

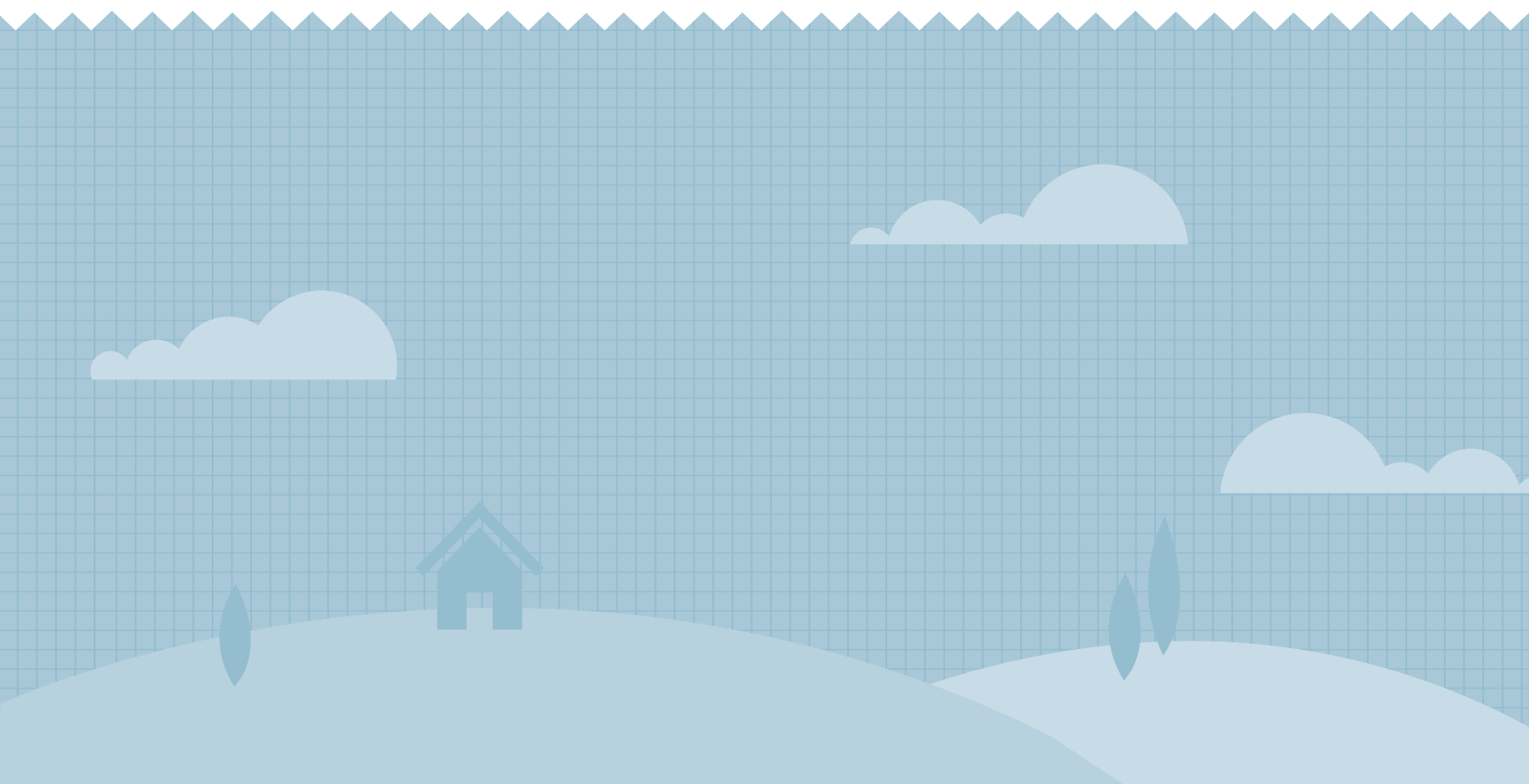


NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR  
**DILIGENT RECRUITMENT**

*at AdoptUSKids*

*Overview of*  
**MARKET SEGMENTATION**

.....  
*A Tool for Targeting Recruitment*



# Overview of MARKET SEGMENTATION

## *A Tool for Targeting Recruitment*

## TARGETED RECRUITMENT

Targeted recruitment considers the unique needs of the children and youth in need of foster and adoptive families and develops recruitment strategies and messages based on their needs. Effective targeted recruitment uses demographic data to inform its understanding of recruiting for the specific needs of children and youth in care as well as identifying shared characteristics of current foster and adoptive parents.

There are many ways to target recruitment. Some examples include: community and faith-based initiatives, recruiting within military installations, recruiting within specific neighborhoods and schools that have a high proportion of children in foster care, incentive programs for foster and adoptive families to recruit others from their communities, and market segmentation.

## FIVE FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS OF TARGETED RECRUITMENT

### Data driven

- Agency uses demographic and other data regarding children in care to determine the need and anticipate future trends, including where youth in care come from geographically.
- Agency researches and builds its recruitment strategies for these potential households, based on the demographic characteristics, values, and behaviors to better identify potential successful families.

### Culturally competent

- Agency needs to be skilled in working effectively with the various social, racial, and ethnic groups that reflect the diversity of children in care.

### Right messages and media

- Agency's messages provide a benefit for the potential family to act by appealing to the targeted parent's values and are placed where parents are likely to respond.
- Right messages and media are targeted at families who reflect the race and ethnicity of children in care.

### Retention obsessive

- Agency does everything in its power to value and support foster and adoptive parents at every stage of the process; otherwise, even the best recruitment practices are in vain.

### Community based

- Agency partners with local community organizations to both get the message out and to support foster/ adoptive parents.

# MARKET SEGMENTATION

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In the world of business, target marketing involves breaking a market into segments and then concentrating marketing efforts on one or a few specific population segments.

In recruiting foster and adoptive parents, market segmentation can be used to strategically target recruitment efforts to specific neighborhoods and communities where families who are most likely to foster and adopt children in care are located. This is accomplished by gathering, analyzing, and utilizing data about current “successful” foster and adoptive families to inform recruitment strategies.

Market segmentation is a powerful tool to use in targeting recruitment. However, it is not the only tool and it is not the best tool to use in every situation. Market segmentation is best used by child welfare systems to target their recruitment efforts to find families who share similar characteristics to their current successful families including their demographic, lifestyle and media choices. It is very important that recruitment strategies based on market segmentation be supportive of and integrated with other recruitment and retention plans in the child welfare system.

Market segmentation helps to answer the four most fundamental marketing questions:

- Who are the targets that you most want to reach?
- What are they like?
- Where are they located?
- How can you reach them most cost effectively?

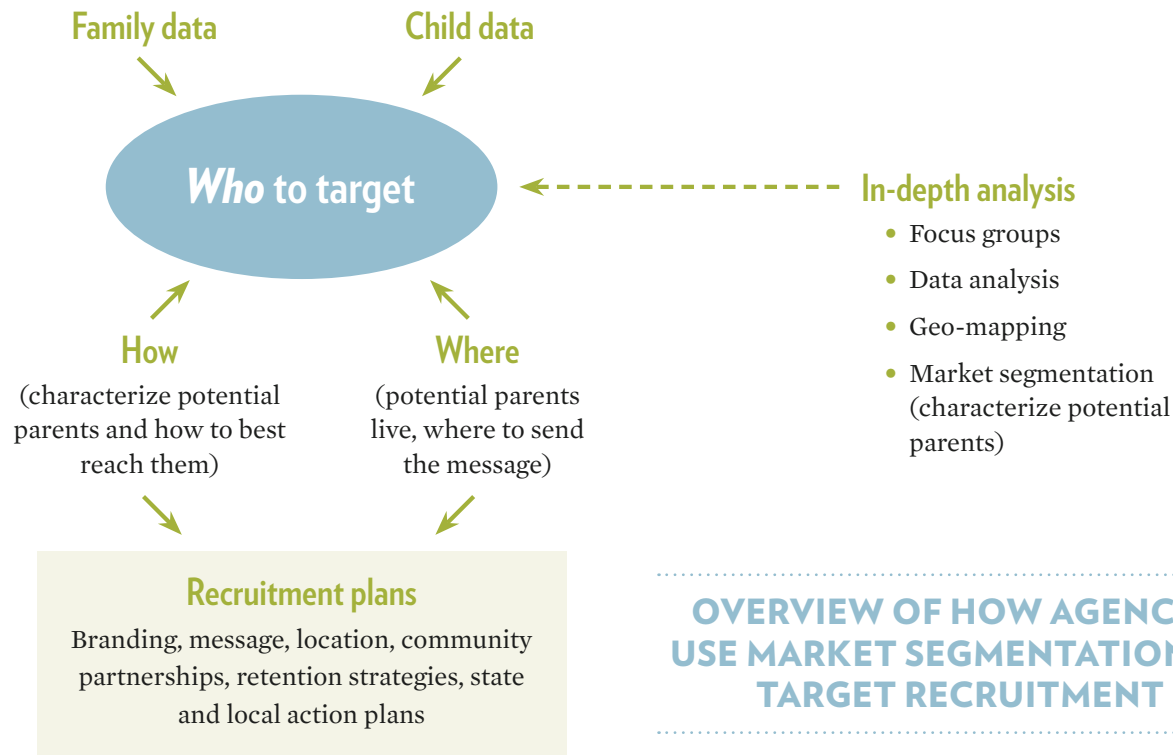
Answering these questions is an essential step in designing a well-focused targeted recruitment program.

The strategy for identifying the marketing targets is based on two tried and true observations from business:

- 1** The best customers for your product are existing customers. The people who have already used your product or a similar one or other people like your existing customers are most likely your best customers.
- 2** Birds of a feather flock together. In choosing a place to live, people tend to seek out neighborhoods compatible with their lifestyles, where they find others in similar circumstances with similar consumer behavior patterns. Once established, the character of a neighborhood tends to persist over time, even though individual residents come and go.

A familiar truism goes... “if you want to catch fish, you’d best cast your line where the fish are.” By identifying the types of neighborhoods in which you find your existing families, you can more accurately predict the types of neighborhoods where you will find your future families and develop targeted marketing plans that will focus on those areas.

By performing an analysis of a large number (1,000 or more) of existing successful foster and adoptive households from the child welfare system’s files, statistically accurate profiles can be made. This analysis is done by an outside marketing segmentation firm for a fee (paid for by the child welfare system) or through licensed marketing software (purchased by the child welfare system). This firm—or agency staff using the software—then generates summary reports describing the lifestyle and profile characteristics of those households. The objectives are to determine:



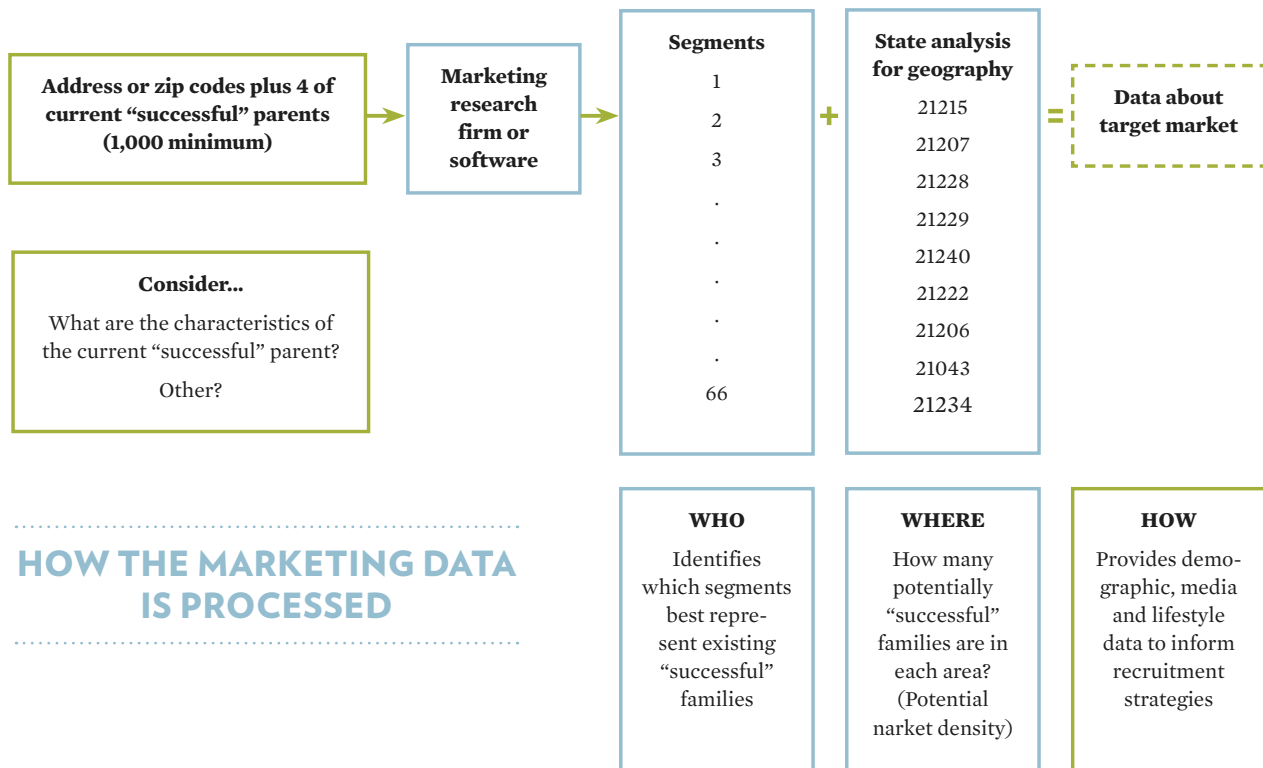
- The consumer market segments that have high potential to be successful foster or adoptive households.
- A set of target groups to which future marketing efforts will be focused.
- The lifestyle preferences of these target groups to make it easier to develop practical marketing strategies.

**Who**—understanding which segments best define the parents to target

- Market research firms have divided the people in the US into discrete demographic segment profiles according to demographics, media usage, and lifestyle preferences.
- Determine which of the segments best define the existing successful parent.
- Determine which segments may have been untapped in previous recruitment efforts.
- Look at data of families from which children were removed. Is the agency doing a good job placing children in the same geographic area? If not, why not?

**How**—to best reach the people

- Review the individual market segment profiles, and then create logical groups for messaging.
- Determine messages that appeal to the identified segments/groups.
- Evaluate agency resources re: time and money. Can all target groups be reached at the same time? If not, how to prioritize?
- Involve foster and adoptive parents.



**Where**—to send the message

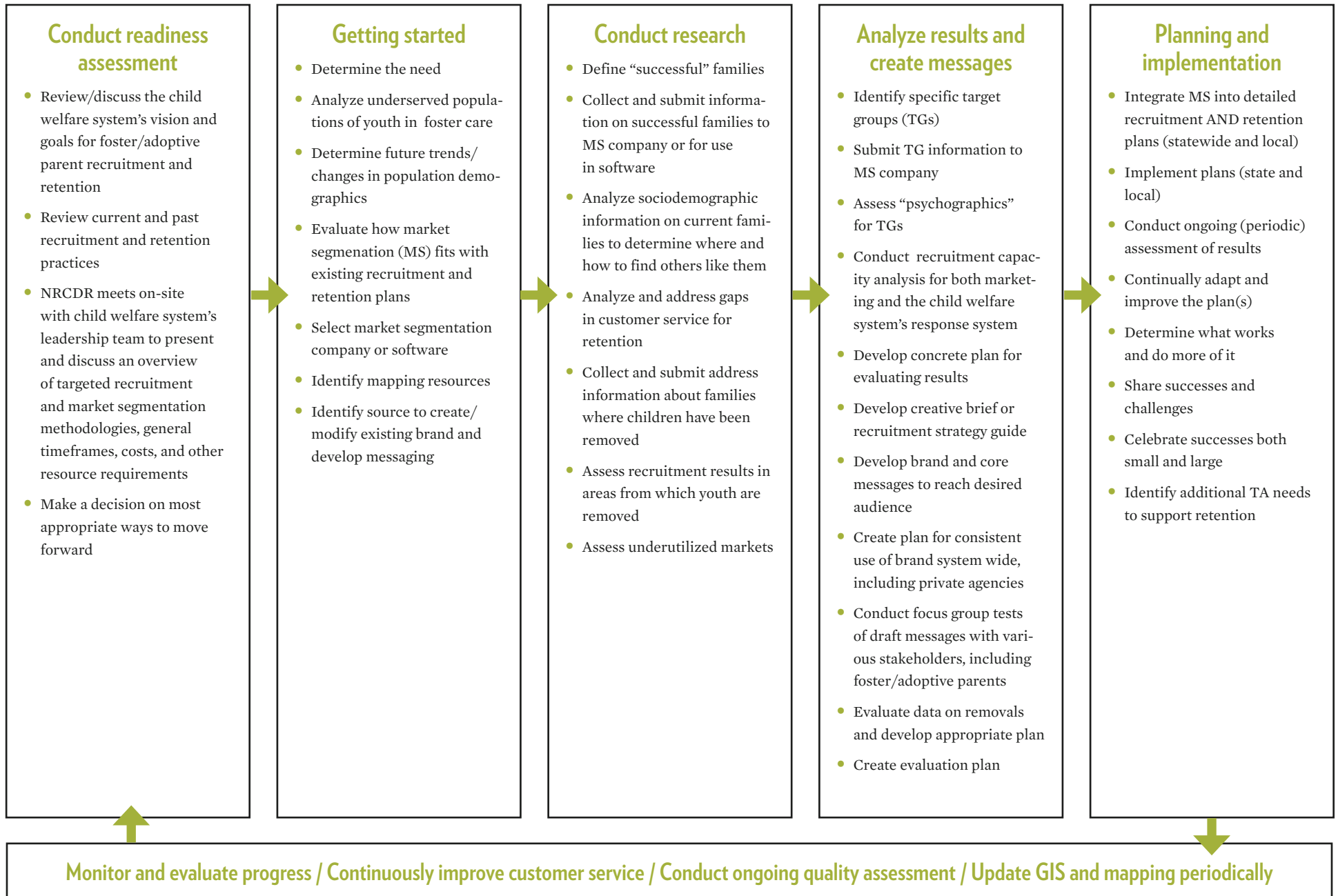
- Concentrate the message to the market segments/clusters.
- Target the recruitment messages geographically and emotionally that reach potential new parents that appeals to their lifestyles.
- Place messages in geographic areas (zip code, census blocks, regions) identified by market research as most likely to yield highest results.
- Create community partnerships in areas where successful families can be found.

## BENEFITS OF TARGETED RECRUITMENT AND MARKET SEGMENTATION

- It is cost and time effective. By getting the “right” people to respond to the recruitment message, less agency time is spent screening out potential foster/adoptive parents and the agency has more time available to provide good customer service to those who do respond to the recruitment message.
- It draws in community partners to locate a higher percentage of families who are more likely to foster and adopt, thereby increasing community awareness and involvement.
- It answers the questions: Who are the targets that you most want to reach? What are they like? Where are they located? How to best reach the people?
- It results in a higher completion percentage for families.

*Market Segmentation Planning Guidelines* follow later in this document to guide child welfare systems in completion of the major tasks required of the state, tribe, or territory in implementing a market segmentation program. The *Guidelines* also outline the tasks of the NRCDR at AdoptUSKids in providing related technical assistance.

# MARKET SEGMENTATION PROCESS FLOWCHART



## Step 1

### Conduct readiness assessment

#### Offsite

- Review the child welfare system's vision and goals for foster/adoptive parent recruitment
- Review current recruitment and retention practices

#### Onsite

- NRCDR meets on-site with child welfare system leadership team to present an overview of targeted recruitment and market segmentation methodologies, general timeframes, costs, and other resource requirements
- Make a decision on most appropriate ways to move forward

### Child welfare system responsibilities

#### Offsite

- Get leadership approval to proceed with the project
- Obtain TA approval from Regional Office
- Provide documents and data, as requested by NRC
- Prepare for onsite TA sessions

#### Onsite

- Host onsite sessions involving key stakeholders

### NRC responsibilities

- Conduct preliminary conference call to assess child welfare system's interest in moving forward, plan for onsite work, identify homework and additional information needed
- Review child welfare system documents (i.e., R&R plan, organizational chart, vision statement)
- Conduct onsite session to introduce MS to leadership

### Key stakeholders

- Adoption and Foster Care Program Managers
- Child welfare system initial requestor for TA
- Others identified by child welfare system such as data, communications/marketing, mapping, senior administrators (e.g., director, deputy director, field operations), key recruitment personnel

### Products

- Readiness assessment report

## Step 2

### Getting started

- Determine the need for resource families
- Analyze underserved populations of youth in foster care
- Determine future trends/changes in population demographics
- Evaluate how MS fits with existing recruitment and retention plans
- Select market segmentation company
- Identify mapping resources
- Identify source to create/modify existing brand and develop messaging

### Child welfare system responsibilities\*

- Determine scope of the MS project (regions/sites/agencies)
- Analyze current data to determine need for resource families
- Identify anticipated trends
- Select market research company and secure contract with or software license from company
- Identify mapping resources
- Create plan for creating/modifying brand and developing messages

\*Note: The level of on-site vs. off-site TA work will vary depending on the specific needs of the child welfare system

### NRC responsibilities

- Provide guidance in determining the scope of the MS project, analyzing parent and child data, identifying market research, mapping, and brand/message resource
- Assist with the development of an initial rollout plan including major steps to be accomplished, timeframes and resource requirements

### Key stakeholders

- Adoption and foster care program managers
- Child welfare system's initial requestor for TA
- Others identified by child welfare system such as data, communications/marketing, mapping, senior administrators (e.g., director, deputy director, field operations), key recruitment personnel

### Products

- Youth in care data analysis
- Removal information



### Step 3

#### Conduct research

- Define “successful” families
- Collect and submit information (name/address and zip+4) to MS company or software
- Analyze sociodemographic information on current families to determine where and how to find others like them
- Analyze and address gaps in customer service for retention
- Collect and submit address information about families where children have been removed
- Assess recruitment results in areas from which youth are removed
- Assess underutilized markets

#### Child welfare system responsibilities

- Provide necessary data re: “successful families” (zip +4) to MR company or process using software
- Provide geographic data on family removal
- Conduct listening tours, surveys and other means of engaging existing foster/adoptive parents to get their advice on what works and doesn’t work in recruitment and retention
- Provide ongoing information to identify the need for foster/adoptive parents, evaluate trends, and past recruitment and retention activities
- Provide ongoing information on customer service

#### NRC responsibilities

- Guide process of defining “successful” families
- Guide process to identify trends, underutilized markets
- Provide assistance as needed in working with MS company
- Assist in integrating planning for customer service/retention and recruitment

#### Key stakeholders

- Foster and adoptive families
- Key administrative staff identified above
- Adoption and foster care program managers(recruitment and customer service)
- Data/mapping personnel

#### Products

- Definition of “successful foster/adoptive family”
- Market segmentation analysis
- Profile of removal areas
- Begin to identify how MS supports existing R&R plans
- Assessment of underutilized markets and beginning of plan to develop strategy to address this area

## Step 4

### Analyze results and create messages

- Identify specific target groups (TGs)
- Submit TG information to MS company
- Assess “psychographics” for TGs
- Conduct recruitment capacity analysis for both marketing and the child welfare system’s response system
- Develop concrete plan for evaluating results
- Develop creative brief or recruitment strategy guide
- Develop brand and core messages to reach desired audience
- Create plan for consistent use of brand system wide, including private agencies
- Conduct focus group tests of draft messages with various stakeholders, including foster and adoptive parents
- Evaluate data on removals and develop appropriate plan
- Create evaluation plan

### Child welfare system responsibilities

- Participate in evaluating and analyzing data reports
- Actively participate in establishing brand and crafting message(s), based on the MS data
- Develop materials that are driven by benefits to prospective families
- Develop community partnerships
- Involve foster/adoptive parents in development of materials
- Determine how many families the child welfare system can reasonably reach out to (marketing capacity)
- Determine how many families the child welfare system’s response system can reasonably process (intake, training, homestudy, etc.)

### NRC responsibilities

- Provide guiding questions for evaluation and analysis of data reports
- Consult with child welfare system’s designees to interpret information obtained from the market research analysis
- Refine the data provided by MR to assist the child welfare system in creating an effective recruitment and retention plan
- Provide guidance and direction in development of brands/messages, as needed
- Facilitate development of the child welfare system’s targeted recruitment plan

### Key stakeholders

- Adoptive/foster parents for development of materials
- Creative team working on branding/messaging (internal and/or external)
- Key staff as identified above
- Data and communications/marketing, mapping, senior administrators (e.g., director, deputy director, field)

### Products

- Capacity analysis
- TGs
- TG lifestyles
- Brand
- Messages for specific TGs
- Promotional materials
- Media choice and demographic reports
- Maps
- Analysis of underserved populations
- Customer service/retention needs
- Evaluation tool

## Step 5

### Planning and implementation

- Integrate MS into detailed recruitment AND retention plans (statewide and local)
- Implement plans (state and local)
- Conduct ongoing (periodic) assessment of results
- Continually adapt and improve the plan(s)
- Determine what works and do more of it
- Share successes and challenges
- Celebrate successes both small and large
- Identify additional TA needs to support retention

### Child welfare system responsibilities

- Get the message out to the targeted areas; reach TGs through media and other targeted approaches, etc.
- Insure “customer friendly” response to initial inquiries
- Insure availability and adequate capacity for foster/adoptive parent training, home study, and other response system requirement from initial inquiry through placement
- Address gaps in family retention throughout the process
- Sustain/improve results through data analysis and assessment

### NRC responsibilities

- Assist in reviewing the implementation and engage the child welfare system in refining plan over time, including retention strategies

### Key stakeholders

- Adoption and foster care program managers
- Recruitment personnel
- Data and communications/marketing, mapping, senior administrators (i.e., director, deputy director, field operations)

### Products

- State and local recruitment and retention planning documents
- Response system planning documents
- Evaluation and assessment planning documents

# MARKET SEGMENTATION PLANNING GUIDELINES

Strategy: \_\_\_\_\_

Results intended: \_\_\_\_\_

| Step #                                  | Action  | Primary responsibility | Start date | End date | Milestone to be completed by this step |
|---|---|------------------------|------------|----------|--|
| <b>Role of the child welfare system</b> |   |                        |            |          |  |
| 1                                       | Identify composition of initial child welfare system market segmentation team                       |                        |            |          |  |
| 1                                       | Obtain TA approval from Regional Office   |                        |            |          |  |
| 1-5                                     | Coordinate conference calls and/or prepare for onsite TA throughout MS process                      |                        |            |          |  |
| 1-5                                     | Provide child welfare system data and documents, as requested by TA consultants                     |                        |            |          |  |
| 1                                       | Obtain leadership approval to proceed with the project  |                        |            |          |  |
| 1-2                                     | Determine what regions/sites/agencies of the child welfare system should be included in the project |                        |            |          |  |
| 1-2                                     | Identify additional stakeholders to include throughout the MS process.                              |                        |            |          |  |
| 1-5                                     | Evaluate how MS fits in with existing recruitment and retention plans                               |                        |            |          |  |

| Step # | Action  | Primary responsibility | Start date | End date | Milestone to be completed by this step |
|--------|---|------------------------|------------|----------|--|
| 2-3    | Assess the need by doing analysis of underserved populations  |                        |            |          |  |
| 2      | Select a market segmentation firm and execute a working agreement/contract or obtain software license (cost to run child welfare system's data is under \$10,000) |                        |            |          |  |
| 2      | Identify availability of mapping services/resources   |                        |            |          |  |
| 2      | Identify sources to create/modify brand, messages, and products   |                        |            |          |  |
| 3      | Develop definition of "successful" families as can be defined by data   |                        |            |          |  |
| 3      | Provide necessary data (zip+4 data on current successful families)  |                        |            |          |  |
| 3      | Evaluate and analyze data reports from market segmentation research company or from software  |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Identify specific target groups (TGs) and submit TG information to MS company or create report in software  |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Assess the "psychographics" for TGs   |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Conduct recruitment capacity analysis for marketing and response system   |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Develop "results oriented" evaluation plan  |                        |            |          |  |

| Step # | Action   | Primary responsibility | Start date | End date | Milestone to be completed by this step |
|--------|--|------------------------|------------|----------|--|
| 4      | Craft the message(s) and establish brand (based on the results from the market segmentation study)           |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Identify desired materials that are benefit driven for prospective families                                  |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Develop creative brief or recruitment strategy guide based on MS data  |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Collaborate with graphics designers during development of materials/products                                 |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Conduct recruitment capacity analysis  |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Create a plan for system-wide use consistent use of brand  |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Conduct focus group tests of draft messages with various stakeholders, including foster and adoptive parents |                        |            |          |  |
| 4      | Evaluate data on removals and develop appropriate plan   |                        |            |          |  |
| 5      | Integrate MS into existing state and local recruitment and retention plans                                   |                        |            |          |  |
| 5      | Get the message out to the targeted areas; reach the families through media and other targeted approaches    |                        |            |          |  |
| 5      | Address gaps in retaining families throughout the process  |                        |            |          |  |
| 5      | Sustain/improve results through data collection and analysis   |                        |            |          |  |

| Step #                                  | Action   | Primary responsibility | Start date | End date | Milestone to be completed by this step |
|---|--|------------------------|------------|----------|--|
| <b>Role of the NRCDR at AdoptUSKids</b> |  |                        |            |          |  |
| 1                                       | Conduct preliminary conference call to assess child welfare system interest and plan for onsite work   |                        |            |          |  |
| 1                                       | Review child welfare system documents  |                        |            |          |  |
| 1                                       | Conduct introductory onsite TA session   |                        |            |          |  |
| 2                                       | Provide guidance for step 2 activities and facilitate onsite TA (if applicable)  |                        |            |          |  |
| 3                                       | Provide guidance for step 3 activities and facilitate onsite TA (if applicable)  |                        |            |          |  |
| 3-4                                     | Consult with child welfare system's MS team and other individuals designated by the child welfare system to interpret the information obtained in the market research analyses |                        |            |          |  |
| 3-4                                     | Refine the data provided by market research company to assist the child welfare system in creating a usable and effective recruitment and retention plan                       |                        |            |          |  |
| 4                                       | Provide guidance for step 4 activities and facilitate onsite TA (if applicable)  |                        |            |          |  |

| Step # | Action  | Primary responsibility | Start date | End date | Milestone to be completed by this step |
|--------|---|------------------------|------------|----------|--|
| 4-5    | Provide guidance, direction, and advice on the best strategies to implement a targeted recruitment plan, including branding and messaging.<br><br><b>NOTE:</b> The NRC consultants will be available by telephone or in person to provide ongoing consultation and advice |                        |            |          |  |
| 5      | Provide guidance for step 5 activities and facilitate onsite TA (if applicable)   |                        |            |          |  |
| 5      | Assist in reviewing the implementation and engage the child welfare system in refining plan over time, including retention strategies   |                        |            |          |  |



More free resources at:  
[www.nrcdr.org](http://www.nrcdr.org)

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