

The Collaboration to AdoptUsKids

Training & Technical Assistance E-Notes

March, 2008

E-Notes Survey

We are seeking feedback to make E-Notes a more effective tool for you, our readers, as well as to highlight what you like about E-Notes. Our evaluators are interested in getting as much feedback as possible, so please follow the link below to access a brief, automated reader survey. With your feedback, we can make E-Notes even more useful for you and your colleagues!

You can access the survey by clicking the following link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=OccGqe6Z_2b619nlP0IX8_2fmQ_3d_3d

Our lead evaluator, Dr. Ruth McRoy, and her research team at the University of Texas will be compiling the survey responses as part of the ongoing evaluation of AdoptUsKids. Your response will be very much appreciated, and we'll share survey results in a future issue of E-Notes.

Recruitment Works/Retention Matters

The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute has released *Adoptive Parent Preparation Project Phase I: Meeting The Mental Health and Developmental Needs of Adopted Children*. Authored by David Brodzinsky, the publication represents the initial phase of a long-term project to address best-practice standards for the preparation and education of adoptive parents.

Key recommendations as excerpted from the policy brief include:

- ▮ *More information about adoption and foster care should be incorporated into professionals' graduate training programs, and better continuing-education opportunities should be developed.*
- ▮ *Professionals should provide parent training/education both before and after the adoption; those who cannot offer such services themselves should provide appropriate referrals to their clients.*
- ▮ *Professionals should provide a balanced, realistic view of adoption - focusing on appropriate skills and expectations generally, and on the unique needs of the child to be adopted in particular.*
- ▮ *Because much of the current post-adoption counseling comes through community-based mental health professionals, they should receive better training in areas related to adoption.*

The brief also makes recommendations regarding content areas for adoptive parent preparation and education.

The publication may be downloaded at

http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/publications/2008_02_Parent_Preparation.pdf

Contents:

[E-Notes Survey](#)
[Recruitment Works/
Retention Matters](#)
[Inter-jurisdictional Services](#)
[Tips & Tools](#)
[T/TA Highlights](#)
[R&R Network](#)
[FYI](#)
[Subscribe or Forward](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Print This Issue](#)



A Note From Sharri

Hello Everyone!

This month, I'd like to introduce you to the other part of the AdoptUsKids T/TA team, and give her an opportunity to share. Tava Serpan began as the Project Director of T/TA for AdoptUsKids on February 4th, 2008. Tava is also the Vice President of The Education Center at The Adoption Exchange in Colorado. Welcome Tava! You'll find a note from Tava below.

Until next month,
Sharri

Sharri Black
Training and Technical Assistance
Director for AdoptUsKids

Inter-jurisdictional Placement Services

A great new resource for understanding the recruitment process in every State has been added to the AdoptUsKids website. In addition to some general "how-to's" for prospective resource parents, the page includes an interactive national map, providing a quick link to details for each State. Each of the AUSK Recruitment Response Teams (RRTs) have provided the content for their own State page, and will provide updates as needed.

Information that is available for every State includes recruitment contact information; licensing requirements; costs; parent support groups; agency and orientation information; data on children in care and waiting for adoption; and upcoming events. Follow this link to visit the new page:

<http://www.adoptuskids.org/resourceCenter/rrtPackets/chooseState.aspx>

Tips & Tools

Permanency for Foster Children: There's No Place Like Home is the name of a website operated by the Sacramento (California) County Department of Health and Human Services to educate youth, family members, other caring adults and professionals about options for permanency. The site contains links to definitions of permanency; youth permanency talking points; a young person's perspective on permanency; program examples and many useful resources.

The web address is <http://www.sacdhs.com/article.asp?ContentID=1755>

T/TA Highlights

AdoptUsKids conducted initial training and technical assistance (T/TA) sessions in January to a group of approximately 30 Maryland stakeholders from across the State, including foster and adoption staff, recruiters and supervisors, State level administrative personnel and representatives from the Maryland Foster Parent Association and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The work included the following:

- Review and discussion of Maryland's "1000 by 10 Plan" recruitment and retention goals (this is Maryland's plan to increase the number of foster homes by 1,000 by the year 2010);
- Review of promising practices in targeted recruitment, including use of marketing segmentation as a tool to enhance targeted recruitment and messaging efforts;
- Branding, messaging and presentation of examples of using these methods in foster care and adoption resource parent recruitment, including the AdoptUsKids Ad Campaign and other strategies;
- Discussion about how local offices could incorporate targeted recruitment and customer service strategies to enhance practice and outcomes;
- Discussion regarding AdoptUsKids T/TA services including help with meeting CFSR and PIP goals and establishing Child and Family Service Plan Recruitment and Retention goals and strategies; and, also, discussion about how these services can be coordinated with efforts of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's in Maryland;
- Discussion regarding using AdoptUsKids Ads, Recruitment Response Teams, the Website, Parent Group mini-grants, respite care initiatives and other T/TA services.

Throughout the T/TA sessions, there was lively discussion and sharing of promising practices between and among the regions of the State. It was clear from the discussions and comments from stakeholders that recruitment and retention staff could benefit from sharing their promising practices, networking and receiving periodic training at regular intervals. AdoptUsKids T/TA staff and consultants participating in the sessions were facilitators Judith and John McKenzie, Tava Serpan and Sharri Black.



Tava Serpan

Hi!

I appreciate the opportunity to say hello to you through E-Notes. Although my role with T/TA will be more behind the scenes, I want you to know of my commitment to our mutual work toward making family a reality for every child. In order for this commitment to be fulfilled, it is important for Sharri and I to be in partnership with you.

Recently, a state program manager shared some ways we could better assist states; we are now looking for the best way to incorporate her suggestions.

Your voice is important. We want, and need to hear from you. Speaking of which..., the survey we mentioned in last month's E-Notes is still open, and we would very much appreciate you taking a few minutes to fill it out. As Sharri said last month, we want E-Notes to be relevant to your needs; this survey will help us do that. Thanks so much!

Tava



Subscribe or Forward

Please help us share E-Notes with others by forwarding this issue, or by visiting the [T/TA website](#) to access our sign-up form.

Contact Us

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

Print This Issue

For a printer-friendly pdf version of E-Notes, [click here!](#)

For a printer-friendly text version, [click here!](#)

Recruitment and Retention Network

Building on the experience and talents of its adoptive parent members, Together as Adoptive Parents, Inc. (TAP), a Pennsylvania support group, is now working to recruit families for waiting children. TAP has begun a partnership with Three Rivers Adoption Council (TRAC) to recruit 25 families to adopt youth age 10 or older from the foster care system. Executive Director Phyllis Steven reports that TAP is planning to host 5-6 recruitment activities monthly and the members are very encouraged by initial response to their efforts.

For more information, contact Phyllis Stevens at 215.256.0669 or at taplink@comcast.net. (E-Notes readers may also know Phyllis through her work as Technical Assistance consultant for both AdoptUsKids and the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption.)

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

Orphan Foundation Scholarships

The Orphan Foundation of America, which administers the Casey Family Scholars program, is now accepting applications for scholarships for the 2008-2009 academic year. Scholarships up to \$10,000 per year are available to eligible former foster youth who are pursuing postsecondary education. The deadline for the first part of the application process is March 31. Details and applications can be found at <https://scholarships.orphan.org/index.shtml>.