable children

Interjurisdictional Placement Services

Placement of Children With Relatives: Summary of State Laws is now available from the Child Welfare Information Gateway. It includes information on State laws concerning preferences to relatives, financial support and adoption by relatives. Relevant statutes for each State are individually summarized.

Access the document at

http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/placementall.pdf

The full report can be downloaded at

<http://www.nacac.org/adoptionssubsidy/valueofsubsidies.pdf>

Tips & Tools

A helpful tool for prospective resource families or anyone wanting to better understand the language of adoption services can be found in the *Adoption Glossary* on the website of the National Adoption Center at <http://www.adopt.org/assembled/glossary.html>.

The glossary includes words and phrases that may be encountered in child-specific listings, recruitment materials, policy publications and other types of communication. It begins at the start of the alphabet with “ADD” and continues on through “wrongful adoption”, providing clear definitions of terminology found in professional language and jargon.

T/TA Highlights

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A Note from Sharri

Hello!

I hope you are having a wonderful summer thus far, and have taken some time to slow down and have some fun. In our state, summer is almost over – as marked by the start of school in two weeks. It seems the older I get, the faster time seems to go. In fact, I realized recently that I had passed the six month mark of being in this position, and used the occasion to reflect on the work of AdoptUsKids T/TA and our priorities for the coming months.

As a result, one commitment I made is to get the word out more about the ways in which AdoptUsKids T/TA can be of service to Tribes and States. As part of the *Children’s Bureau Training and Technical Assistance Network*, we are ready to assist you with all needs related to recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families.

This spring, AdoptUsKids assisted New Jersey with its comprehensive initiative to improve recruitment and retention of resource families for sibling groups. Taking advantage of the “breathing room” created by a significant net increase of resource families during 2007, the State wanted to better target its efforts to ensure that siblings remain together in resource family care.

The first AdoptUsKids site visit consisted of a meeting with key stakeholders to develop a better shared understanding of New Jersey’s strengths and needs in relation to resource families for siblings. Attendees included Resource Parents, Recruiters, Area Resource Family Specialists, Trainers, Licensing Staff, Supervisors and Managers. The group was enthusiastic and productive and seemed to truly welcome the opportunity to come together around a topic about which they had much shared passion.

The information from the first session was utilized to fine-tune two follow-up sessions which occurred the following month. Offered to key staff and resource parent advocates in two different areas of the state, these sessions were designed to build capacity to arrange and support joint placements for siblings. State administrators presented the revised State sibling policy, including services and financial supports available to resource families of siblings. A new sibling recruitment campaign was previewed and very well received. AdoptUsKids consultant Maureen Heffernan provided the group with information on sibling relationships as well as practical strategies to achieve joint placements, including the short and long-term supports needed by resource families. The attendees left with many concrete resources as well as new knowledge and expanded professional networks. We are looking forward to checking in with New Jersey over the next few months to see how this important work is progressing.

Recruitment and Retention Network

Resource Family Recruitment and Retention is the featured topic in the most recent issue of *Training Matters*, a publication the North Carolina Division of Social Services Family Support and Child Welfare Services Statewide Training Partnership.

The newsletter identifies North Carolina and national sources for training, written guides and tools, as well as resource organizations including AdoptUsKids. A detailed overview of core recruitment and retention strategies is also included.

Access the publication here: http://www.trainingmatters-nc.org/tm_v9n3/TMv9n3.pdf .

Please send us your stories and ideas that have shown results in recruitment, retention and interjurisdictional placements. Email your offerings to sharri@adoptex.org.

FYI

How the Child Welfare System Works is a new factsheet available from the Child Welfare Information Gateway, including a clear one-page flowchart diagram of system functions that might be especially helpful to new resource families. The publication can be found at <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/cpswork.pdf>.

For starters, we would be glad to help you with the development of the upcoming Title IV-B Child & Family Service Recruitment & Retention Plans. And as always, we are available to partner with you to address issues related to your Child and Family Services Review and Program Improvement Plan.

Please don’t be constrained by these focus areas, however. Feel free to request technical assistance in any area of need you can identify that is related to the recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families. It’s not even necessary that you have a specific service already in mind. Give me a call or send an email with your thoughts and we can work together to customize an approach for your situation. I can be reached at (303) 990-3750 or by email at sharri@adoptex.org.

Click here for a flyer with more information on the Training and Technical Assistance Services available through AdoptUsKids.

I look forward to hearing from you and thanks for reading!

Sharri Black
T/TA Director for AdoptUsKids



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For more information about AdoptUsKids Training and Technical Assistance Services, contact Sharri Black at (303) 990-3750 or email sharri@adoptex.org.

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