



FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT DILIGENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PLAN

(Revised June 2015)

Background

North Dakota is committed to recruiting foster and adoptive parents that reflect the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of the children in out-of-home care. The Statewide Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention State Plan developed in August 2012, shifted North Dakota's focus from addressing primarily 'general' recruitment efforts to equally addressing both general and targeted recruitment activities. (Attachment 1)

Regional coalitions were required to submit a "Request for Funding" proposal (Attachment 2) for the 2013-2015 biennium which identified general and targeted recruitment activities. The coalitions were directed to analyze their regional data in order to identify gaps and needs in their region and submit their proposal based upon this determination. The eight regional coalitions submitted a proposal and funding was awarded. The amount available to each region was determined based on the approximate population of children by region and budget usage from the last biennium. This is the structure and schedule North Dakota will utilize throughout the five years of this CFSP.

North Dakota has a new tool in our data management system, FRAME, to provide a quick glance at foster care demographics. The "Foster Care Demographics Report" is available to all FRAME users and allows access of up-to-date data related to foster youth; i.e. # foster children in each county, region, age, race, etc. Coalitions can view demographics as specific or globally as needed to determine their need through an inquiry process. The only data that is not readily available is the identification of sibling groups and special needs children.

Data as of 6/10/15:

Unique Child Totals by Age

Region	Ages																					
	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
I - Northwest	122	3	8	3	6	8	12	2	7	6	5	4	11	8	4	7	13	10	4	1		
II - North Central	171	15	6	14	11	7	13	5	10	10	8	10	6	6	10	14	9	16	1			
III - Lake Region	171	9	11	10	11	14	11	10	12	9	6	5	10	10	6	10	7	15	5			
IV - Northeast	261	18	12	16	23	19	20	14	20	13	13	4	12	9	4	23	20	14	6	1		
V - Southeast	218	21	14	14	12	13	8	9	3	7	8	8	7	17	19	22	22	6	1			
VI - South Central	94	4	6	11	10	4	3	6	7	1	7	3	3	5	5	6	6	6	1			
VII - West Central	209	12	5	6	8	16	7	10	16	12	13	12	9	7	12	20	17	22	3	1	1	
VIII - Badlands	111	8	9	9	7	7	8	4	1	5	2	4	6	5	5	7	11	10	2		1	
Age Totals	1357	90	71	83	88	88	82	60	76	63	61	50	65	57	63	106	105	115	28	4	2	

Unique Child Totals by Race

Race	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	509
Asian	8
African American	105
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	13
White	820
Unable to Determine	39
Refusal by Client	0
Total	1494

Children by Gender

Gender	Total
Male	706
Female	651
Total	1357

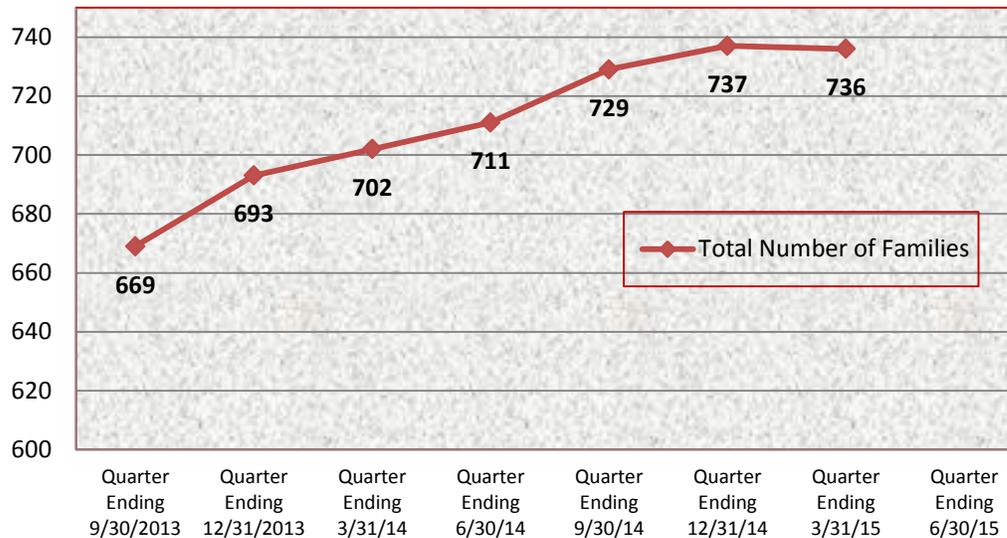
Foster Care Children Demographics: This report identifies the total number of children in foster care arranged by age, race and gender.

The regional coalitions continue to hand count licensed foster homes within their region and report the numbers to CFS on a quarterly basis.



Number of Licensed Foster Families

7/1/13-6/30/15



* Reported in part by the Foster Care Recruitment and Retention memorandum of understanding (MOU) data collection. Data includes all eight regions of the state, however, does not include Tribal Affidavit homes.

Regions are able to identify their needs and resources. Outcomes are required after the close of the biennium; due to the state office August 15, 2015 (Attachment 3). These outcomes will measure regional success as well as identify reasons that families did not follow through with licensure after inquiry, and reasons why families are no longer licensed for foster care.

The AASK Program completes adoption assessments for all families seeking to adopt a child from foster care in North Dakota, including families identified for specific children being adopted from foster care and for general recruitment adoptive families. In the current fiscal year (July 1, 2014 through May 2015) the AASK Program has completed 98 new, updated and subsequent adoption assessments.

The UND Children and Family Services Training Center contracts a part-time Foster & Adoptive Home Recruitment and Retention Specialist to assist ND statewide. This position provides consultation to regional recruitment and retention coalitions, offers training opportunities, and researches best practice methods of recruitment and retention. The Specialist produces a variety of recruitment resources for agencies to use at the local level:

- A "Recruitment and Retention" newsletter is published every other month which identifies direct links to articles or tools from the NRCDR/Adopt US Kids, tips for customer services, talking tips for people interested in foster parenting, etc.
 - Informational topics vary throughout the year and may include:
 - Direct links to articles or tools from the NRCDR/Adopt USKids.
 - Tips for safety, developmentally appropriate activities, how to talk to others about foster parenting
 - Upcoming Events
 - Training and Support opportunities
 - Useful tools for foster parent recruiters



- Recognition of Foster Care Month – including the state proclamation and photograph with the Governor.
- Statewide recruitment and retention surveys were developed with results distributed statewide
- Training is provided to child welfare professionals at Child Welfare Certification Training as well as other scheduled training opportunities
- Assistance and technical support is provided to regional coalitions in the development of recruitment messages; identifying new and innovative recruitment tools; strategic retention plans, and identifying and expanding relationships with community partners
- Collaboration with work groups to develop new and innovative ways of meeting our increasing complex need for foster and adoptive families
- Serves as a “clearing house” for recruitment and retention resources in the state

North Dakota is the recipient of a grant for a full time Wendy’s Wonderful Kids (WWK) recruiter, who currently is located in the eastern side of the state. WWK approved a second recruiter position for North Dakota that is located in the western part of the state and has a primary focus on child specific recruitment for Native American children.

Additionally, North Dakota has an active ND Heart Gallery movement which facilitates web site and a photo gallery of waiting children that travels the state. There is an annual “gala” where new portraits are unveiled; however children can be added to the gallery throughout the year. Currently there are thirteen ND waiting children being featured in the ND Heart Gallery.

Contact Information:

Information related to foster care, and the need for foster parents, can be found by accessing the Department of Human Services’ website at:

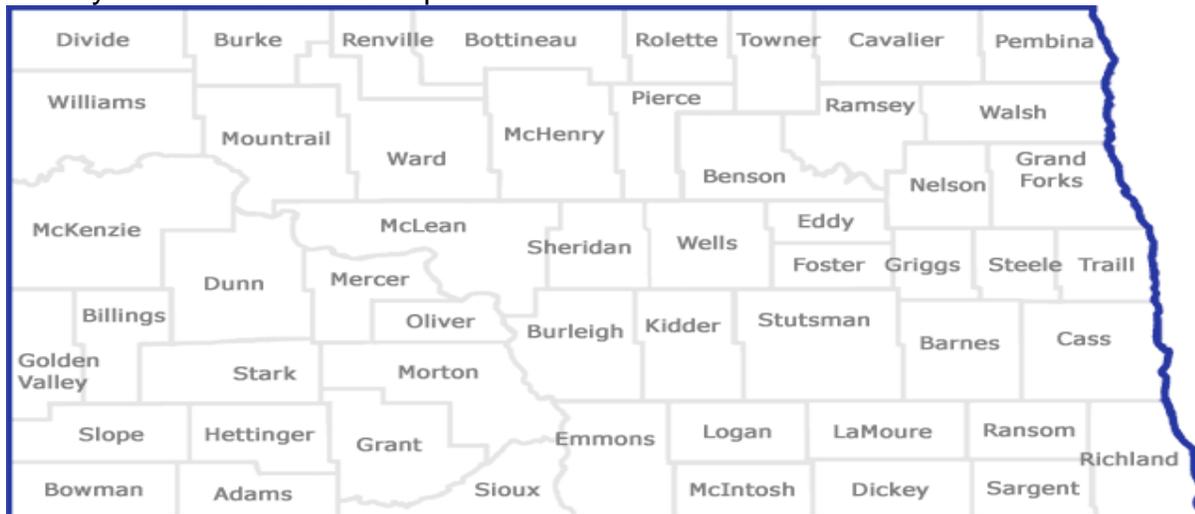
<http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/fostercare/>

Individuals interested in learning more about becoming a foster parent can enter their name, address and telephone number, press ‘send’, and the inquiry is sent directly to CFS. Inquiries are immediately forwarded to the appropriate county and PATH (therapeutic family foster care) contact for follow up.

County social services are responsible for conducting family foster home studies. County social service licensing staff completes the home study and submits it the regional human service centers for foster care licensure. The Department of Human Services’ website includes the location of all county social services, their phone numbers and their hours of operations. Clicking on a county will bring up the information below:



County Social Services Example:



Kidder County Social Services Board

120 East Broadway
PO Box 36
Steele, ND 58482
Phone: (701) 475-2551
Fax: (701) 475-2298
TTY: (701) 475-2551
Hours: 8:00 to 5:00

Contact information for the AASK adoption program is also available on the Department's web site at: <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/adoption/>. Links are provided to answer questions regarding the process of adoption as well as agency contact information.

Fee Structures:

There are no fees associated with family foster home licensing. The Department of Human Services assumes costs related to fingerprint-based criminal records checks as well as costs related to private well water testing. In addition, any costs related to a physical or psychological exam required by the licensing agency is the responsibility of the licensing agency or the Department of Human Services. (NDAC 75-03-14)

Fees charged to prospective adoptive families by the AASK program are minimal and relate to criminal background checks, an application fee and psychological testing. These costs can be reimbursed to the family if the child they adopt qualifies for an adoption subsidy.

Statewide Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention Task Force:

The ND Statewide Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention Task Force gathers each fall to provide an overview of regional recruitment and retention activities as well as receive training. Task force members represent all eight regions of the state and include individuals from counties, regions, tribal social services, licensed child placing agencies, the UND Training Center, Children & Family Services and foster parents. Each coalition shares the efforts that were successful and brainstorm solutions for the



challenges faced in their region. Regional coalitions are able to learn from one another and bring back fresh innovative ideas from these presentations.

Regional Recruitment and Retention Plans:

North Dakota received technical assistance from the National Resource Center on the Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents (NRCRRFAP) and the National Resource Center for Tribes (NRC4Tribes) to gain a foundation and greater knowledge of recruitment and retention strategies focusing on recruiting homes for teens, sibling groups and to increase the pool of Native American families. As a result, regional coalitions were directed to submit a “Request for Funding” (Attachment 2) outlining both general and targeted recruitment and retention plans in order to receive an fiscal allocation. This was a change from prior biennium’s when regional plans contained mostly ‘general’ recruitment activities.

Examples of general recruitment activities contained in the regional plans:

- Host foster parents inquiry meetings at public establishments
- Purchase radio, newspaper, television or billboard ads
- Develop public service announcements
- Television and radio interviews highlighting specific events or awareness campaigns
- General advertising on promotional items placed strategically in local businesses
- Add representation from the retail business community, media network and former foster youth to the coalition with the goal of expanding the recruitment message to more effectively reach targeted areas
- Train and encourage agency staff to share the recruitment message to external areas of the community with which they are connected such as places of worship, community and civic groups, neighborhood groups and social/recreational areas

Examples of targeted recruitment activities contained in the regional plans:

- Advertise on radio stations that serve the Native American Indian reservations
- Set up booths at fairs in Native American communities, pow-wows, Native American colleges or at the Indian casinos
- Testimonial commercials specific to teens, Native Americans, and sibling groups
- Newspaper classified ads recruiting foster homes for specific targeted populations
- Speaking engagements and targeted talks by agency staff in area locations mutually used by staff and target population
- Develop a partnership with the United Tribes Technical College to increase awareness of the need for Native American foster homes

Examples of retention activities contained in the regional plans:

- Provide more frequent training for foster parents to best meet their time schedule
- Offer sharing opportunities during training sessions to receive the support of other foster parents
- Offer stipends to seasoned foster parents who are willing to mentor new foster parents
- Give recognition awards to foster parents for years of service, ‘above and beyond’ awards or ‘thank you’ cards



- Cross agency referrals and collaboration when foster parents move across county lines or between agencies; i.e. PATH and county foster homes
- Promote and/or enhance foster and adoptive parent support groups

Cultural, Racial & Socio-Economic Variations/Linguistic Barriers:

The Department of Human Services works in collaboration with the Native American Training Institute (NATI). NATI provides unique, culturally-relevant training and curriculum packages for professionals working with Native American children and families. Currently, areas of training available are foster parenting, wraparound, youth relationship-building/HIV/AIDS awareness, ICWA, cultural competency and historical trauma. The Institute also conducts workshops and conferences throughout the year. The North Dakota Indian Child Welfare Act conference is held in February each year. In addition, throughout the year NATI is coordinating mini-conferences for state and tribal human services and other professionals. NATI is also available, by request, to do personalized or specialized training in areas such as strategic planning, tribal funding access for child welfare programs, parenting, and program planning.

The North Dakota Community Action Partnership provides interpreters, upon request, to the eastern portion of the state. Also, the Metro Interpreting Resource Center (MIRC) provides coordinated training and administrative support for the decentralized network of interpreters that operate in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area. Their mission is to serve as an interpreting resource. Qualified interpreters are provided to ensure that public services are delivered effectively and that all area residents have equal access to services. Base financial support for this project comes from seven public sector agencies: the cities of Fargo and West Fargo; Fargo Law Enforcement; and Fargo, West Fargo and Moorhead Public School Districts. Each of these member agencies is represented on the Advisory Board that guides the work of this project. Interpreters are professionally trained and certified to provide services in the following primary service sectors:

- Courtroom/Law Enforcement
- Social/Human Services
- K-12 Education
- Employers

Training and services to child welfare staff working with refugee minors is available through the LSS/New Americans Project in Fargo, North Dakota.



Goal 1: North Dakota Department of Human Services will provide funding statewide to support regional foster/adoption coalitions' recruitment and retention activities.

Strategy:

1. NDDHS will develop a statewide recruitment and retention plan which will incorporate regional coalition plans:
 - a. A statewide recruitment and retention plan will be developed by August, 2012
 - b. The statewide plan will be discussed with regional coalitions by August, 2012
 - c. The statewide plan will incorporate regional plans in the 2013-15 biennium
2. NDDHS will fund regional coalitions pursuant to an approved plan and Memorandum of Understanding:
 - a. A funding announcement will be sent to each regional coalition by July 1, 2013
 - b. A request for funding, which includes a regional plan that addresses both general and targeted recruitment activities, will be submitted to NDDHS within 6 months of the funding announcement
 - c. Proposals will be evaluated and funding will be offered based upon an approved regional plan within 30 days of receipt of the proposal

Outcome:

1. Recruitment and retention activities related to foster care and adoption are financially supported by the state.

Goal 2: North Dakota will increase the number of families that are willing to foster or adopt children who are in the state foster care system through general and targeted recruitment.

Strategy:

1. Increase public awareness and educate the community on the need and benefits of providing foster care or adopting:
 - a. Join Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Task Force goals with local community agencies to provide information at any area wide events
 - b. Create and disseminate foster care and adoption information and needs through mass media communication, social networking sites, or any other information delivery systems
2. Target a portion of regional coalition funding specifically to recruit families for identified child populations:
 - a. Analyze data to identify specific child populations
 - b. Develop specific recruitment strategies to meet the identified need

Outcomes:

1. Children who are placed in foster care can remain within their home community.
2. Sibling groups can remain together while placed in foster care or adopted.
3. Resource homes are available to foster or adopt older youth or children with special needs.
4. Resource families represent the racial, cultural and ethnic characteristics of the regions foster and adopt population.

Goal 3: North Dakota will retain the current number of families that are willing to provide foster care to children in the state foster care system.

Strategy:

1. Foster parents will be provided with training, support and recognition
 - a. Develop strategies to retain resource families based on the reasons that families choose to no longer provide foster care or adopt

Outcome: Foster parents will not terminate their foster care license due to the licensing agency's lack of support, insufficient training opportunities, or feeling of inadequacy.



Request for Funding
Foster and Adoption Recruitment & Retention
July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2015

Region: _____

RECRUITMENT

Goal: North Dakota will increase the number of families that are willing to foster or adopt children who are in the state foster care system through general and targeted recruitment:

General Recruitment: _____ **Amount:** _____

In this section, describe general recruitment activities that will be utilized to recruit adoptive and foster care families. Additional strategies that will be used to achieve this goal are encouraged.

Strategy:

- 1. Increase public awareness and educate the community on the need and benefits of providing foster care or adopting:
 - a. Join Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Task Force goals with local community agencies to provide information at any area wide events

List planned activities for general recruitment efforts:

- b. Create and disseminate foster care and adoption information and needs through mass media communication, social networking sites, or any other information delivery systems

List planned activities for general recruitment efforts:

Targeted Recruitment: _____ **Amount:** _____

Strategy:

- 2. Target a portion of regional coalition funding specifically to recruit families for identified child populations:
 - a. Analyze data to identify specific child populations

Identify "Need" (Who and where are the children/youth?):
Use regional data to develop a picture of the children in your care; i.e. age, gender, race, sibling groups.

Identify "Resources" (Who & where are the families we really need?):
Use regional data to develop a picture of the foster families in your region and where they're located; i.e. minority race homes, homes licensed to serve adolescents, sibling groups. Please identify the number of homes that are unavailable for general foster care placement; i.e. licensed for specific child, respite care only, etc.

- b. Develop specific recruitment strategies to meet the identified need



List your target population and list strategies that will be used to recruit foster and adoptive families to meet the needs of children in this target population; i.e. sibling groups, older youth, children of minority race:

RETENTION

Retention: _____ **Amount:** _____

Goal: North Dakota will retain the current number of families that are willing to provide foster care to children in the state foster care system.

Strategy:

1. Foster parents will be provided with training, support and recognition:

Outline strategies that will provide foster parents with training, support and recognition:

Identify reasons for closure of foster care homes during the last biennium. Outline strategies that could alleviate the reasons for closure:

Attach a detailed budget plan to support the activities listed above. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deb Petry at (701)328-3581, or dpetry@nd.gov.

Due date: August 15, 2013.

Signature

Date

*Administrative County (*County to be reimbursed by the State.)

NOTES:

- The MOU will include a requirement to report outcomes of each strategy. (Please review outcomes noted in State Plan)
- Promotional items are limited to 10% of the total budget.

Attachment 3

Page 10 of 12



Safe Children ~ Strong Families

Foster and Adopt Recruitment & Retention

Regional Outcomes

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2015

REGION _____

Recruitment

GOAL: North Dakota will increase the number of families that are willing to foster or adopt children who are in the state foster care system through general and targeted recruitment.

One measure of success.

- 1. Licensed foster parents as of 7/1/13 _____
- 2. Number of newly licensed foster parents from 7/1/13-6/30/15 _____
- 3. Number of foster parents who terminated their license _____
- 4. Licensed foster parents as of 6/30/15 _____

The most successful sources of recruitment were:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

Look for what works and do more of it!

- 1. Number of inquiries from prospective foster parents _____
- 2. Number of inquirers who submitted applications to become foster parents _____
- 3. Number of those licensed or approved _____

Reasons that the family did not follow through with foster care licensure:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

Is there a way to alleviate any of the above reasons?

Targeted recruitment activities: (check all that apply)

- 1. Families willing to foster or adopt adolescents or older teens _____
- 2. Families who represent the racial, cultural and ethnic characteristics of regional foster and adopt population _____
- 3. Families willing to foster or adopt special needs children _____
- 4. Families willing to foster or adopt sibling groups _____

OUTCOMES: (Please respond to each outcome with specific regional example(s).)

- 1. Children who are placed in foster care can remain within their home community.

- 2. Sibling groups can remain together while placed in foster care or adopted.



3. Resource homes are available to foster or adopt older youth or children with special needs.

4. Resource families represent the racial, cultural and ethnic characteristics of the regions foster and adopt population.

Retention

GOAL: North Dakota will retain the current number of families that are willing to provide foster care to children in the state foster care system.

How can we support and retain our Foster Parents?

Reasons that families are no longer licensed for foster care:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Is there a way to alleviate any of the above reasons?

OUTCOME: (Please respond to outcome with a specific regional example(s).)
Foster parents will not terminate their foster care license due to the licensing agency's lack of support, insufficient training opportunities, or feeling of inadequacy.

Signature

Date

