

Executive Summary

Relevant Numbers:

- 173 calls to the toll free line
- 15,000+ units of materials distributed
- 98 Recruitment activities conducted since program inception
- 22% of callers are in progress (waiting to attend an orientation session, to start training or waiting for their homestudy to be completed)
- Referrals include: NECCO-1; Sunrise-2; DCBS-5; Bellewood-1; Omnivisions-1.

Implementation Team

- Mike Grimes, Director
- Jennifer Hall, Co-Mgr.
- Caroline Crump, Co-Mgr.
- Jessica Morris, Coordinator
- Phil Kilby, Coordinator
- Crystal Collins-Camargo, Evaluator
- Dana Sullivan, Evaluator
- Ramie Martin-Gilijatovic, Research Mgr.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In an effort to be responsive to the needs of our partners in the four intervention regions, the Project MATCH implementation Team will be publishing a quarterly executive summary. The purpose of this executive summary is to summarize the key points or activities that have occurred in the past quarter.

The summary will be divided into five sections, each detailing accomplishments to date with

the individual interventions. A final section will include relevant data from the project evaluators.

We look forward to receiving feedback from you as to additional information you would like to see included in future executive summaries. This first issue will be a little longer than future issues, due to the fact that we are reporting for two years.

November 2010



Intervention #1: Targeted and Child Specific Recruitment

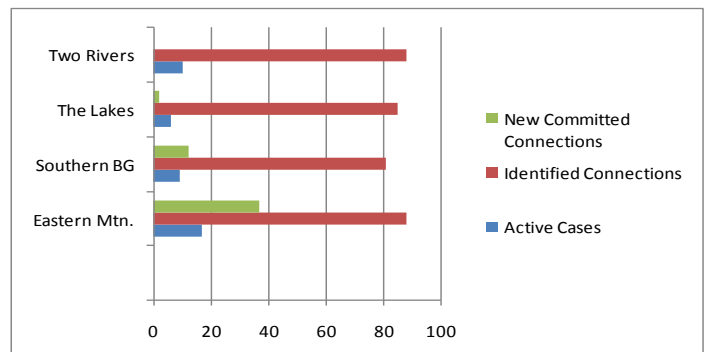
Making use of dedicated recruiters was chosen as a Project MATCH intervention based on survey and focus group results. Those results indicated that agency staff do not have adequate time to focus on the recruitment of new resource homes and that the bulk of time spent recruiting was performed on general recruitment. General recruitment, while good for public awareness, does not result in the type of homes that will care for children who come to the attention of the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS). Based on research that indicates that resource parents are strong recruiters, Project MATCH hired eight experienced resource parents. Recruitment services are not focused on a specific agency, rather they are focused on the children. From the reporting period of April 1-September 30, 2010 approximately 47 recruitment activities have been conducted by these parents, referred to as Diligent Recruitment Specialists (98 activities since the program began). Some examples of activities

conducted include:

- Distributing tray liners at a family restaurant in an area indicated to have strong potential based on market segmentation data;
- Television interviews regarding homes for teens, with two teens participating in the interview;

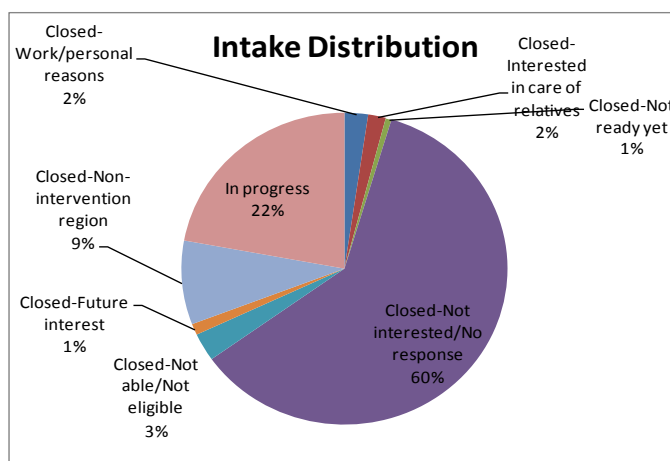
Additional aspects of dedicated recruitment include targeted and child specific recruitment. To meet those goals several tools have been used. These include Family Finding, a nationally known model of locating and developing lifelong family con-

nections for the loneliest children in out of home care. File mining and relative searches (68 relative searches have been conducted to date) have also aided in this effort. The chart below shows connections made related to Family Finding active cases. The Specialists have also been making use of pictures of the children currently in care in their assigned regions to make their recruitment activities more meaningful and child specific. Market segmentation data will also be used in January 2011 for targeted mailing purposes to further assist the implementation team in reaching prospective families most likely to be interested in becoming a resource parent.



Intervention #2: Customer Service

During the focus group sessions, resource parents indicated that they could benefit from someone to support them throughout the training and approval process. As a result, the Project MATCH implementation team developed a customer service model similar to that used by AdoptUsKids. Families who inquire through the recruitment efforts of the Diligent Recruitment Specialists, are giving information about all the agencies in their geographic area and are contacted on a regular basis to keep them engaged in the process as well as to trouble shoot any barriers that may prevent a prospective parent from moving forward. At the end of September 30 (the first year of recruitment activities), 173 intakes had been received. Those intakes are broken down in the following manner:



As of this writing, 22% of initial intakes are in various stages of the information gathering, orientation, training and approval process.

At this time 32 of the intakes are in various stages of progress. This means that they have received our initial information and are working to contact agencies, or they may be waiting on an orientation session/information meeting, or they may be waiting for training to start. A few are already in the training process and one is awaiting agency ap-

proval. The known agency breakdown is as follows:

Necco	1 family
Sunrise	2 families
DCBS	5 families
Bellewood	1 family
Omnivisions	1 family

Intervention #3-Utilization of Respite Between Completion of Pre-Service Training, Approval and Placement

The original intent of this intervention was to provide prospective resource parents with the opportunity to have hands on experience with children in out of home care (recommended 3-5 hours). The goal was to keep them engaged during the time-frame between the completion of training and the notice of approval as a resource home. A secondary goal was to have those prospective parents broaden their acceptance scale after that experience with children.

As we proceeded with working with DCBS Recruitment and Certification teams and private agency staff, as well as discussing how the intervention would work with seasoned resource parents, we ran into two challenges. The first challenge iden-

tified was that our program did not match the state's definition of respite (overnight). When this issue was brought to the attention of the Advisory Board, the title of Alternative Caregiver Training (ACT) was thought to be more descriptive, as this is really "on the job training". The second challenge was that Kentucky's experienced resource parents did not want to leave strangers alone with their children. They were however, comfortable with job shadowing or short term experiences. We identified the following parameters for the ACT program:

- In home shadowing and assistance to a resource parent;
- One on one care for the child in the home of the

seasoned resource parent;

- One on one care for the child in the home of the prospective resource parent (requires completion of all paperwork, criminal records check/CAN check, and one home consultation);
- Provision of care giving services at an ASK, Network, Mentor or other resource parent training event;
- Assistance at local and regional events for youth, such as a day camp.

As of this writing, no matches have been made, but several families will be matched soon.

Intervention #4: Mix and MATCH Sessions

These sessions, formerly known as Quarterly Regional Peer Consultation Groups involve a mix of public and private agency staff and public and private agency resource parents. The purpose of these sessions is to give staff the opportunity to review regional data related to a particular topic and to then have the opportunity to discuss regional strengths and challenges. Action plans are developed based on group consensus of which challenge (s) to focus on and the sessions end with a celebration of successes identified for that time period. A total of 16 Mix and MATCH sessions have been held as of September 30th, with 163 participants (duplicated counts).

The action planning phase of the sessions are resulting in some

unique activities and tasks, a few of which are detailed below:

- Collaborative community wide recruitment event;
- Information about foster care and adoption added to the pay stubs of all court personnel and featuring the Project MATCH toll free number;
- Identification of Latino leaders in the community to assist in recruitment efforts in their community;
- Development of a video of children/youth in foster care discussing the importance of permanency and sibling connections to share with local judges;
- Sending birthday, anniversary, thinking of you, congratulations, etc., cards to youth in foster care, resource parents and birth families in an effort to improve customer service;
- Networking and/or special training sessions to all resource parents about parenting older children;
- Adding a teenager panelist to PS-MAPP meeting 9 to provide an opportunity for prospective parents to see teen strengths;
- Make an effort to solicit and use foster parent suggestions in the development of foster parent training.

To date, 163 staff and parents have participated in Mix and MATCH sessions.

Intervention #5: Collaboratively Review Permanency Data With the Courts

The overall intent of this intervention was to educate judges and court personnel of the impact that the courts have in permanency for children. Several tasks are associated with this intervention. Judges will receive information on the importance of using kinship care as a least restrictive placement. They will be educated on their role in concurrent planning. We will also share data with the judges to insure that they are knowledgeable of court related barriers to permanency.

We are fortunate to have two judges who serve on the advisory board as well as a representative from the Administrative Offices of the Courts. They have all shared valuable suggestions on means of sharing

data and educating the courts. The director for Project MATCH has made several presentations regarding permanency data at various court related activities. These include:

- Fayette County Family Drug Court-May 28th
- Fayette County Model Court Steering Committee-June 8th
- Daviess County Model Court Steering Committee-July 29th
- Court improvement program steering committee-September 30th

Project staff are in the process of automating permanency data into a report format that will be

produced twice a year and will be distributed to all court jurisdictions in the state. A second round of presentations will be made to the model courts in the spring of 2011 to show trends between 2009 and 2010 data.

