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In summarizing research, we try to give you new ideas for refining your practice. However, this publication is not intended to replace child welfare training, regular supervision, or peer consultation—only to enhance them.

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NC Refocuses on Diligent Recruitment of Families for Children in Foster Care

Recruitment and retention of families for children in foster care matters a great deal. When we have enough foster and adoptive parents and kin caregivers, it is easier to place children in their home communities and school districts. More siblings can stay together. Careful matching with caregivers is easier. Children awaiting adoption don't have to wait as long for forever families.

Understanding this, North Carolina built a solid network of state, county, and private agencies to find and support resource families. See Figure 1 for a snapshot of this network.

But we've had a bit of a wake-up call. In 2015, federal reviewers concluded we need to improve our system for recruiting and retaining resource families. Rising numbers of children in foster care (Fig. 2) and declines in adoptions of waiting children

(Fig. 3) underscore the importance of doing everything possible to find and hang on to families for kids in care.

Knowing we can do better, a broad array of NC stakeholders has developed a plan to help us bring about needed changes. This article will explain our state's vision for the future, our new Diligent Recruitment and Retention (DRR) plan, and what it means for you and your agency.

A Need for Improvement

In 2015 federal reviewers were concerned our state could not show that routine, state-wide diligent efforts were being made to find families for children with special needs and families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the children in DSS custody. They also noted that NC did not provide consistent standards for diligent *continued next page*

FIGURE 1
NC Foster Care & Adoption Facts

As of April 30, 2017

Foster Care Agencies

- 100 public/county DSS agencies
- 81 private child-placing agencies
- 97 residential facilities

Foster Homes

- 6,843 licensed foster homes:
- 38% were family foster homes supervised by county DSS agencies
 - 58% were either family or therapeutic foster homes supervised by private agencies
 - 4% were residential/group/institutions

Adoption Agencies

- 100 public/county DSS agencies
- 42 private adoption agencies

Adoptive Homes

- 11,335 children adopted from foster care from 2007 to 2014

Sources: NC DSS, 2017a & 2017b; USDHHS, 2017

FIGURE 2
Number of Children in Foster Care in NC

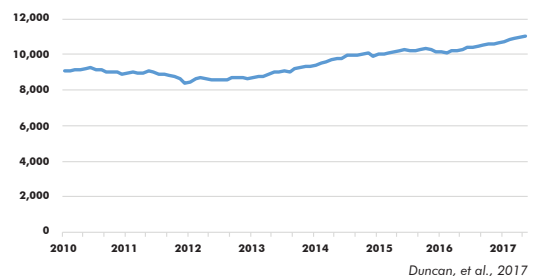
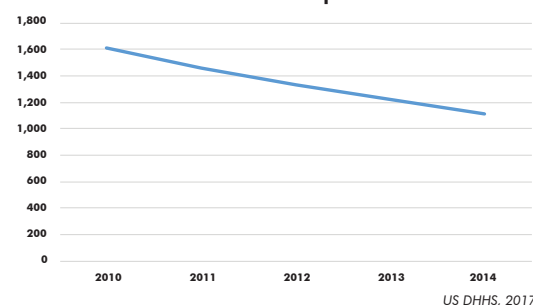


FIGURE 3
Number of NC Children Adopted from Foster Care



NC Refocuses on Diligent Recruitment continued from previous page

recruitment, nor did it have a system for monitoring diligent recruitment.

After the federal review, NC determined that strengthening and reframing our state's diligent recruitment plan would be the best way forward. As part of its federal Program Improvement Plan (PIP), NC promised to recreate our DRR plan and address federal reviewers' concerns by Dec. 31, 2018.

Creating the Plan

By the time the PIP was approved on Jan. 1, 2017, efforts were already well underway to improve diligent recruitment in NC. In fall 2016, the NC Division of Social Services approached the National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment (NRC-DR) for assistance. By October 2016, a **workgroup** dedicated to creating a new DRR plan had formed. The group's participants included representatives from the Division, county DSS agencies, and private agencies. Two consultants from the NRC-DR offered the group guidance and support.

To determine what should be in the new plan, the workgroup held **regional stakeholder meetings** between October 2016 and January 2017. These were attended by more than 200 people with ties to the recruitment of resource families, and included Division staff, county DSS staff, private agency staff, former foster youth, foster/adoptive parents, GALs, and others.

The workgroup then compiled the notes from these meetings and, with the help of the NRC-DR, crafted the plan in spring 2017. This was an extremely collaborative process; the plan represents the hard work of hundreds of people across the state who are invested in the diligent recruitment and retention of resource parents.

The Division released the new DRR plan June 15, 2017. You can find it here: <http://bit.ly/2stwqsf>.

NC's Vision for DRR

Although many people and agencies in North Carolina contribute to recruitment and retention of resource families, we are all ultimately a part of one, unified child welfare system. The new DRR plan is a vehicle to help us improve our results and the way we work together. As a starting point, the plan lays out the beliefs and values at the heart of what we do. You can find these in the box at right.

The plan then articulates a long-term vision of a future in which North Carolina will eventually have:

- A structured statewide approach to recruitment and retention.
- An efficient recruitment process that is easy for prospective resource families to understand.
- Placement stability for children served by the foster care system.
- Placement of children in their home communities and school districts.
- Sibling groups placed together.
- A diverse population of foster and adoptive families, including but not limited to diversity of ethnicity, race, language, and location.
- Public and private child welfare staff who are familiar with North Carolina's Diligent Recruitment and Retention Plan.
- Consistent engagement in technical assistance, information sharing, and collaboration around DRR by the Division, county DSS agencies, and private agencies.
- Statewide use of a customer service approach to DRR, with positive feedback from foster and adoptive families.
- Involvement in the DRR process by resource families and youth served by the foster care program.
- Statewide capacity to collect, assess, and interpret data to inform DRR activities.

Beliefs behind the Plan

- Value all prospective, current, and former foster and adoptive parents
- Value all caregivers and encourage the licensure of kinship placements whenever possible
- Provide and value opportunities for support, engagement, and training of resource families
- We have an obligation to build our capacity to use data to inform diligent recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive parents



Building on a Solid Foundation

Before we delve into the changes the new plan brings, a few words of reassurance. While the plan brings new expectations, the basics of our work will remain the same. We will continue to have a state-supervised, county-administered system in which counties partner to varying degrees with private agencies to recruit resource families and supervise foster homes and provide adoption services. Prospective resource parents will still be free to choose to be licensed as foster parents and/or be approved as adoptive parents by either a public or private agency. And, the NC Division of Social Services will continue to provide supports to public and private agencies, especially through its NC Kids Adoption and Foster Care Network.

New Expectations

What does this new plan mean for NC's child-placing agencies and child welfare professionals?

County agencies must develop annual DRR Plans. The statewide DRR plan provides a template agencies must use to develop this annual plan. Using this template will ensure county child welfare agencies and the state take a consistent, structured approach to DRR, one that involves measuring progress toward concrete goals. Note:

NC Refocuses on Diligent Recruitment continued from previous page

while plans begin with a template, the expectation is that each county's plan will be unique, reflecting differences in culture, geography, etc.

Each county agency's DRR plan will have three parts:

1. Information Gathering. Here the agency captures details about how it staffs and supports recruitment and retention, the data it collects and uses to monitor DRR, the strategies it uses, the barriers it experiences, and more.

2. Plan Development Process. Every plan should be developed with input from an inclusive group of stakeholders. In this section the agency records things such as who was involved in plan development, how the agency will build the capacity needed to measure outcomes and success, and whether the agency has technical assistance needs related to DRR.

3. Plan and Measurement. This part of the plan lays out concrete strategies for achieving the four goals identified in the box above. Agencies have the option of setting additional goals for themselves in their plans.

Each county's DRR plan will also serve as its annual Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) plan. Please refer to the new statewide DRR plan for guidance and information about the overlap between DRR and the requirements of MEPA.

When their plans are completed, counties will submit them to their assigned NC Kids Consultant. If needed, the consultant will work with the county to develop a plan for technical assistance around DRR.

Private child-placing agencies are encouraged—but not required—to develop annual DRR plans. Private agencies that develop DRR plans are encouraged to share them with the Division and the county DSS agencies with whom they partner.

All agencies must develop and use data profiles. So that we can make data-driven decisions regard-

FOUR DRR PLAN GOALS	ITEMS ON DATA PROFILE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruit and maintain a sufficient pool of ethnically and racially diverse families who can provide ongoing safety for and meet the needs of children in foster care 2. State, counties, and private child-placing agencies have the capacity and ability to use data to inform and monitor diligent recruitment and retention efforts throughout NC 3. Excellent customer service provided to prospective, current, and former foster, adoptive, and kinship families 4. Excellent customer service provided to internal and external community partners/stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of children in care • Characteristics of children in care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Race/Ethnicity – Age • Number where ICWA applies • Characteristics of families available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Race/Ethnicity • Average time from initial inquiry to licensure • Total licensed beds • Total truly available beds • Children placed out of county and/or with outside agencies due to lack of available families • Number of placement disruptions or placement changes • <i>Option to track additional data points</i>

ing diligent recruitment and retention, each county DSS and each private child-placing agency must complete a Diligent Recruitment and Retention Data Profile. This profile must be updated quarterly and shared with the Division every year on Aug. 1. The Division will then share comprehensive statewide data on an annual basis to help inform ongoing localized and statewide recruitment and retention efforts.

To develop their data profiles, agencies should use the DRR Plan's Data Profile template. The box above depicts the kind of data points collected in this template.

The NC Division of Social Services understands that agencies currently vary widely in their capacity work with DRR data. If your agency needs technical assistance in this area, please contact NC Kids (nc.kids@dhhs.nc.gov; 877-625-4371).

Implementation Timeline

DRR Plans. In the coming year counties will develop and submit their DRR plans to their assigned NC Kids Consultant in two cohorts, or phases. Phase 1 counties must submit their plans by Feb. 1, 2018. Phase 2 coun-

ties must submit plans by May 1, 2018. Please refer to the next page to see which phase your county is in and who your county's consultant is.

All DRR plans submitted next year will be for SFY 2018-19 and be effective July 1, 2018. The expectation is that county agencies will update and resubmit these plans to their assigned NC Kids Consultant by September 1 of each year, starting in SFY 2019-20.

Data Profiles. County DSS and private child-placing agencies must submit their first DRR data profile to the Division on August 1, 2019. Data profiles must be updated and resubmitted to the Division by August 1 of each year thereafter.

Conclusion

North Carolina has a new plan and approach for the diligent recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families for children in foster care. This plan and approach will help us increase our use of data, the extent to which we involve key stakeholders, and the quality of our customer service. This, in turn, will ultimately strengthen our ability to achieve the outcomes we seek for children and their families. ♦

Implementation of NC's Diligent Recruitment Plan: County Assignments by Phase

Phase 1 Counties *(DRR plan due to NC Kids Consultant by Feb. 1, 2018)*

Alamance	Davidson	Macon	Randolph	Yadkin
Alexander	Davie	Madison	Robeson	Yancey
Alleghany	Duplin	Martin	Rutherford	
Avery	Edgecombe	McDowell	Stanly	
Bladen	Gaston	Mitchell	Stokes	
Brunswick	Gates	Montgomery	Surry	
Burke	Granville	Moore	Swain	
Caldwell	Halifax	Nash	Warren	
Catawba	Haywood	Northampton	Wayne	
Chowan	Hertford	Pasquotank	Transylvania	
Cleveland	Iredell	Perquimans	Tyrell	
Columbus	Johnston	Person	Union	
Currituck	Lee	Polk	Vance	

Phase 2 Counties *(DRR plan due to NC Kids Consultant by May 1, 2018)*

Anson	Dare	Jones	Rockingham
Ashe	Durham	Lenoir	Rowan
Beaufort	Forsyth	Lincoln	Sampson
Bertie	Franklin	Mecklenburg	Scotland
Buncombe	Graham	Mitchell	Wake
Cabarrus	Greene	New Hanover	Washington
Camden	Guilford	Onslow	Watauga
Caswell	Harnett	Orange	Wilkes
Chatham	Henderson	Pamlico	Wilson
Cherokee	Hoke	Pender	
Clay	Hyde	Pitt	
Craven	Jackson	Richmond	

NC Kids Consultant County Assignments

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shirley.williams@dhhs.nc.gov

Johnston through Polk
Kerri Shiflett
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Britt Cloudsdale
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Let's Be Clear with Families: "Fostering to Adopt" Is Not Really a Thing

by Britt Cloudsdale, NC Kids Adoption and Foster Care Network, NC Division of Social Services

If your responsibilities include talking to prospective foster and adoptive parents, it is likely you've heard families say they want to "foster to adopt." It's a common phrase and, at first glance, conveys a simple meaning: the family would like to foster with the end goal of adopting a child placed in their home.

Because this phrase is so widely used, many families—and even some social workers—are confused to learn that "fostering to adopt," as a concept, does not exist. Indeed, because the "foster to adopt" mindset can undermine our efforts to help children and families, we must be ready to set the record straight whenever this term comes up.

Conflicting Goals

To see why the "foster to adopt" idea is problematic, consider the primary goals of foster care and adoption. When a child enters **foster care**, the goal of the child's team is almost always to reunify the child with the child's family. As a member of the team, the foster parent's role is to care for the child, keep them safe, and meet their ongoing needs until it is safe for the child to return home.

As members of the team, foster parents must do what they can to maintain and strengthen the bond between children and their families. They must buy in to the practice of shared parenting, which builds trust between the biological parents and foster parents and encourages consistency and security for the child. Shared parenting only works when all members of the team view the child's stay in foster care as temporary and are motivated to achieve reunification.

The primary goal of **adoption**, conversely, is permanency with someone other than the biological parents. Simply put, "foster to adopt" doesn't work because the goals of foster care and adoption are inherently in conflict.

When we ignore this conflict and license families whose primary aim is to adopt their foster child, we set the stage for disappointment and disaster. These families may be unwilling to engage in activities that would help us achieve reunification. In the worst cases, they may even sabotage the team's efforts, which can lead to placement disruptions, longer foster care stays, and more trauma for children.

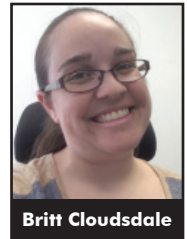
Send a Clear Message

So, what's to be done? As professionals, we need to be clear with families that the idea that people can "foster to adopt" is a **myth**. It's our responsibility to ensure families understand the primary goal of foster care, and to properly assess the motivations of families who seek to foster. As we assess families, we should encourage them to carefully and deliberately search their hearts to understand their own motivations. Being **open** to the idea of adoption is very different from having a **goal** of adoption.

Of course, there's nothing wrong with wanting to permanently add children to one's family through adoption. We owe a great debt to everyone willing to open their home to our kids in this way!

But if we identify prospective foster families we think may not be able to put their personal adoption goals aside as foster parents, our choice is clear. We should never try to convince anyone to pursue fostering if it would not be a good fit for them. If you are a foster parent recruiter, being clear that there is no such thing as "foster to adopt" may mean referring more families to agencies serving families who exclusively seek to adopt. In the long run, though, this is a better use of your resources, and will result in better outcomes for children and families.

In North Carolina there are many different agencies with different methods, but we are all ultimately a part of one, unified child welfare system. If your agency is not the best fit for a family because of their motivations or because of your focus area, there is likely another agency out there for that family. Partnering across agencies as we recruit foster and adoptive parents opens more homes for more kids, and helps children exit foster care sooner. ♦



Britt Cloudsdale

Words to Use with Families

Here are some things it can be helpful to say to help families understand the different goals of foster care and adoption, and why understanding their motivation for fostering is so important.

If you keep thinking about adoption every time you get a placement, it's going to make your role as a foster parent very difficult. When the team is working on reunification, you may find yourself hoping it falls apart so you get the chance to adopt. When it's time to engage in shared parenting, your heart won't be in it 100%.

Being a foster family who is open to the idea of adoption is MUCH different than a foster family with the goal of adopting.

The bottom line is, check your motivation. Examine your heart. If you became a foster parent, would you be looking at each child as potentially being your own, or would you be able to cultivate a good relationship between the children and biological family and love the children as if they were your own?

If the answer is yes, you have nothing to worry about.

If you're not sure or your answer is no, you may need to think a bit more before pursuing licensure.

Adapted from SIRRATT, 2016

Supporting and Developing the Resource Families You Have

We ask a lot from resource families. We want them to play a variety of complex roles: reunification partner with the birth family, contributing member of the team of professionals serving the child and family, potential permanent family for the child if reunification is not possible, and loving caretaker for the child (Casey Family Programs, 2002). We want them to do everything from shared parenting to participating in child and family team meetings to taking the children to all their appointments.

Really, the surprising part is not that we have trouble finding families, but that so many come forward. But come forward they do. They make the tough decision to bring a child into their lives. They go to training. They navigate the foster home licensing process.

And then, after all that, many leave. Sometimes the cause is natural and unavoidable: families move, or there is a significant life event. But the most common reason foster parents leave is a perceived lack of responsiveness, communication, and support from the very system that worked so hard to recruit them (NCR-DR, 2009).

How is this possible? More to the point, what can we do about it?

Reframing Our Perspective

If you ask foster families if they would rather be “retained” or “supported,” which would they choose? Reframing our perspective from *retaining* families to *supporting* and *developing* their ability to nurture and care for children can help welcome foster families into a collaborative and reciprocal relationship. This is consistent with seeing recruitment and retention not as solitary events, but rather as parts of a relational process.

The National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment (NRC-DR) suggests using a **customer service** model focused on making sure each family (1) feels respected and valued, (2)

Don't Miss this Customer Service Guide

The NRC-DR has developed a fabulous 50-page guide to help agencies use customer service to improve their recruitment and retention efforts and provide a more positive experience for foster, adoptive, and kinship families.

The guide contains a framework emphasizing processes, relationships, and organizational commitment to good service; offers suggestions for implementing a customer service approach; and contains a wealth of ideas and tools agencies can use. You can find it here: <http://bit.ly/2ssMaMD>



feels like a significant contributor to the challenging work of child welfare, (3) gets the support they need, (4) has opportunities for growth, and (5) receives timely responses when they have a need.

A good first step is to assess the extent to which your agency uses a customer service approach with resource families. Conducting satisfaction surveys with current families and exit interviews or surveys with those who leave is an excellent starting point. You can find examples of questions asked in foster parent exit interviews here <http://bit.ly/2ruYpZu> and here <http://bit.ly/2sDcKmq>.

The NRC-DR also provides a great 4-page tool agencies can use to gauge how “family friendly” their recruitment and retention process is. You can find it here: <http://bit.ly/2sDeo7Q>.

Supporting Families

A challenge in supporting families is helping them navigate the gap between their expectations *before* the placement and the **reality** after placement, as well as navigating the impact fostering has on their family. Routine home visits with resource parents can be used to help explore these issues and provide needed support, so that challenges don't become crises. Often a genuinely listening ear helps families process changes and adjust their expectations.

According to the NRC-DR, supporting families is not just about post-placement services, but an array of confidence- and skill-building services that begin when families first apply to foster. Selected support ideas include:

- Connecting families during the licensure process with other waiting or experienced families
- Helping parents self-assess their strengths and weaknesses
- Training on evidence-based and trauma-informed practices
- Sharing information about the child's history and needs

For a full NRC-DR article on this, visit <http://bit.ly/2ruMOtz>.

Developing Families

In a sense, developing families means **every** interaction you have with them increases their ability to meet the needs of a child in foster care. Families need opportunities to develop *before* and *while* children are placed with them. The NRC-DR suggests helping families self-assess what information, training, or support they need to “help them feel confident and capable about parenting.” Conducting interviews every time a placement ends also helps families develop, since the process identifies what worked well and where additional supports or resources may be needed. Post-placement interviews can be conducted regardless of the reason the placement ends. ◆



A Conversation with Catawba County’s Megan Burns Suggestions and Lessons Learned from a (Relatively) New Recruiter

Recruiting and retaining resource families is a critical but sometimes lonely job. There are 183 child-placing agencies in the state, but the people who bear primary responsibility for attracting and supporting families for children in foster care get few opportunities to share their experiences and learn from one another. With this in mind, *Practice Notes* contacted Megan Burns, Foster Parent Recruiter and Trainer at Catawba County DSS. When Megan stepped into her job in 2014, she was new to recruiting. We spoke with her to find out what she’s learned since then and what recruitment and retention look like in her county.

Consistently Getting the Word Out Is Key. Like other recruiters, Megan understands that her success depends in part on constantly getting the message out. It’s really true what they say: many families think about becoming a foster parent for years before calling. First they see an advertisement. Then they hear about it on the radio. Then they listen to a presentation at church. Finally, they call.

For Megan, getting the word out includes presentations and booths at community events and for civic and religious groups. In her experience the top three places for referrals are: (1) word of mouth from current foster/adoptive families, (2) churches, and (3) her agency’s website.

But Megan’s clear that recruiting is only part of the equation. As she puts it, “If you’re going to recruit, you have to retain!” Supporting current families and making sure they are satisfied with the support your agency provides is crucial if you want new families to come on board.

Partnering with Churches. Most faiths encourage believers to do what they can to help children. Many churches also want a way to give back

to the community, so they jump at the opportunity when approached.

To build relationships with a wide array of faiths and denominations, Megan sought introductions. For example, a co-worker who is Hmong introduced her to her church, and some of her agency’s African-American board members introduced her to theirs.

Megan found not all churches were comfortable having her share information in person, but they were willing to make announcements during services or include information in their bulletins or newsletters. This year she asked almost 300 churches to spread the word about the need for foster and adoptive parents on “Foster Care Sunday,” which is the third Sunday in May.

Encouragement. Megan’s message for those new to recruiting is: “It gets easier!” She says the first year on the job took intense effort to seek out referral sources and community partners to support resource parents. Now she coordinates two or three recruitment- or support-focused events a month without having to seek those events out, because the community calls her.

Supporting Families. Megan emphasizes supporting the resource parents you have. Her agency does this in many ways, including:

- Maintaining a donation “closet” to help with needs for kids entering care for the first time;
- Using an email listserv to seek child specific donations when needed (e.g., a dresser or soccer cleats);
- Hosting a monthly support group open to all resource parents in the area, even those supervised by other agencies; and
- Coordinating monthly events, such as a “parents’ night out” and family-friendly activities.

Catawba also requires foster families it supervises to take the Annie E. Casey Foundation-sponsored training *Attach-*

Megan’s message for those new to recruiting is: “It gets easier!”

ment, Regulation, and Competency (ARC). Families rate this training highly on satisfaction surveys and report it helps them respond more effectively to children’s negative behaviors. Data on whether ARC training improves placement stability is being gathered and will be reported at the end of the grant period.

Kinship Families. Whether or not they are licensed foster families, kin caregivers are essential. Indeed, at the end of April 2017, 25% of children in DSS custody in North Carolina were placed with a relative (Duncan, 2017).

Catawba DSS has an entire unit dedicated to ensuring kin get the support they need. When relatives are being considered as a possible placement for a child, the worker who does the home study becomes the family’s Kinship Support worker if the child is placed with them.

Catawba’s Kinship Support workers visit kin caregivers at least once a month and can accompany them to important meetings, such as court dates. Catawba also strongly encourages all kinship families to go through TIPS-MAPP and become licensed. Licensure helps reduce the financial burden some kin families feel, and the training helps equip them to handle the challenges of their role.

Questions for Megan? She can be reached at 828/695-4553; MBurns@CatawbaCountyNC.gov. ♦

Coming Soon: DRR Calls!

In October 2017, NC Kids will start facilitating quarterly DRR calls. Like the Division’s *Staying Connected* calls, DRR calls will be a peer-to-peer forum featuring information sharing, special presenters, updates, and more. These calls are a direct response to requests from recruitment professionals statewide, who say they need more ways to connect with and support one another.

Using Data to Improve Recruitment and Retention of Resource Families

Data plays an important part of diligent recruitment. As with any improvement project, we want to use data wisely to help make sound, clear choices about what to address and how to address it. Data needs to be seen as a helpful tool that makes our work easier, not as a meaningless extra step.

Specific to diligent recruitment agencies, need access to:

- Accurate and consistent data on the characteristics of children in care; and
- Ongoing analysis of the current pool of available placement options.

As outlined elsewhere in this issue, the DRR Data Profile now required of all North Carolina county and private child-placing agencies focuses on precisely these data points.

Case Example: Using CQI to Improve DRR

North Carolina has a **continuous quality improvement** (CQI) model for child welfare. Known as the REAP/CQI model, it has six steps (see sidebar) for using data to improve practice. Let's see what it looks like when an agency applies this model to improving diligent recruitment and retention of resource families.

Step 1. Identify and understand the problem

Our fictional agency, County Excellent, reviewed current data on placement moves to determine where to focus its efforts. Because current data show higher numbers of moves for teenagers in its custody, County Excellent decides to focus on reducing moves for teens.

Next, they review data on specific reasons teens move. They find the following possible patterns in the data:

- Teens with special needs seem to move more.
- Teens with multiple mental health diagnoses move more.
- Teens whose initial foster care placement was with a family that had received RPC training* move less.

Step 2. Research the solution

County Excellent spends time looking at examples of successful efforts by other agencies to reduce placement moves for teens.

Step 3. Develop a theory of change

Based on research, County Excellent develops this theory of change:

- Families are not getting enough support after initial placement of a teenager in their home.
- Families don't understand the specific needs of teens.
- The county doesn't have easy access to the reasons for placement moves.

Step 4. Adapt or develop the solution

County Excellent develops the following strategies:

- Provide increased follow-up and support to families after they have teens placed with them to help address any new support needs.
- Involve teens in training prospective and current foster parents to help increase parents' understanding of teens' needs and perspectives.
- Provide additional training to foster parents, create peer-to-peer mentoring pairs for foster parents, reframe messaging about available respite care, and encourage foster parents to use respite care.
- Add an element to the county's DRR Data Profile to capture why moves occur.

Step 5. Implement the plan

County Excellent develops a plan that lays out the steps for implementing each strategy and a timeline that will implement changes one at a time. Tasks are assigned to team members to ensure staff will be ready to implement new practices effectively.

6. Monitor and assess the plan

County Excellent decides to review its DRR Data Profile quarterly to determine whether there have been changes in the number of moves and the reasons for the moves. This will help them assess the impact of each strategy as it is implemented.

Resources for Using Data to Improve DRR

Planning for any change can be overwhelming. As with any new practice or procedure, the sooner you start discussing ideas and addressing concerns, the easier it will be to implement changes smoothly. Fortunately, the National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment (NRC-DR) has many resources to assist your agency in using data as you work to plan, implement, and evaluate a diligent recruitment plan. You can find these resources by visiting <http://www.nrcdr.org/diligent-recruitment/using-data>. ♦

NC 's REAP/CQI Model

1. Identify and understand the problem
2. Research the solution
3. Develop a theory of change
4. Adapt or develop the solution
5. Implement the solution
6. Monitor and assess the solution

* RPC is shorthand for the National Child Traumatic Stress Network's course "Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents." To learn more about the RPC, contact the Center for Child and Family Health (<https://www.ccfhnc.org/>).

References for this Issue

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