

Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan

The Division of Children and Family Services believes that every child deserves a safe, stable, and nurturing family every day. To that end, the Division is committed to recruiting an array of diverse foster homes that can successfully meet the needs of children in foster care until they can achieve permanency.

At present, the greatest need for foster homes include:

- Parents willing to foster youth ages 10-17 will giving them opportunities for normalcy, particularly given feedback from the Youth Advisory Board regarding need for foster homes for teenagers and increased movement to less restrictive, family-like settings as a result of Family First Prevention Services Act;
- Parents willing to foster children with special health care needs and developmental delays, particularly given increased movement to less restrictive, family-like settings as a result of Family First Prevention Services Act;
- Parents willing to foster sibling groups to help the state preserve sibling connections that are so vital to children’s well-being;
- Parents willing to learn and understand the impact of trauma on children.

Strategy	Action Steps	Responsible Person or Team	Start Date
A. Increase Relative Placements			
	1. Continue to monitor and ensure relative placements are happening at the time of removal.	Executive Staff	Ongoing
	2. Enhance the "family finding" practices of relatives and fictive kin for children entering foster care	Kinship Connect Coordinator and Assistant Director of Community Services	July, 2019

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3. Explore further supports to enhance relative and fictive kin families once the child is placed (provisional or approved relative families)

B. Recruitment for Targeted Population

1. Utilize consultant for focus groups to gather information from current foster families to enhance caring for teens.	Program Administrator and Foster Care Manager	Ongoing
2. Increase the youth voice.	Program Administrator	Ongoing
3. Assess Demographics for the needs in each area/county for resource homes.	Placement Support and Community Outreach Unit	Ongoing
4. Continue to collaborate on Immerse Host Homes for teens.	Foster Care Manager	July, 2019
5. Increase collaboration with Private License Agencies	Foster Care Manager	Ongoing
6. Increase collaboration with Therapeutic Foster Care Placements specifically focused on older youth with complex behaviors.	Specialized Placement Unit	Ongoing
7. Collaborate with Project Zero to continue the Arkansas Heart Gallery and Short Films to increase awareness for target populations.	Adoption Manager	Ongoing
8. Collaborate with Office of Development and Training to align strategies for Foster and Adoptive Recruitment Strategies	CIU Manager	July, 2019
9. Collaborate with Placement and Residential Licensing Unit to distribute information on all child placement agencies, including location and hours of services, to assure that all prospective foster/	Program Administrator and Foster Care Manager	October, 2019

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adoptive parents have access to agencies that license/approve foster/adoptive parents.

C. Increase Community Partnerships through Collaboration			
	1. Share monthly data to inform partners on DCFS needs.	Foster Care Manager	Ongoing
	2. Continue management meetings with community partners.	Foster Care and CIU Manager	Ongoing
	3. Support and develop relationships at the county level with community partners.	Resource Supervisors and Foster Care Manager	Ongoing
D. Streamline the application process for Resource Applicants			
	1. CIU Pilot to Open Homes within Lean Six Sigma Goal.	CIU	Ongoing
	2. Streamline process for applicants to enroll and become CPR/First Aid Certified.	CIU Manager	July, 2019
E. Training			
	1. Develop and implement training curricula for Resource/Adoption/CES staff to include working with diverse communities including cultural, racial, and socio-economic variations and more information and examples of biological/foster connections.	Foster Care/Adoption and CIU Managers	July, 2019
	2. Monitor and enhance continuing education for Resource Parents by attending PRIDE sessions to increase understanding of participant needs and to assess Division representation/messaging during PRIDE.	Foster Care Manager, Training Skills Development Team, DCFS Permanency Planning Team	Ongoing

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3. Hold Resource and Adoption Training Bi-Annually	Foster Care Manager and Adoption Managers	December, 2019
4. Develop and implement a training curriculum specific for Relative and Fictive Kin Resource Homes	Foster Care Manager and Program Administrator	July, 2019
5. Strengthen approval process for Relative and Fictive Kin Resource Homes	Kinship Connect Coordinator, Assistant Director of Community Services, and Foster Care Manager	January, 2020

F. Communication Platform

1. Review and Enhance the www.fosterarkansas.org website to reflect ARCCC comprehensive information about the need for resource families and volunteers	CHRIS Team, Foster Care Manager, Adoption Manager, DCFS Community Services	Ongoing
2. Establish consistent messaging about DCFS needs	DCFS and Communications Team	Ongoing

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	3. Develop a platform for positive messages for teens in foster care.	DCFS and Communications Team	Ongoing
	4. Develop a recruitment table that has consistency statewide and offers materials in Spanish and Marshallese	CIU Manager	Ongoing
G. Retention and Support of Resource Families			
	1. Increase Communication from Central Office to Resource Families through monthly emails	Foster Care Manager	Ongoing
	2. Host Annual Resource Parent of the Year Banquet	Foster Care Manager and Communications Team	Ongoing
	3. Assess the Foster Parent Portal for continued enhancements.	CHRIS Team and Foster Care Manager	Ongoing
	4. Maintain the Foster Parent Advisory Council	Foster Care Manager	Ongoing
	5. Monitor and expand the Little Rock Angels Program	Foster Care Manager	Ongoing

Demographic Information on Children who Entered Foster Care between 7/1/2018 and 5/31/2019

Gender of All Children who Entered Care

Gender	N	%
Male	1,498	50.2
Female	1,484	49.8
Total Entries into Care	2,982	100.0

Age Range	N	%
0 to 1	804	27.0
2 to 5	776	26.0
6 to 9	494	16.6
10 to 13	473	15.9
14+	435	14.6
Total Entries into Care	2,982	100.0

Race/Ethnicity	N	%
WHITE	1927	64.8
BLACK	524	17.8
MULTIPLE	313	9.1
HISPANIC	189	7.1
NAPI	10	0.4
ASIAN	5	0.1

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AIAN	1	0.1
UTD	13	0.6
Total Entries into Care	2,982	100

Removal Reason Breakdown among Children who Entered Foster Care between 7/1/2018 and 5/31/2019

Removal Reason	N	% of Removal in which Reason was Cited
Neglect	1515	50.8
Substance Abuse	1509	50.6
Incarceration of Parent(s)	663	22.2
Physical Abuse	407	13.6
Inadequate Housing	375	12.6
Sexual Abuse	217	7.3
Caretaker's Inability to Cope	143	4.8
Child's Behavior Problem	109	3.7
Abandonment	82	2.7
Death of Parents	19	0.6
Child's Disability	8	0.3
Relinquishment	6	0.2
Total Reasons	5,053	
Total Entries into Care	2,982	

