



FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT DILIGENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PLAN

(Updated June 2018)

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 (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) 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 accordingly. The amount available to each region was determined based on the approximate population of children by region and budget expenditures from previous biennium's. This was the structure and schedule North Dakota will utilize throughout the five years of this CFSP. In January 2018, request for funding had to change based in the SB 2206 County Social Service Redesign efforts, which wrapped recruitment and retention funding into the legislative bill. Funds were distributed to the counties in a similar way, but most costs were embedded into the county fiscal formula.

North Dakota has a reporting 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 to their local county or as globally as needed to determine their needs. Data that is not readily available is the identification of sibling groups and special needs children from each custodial county.

Moment in Time Foster Care Data on 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
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	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		Children by Gender	
Race	Total	Gender	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	509	Male	706
Asian	8	Female	651
African American	105	Total	1357
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	13		
White	820		
Unable to Determine	39		
Refusal by Client	0		
Total	1494		

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



Moment in Time Foster care Data on 6/7/2016

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		
I - Northwest	140	17	6	8	6	4	5	5	6	6	7	3	5	10	10	10	13	12	4	2	1		
II - North Central	169	12	18	6	13	9	7	7	8	9	9	5	11	5	5	9	14	15	7				
III - Lake Region	214	16	13	20	17	12	20	14	9	14	9	10	7	14	7	12	10	4	4	2			
IV - Northeast	227	20	18	11	13	15	18	12	12	19	10	7	6	10	9	10	16	17	3	1			
V - Southeast	274	22	22	18	18	16	13	15	10	12	7	15	13	11	9	21	28	14	9	1			
VI - South Central	83	5	4	4	6	7	5	1	6	4	1	8	2	4	4	7	9	5		1			
VII - West Central	206	14	10	6	6	10	12	6	8	16	12	10	10	9	12	12	22	24	7				
VIII - Badlands	98	2	8	10	9	4	6	6	2	3	2	1	4	8	6	6	7	12	2				
Age Totals	1411		108	99	83	88	77	86	66	61	83	57	59	58	71	62	87		119	103	36	7	1

Unique Child Totals by Race

Race	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	563
Asian	8
African American	125
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	12
White	788
Unable to Determine	47
Refusal by Client	0
Total	1543

Children by Gender

Gender	Total
Male	709
Female	702
Total	1411

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

Moment in Time Foster Care Data on 6/28/2017

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		
I - Northwest	128	6	17	5	8	8	3	4	8	6	5	4	4	10	8	12	7	11	2				
II - North Central	134	8	8	12	7	12	4	6	6	5	6	5	5	5	9	8	9	13	5	1			
III - Lake Region	248	13	24	22	18	20	20	21	11	16	15	11	10	7	13	5	12	7		2	1		
IV - Northeast	281	30	22	22	19	11	15	24	15	10	22	15	9	3	13	13	15	17	4	2			
V - Southeast	285	24	18	19	21	14	15	10	10	12	14	11	8	13	20	15	26	26	6	3			
VI - South Central	88	9	8	5	4	4	3	5	1	7	1	2	8	6	3	4	9	5	4				
VII - West Central	207	13	11	12	7	7	11	9	10	6	14	16	9	12	14	15	9	21	10	1			
VIII - Badlands	92	3	6	10	10	7	4	2	4	4	4	1	2	3	6	9	8	8	1				
Age Totals	1463		106	114	107	94	83	75	81	65	66	81	65	55	59	86	81	95		108	32	9	1

Unique Child Totals by Race

Race	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	609
Asian	5
African American	121
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	14
White	827
Unable to Determine	29
Refusal by Client	0
Total	1605

Children by Gender

Gender	Total
Male	747
Female	716
Total	1463

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



Moment in Time Foster Care Data on 6/26/2018

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	150	14	9	15	11	10	15	5	3	8	6	6	6	7	10	8	6	9	2				
II - North Central	167	12	14	17	10	7	10	8	8	8	12	7	4	7	10	7	8	10	7	1			
III - Lake Region	270	16	19	19	20	16	19	21	26	10	14	17	13	10	11	10	9	10	8	2			
IV - Northeast	276	16	29	21	21	14	18	9	22	16	17	10	15	9	10	11	12	8	13	2	2	1	
V - Southeast	321	34	29	23	16	25	13	18	16	14	10	15	13	6	10	20	16	19	17	6	1		
VI - South Central	105	6	8	4	8	5	5	4	5	4	4	6	2	6	10	5	7	10	3	3			
VII - West Central	249	23	15	17	11	11	10	12	14	12	15	11	19	13	14	13	12	9	14	4			
VIII - Badlands	73	7	3	2	4	7	4	3	5	1	1	2	2		5	4	8	5	9		1		
Age Totals	1611		128	126	118	101	95	94	80	99	73	79	74	74	58	80	78	78	80	73	18	4	1

Unique Child Totals by Race ?		Children by Gender ?	
Race	Total	Gender	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	679	Male	811
Asian	6	Female	800
African American	148	Total	1611
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	8		
White	897		
Unable to Determine	38		
Refusal by Client	0		
Total	1776		

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

The Recruitment & Retention Coalitions can view the foster care demographics reports “moment in time” data to determine the difference from last year to this year. From June of 2016 to June 2018, the data shows that ND foster care numbers have increased by 200 children on any given day. The foster care cases with client’s ages 0-5 have increased by 18 children and the cases with youth ages 17+ have increased by 26.

The report can be run as a statewide data report or specific to a county. If the report were specific to Grand Forks County (Region 4) it would verify the need for homes based on the age of children specific to custody with their agency. Data below shows the demographic breakdown for Grand Forks County children in foster care.

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
IV - Northeast	230	14	26	18	18	11	13	6	20	14	16	10	13	9	8	7	6	8	8	2	2	1
Age Totals	230	14	26	18	18	11	13	6	20	14	16	10	13	9	8	7	6	8	8	2	2	1

Unique Child Totals by Race ?		Children by Gender ?	
Race	Total	Gender	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	100	Male	122
Asian	4	Female	108
African American	14	Total	230
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1		
White	145		
Unable to Determine	2		
Refusal by Client	0		
Total	266		

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

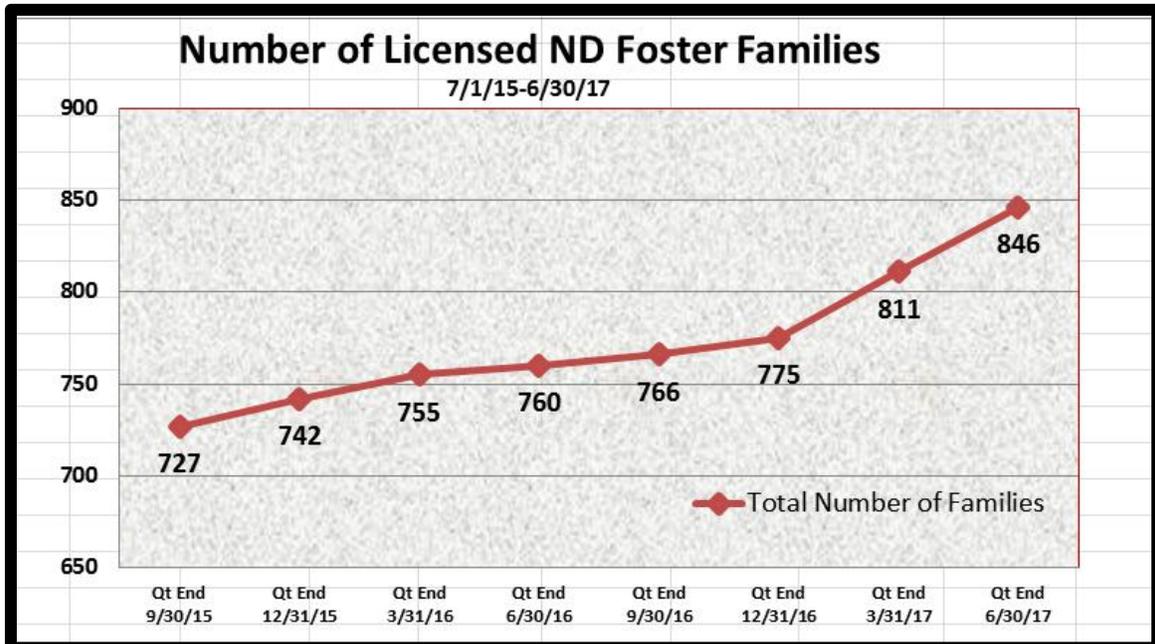
*The age 21 case indicates that child will be 21 this year. ND does not provide foster care services after age 21.



Previous State Biennium Update

July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017

The regional coalitions submit quarterly reports indicating the number of licensed foster homes within their region.



* Data reported by the Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Coalition includes all eight ND regions. These numbers do not include Tribal Affidavit homes.

2015-2017 Statistics:

- The ND biennium began with 727 homes licensed
- The ND biennium ended with an **increase of 119** homes
- The lowest number of homes was in the first quarter.
- The highest number of homes was in the eighth quarter at 846.

2015-2017 Outcomes (Attachment 1): Regional outcomes are collected and submitted at the end of each state biennium addressing the statewide goals (Attachment 3). The last outcomes collection was received August 15, 2017. The outcomes measured regional success, identified reasons that families did not follow through with licensure after inquiry or reasons why families are no longer licensed. North Dakota is interested in adjusting the outcomes data collection process to capture more quantitative data. However, the historical approach remained after consultation with the National Resource Center for Recruitment and Retention did not offer new or additional ways to capture the data. In fact, North Dakota's approach is far further reaching than other states, so North Dakota opted to continue as is until a further analysis of data collection measures can be implemented.



Outcome 1: Children can remain in their home community.

Overall ND regions reported with consistency that children are placed close to their home community, however it is understood that local placement options are not always possible if the child has treatment needs the local community cannot support. Regions highlighted:

- Home community is a placement priority
- Majority of children remain in their home community
- Concerted efforts are made to locate a relative residing in the community
- Movement out of the area has been the result of placement with a sibling
- Successful Examples:
 - Region III: A foster family took in a sibling group of three so they did not have to leave their school of origin
 - Tribal: Affidavit home taking emergency placements to keep children close to the reservation.
 - Region IV: Foster family who took in a sibling group who entered care at staggered times in efforts to keep the children close for reunification, school, and sibling connections.
 - Region V: A teacher at a school became licensed solely for a student in need of foster care placement. Their license allowed the child to continue in their high school.

Outcome 2: Sibling groups remain together while placed in foster care/adopted.

Overall ND regions reported with consistency that children are placed with their siblings as often as possible. Regions highlighted:

- Several large sibling groups have been maintained together!
- Amending a license to accommodate sibling placements is allowable and helpful.
- If not the same home, efforts to keep them all in the same community. Families work collaboratively to facilitate sibling visits (meet at zoo, park, etc).
- When children cannot be placed together it is mostly due to a child's treatment needs out of county area or at times out of state.
- Successful Examples:
 - Region III: A new foster family was unsure of taking more than one child to begin; however took a sibling group of three to keep them together. All of them did well.
 - Region V: Family of six kids began in four placements, now all together with a plan of adoption with the family.
 - Previous adoption for a child who entered foster care later, adoptive home fostered the siblings.

Outcome 3: Resource homes are available to older children with special needs.

Overall ND regions reported with consistency that recruitment does occur to identify families willing to serve children with special needs.

- Increased use of homes for drug exposed newborns
- Recruitment is done for specific homes for 18+, infants, high needs placements International adoptions (TPR on adoptive parents) high needs of the children, now in pre-adoptive families awaiting adoption.
- LGBTQ homes to care for children who identify as LGBTQ
- Successful Examples:



- Region I: 18+ youth had a family get licensed specific for him.
- Region III: Therapeutic home took on two brothers with significant behavior challenges; negative behaviors have greatly decreased!
- Region V: International adoption where the parents terminated their rights 8 years after having the child; AASK's Wendy's Wonderful Kids program found this child a forever home.
- Region V: After several failed attempts to locate a forever family for a TPR case; the teenager was found by a single mother who is his forever home.
- Region II: Increase in interest for 18+ placements.
- Region IV: 18+ youth who went to college; the college experience did not go as planned and the youth chose to work fulltime and discontinue 18+ care. However, the child remained as a "family member" in the foster home post discharge.
- Region IV: Excess maintenance payment was used to assist with additional costs to support a medically fragile child with cancer. The family adopted the child.

Outcome 4: Resource families represent the racial, cultural and ethnic characteristics of the region's population.

Overall ND regions reported with consistency that recruitment to identify families with racial and cultural needs of the community has its challenges. Regions Highlighted:

- Majority of ND foster homes are of Caucasian race, however majority (over 85%) of ND census of racial population is known to be Caucasian.
- Less than 10% of the foster parents are of diverse racial background
- Training and cultural sensitivity education is offered to all providers
- Native American family home recruitment and retention remains a priority to accommodate Native American children placed in foster care. Homes have increased as well as working relationships with the Tribal Nations to accommodate the approval of an affidavit tribal home located on the reservation.
- Relative recruitment is a priority; however, many relatives do not choose to get a foster care license.
- More homes licensed who identify themselves as LGBTQ community.

Outcome 5: Providers will not terminate their foster care license due to the licensing agency's lack of support, insufficient training or feeling of inadequacy.

Overall ND regions reported with consistency that support is offered to family foster homes ongoing. Regions highlighted:

- Licensing provides ongoing support, encouragement, and training
- Agencies have offered peer mentoring from experienced foster parents
- Increased communication upon obtaining a license assists the family in feeling initial support as they understand the process of the ND child welfare system
- If a foster family is accused of child abuse and neglect, with the filing of a SFN 960, some licensors have assisted the family through the process in an effort to help the family feel supported, yet not blur the investigation.
- Increased education and communication from licensing with county workers, to ensure messaging and information given to foster parents is consistent.



Regions reported the most successful sources of recruitment were:

- Word of mouth from current foster families
- Immediate responsiveness to inquiries from prospective families
- Special Events: Booths, parades, face-to-face interactions
- Community Outreach: “Extra Slice” on pizza boxes, etc.
- Faith based community outreach
- Child-specific recruitment (locating relatives/fictive family)
- County workers advocating
- Educating relatives on benefits of licensure
- Social Media FaceTime Live
- Radio/TV advertising

Regions reported the most successful approach to retain the current families

- To have good, clear and ongoing communication with licensed providers
- Offer support groups
- Provide information, tools, resources to recharge their perspective

Regions reported reasons families did not complete their initial licensing process

- Training access to 27 face-to-face hours for PRIDE (multiple regions), want online options to be part of the training. **This is underway!
- Spouse not on board
- Cannot pass the background check
- Foster parenting is harder than they thought it would be
- Family schedule is too busy
- Family situation changed – divorce, death, birth of a baby, etc.

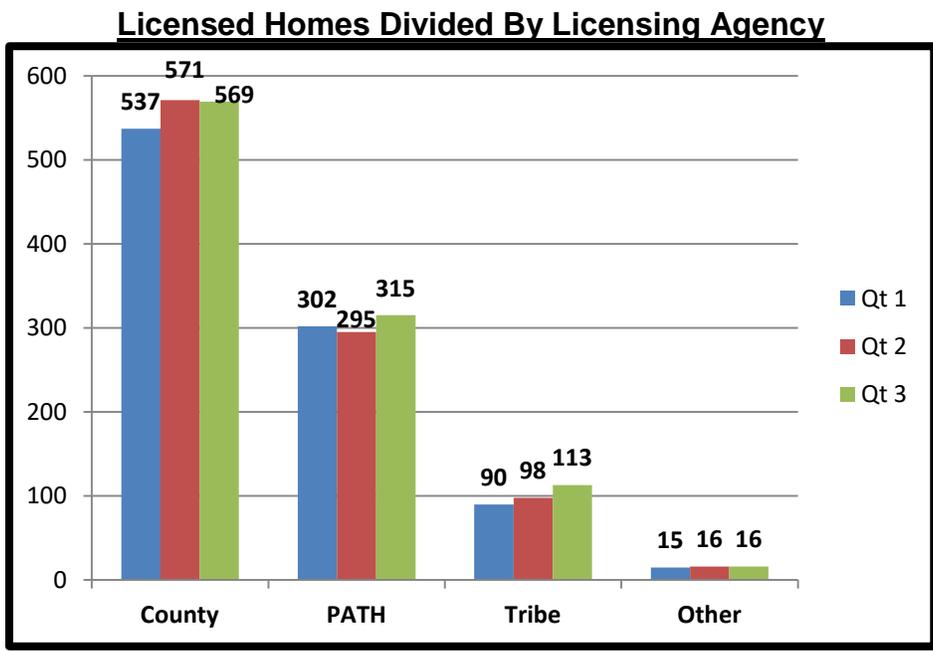
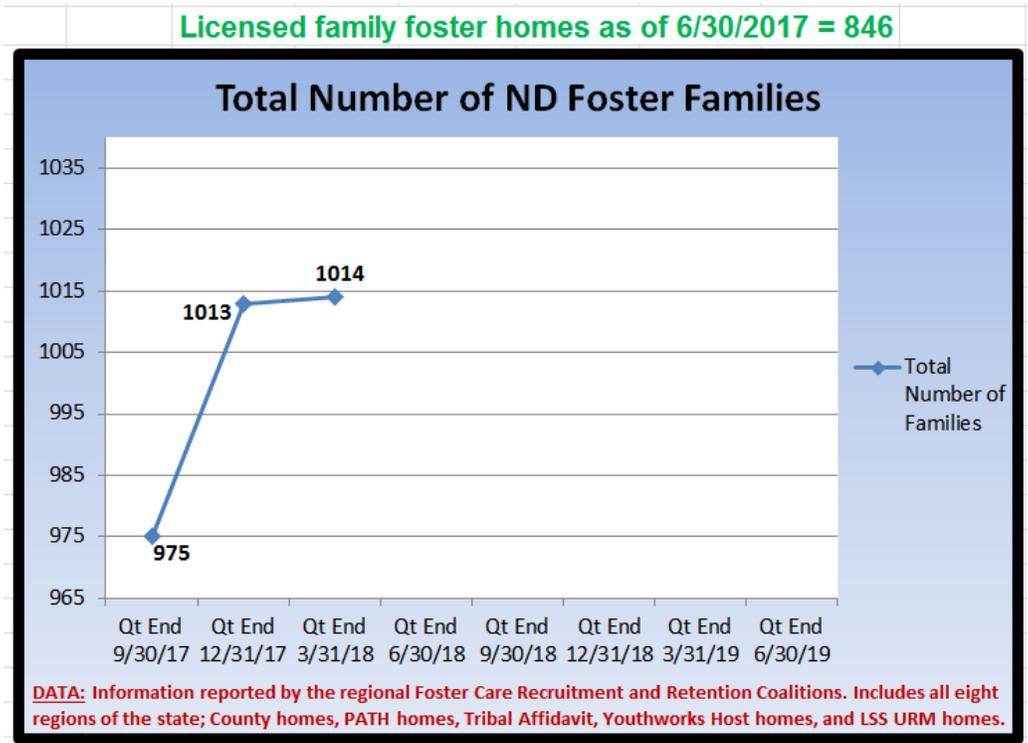
Reasons families discontinued their foster care license

- Moved out of state
- Adopted the foster youth
- Working parents -- schedule of foster youth is too cumbersome
- Need more time to focus on current family needs
- Provider burn out
- Revocation
- CPS report on their own children in their home
- Systems issues (treatment needs, services for child, or frustrated with workers)



Current State Biennium Update
July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2019

The current biennium report show an increase in the number of recruited and licensed family foster homes, but the outcomes data will not be available until August 2017.



Recruitment & Retention Statewide Task Force

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.

Statewide R&R Accomplishments – Obtained October 2017

ND continues to have ongoing Regional Coalition meetings to discuss recruitment and retention efforts as well as brainstorm solutions for local needs. NDDHS does support the collaborative effort of all regional coalitions to attend the annual statewide Recruitment & Retention Task Force meeting hosted by Children & Family Services each fall. At the Task Force meeting, held October 2017 regions reported:

- Stress ball STARS given to the blood drives
- “Fishing for Foster Parents”; goldfish crackers were given out at parades
- “Find Your Super Power - Become a Foster Parent” theme community activities
- Kids Day Out event during week of the young child
- Movie Theater restored – advertising for foster parenting
- Community booth at “Rock the Leaves” musical event
- School PTA/ PTO meetings and school fliers
- Minot Fairgrounds and ND highways had billboards about foster parenting
- Foster Care month – coalition dispersed yard signs, ribbons on trees, etc.
- Hockey arena team sponsors \$5 ticket night
- Incentives purchased for families: pool passes, ball game tickets
- Birthday cards and anniversary cards were mailed to the foster parents
- Booths, fairs, radio ad, online ad, cotton candy at the rodeo
- Pizza cutters and flyers on super bowl Sunday
- Banquet for foster parent recognition
- Christmas in the Park booth
- Flamingos on the hospital lot one for each child in care
- All licensing forms are linked online makes it easy for providers to apply/ reapply
- Activities at county fairs, advertisements on bus, email on school, ad in school
- Offering trauma training and grief and loss therapy sessions
- Facebook page + Logo – Dare to Care social media
- More interest in respite and emergency care, helpful for short term assistance to current families (retention efforts)!
- Community Fun Nights – donations, games, activities, etc.
- Good Day Dakota media segment, IHeart Radio advertising and PSAs
- Educators Staff Development Days – allowed a booth to help recruit
- Foster parent picnic with door prizes.
- Fundraiser Event: 31 Bags as a fundraiser to give each child in region VIII.



- Individuals sponsored the bags; youth from the school help
- Banners at baseball field and the Dickinson city banner as advertising
 - Brainstorming Facebook Live
 - Homecoming float with promotional items thrown to the crowd
 - Annual foster parent picnic ~ huge donation of food and games for all MHA nation foster children and foster parents.
 - \$5000 in donations for door prizes; smokers, grills, food gift cards, swimming gear; great recruitment!! Great recruitment tool too.
 - Table tents at area restaurants
 - Pens in at Pharmacies
 - Cup sleeves to coffee shops
 - Golf tees to area golf courses
 - Halloween candy stickers for foster parent to use on their candy they hand out
 - Foster parent gem of the week
 - “Foster Ware” Parties (Tupperware; invite others to recruit foster parents)
 - Letters to mayors- include paragraphs with water bills, posters in city hall

Statewide R&R Challenges – Obtained October 2017

ND continues to have discussions about the best way to retain families once they have become a licensed provider. Families have provided various reasons why they choose to discontinue the licensing process or no longer retain their license after duration of time. Foster care providers indicate they cease the licensing process after further reflection of how having extra children in their home may disrupt their own children schedule, they disclose they have had a change of heart, unexpected marital/family issues have arisen, or the expression that getting too attached to the children would be difficult for their own family when the foster child has to go, etc. Once licensed, providers who choose to let their license expire or discontinue providing foster care to children state the reasons they no longer remain a foster parent are; adoption of a specific child/ren, family issues, moving, no longer interested, specific license for a child who has exited care, etc.

ND Recruitment and Retention Coalitions have worked with local licensing workers to help educate prospective providers early on regarding the pros and cons of foster parenting, not intending to sway decision making, rather to assist in making an educated choice and commitment. In addition, great effort has been made to offer additional support early on for the new families to assist in answering questions and guiding them through the process of a first placement, expectations, navigating the system, understanding the payment schedule, and knowing it is ok to ask for additional support if it is needed, etc.

Regional Coalition Plans:

North Dakota received technical assistance in the past 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 a fiscal allocation from the state. This model has been working.

Examples of general recruitment activities contained in the regional plans:

- Host foster parents inquiry meetings at public establishments
- Facebook LIVE events
- Purchase radio, newspaper, television or billboard ads
- Develop public service announcements
- Television and radio interviews highlighting specific events or awareness
- 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 area.

Examples of targeted recruitment activities contained in the regional plans:

- Recruit specialized care for specific behavior challenges (aggressive, sexually acting out, and low function). These three populations are the most difficult to place foster children.
- 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 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
- Offer stipends to seasoned foster parents 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

Specific Adoption Recruitment - Update June 2018:

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, 2017 through May 2018) the AASK Program has completed



72 new assessments and 6 updated 22 subsequent adoption assessments. In this same time frame, AASK has completed 169 child adoption assessments for children whose case plan goal is adoption.

North Dakota has two full time Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) recruiters. WWK recruiters are located in eastern ND, with one recruiter having a primary focus on child specific recruitment for Native American children.

North Dakota has an active ND Heart Gallery, which facilitates a web site and photo gallery of waiting children. The photo gallery is transported across the state showcasing professional photographs of each child. ND hosts an annual "gala" where new portraits are unveiled; however children can be added to the gallery throughout the year. Currently, ND is featuring 14 children in the ND Heart Gallery, with 15 additional children featured who have been matched with prospective adoptive parents. This number has been recently reduced by the placement and adoption finalization of 19 children who were waiting without an identified family. Additional children will be added before August 2018 to be featured in the November unveiling of the new gallery. Not every child's team is supportive of the child's inclusion in the Heart Gallery, however the option to be featured is provided to all children waiting for a forever family.

North Dakota provides adoption services to Tribal custody children at the request of each Tribe, through the AASK program. The Tribe seeks approval of the State adoption administrator for AASK to provide these services on a case-by-case basis. In the current SFY, AASK has placed 17 children for adoption at the request of the Tribe and has also assisted in the finalization of adoption for 17 children.

Ongoing R&R Plan Information

Inquiry 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.

CHANGES/ PLANS: ND has had an increase in inquiries for foster parenting. In addition, SB 2206 County Redesign efforts have challenged current practices to ensure consistency, efficiency and seamless effort to assist the client. In this case, the prospective foster parent would be the client and we want to ensure they are contacted back asap with clear, detailed information. At this time the contact response to inquiries is sent to the county and PATH office to complete the outreach. North Dakota is analyzing a "Clearing House" model to take on all recruitment and retention inquiries, oversight of the funds to be dispersed, etc. Phase one may include having the regional office staff contact the prospective provider to detail the levels of care in state, what is required, how to proceed with background checks, etc. Phase two would be to contract the effort to one vendor.



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.

State Policy Limitations:

ND does not have limitations about who can become a foster parent. The US Supreme Court decision regarding same sex marriage has not and will not have program implications on licensing ND foster homes. Currently, ND does have same-sex couples licensed to provide foster care to children and our state has had same sex couples licensed in the past. Same sex couples may also adopt children from ND foster care.

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 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.

Training Center:

The UND Children and Family Services Training Center (CFSTC) no longer employs a part-time Foster & Adopt Recruitment and Retention Specialist. The position has since been absorbed into duties of a current position to provide consultation to regional recruitment and retention coalitions, offer training opportunities, and research best practice methods of recruitment and retention. Recruitment & Retention efforts continue to be made; updating Facebook, attending Statewide Task Force Meetings, researching topics ongoing, and producing recruitment resources for agencies for the eight Recruitment and Retention Coalitions 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.
- 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



Foster and Adopt Recruitment & Retention Regional Outcomes

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017

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 7/1/15: _____
- 2. Number of newly licensed foster parents from 7/1/15 - 6/30/17: _____
- 3. Number of foster parents who terminated their license: _____
- 4. Licensed foster parents as of 6/30/17: _____

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.



Request for Funding

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.



North Dakota Goals

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: 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.

