

# **NM Step Up! Diligent Recruitment Project**

## **County-Specific Recruitment & Retention Plan**

### **Step One: Self Assessment**

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As part of the Diligent Recruitment Step Up! Grant's Customer Service initiative, the Customer Service Work Group and the National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment are working to help the five project counties develop county-specific, targeted Recruitment & Retention plans. The first step in the process is a self-assessment, so each county can determine what they need to know to proceed to develop a Recruitment & Retention Plan. Below is a series of questions about your recruitment and retention practices and outcomes. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. We understand that you may not readily have the information to completely address each question. This process will help you to recognize the critical planning information already available to you as well as to identify areas where further consideration or research is needed. From your answers and non-answers, the Work Group will also be able to identify areas for further technical assistance.

#### 1) Children/Youth:

Can you describe children/youth in care, broken down by as many of these factors as possible:

- + Total number
- + Age range
- + Race/ethnicity
- + Average time in care
- + Number/percent sibling groups
- + Type of placements and number of each:
  - Kin
  - Regular foster care
  - Treatment foster care
  - Group care
  - Other (please specify)
- + Describe the characteristics of children/youth for which you have the greatest difficulty finding foster or adoptive families currently.

#### 2) Recruitment & Retention:

Can you describe your county in terms of the following:

- + General population demographics
- + Current number of available homes and placement slots, by age, gender, race/ethnicity, special needs, location.
- + Current number of available homes (non-relative, non-restricted).
- + Number of placements outside of the county. Where? What type (foster home, group home, treatment center, etc.)?

- ✚ What general recruitment activities are being used in your county? Where? With whom?
- ✚ What targeted recruitment activities are being used in your county? How? With whom?
- ✚ What child-specific recruitment activities are being used in your county? How? With whom?

3) Successful foster parents:

Can you describe your most successful foster parents?

- What are the characteristics that you consider significant?

✚ Where do they live?

- In the same community (which one?)
- Widely scattered in the county
- In a small group of communities (which ones?)
- In or out of town

✚ Can you describe why they foster?

- Personally compelled to do it
- Were formerly in the system
- Family or friends influenced them
- Other (please specify)

4) Where are children picked up:

Can you describe the areas in which children are generally picked up?

✚ Usually one or more repeat neighborhoods (which ones?)

✚ Characteristics of the neighborhood

- Income
- Education
- Race/ethnicity
- Availability of services, schools, churches

5) Community:

Are there community partners who could help with recruitment and retention?

- ✚ Out-of-county placement resources
- ✚ Current or former successful foster/adoptive families
- ✚ Resources in child removal areas
- ✚ Those who work with CYFD

✚ Others (please specify)

6) Foster/adoptive parents:

Are there opportunities for current foster/adoptive parents to provide input on building a county-specific Recruitment & Retention Plan? Input could be gathered through focus groups, individual interviews, surveys, and/or meetings with staff or individual phone calls or conversations.

- ✚ Quarterly Foster Parent meetings utilized
- ✚ Statewide Foster Parent Association utilized
- ✚ Foster Parent Liaison utilized
- ✚ Other (please specify)

7) Where do you lose families?

- ✚ What are the gaps in retaining families in the recruitment/retention process?  
Where do you lose them? Why?
- ✚ Point of inquiry (you don't hear back)
- ✚ Between inquiry and Orientation
- ✚ Orientation (during, after)
- ✚ Home study (during, after)
- ✚ First placement (during, after)
- ✚ Later (specific incident, personal reasons)

8) What data do you regularly collect to track how families progress through the process? How do you use this data in your work?

9) Do you know FP satisfaction levels? How? High or low?

- ✚ Specific dissatisfactions (staff-related, communication related, bio-parent related, child related, time related, situation specific)
- ✚ Specific satisfactions (same)

10) What elements of your Customer Service Plan do you think should be incorporated into a Recruitment & Retention Plan?

11) Please add any additional considerations that will be important to consider in developing your Recruitment & Retention Plan.

12/12/13



The Step Up! Diligent Recruitment Project is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth & Families Administration, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, under Grant #90-CO-1050.