Welcome!

Please join the meeting using your phone and computer so that you can participate fully. Your unique web login is provided in your confirmation and reminder emails.

Phone number (toll-free): (855) 621-8944

Conference ID: 30818073
Recruiting, Developing, and Supporting Resource Families in Rural Communities

Peer-to-Peer Meeting | February 25, 2016

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Director, National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment at AdoptUSKIds

Tracy Serdjenian  
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Tribal Child Welfare Specialist, National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment at AdoptUSKIds

Kathleen Belanger  
Consultant, National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment at AdoptUSKIds
Welcome and Introductions

- Jill Marshall May, Director, NRCDR
- Tracy Serdjenian, Associate Director of Stakeholder Engagement, NRCDR
- Rebekah “Becky” Main, Tribal Child Welfare Specialist, NRCDR
- Kathleen Belanger, Consultant, NRCDR
Housekeeping

– This meeting is 90 minutes long and the entire meeting will be interactive.

– We will record this meeting and provide the recording, PowerPoint, and contact list to you in a follow up email. The recording will be posted on the NRCDR website.

– Your line will be open during the entire meeting for questions and discussion. Please mute your line when you are not speaking. You can use *6 to mute and unmute your line.

– You can use the chat function to let us know if you are having technical issues or to communicate with NRCDR staff.
Agenda

- Welcome, introductions, housekeeping
- Review of agenda
- Rural and tribal challenges and strengths
- Strategies for recruiting resource families in rural and tribal communities
- Strategies for developing and supporting resource families in rural and tribal communities
- Resources, next steps, and closing remarks
Discussion: Rural Strengths and Challenges

Please share:

– Your name and state, tribe, territory, or county
– Why you joined the call
– A challenge and/or strength that you experience in the rural community in which you live and/or work
Poll Question
Rural and Tribal Challenges

- Income/economic challenges: poverty
- Human capital: fewer specialists and health and mental health care providers
- Physical capital: infrastructure (limited transportation, roads, buildings, hospitals, schools, and internet access)
- Distance to travel:
  - for training and development opportunities for resource parents and caseworkers
  - to access services, specialists, and medical assistance
  - for child visits
  - for consultation, collaboration, and respite care
Poll Question
Rural and Tribal Strengths

Place

- Context for life, history and continuity
- Potential voting power
- Manageable systems—we know each other
- Values: loyalty, family, initiative, self-sufficiency

Social capital and relationships

- Resources available by:
  - Membership in social network
  - Trust, shared norms/values
- Accruable, reciprocal, transferable
Discussion: Social Capital

– Think of your community. Who is rich in social capital?
Types of Social Capital

- Bridging--between group relationships
  - Organizations that link others
  - People who are members of different groups (can link them)
  - Organizations that link people throughout the region (faith communities with larger structures)

- Bonding--in group relationships
  - Clicks/clubs
  - Sororities/Junior League
  - Faith communities with closed memberships
Strategies for Recruiting, Developing, and Supporting Rural Resource Families

Topics raised by the group:

- Concrete recruitment strategies
- Efficient ways to recruit
- Ideas for working on a limited budget
- Access to supportive resources in rural communities and providing adequate training and contact to those communities
- Recruitment strategies that have worked with individuals following through with the foster/adopt process
Strategies for Recruiting, Developing, and Supporting Rural and Tribal Resource Families

– Know the community(s).
– Engage the community(s) utilizing strengths.
– Recognize each tribe is a sovereign nation and each tribe is unique.
– Become more aware of others’ worldview.
– Learn about practices, understandings, challenges, interpretations, culture and worldview.
– Value and respect each culture.
– Develop skills to understand, communicate, and recognize each culture.
Rural and Tribal Strategies: “Capitalize” with Social Capital

- Link with people who are trusted and connected vs. relying on people with specific positions or titles or on your own credentials.
- Recognize that tribal elders, spiritual leaders, and elected officials are often rich in social capital.
- Take time to establish ties, engage, listen, and learn.
- Remember: “It’s who you know vs. what you know.”
- Think about how one fits vs. what one has to say.
Strategy: Increase Awareness and Appreciation

– Increase broad rural and tribal awareness:
  • ICWA training: Become familiar with ICWA and tribe(s).
  • Rural competence training: Become aware of rural and tribal culture and variance in rural culture.
  • Examine national and community rural and tribal data (not just foster care/adoption data).

– Increase specific awareness of region, tribe, community:
  • Understand who lives here and why. Learn the history.
  • Read the tribal and local/state newspaper.
  • Visit areas where people meet and participate in gatherings, tribal events, and celebrations.
Strategy: Capitalize on Place

- Make recruitment local.
- Find local people with capital to advise and to recruit.
- Show pictures of local people (with consent).
- Use local media outlets:
  - Local newspapers and flyers
  - Local radio stations
  - Local information outlets (schools, church bulletins, etc.)
- Make it “homey”; make it real.
Discussion: Using Rural Strengths to Recruit Resource Families

- How have you engaged the rural strengths of place or social capital to support your efforts to recruit, develop, and support families?

- How could you change your strategies to focus on relationships and/or place?
Strategy: Build Bonds

- Demonstrate that you value the people in the community more than achieving your immediate goals.
- Show a commitment to helping tribes care for tribal children.
- Demonstrate that it’s not just a job—it’s a long-term relationship.
- Find creative ways to be there for each other to provide assistance and support to Native children and families.
Strategy: Build Bridges

– Examine the largest bridging groups.
– Ask around:
  • Who has a good contact? Who is trusted by both communities?
  • Who doesn’t mind sharing their capital?
– Meet the person(s) in the agency responsible, the joint contact, and the end contact…
– Share stories, make connections, and build a relationship.
– If possible, seal the connection with a fairly formal partnership.
– Honor the partnership with announcement, media, etc. (if appropriate).
Strategy: Build Community

– Form a relationship with those connected, those with the most social capital.
– Establish “foster care foothold”.
– Have someone “on the ground” committed to the community more than to the project.
– Engage the community in fostering and adopting.
– Keep this message in the forefront: These are the children of THIS community. How can we help this community help its own children?
– Focus on empowerment, not sales.
– Hold partnering events.
Strategy: Tribal and State Partnerships

– States and Tribes can work together to:
  • Support ICWA practices
  • Identify and meet needs of Native American children and their families together
  • Identify relative/family resource placements for children
  • Provide culturally relevant services for children in placement
  • Develop resource homes
  • Keep siblings together or reunite them when separated in care
  • Identify and share resources
– Partnership between states and tribes benefits both agencies.
Discussion: Tribal and State Partnerships

– What are successful ways that states and tribes have partnered?
– How could states and tribes partner?
– How can this partnership help both states and tribes to recruit families?
Strategy: Engage Spiritual Communities

– Spiritual communities are often the center of the social community.
– They provide places to meet, to celebrate, for sacraments—coming into and leaving life.
– Be there for community; learn the community.
– Appreciate the community’s spiritual diversity.
– Social capital involves giving: When you give to others, they give to you. Everyone wins.
Discussion Topic: Rural Recruitment Strategies

– Have you used any of the strategies mentioned thus far to recruit, develop, or support resource families in rural communities?

– Have you used other strategies that haven’t been mentioned?

– What worked?

– What did you learn?
Developing and Supporting Resource Families in Rural and Tribal Communities

- Identify training and support needs (by region or community).
- Develop surveys or feedback mechanisms to assess training and support needs.
- Create a lending library for staff and families.
- Offer online training for staff and families.
- Develop training/development plans with families.
- Use the social capital of staff, agencies, and the community to assist with training/developing staff and families.
- Work to increase the foster care- and adoption-competence of local mental health and family support service providers.
Developing and Supporting Resource Families in Rural and Tribal Communities

- Assess and document useful support services in each community.
- Create a guidebook that identifies all services provided by the agency.
- Create a guidebook that identifies all services provided by the tribe and the tribal community.
- Host private Facebook groups for resource parents.
- Staff a phone help line through which parents can access information, referral, and emotional support.
- Provide the option of support/therapy via videoconference.
Developing and Supporting Resource Families in Rural and Tribal Communities

– Provide at least some services regionally (support groups, peer support, retreats, training).

– Host a conference or training with childcare and funds to offset travel costs.

– Develop a resource-intensive website with articles, tip sheets, and a searchable (by region) database of local resources.

– Help families to access assistance when there is a time of need.

– Be ready to listen and take time to identify concerns/issues, strategize, and create a plan together.

– Recognize and honor families, staff, and community partners.
Discussion Topic: Developing and Supporting Rural Resource Families

– Have you used any of the strategies mentioned thus far to develop and support resource families in rural communities?
– Have you used other strategies that weren’t mentioned?
– What worked?
– What did you learn?
Additional Information and Support

Mark your calendar for consultation with Kathleen and Becky!  
*Thursday, March 3rd, 3:00-4:30 pm eastern*

Reach out with questions or for additional support:  
Tracy Serdjenian, Associate Director  
NRCDR at AdoptUSKids  
tserdjenian@adoptex.org
Poll Question
Next Steps

– Complete the brief feedback survey that will be emailed to you after the meeting.
– The meeting recording, contact list, and PowerPoint from today’s meeting will be emailed to you.
– Visit the NRCDR website: www.nrcdr.org
– Access the Diligent Recruitment Navigator: http://nrcdr.org/diligent-recruitment/dr-navigator
– Sign up for E-Notes: nrcdr.org/news-and-e-notes
– Follow NRCDR on Twitter: @NRC_DR