

Find a Family- Now!

Collaborative Presentation of The Specialized Recruitment Program of Northwest Adoption Exchange and AdoptUSKids.org

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Northwest Adoption Exchange



Specialized Recruitment Program

www.nwae.org

- Funded by WA State DSHS
- Serves between 20-60 children a year, depending on funding

Specialized Recruitment Program

Goals:

1. to recruit adoptive families for older, hard to place children in foster care *or*
2. connect children with family members or kin who can be a support and relationship for the child, especially if they age out of care

Elements of Specialized Recruitment

- File Mining
- Interviews: Child, Caseworker, Foster Parent, Service Providers
- Family Finding & Connecting- Seneca Center
<http://www.senecacenter.org/familyconnectedness>

Elements of Specialized Recruitment

- In State Recruitment Activities:
 - Kids Fest
 - Wednesdays Child Filming
 - Seattle Times Newspaper Feature

Elements of Specialized Recruitment

- Website Recruitment:
 - Washington Adoption Resource Exchange (WARE)
 - Northwest Adoption Resource Exchange (NWAE)
 - AdoptUSKids.org
- Find a Family Search on AdoptUSKids.org

Elements of Specialized Recruitment

- Assist the caseworker in reviewing family homestudies and matching
- Assist the caseworker in family selection, transition planning
- Assist the adoptive family to prepare for their child

Characteristics of the Children

- The majority of children have had one or more entrances into care
- Numerous previous placements
- Majority of the children take psychotropic medication
- Lots of Encopretic boys!

Characteristics of the Children

- suffered multiple forms of abuse resulting in significant trauma
- experienced multiple losses
- mental health diagnosis
- present with maladaptive behaviors

Characteristics of the Children

- social, emotional, and developmental delays
- feelings of abandonment
- experience difficulty with peers
- the disruption rate for children in care is between 6 to 25%
- 25% of children in care remain in care for 5 or more years

Characteristics of the Families

- **What is the family's motivation for adopting?**
 - Provide permanency for a child
 - Want to expand their family
 - Infertility
 - Want a sibling for their child
 - Special needs adoption is less expensive
 - What to adopt a child in need

Families who adopt special needs children are:

- Generally Older
- Have Prior parenting experience
- Adaptable and flexible
- Able to focus on the child's needs
- Have prior life experience
- Want to help a child in need
- Want to provide permanency for a child

Families who adopt special needs children are:

- Motivated by their desire to **make a difference** in a child's life
- They are not discouraged by a child's rejection of them or mal-adaptive behaviors
- They are able to make an unconditional commitment to the child placed in their care
- They accept the child as they are
- Are empathetic

Families who adopt special needs children are:

- Effective communicators
- Great multi-taskers
- Love a challenge
- Know their limitations
- They are patient
- They are resourceful and tenacious
- They are able to work with professionals and not do the professional's job

SRP Outcomes

- 70%-80% of children are placed each year
- 2009:
 - Placed: 36 of 48 children = 75%
 - 20 children: Ages 10-13
 - 11 children: Ages 14-17

How we find families for children



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Quick Tips and Tools for Recruitment and Retention



Quick Tips and Tools for Recruitment and Retention

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10 Questions to Ask Families

1. Is the family realistic about the challenges that lie ahead when seeking to adopt a child from foster care?
2. Is the family able and willing to embrace their child's history?
3. Can the family accept that their child has been affected and shaped by their past and history in possibly profound ways?
4. Can the family parent differently than how they parented biological children?
5. Is the family willing to educate themselves, their family, and friends on a (potentially) ongoing basis to promote an understanding of their child's needs and how to best meet his or her needs?
6. Is the family willing to be misunderstood, criticized, and even judged by others who do not understand their child's history and the impact of that history?
7. Is the family prepared to advocate for their child at school and in the community?
8. Is the family willing and able to sacrifice their expectations and desires in order to connect with their child to help him or her regardless if the process is done over several months or several years?
9. Is the family willing to accept and embrace their child's holistic needs?
10. Is the family willing to seek support from others? Can they willingly and intentionally seek and accept help when they encounter challenges from their child that they are not equipped to handle?

Author Unknown



AdoptUSKids

Together we hold their future

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