

The Collaboration to AdoptUsKids

Training & Technical Assistance E-Notes

April, 2008

Recruitment Works/Retention Matters

How the Rensselaer County Foster Care Enrichment Team Improved Their County's Foster Care Placement System describes a multi-system collaboration that achieved remarkable improvement in placement stability in a New York county. The project utilized a team approach involving the local public child welfare, mental health, and health agencies, and private child placing agencies. The team met regularly to address the needs of specific children as well as system-level issues.

During the four-year period (1999-2002) covered by the report, the rate of unplanned placement changes in the county fell from 22.6% to 2.7%. The report provides extensive information regarding the background and operation of the program and detailed recommendations for replication. A copy can be downloaded at

http://www.clmhd.org/UploadedFiles/Resources/MHI_0404_FCETreport.pdf

Interjurisdictional Placement Services

We are pleased to announce that Sharon Tittle has joined our T/TA team to lead the development, coordination and implementation of the Interjurisdictional Information Network (IIN). The IIN will be a vehicle for States, Tribes, Adoption Exchanges and other agencies to share effective practices and improve performance in interjurisdictional placements. During her 22 years with the Florida Department of Children and Families, Sharon held various child welfare positions and most recently served as the State's Program Improvement Plan Program Manager. She has great concern for interjurisdictional placements and is bringing expertise and creativity to the position. Please join us in welcoming Sharon!

Tips & Tools

The significance of supportive relationships for young adults who were previously in foster care is the subject of a new report from Chapin Hall Center for Children. *A Reason, a Season, or a Lifetime: Relational Permanence Among Young Adults with Foster Care Backgrounds* is authored by Gina Miranda Samuels and based on interviews with 29 young adults who aged out of foster care.

As described in its abstract, the publication "introduces the concept of familial support, providing a sense of family connection, as an important support provided by some participants' inner-circle network members." It addresses the "ambiguous loss" associated with foster care and its impact on perceptions regarding permanency: "Most conveyed a sense of hoping for permanence in relationships but not being confident of the certainty of this or perceiving it as something under their control."

The report's recommendations emphasize the importance of emotional support; encourage application of a youth development philosophy that addresses the skills needed for interpersonal connections; and encourages the utilization of family centered approaches that "recognizes multiple family relationships, memberships, and affiliations."

The report can be found at http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1466.

Contents:

[Recruitment Works/Retention Matters](#)
[Interjurisdictional Services](#)
[Tips & Tools](#)
[T/TA Highlights](#)
[R&R Network](#)
[FYI](#)
[Subscribe or Forward](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Print This Issue](#)



A Note from Sharri

Happy Spring to each of you!

Last month, Tava Serpan and I attended the Children's Bureau Training and Technical Assistance Network meeting in Washington DC and met with our colleagues from around the country. In addition to learning a lot, it was great to finally "put faces to names."

March was also the due date for our semi-annual report, and provided an opportunity for me to reflect on all the creative and successful work that has taken place in States over the past six months on behalf of children and families. Our goal with **E-Notes** is to share that news broadly so that lessons learned and strategies developed can quickly be applied in new settings.

Watch your mailbox for a copy of *Barriers & Success Factors in Adoption from Foster Care: Perspectives of Families & Staff*,

T/TA Highlights

Last Spring **E-Notes** highlighted the work of “United for Families: The Collaborative Circle for the Well-Being of South Dakota’s Native Children.” Locally, this lengthy title has been referred to as “the Collaborative Circle” or “the Circle.” However, in a recent meeting, members suggested that the Circle should reflect its purpose and membership, which includes the language spoken by many members. As a result, the Circle is now being referred to as the “Collaborative Hocoka,” meaning *Circle*. Other Lakota and Dakota words are also being incorporated into the language of the organizational charter.

Membership in the Hocoka continues to include all nine tribes in South Dakota: Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Crow Creek Tribe, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and Yankton Sioux Tribe. In addition, membership includes state CPS regional managers and private agency partners.

AUK consultant Kathy Deserly reports that exciting changes have occurred in the past year. The Casey Family Programs have provided financial support which has facilitated the hiring of a consultant coordinator for the Hocoka. Funding is also providing resources to each of the committees, enabling them to meet specific needs developed by each committee. In addition, the National Indian Child Welfare Association will be providing technical assistance with the Reconciliation committee—with an emphasis on improving tribal-state relations in child welfare.

As the Collaborative Hocoka enters its fourth year, there continues to be a growing dialogue among its members about ways that services can be developed and improved for Native children who are part of both the state and tribal child welfare systems. Indian Child Welfare Act compliance is at the core of all the work and the Hocoka continues to address the recommendations of the South Dakota Indian Child Welfare Commission report findings. While work much remains to be accomplished, much work is being done by this committed group of people. It is an exciting and hopeful journey.

Recruitment and Retention Network

Resource families in New Jersey have a unique option for assistance with necessary home improvements. The Resource Home Rehabilitation Program is available to low and moderate income foster, adoptive and kinship families. It makes funds available for repairs and renovations to meet licensing standards or accommodate the needs of children in care. The program is structured in the form of grants for amounts under \$10,000 and second mortgage loans for larger funding needs. Loans may be repaid by continued service as resource parents rather than cash.

The Rehabilitation Program is administered by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. For additional information, contact Dianna Black, Dianna.Black@dcsf.state.nj.us.

Please send us your stories and ideas that have shown results in recruitment, retention and interjurisdictional placements. Email your offerings to sharri@adoptex.org.

FYI

Now available: *Adoption Competence: A Guide to Developing an Adoption Certificate Program for Mental Health Practitioners*. Download the guide from the National Welfare Resource Center for Adoption by [clicking here](#).

prepared by the AdoptUsKids Research Team, led by Dr. Ruth McRoy. The report summarizes two studies completed during the initial five year AdoptUsKids funding period, one addressing “Success Factors” in adoption and other “Barriers” to adoption. The mailing also includes a DVD highlighting the research findings and featuring parents and caseworkers discussing their experiences with the adoption process. If you do not receive the materials by mail, they can be ordered using the publication order form on the AdoptUsKids website, www.adoptuskids.org.

Thanks for reading!

Sharri Black

T/TA Director for AdoptUsKids



Subscribe or Forward

Please help us share E-Notes with others by forwarding this issue, or by visiting the [T/TA website](#) to access our sign-up form.

Contact Us

For more information about AdoptUsKids Training and Technical Assistance Services, contact Sharri Black at (303) 990-3750 or email sharri@adoptex.org.

Print This Issue

For a printer-friendly pdf version of E-Notes, [click here](#)!

For a printer-friendly text version, [click here](#)!