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Florida Teen Recruitment Initiative





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Follow Up to March 13 Statewide Meeting on Recruiting Homes for Teens

Four issues identified at the statewide meeting were:

- Statewide campaign to enlist new families who will care for teens both by recruiting families new to fostering and encouraging existing families to foster older children
- Improving selection criteria/tools for families who care for teens to increase the odds of success and raise the prestige of fostering teens
- Improving systems for matching youth with families and ensuring that they have accurate fair information about one another
- Improving supports for families and teens to improve the chances for success and enable families to care for older children

The overall responsibility of DCF headquarter is to:

- Develop materials and resources with Statewide application
- Coordinate materials and resources developed by CBCs and Regions

The Florida State Foster and Adoptive Parent Association will:

- Participate in and contribute to all recruitment events
- Use social and traditional medial to further the campaign
- Advise on needed practice improvements and assist in implementation of these improvements
- Host annual conference where innovations with be showcased

The overall responsibilities of DCF Regions is to:

- Coordinate information sharing and strategizing among the CBCs in the region
- Ensure that Investigators are involved in implementation
- Develop resources on a regional level

Overall Responsibility of CBCs

- Develop a local broad based committee to design and implement local campaign (may be QPI or other existing committee)
- Develop local targets or other ways to measure success

The Child Welfare Institute at FSU will:

- Develop and Implement an evaluation of the Campaign
- Assist in Identifying Statewide Resources



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The following actions are recommended in each area:

Recruitment and Information Campaign:

Messages: Help a child succeed and join an exciting supportive community of people like you

Having a family makes all the difference

Parenting doesn't stop at 18

DCF Headquarters:

- Support and assist in organizing a statewide concert tour of the NexGen band.
Purposes:
 - Raising awareness of the need for families for teens
 - Introducing teens and families to communities
 - Provide funding for band travel and costs for up to 12 concerts Statewide
 - Promote kick off concert Friday June 19 at FSFAPA conference; kickoff will be open to the public
 - QPI, DCF coordinate with local CBCs to publicize FSFAPA concert and organize events around the stat
- With the assistance of a consultant, develop a PSA to be aired statewide and used locally to raise awareness of the opportunity to be part of a teen's success
 - Florida Youth Leadership Academy (FYLA) interviews for incorporation in PSA to be recorded during weekend of 4/17
 - To be completed by FSFAPA and previewed there
- Press conference at FSFAPA to discuss changes and campaign and kick off tour
- Use of social media focused on tour and other experiences that provide the public opportunities to know and understand more about youth
- Statewide website/e-mail and 800 number to answer inquiries
 - Staffed by foster parents or former foster youth with consistent message
 - Referral to local recruiters
 - Quick response time
 - Follow up protocol
- Regularly distribute a campaign newsletter to follow progress and share suggestions
- Support flexibility with pre-service requirements
- Coordinate with FSFAPA in Statewide messaging

CBCs:

- Develop local "plan" for media and communications – examples:
 - Locate venue for concerts and publicize
 - Connect with local media, and engage in local events, and use social media
 - Heartland has developed a 60 second video that can be shared
- Engage local communities including faith communities
- Develop and implement techniques to encourage foster parents to accept teens
- Engage local foster parents and youth in recruitment efforts



DCF regions

- Regions to facilitate sharing among its CBCs of strategies and media

Improved Selection Criteria:

DCF Headquarters:

- Interview youth at FYLA and FSFAPA regarding their suggestions for selection criteria
- Coordinate development of
 - Short self-assessment questionnaire for foster parents for possible use by CBCs
 - Interview model for assessment

CBCs:

- Survey youth and foster parents for suggestions on questionnaire or other instruments
- Develop protocol for assessment
 - Have youth and experienced foster parents assist with questionnaire

DCF Regions:

- Coordinate strategies among CBCs and share progress

Improved Systems for Matching Youth and Families:

DCF Headquarters:

- Coordinate and share strategies among CBCs/regions
- Make tools available on-line (DCF site, QPIFlorida, Facebook, Pinterest, & Vimeo)
- Develop protocols for Facebook page - like web-based sites where foster parents can provide information while privacy is protected

CBCs:

- Allow youth and foster parents to meet prior to placement (use of visitation centers?)
- Prepare statements by youth explaining their history
 - CBCSWFL created profiles of teens needing homes for matching
- Review effectiveness of P-harmony program (Heartland) for possible replication
- Prepare statements from foster parents for sharing with youth, caseworkers, and CPIS

DCF Region:

- Ensure that CPIs collect information about youth to share with placement and foster parents
- Ensure that Information about families is available to CPIs
- Ensure that Regional staff assist with innovative practices



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Improved Support For Youth and Families:

DCF Central/FSFAPA:

- Share strategies statewide
- Assist in recruiting community support to develop after school and summer activities for teens
 - Convene meeting of non-profits and statewide business to encourage free and low cost activities, as well as summer and part time jobs.
- Development/coordination of warm line/web-based support
- Develop monitored support boards on DCF and FSFAPA websites

CBCs:

- Identify local resources for activities and jobs
 - FSS has identified local opportunities
- Provide local resource directories
- Consider financial incentives for families with teens to cover additional expense (100800 funds for the actual activities)
- Provide mentoring for foster parent and youth
- Help staff warm line

Regions:

- Assist in locating/cataloging existing regional resources
- Coordinate sharing of resources