Georgia Division of Family and Children Services

CASA Presentation on the DFCS Caregiver Recruitment & Retention 2015 Plan

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Why Now?

- **Media Attention**
  - Child Deaths
  - CPS Backlog/ Call Center
  - Privatization
  - Governor’s Reform Council
    - 3 Direct Recommendations

- **Resource Development**
  - Understaffed /under-trained
  - Over-reliance on providers
  - Need for foster homes
  - Need for specialized beds
  - Kenny A
  - No State-level RD team

- **Practice Concerns**
  - Placement Matching
  - Lack of Placement Stability
  - Non-Contracted Provider Use
  - CCI Waivers for Children 10 and Under
  - State-funded PRTF / Crisis Beds
  - Hoteling / Overnights in DFCS Offices
  - Low rate of relative placements

Desired Results

- Have sufficient placement options to match children, youth & sibling groups with the least restrictive and most appropriate placement option immediately
- Eliminate Hoteling (radically decrease by Jan 2016)
- Eliminate Use of Non-Contracted Providers (radically decrease by July 2016)
- Increase Placement Stability (significant trends showing by Jul 2016)
- Increase Net Number of Foster Care Givers (20% YOY by Dec 2017)
- Increase Number of Relative Placements/Foster Parent (increase to 25% by Jul 2016)
Caregivers Needed!

Division of Family and Children Services

2015 Statewide Recruitment & Retention Plan

www.gascore.com

Click on DFCS RD U Teams
2015 Recruitment & Retention Plan

2015-2019 CFSP Diligent Goal 1: Ensure that children and youth are placed in the least restrictive and most appropriate placement.

Objective: Expand the number of foster and adoptive resources (in either the county, CPAs or CCIs) to ensure that each child needing foster care placement has at least two potential placements that reflect their need for the least restrictive and most appropriate environment by September 2019. Initial 5 Year Targets: Approve 2,500 Partnership Parents, 1,000 Resource Parents, 700 Adoptive Parents, and 300 Relative Foster Parents.

1. **2015 Goal # 1:** Each region to maintain current number of families and increase its total number of approved foster caregiver (foster, resource, and relative) resources by 20% and at least twice the number of bed spaces as newly approved resources by 11/30/2015. Baseline state goal = 360 new caregivers and 720 additional bed spaces.

2. **2015 Goal # 2:** Enlist the partnership of CPA providers to maintain current number of approved families and increase the number of their caregivers by 20% and at least twice the number of bed spaces as newly approved resources by 11/30/2015. Baseline RBWO goal = 331 new caregivers and 662 additional bed spaces.

3. **2015 Goal # 3:** Enlist the partnership of CCI providers to develop at least 50 “no reject, no eject” acute MWO bed spaces by 11/30/2015.

Radio Ads & Billboards
2015 Recruitment & Retention Plan


Objective: Improve placement matching process, tools and training for resource development staff by September 2019.

1. **2015 Goal:** Establish functional and productive RD-U teams in each region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Regional RD Leads</th>
<th>Email Addresses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sherry Carver</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sherry.carver@dhs.ga.gov">sherry.carver@dhs.ga.gov</a></td>
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2015 Recruitment & Retention Plan

2015-2019 Diligent Recruitment Goal 3: Increase the retention of prospective caregivers during the approval process and once approved, retain caregivers for at least five years.

The number of families who terminate their involvement with the agency prior to approval will be decreased by 25%; and 2) 85% of foster parents will serve at least five (5) years and no more than 15% of foster parents will exit within 18 months of approval.

Objective: Develop reports that track how adequately prepared, supported and appropriately match families are for placement of foster, adoptive and relative placements as evidenced by the percent of parents who exit after one placement, the maltreatment in care rate, number and type of policy violations and other indicators of safety and compliance with caregiver standards by July 2016.

1. 2015 Goal: Establish a tracking method that supports understanding of “drop-out” of prospective caregivers in the approval process; and reasons for closure of approved foster parents.

$5.8M Budget Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RD Budget</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Recruitment</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Retention</th>
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Caregiver Recruitment, Retention & Utilization
(CRRU Team)

Program Director
Recruiter
Caregiver Ombudsman
Part-Time Caregiver Navigators (foster, adoptive and relative caregiver positions)

Responsibilities include
• Answering the 877-210-KIDS inquiry line
• Providing web-based Information Sessions
• Answering the “warm-line”
• On-going foster parent training
• Handling grievances
• State level recruitment initiatives / support to counties on local initiatives

Recruitment

• Publicize need for relative, foster & adoptive parents statewide
  – Implement statewide advertising campaign to include radio & television ads, billboards, website, brochures, develop other recruitment and approval materials.
  – Provide for incentives for foster parents who recruit new foster parents.
  – Develop/support a database and process for approving volunteers who support foster parents.
  – Regional / CPA Innovations Grants
Preparation

• Eliminate barriers to approval and shorten length of time to approve relatives, foster & adoptive parents
  – Develop caregiver IMPACT pre-service training hubs statewide to ensure that classes are continuously available. Provide pre-printed handout packets to trainers. Provide for web-based Information Sessions
  – Reduce the paperwork burden required for approval; redesign approval paperwork to ensure ease of understanding and completion. Provide pre-printed packets to counties to ensure consistent quality and reduction of administrative responsibilities on RD staff.
  – Increase contracting out for completion of home evaluations to support regular and faith-based recruitment initiatives.
  – Cease contracting out the caregiver inquiry line (877-210-KIDS); move operation into state office function to support improved tracking and efficiencies in progressing applicants through the process.
  – Partner with a University to assess the pre-service training model (IMPACT) and implement recommendations; and to develop an Individual Assessment Tool to ensure that applicants are not screened out or denied inappropriately.

Retention

• Increase Tenure of Foster Parents & Support for Relative Caregivers
  – Increase communication with foster parents via newsletters, email blasts, calling posts, feedback sessions and other means.
  – Increase # of paid scholarships for annual AFPAG conference
  – Increase type, quality and availability of on-going training
  – Develop a warm-line to provide phone and web-based chat support to support caregivers.
  – Improve placement matching efforts through use of GA SHINES and GA SCORE
  – Special services to foster parents/relative caregivers
How You Can Help

- Tell us how you want to help.
- Adopt a Resource Development Team! Ask them how you can help.
- Volunteer to be on IMPACT panels.
- Become an IMPACT co-leader
- Share the 877-210-KIDS #
- Connect your church to Promise686
  – www.livethepromise.org
- Provide door prizes for caregiver events
- Develop an official process for letting DFCS know when caregivers or children have a complaint
- Assist with childcare during caregiver training
- Assist with identifying permanency/placement resources

How You Can Help

- Assist with childcare in the office while trying to find placements
- Volunteer with office work
- Help foster parents with training
- Provide caregiver trainings
- Mentoring foster parents through the court process
- Adopt a group home
- Provide training to group homes
Pre-Submitted Questions

1. What specific efforts are included in the state recruitment campaign? Covered. What are some of the successful strategies being used currently? Radio and billboard ads; faith based agency recruitment
2. Is there or will there be a local or regional designated contact for interested parents and/or outreach activities? (see regional RD list)
3. What is the timeline for activities in the state or regional plan? Covered
4. Will there be targeted recruitment efforts for specialized populations (i.e. older youth, LGBTQ, disability)? Yes though there is not a targeted plan for LGBTQ.
5. Will statewide recruitment include both DFCS and private foster home recruitment? All were invited but 10 CPAs are actively partnering with DFCS.
6. Is there a designated hotline/number for prospective foster parents to inquire about foster parenting? 877-210-KIDS
7. If so, who is responsible for follow-up? DFCS county resource developers

Pre-Submitted Questions

1. Are there any efforts to increase the per diem rate? Not at this time.
2. Are there any changes to the licensing and oversight of foster homes? No. Are there any differences for DFCS vs. private agency foster homes? Not in standards and approval however monitoring is different because private agencies are licensed by RCC and have contract with DFCS thus both agencies have a monitoring responsibility.
3. Will there be any changes to the current foster parent training? Yes there will be enhancements based on the reasonable and prudent parenting law as well as any recommendations based on our planned curriculum assessment.
4. How will priority be given to placing children in their home county/region? This has and continues to be a priority; better placement matching protocols will be developed to better support this objective.
5. How can CASA and others support joint recruitment efforts? Covered
Pre-Submitted Questions

1. How does one become a receiving home? Fulton and DeKalb are the only counties using this model. Contact Elizabeth Malikian if interested at elizabeth.malikian@dhs.ga.gov

2. Are emergency rates available to children upon entering care? We don’t have a rate level called “emergency rate”.

3. Have there been recent changes in the per diem rate or other financial support, like clothing allowances, for foster families? If so, can you share some additional information? There was a 3% per diem rate increase in Sept 2013. The memo can be read at https://www.gascore.com/documents/2013MemorandumonRateIncreases_092413.pdf. There was a clothing allowance rate change in July 2014. The memo can be reviewed at https://www.gascore.com/documents/ChildWelfareServicesMemorandum2014_02.pdf