

Putting Children First

A Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Resource Homes

January 2006

**Maryland Department of Human Resources
Social Services Administration**

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Introduction

The Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) is committed to partnering with communities to provide safe and stable neighborhoods in which children can grow. We believe that ...

- Every child deserves the sense of well being only a safe, stable environment can provide.
- Children grow best in families where they can form enduring relationships and learn life skills.
- Children do better when placed in their neighborhood and community.
- It is never too late to seek adoptive families for children.

On November 8, 2005, Maryland had a total of 10,458 children in out-of-home care.

- Most of the children in out-of-home placement (foster care) are temporarily separated from their families due to abuse, neglect, or other family circumstances. Fortunately, most of these children will return home when their parents are able to provide for their needs or to the care of relatives. In the meantime, the children need to feel safe in a nurturing, stable resource family.
- However, there are situations when children cannot return to their birth families and desperately need the commitment and security of a new family, where they can be adopted.

Each child is a precious resource. Raising children to be healthy, productive adults capable of realizing their full potential is one of society's most important responsibilities. The Department is embarking on a family-centered, neighborhood-based practice model that focuses on building families' and communities' capacity to address the needs of their children. The Department cannot meet the diverse needs of families alone—building stronger communities is essential to our children's success. When children must leave their birth homes to be safe, the community must help to protect and nurture them. This recruitment plan will target increasing community placements throughout the state.

This plan addresses Maryland's need for:

- Resource Families: families who will provide both foster care and adoptive placements for the children placed in their care. Resource Families are licensed both as foster and as adoptive parents. This practice is one way of expediting permanency for children who are unlikely to be reunified with their family or who have a plan of adoption.

- Foster Families: families who provide temporary homes that are safe and nurturing places in which to live. Foster parents work with the birth family and the local department of social services to provide the best possible care for children, and facilitate the effectuation of the permanency plan (reunification with parents, placement with relatives or adoption).
- Adoptive Families: families who will provide a permanent home to children in the State's care. Adoption is the legal proceeding by which a child becomes a member of a family with all the legal rights and privileges to which a child born to the family is entitled.
- Respite Families: families who do not provide care for a child full time, but who provide care over weekends or on special occasions to provide relief for the full time resource family. Because "getting a break" from the demands of parenting is important to any parent.

In Maryland we dually approve families as resource homes even though the families may specifically request to be either foster or adoptive homes. As a result, in this document the term "resource family/ home" includes all families.

Background

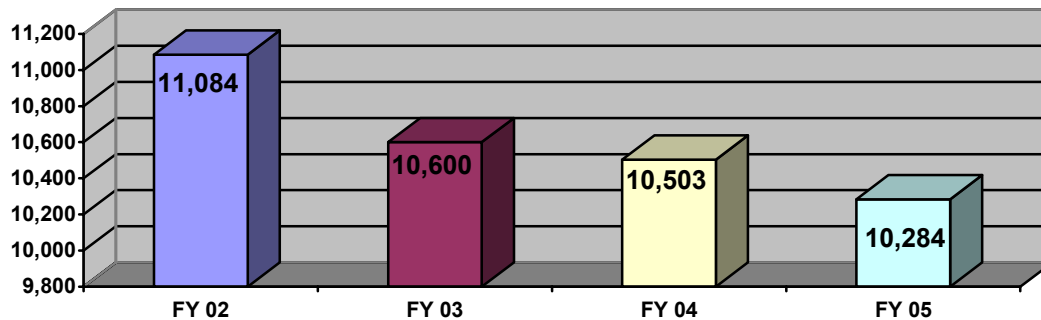
Overview of Out-of-Home Placement

Over the past three years, the number of children in out-of-home placement has decreased (Chart 1). On November 8, 2005, Maryland had a total of 10,458* children in the following out-of-home care settings:

- Resource homes: 73%*
- Group homes: 18%
- Residential treatment: 4%
- Independent living programs: 2%
- "Other" (hospital, incarceration, etc.): 3%

** This does not include the children placed in informal relative placement. Also, this is point-in-time data- just as the chart below is at that specific point in time.*

Chart 1
Number of Children in Out-of-Home Care – On June 30th each year



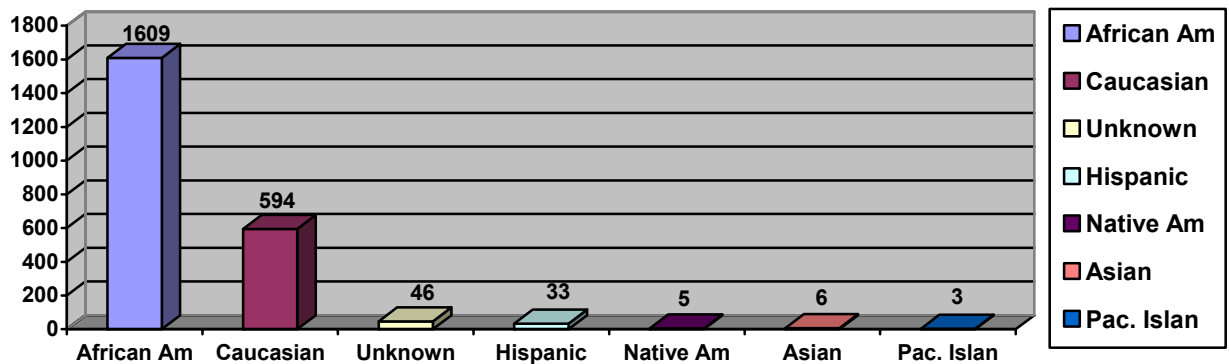
Currently, approximately 73 percent of children in out-of-home care are placed in family settings. Maryland wants to increase the number of children in family settings and reduce the number of children placed in congregate care. Therefore, a primary focus of the Department's recruitment efforts will be to increase the number of family-like placements (foster, medically fragile and treatment homes) and to identify children who are currently placed in group settings that are ready to return to a family environment.

Children in Need of Resource Families

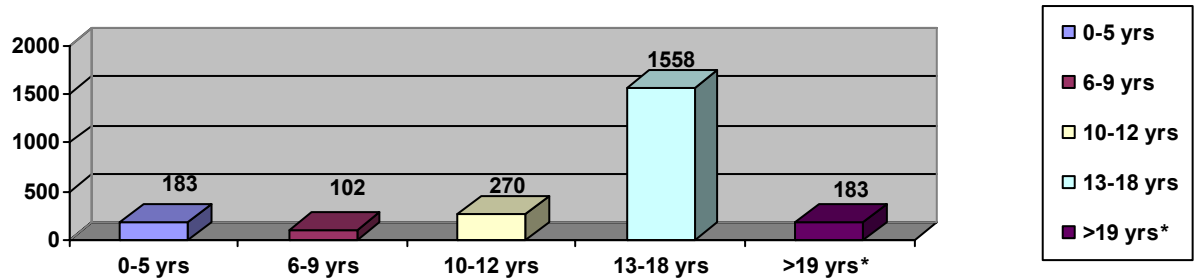
Children in Group Homes and Residential Treatment Centers (RTC)

Twenty-two percent of the children in out-of-home placement in Maryland are placed in group homes and RTC settings (congregate care). These children have various permanency plans; however, many of these children are ready to move to a least restrictive, family-like setting. The dependence on congregate care is not only costly, but in most cases children are placed a great distance from their families and community. This is not to say that group homes and RTC are not needed. There are children in our care that have needs that can only be addressed in such settings. In addition to this plan, the Department is working with the provider community on increasing programs that address the needs of children who require group home and RTC placement. On November 8, 2005, Maryland local departments had 2,296 children in congregate care placements.

Chart 2
Children in Congregate Care by Race

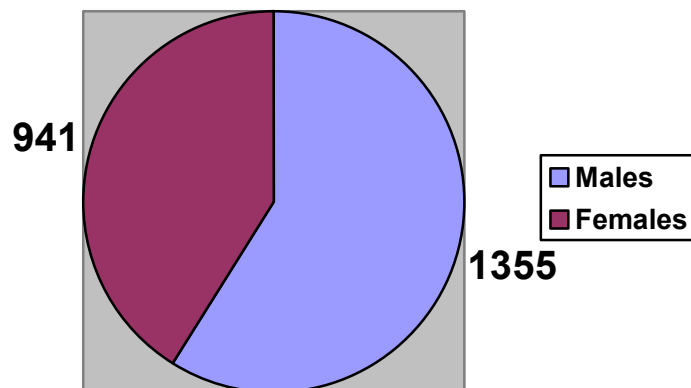


Children in Congregate Care by Age



**Most of these children are in Independent Living programs*

Children in Congregate Care by Gender

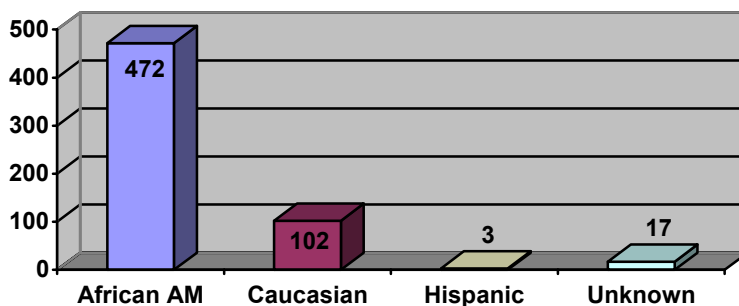
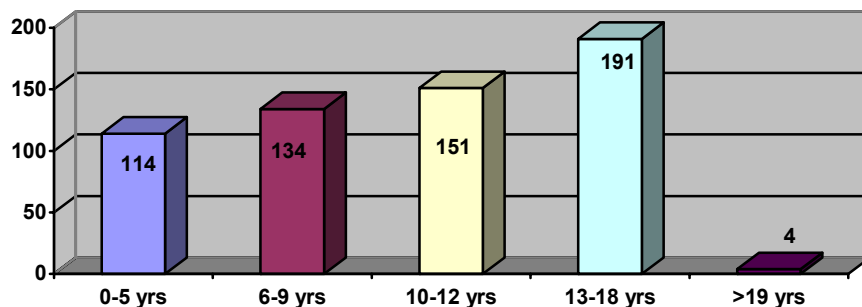


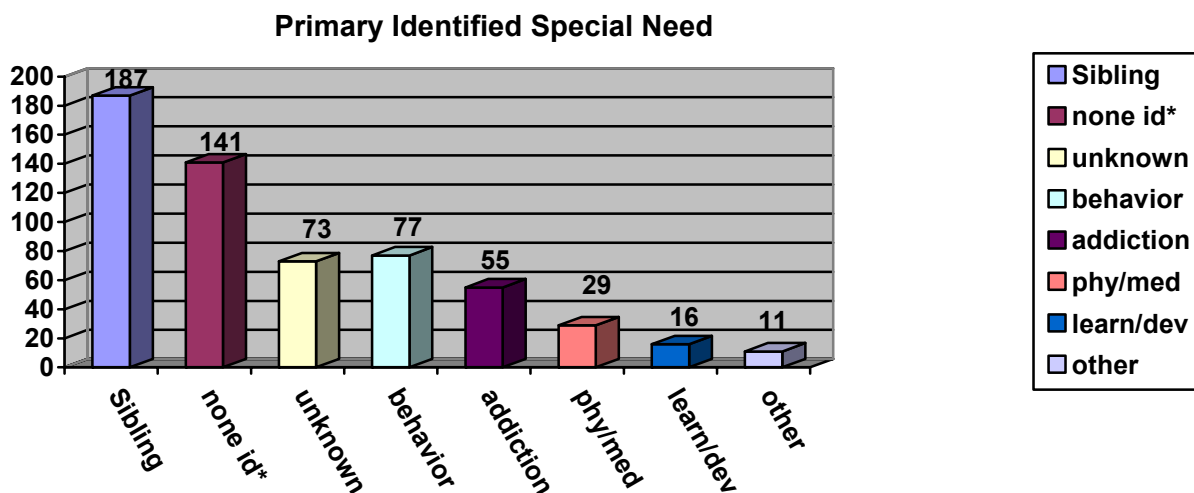
Adoptable Children

On November 8, 2005, Maryland local departments had 1,470 children with a plan of adoption and 594 of these children are legally free. Approximately 150 of the children with a plan of adoption (1,470) do not currently have an identified adoptive resource (as surveyed by LDSS). Of these children, approximately a half are registered with the Maryland Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) for child specific recruitment. MARE is the vehicle where children who are not legally free can be matched with the families from the entire state (public and private agency families) that have been approved as adoptive parents. Legally free children are transferred from MARE to the AdoptUSKids national adoption exchange database. Currently, local departments are updating the children registered in MARE and are adding those children who do need a resource. Of the 594 children with a plan of adoption who are legally free, 58% or 342 are male. The charts below provide more demographic information on these youngsters.

Demographics of these 594 youngsters are:

**Chart 3 Adoptable Children
Age and Race of Children who are Legally Free**





**None id. Means the child has no special need identified versus unknown, which means the data has not been entered*

As is true in public child welfare systems nationwide, a majority of children available for adoption through Maryland local departments of social services present unique and often challenging issues. Many of the children referred for child-specific adoption recruitment have been in foster care at least two years with some remaining in out-of-home placement for five years or more.

During their time in foster care, many of these children have experienced multiple placements and some have endured at least one adoption disruption. Many are struggling to deal with the disappointment that their birth parents are unable to care for them and the feelings of grief and loss associated with coming into the foster care system. Often foster children struggle with post-traumatic stress and the inability to form healthy attachments to adults. These children require a number of special services, such as psychiatric counseling, special education and educational tutoring to meet their needs. At the same time, they are resilient and can thrive in stable, nurturing family settings.

Recruitment Targets

The needs of our foster children dictate recruitment targets, which are shown in Table 4. Maryland needs to recruit appropriate family settings for all children in the Department's care and custody. In general, we need to focus on broadening the diversity of resource home options. Recruitment of diverse foster and adoptive parents provides the greatest likelihood that foster children can be matched to a family that can meet their needs rather than placing a child in an "open slot" that may be ill equipped to meet their needs. In addition, creating a diverse pool of resource families is required under federal law. Maryland does not discriminate by sex, race, marital status, and / or sexual orientation. Please refer to Table 4 on the next page.

Table 4: Maryland Recruitment Targets Based On Children's Needs

Type	Target	Rationale
Foster Homes	<i>Younger adults and families</i>	Current DHR resource parents are overwhelmingly older (age 50+). While maturity is desirable, older adults tend to stop fostering due to life situations (such as retirement or illness). While single adults make wonderful resource parents, some children would benefit from a two-parent family setting.
	<i>Baltimore City and Prince George's County</i>	The largest numbers of children in care are from these jurisdictions. These two jurisdictions make up 80% of the child welfare population in the State.
	<i>People willing to provide homes for boys of all ages and teen girls</i>	Current resource parents tend to prefer younger girls. The benefits of a family setting are not gender-specific. There is always a need for homes for males in care. Families are more likely to offer to parent a female except if the female is in her teen years. In general, teens are a challenge for any parent but our youth face more issues than their peers because of their feelings related to grief and loss and the maltreatment they may have experienced.
	<i>People willing to foster teen moms and their babies</i>	The Department tries to place and maintain teen mothers and their children together. There are a few teen mother programs within the State. Teen mothers who are now parenting children would benefit from the relationships, guidance, and support of a family.
	<i>People willing to parent sibling groups</i>	The need to increase options for keeping siblings together in foster care is ongoing. Sibling placement is a priority for the Department.
	<i>People willing to parent children with substantial medical and emotional needs</i>	This group includes infants and young children, a vulnerable population that greatly needs a family setting. Often the unique needs of medically fragile children require a parent to stay in the home full time and maintain frequent contact and visits to doctors. These placements are often best served by the experienced parent. Many of our children come to us with significant emotional and behavioral issues caused by physical and sexual abuse and chronic neglect.
	<i>People willing to foster on an emergency basis</i>	These children need an immediate stable home day, night, during weekends, or on holidays. Sometimes placements are needed for new entries into care and other times a child may need an emergency placement when their current placement has fallen through (disrupted).
	<i>Prospective parents willing to provide respite care for foster and adoptive parents</i>	Resource families often need an opportunity to have a break from the children but need an approved resource to provide the care that is needed when they are away.
Adoptive Homes	<i>People willing to adopt males over age 8 and teens of both genders.</i>	Of children currently with a plan of adoption, 40% are over age 9. In addition, 73% are African American.
	<i>People who will adopt children with medical and emotional needs</i>	The majority of children currently referred for child-specific recruitment have physical, emotional, learning, or other disabilities.
	<i>People willing to adopt sibling groups</i>	Of children available for adoption, 32% are part of a sibling group who need/ wish to be adopted together.

The Licensing Process

Basic Resource Family Qualifications

Being a resource parent is the highest form of public service. Resource families have the respect of their community, and the reward of knowing they have helped to stabilize a family in crisis. When needed, the resource family can provide the permanent family a child wants and needs.

Resource parents must be willing to work closely with birth parents on behalf of children and to model good parenting behavior. Resource parents must understand and value working with birth parents, extended family, and the community. The most effective resource parents enjoy children, like to parent, value family relationships, and have a strong personal support system. Many are motivated to make a positive difference in a young person's life or to contribute to their community.

As stated earlier, the local departments of social services throughout Maryland recruit, train and license resource homes. The box at the right lists basic qualifications for foster families only. Two additional factors apply to adoptive parents. The first is that adoptive parents can live anywhere in the U.S. The second is prospective adoptive parents who are married must be living together and adopt as a couple—their marriage cannot be in an unstable status. An adoptive parent can also be legally divorced and adopt as a single parent.

Foster Family Basic Qualifications

- Must be at least 21 years old
- Can be married or single, with or without birth children in the home
- Can be of any race, creed, or national origin
- Need to be in good physical and mental health
- Must be able to support their household financially
- Home must meet safety and health standards (Health Department)
- Must agree not to use physical punishment
- Must have adequate space in the household to accommodate children
- Must agree to a criminal background clearance
- Cannot have a history of child abuse/neglect or criminal activity related to violence or drug abuse
- Must agree to a child support clearance
- Must be willing to complete additional training requirements

Process Of Licensure

The box on page 10 provides an overview of the licensing/ approval process for new resource parents. Prospective families can (and do) opt out at any stage in the process.

People interested in becoming resource parents can contact Maryland Department of Human Resources recruitment line, (800) 39-ADOPT or (800) 555-1345. The call center responds to calls immediately and gathers preliminary information that is forwarded to the appropriate local department recruiter. Interested individuals can also contact their local department of social services directly (see contact information in the appendix).

In addition to conducting an initial screening of the prospective family, the local department recruiter explains basic requirements for fostering/adopting—such as age; income; space in the household; training; and required medical, police, and FBI clearances. The recruiter then invites the prospective parent to attend an upcoming orientation, which is offered by the local department. The frequency of orientation is based on the number of calls received. The recruiter follows up with a letter to the prospective parent inviting him/her to the orientation and providing a reminder of the date. Orientation is often readily available within the region of the State where the interested family lives if not in the jurisdiction in which they reside.

At orientation, prospective families watch a video that highlights the importance of resource parents in the lives of children and the need for permanent, nurturing homes. Often, a veteran resource parent or foster child speaks to emphasize the important role resource parents play in the lives of children. At the end of orientation, prospective families who are still interested complete an application and register for training.

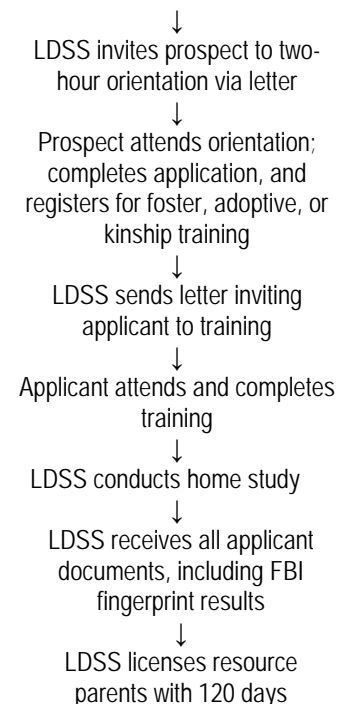
Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) caseworkers train and complete home studies for relative, foster, and adoptive families. Preparation training of prospective resource parents is required. Local departments use the Parent Resources for Information Development and Education (PRIDE) curriculum, which is a 27 hour comprehensive training. It presents a realistic picture of the challenges and rewards of foster care and adoption, in addition to providing resource parent candidates with multiple opportunities to discuss issues and ask questions about situations they may encounter. Persons who are licensed and serve as resource parents are required to participate in an additional 6 hours of ongoing, in-service training throughout the year to maintain their licenses. PRIDE training schedules vary among local departments—some areas of the state provide training regionally.

After the PRIDE training is completed the prospective families meet individually with a caseworker to discuss concerns and questions. These meetings provide an opportunity for the caseworker to assess the strengths of each family as well as educate the family on the children who may one day be placed in their homes.

The caseworker completes a home study at the applicant's residence. Once the family completes the entire preparation process, the caseworker determines whether they have met licensing standards or not. If approved the LDSS then assigns a resource home caseworker to the family. This caseworker advises them on requirements for annual license renewal and available support groups.

**Maryland Resource
Parent Preparation**
(may vary by jurisdiction)

**Prospective families call:
1-(800) 39 – ADOPT or
(800) 555-1345**



As a result of the staffing patterns and the rigorous PRIDE training schedule, the local departments of social services are not usually able to begin with a family immediately after receipt of the first call. The orientations and PRIDE training sessions are scheduled to begin on a regular cycle. Families who begin the process and provide their verifications in a timely manner will be approved within 120 days of beginning the training process.

Retention Process

It is imperative that our resource parents have a positive and supportive experience. This helps to make them better caregivers for the children placed in their homes. We encourage local departments to provide a mentor resource family to prospective families throughout the licensing process and during the time the new resource family receives their first child for placement.

All foster children have caseworkers that coordinate services for them, such as counseling, mentoring, tutoring, parent-child visits, school enrollment and medical appointments. The caseworker visits the child monthly to assess the child's progress and to answer any questions the child or the resource family may have. The Department pays for room, board, medical care, clothing, and other necessities for foster children. The amount of these payments is based on the age of the child and the child's unique needs.

The resource families have their own caseworkers that are assigned to provide support to the family and to assist them with eliminating any problems that may arise. These workers visit as needed, but at least once annually. As previously stated the child's caseworker visits the home regularly and can assist in addressing the needs of the resource family with any challenges they may experience. Both caseworkers are expected to collaborate and support not only the child but the family. Often families only need an "ear" to listen to their concerns, feelings and frustrations. Local department staff play a key role in supporting and retaining resource families.

Throughout the year, local departments sponsor activities for resource families, such as holiday and back-to-school parties and summer picnics. Occasionally, donations from the community enable resource families to attend sports, cultural or other entertainment events free of charge. Community generosity also provides a substantial array of gifts and parties for foster children during each holiday season.

Resource parents are eligible for membership in the foster parent associations coordinated by each local department. These groups meet regularly to discuss issues related to foster parenting and provide support. The Department is currently working with a small group of resource families to revitalize the State foster parent association. This statewide organization will be an independent organization that will work with the Maryland Department of Human Resources to ensure that the State addresses the needs of our many families who provide for the children who need out-of-home placement.

There are 8 adoption support groups sponsored by the Department who welcome **all** dually approved families to their meetings. These support groups provide emotional support, advice and assistance to resource families. Many times members of these groups provide respite care for the children and families after placement. The Department is currently in the contracting process to expand the adoption support groups to ensure that each jurisdiction has an opportunity to provide this substantial support to families.

The Department will explore opportunities to develop respite care families for the children and resource families who provide them care. This is a great way for families to get away, have some free time and feel comfortable that the child is in the capable hands of another approved resource family. Resource families say the one thing they need is a break from the demands of parenting. Respite care continues to be one of the major areas of need and is key to retention. The Department continues to partner with the local departments of social services in implementing a respite care program. The Department will recruit respite care families who can and are willing to provide services both with and without receipt of a financial incentive. Resource parents are a scarce, valuable resource. Supporting and working in partnership with them to serve abused and neglected children is essential to resource home retention. In addition, when agencies succeed in retaining a dedicated, enthusiastic cadre of resource parents, they have a strong recruitment resource at their disposal.

The Department recognizes the ongoing challenge in providing childcare for our resource families and we continue to explore opportunities to address this very important need. We encourage local departments to use flex funds when available and to enroll toddlers into programs such as Head Start and/or Early Intervention as soon as the child is eligible.

The Department will **re-institute** the cash incentive program for current resource families who refer their friends to become resource parents. Each time a referred family is approved to foster, adopt or become dually licensed the family who referred them will receive a **\$150.00** cash award. The \$150 will be disbursed accordingly: \$25 after the family attends orientation and completes application, \$50 after the family has completed the licensing process and \$75 after the first child is placed in the home. This becomes effective for any family referred after February 1, 2006. Child welfare agencies across the nation have found that “word of mouth” is perhaps the most powerful “advertising” method for recruiting resource parents. Resource parents are truly our best recruiters.

To assist resource families in obtaining the required on-going training hours, the Department is developing and designing a Child Welfare Training Academy to provide additional training for both staff and resource families. This Academy will provide an opportunity for caseworkers, supervisors, and resource parents to attend training together. The focus of the Academy is to develop skills that will assist staff and resource families in meeting the challenging needs of our children and families. The Academy will begin in early 2006.

MARYLAND

Department of Human Resources

Resource Home Recruitment and Retention

Work Plan

December 2005

The Maryland Department of Human Resources in partnership with the twenty-four local departments of social services is making an aggressive effort to recruit and retain resource family homes. We believe that children deserve to remain with their families whenever possible, but if for safety reasons a child must be removed then that child should be placed in a family setting. Through this work plan we hope to increase the number of resource homes available for children in our care. As of June 30, 2005, there were 3, 082 foster homes. **Our goal is to increase this number by 4% (154) by December 2006.**

<u>Event/Activity</u>	<u>Deliverable</u>	<u>Due</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Desired Outcomes & Status</u>	<u>Issue/barriers</u>
1. Establish a Resource Home Recruitment Steering Committee.	Invite members Establish the recruitment steering committee.	December, 2005 January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit representation from for SSA, Service Affiliates, and Private Child Placing Agency through the PIP Access to Services workgroup. 	Representation achieved Initial meeting rescheduled due to inclement weather Initial meeting held Dec. 20, 2005	None identified (N/A)
2. Conduct a market analysis.	Market analysis completed that identifies target audience and guides public relation campaign/efforts.	December 1, 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with Comcast and other possible companies about pro bono work (N. West by Sept. 1, 2005) 	A marketing strategy based on the diverse communities throughout the state. Continue to meet with Comcast	N/A
3. Local jurisdiction resource home needs assessment.	Assessment that establishes needs both local and statewide.	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with Idss recruiters to begin process (SH, JE, & SP, by 1/30/06) Meet with DHR Communication Management Council (N. West by 08/24/05) 	Clear understanding of the local and statewide needs regarding both resource homes and respite care homes. Assessment information received from Idss Jan 2006 Survey developed	N/A
4. Assess LDSS staff capacity to respond to inquiries timely.	Report on LDSS staffing capacity related to licensing, homes studies, and supporting resource families.	December 1, 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with Services Affiliate to solicit ideas on how best to capture this information (WS by 10/30/05) Obtain most recent caseload report from HRDT (DH by 09/01/05) 	Adequate staff at the local level so response times and support to families is improved. HRDT provides caseload report as requested (August & October)	N/A

<u>Event/Activity</u>	<u>Deliverable</u>	<u>Due</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Desired Outcomes & Status</u>	<u>Issue/barriers</u>
5a. Hire regional resource specialist (3). 5b. Hire child specific resource specialist (3)	Staff Hired	January 1, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with HRDT (WS by 08/31/05) • Identify PINs—reclass if necessary (WS by 10/30/05) • Create job specifications (SH, JE, & SP by 10/30/05) • Recruit for positions and hire (WS & DH by 01/01/06) 	<p>5 a. Central office staff available to consult, train, and support local department efforts in recruiting and retaining resource and respite families.</p> <p>5b. Central office staff dedicated to recruiting adoptive families for children who have a plan of adoption but have no identified resource.</p> <p>Request for new PINS submitted</p>	Staffing Resources
6. Develop marketing (informational) packet.	Packet distributed to call center and LDSS.	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design materials (N. West and program staff by 10/30/05) • Produce materials (N. West by Jan. 2006) 	Packets provided to all families who inquire.	N/A
6a. Train call center and LDSS staff on responding to inquiries.	Call center and local staff trained	December 1, 2005 January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call center staff trained/provided information (PG & JE by 12/30/05) • LDSS staff trained/provided information (JE by 01/06) • Conduct monthly review of call center referrals and meet with call center staff (PG &JE) 	<p>Call center and local staff respond timely and provide consistent information to families who inquire.</p> <p>Met with call center staff, script developed and implemented 12/20/05</p> <p>Pamela Gill of Communications Services has responsibility for Call Center oversight and will be included in all training and evaluation activity</p>	N/A
6b. Obtain local resource home contact information and orientation schedule for the year.	Information obtained and provided to call center and SSA staff.	January 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with Services Affiliate to request information (WS by 10/30/05) • Information compiled and listed by local jurisdiction (JE by January 2006) • List distributed (JE 01/30/06) 	Response by staff is informative and accurate.	N/A

<u>Event/Activity</u>	<u>Deliverable</u>	<u>Due</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Desired Outcomes & Status</u>	<u>Issue/barriers</u>
7. Strategic statewide public relations campaign.	Campaign implemented (PSA & collateral materials – media).	PSA- 09/30/05 Materials- Jan, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSA developed and aired (N. West by 09/30/05) Materials developed (N. West by January 2006) 	<p>Raise public awareness and increase inquiries.</p> <p>PSA broadcasted on radio in Baltimore area for two weeks beginning August 10, 2005.</p> <p>PSAs –Comcast completed and broadcast in November and December 2005</p>	N/A
8. Partner with private Child Placing Agencies to recruit and study resource families.	Contract awarded	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFP to DBM (SP by 11/11/05) Award contract (SP by 02/2006) 	Increase in licensed resource homes for children in the child welfare system.	Procurement Process
9. Partner with faith-based community to recruit resource families.	Contract awarded	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review 3 proposals (DHR RFP team by 09/01/05) Award contract (SP by 12/2005) 	<p>Increase in licensed resource homes for children in the child welfare system.</p> <p>Proposals received did not meet criteria—RFP re-issued (October 7, 2005 to CPU)</p>	Procurement Process
10. Establish resource family and post-adopt support groups in all jurisdictions.	Contract awarded	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFP to DBM (SP by 12/2005) Award contract (SP by 02/2006) 	Families are supported within their local jurisdiction.	Procurement Process
11. Re-establish the Maryland foster parent association—through state association revitalize the local associations.	Establish the state association	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene design team made up of Idss resource families and Idss staff (JE by 08/30/05) Establish by-laws (Design Team by 1/14/06) Re-institute association (01/2006) 	<p>Resource families have support locally, unite in one voice, and organize initiatives.</p> <p>Design team met on August 27, 2005</p>	Due to low response during the holidays, meeting to reestablish by-laws and re-institute association was changed from early December 2005 to 1/14/2006.

<u>Event/Activity</u>	<u>Deliverable</u>	<u>Due</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Desired Outcomes & Status</u>	<u>Issue/barriers</u>
12. Provide cash incentives to resource families who recruit new families.	Establish cash incentive program	February 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular letter drafted and submitted to CW Steering Committee (JE by 11/01/05) • Circular letter finalized and issued (JE by 01/01/06) 	Increase number of resource homes.	Circular letter delayed until end of January.
13. Provide respite care services.	Guidelines developed to provide respite care services	September 1, 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular letter issued (SH by 08/22/05) 	Resource families are supported and receive respite care services. CL approved and sent October 7, 2005	
14. Establish rate increase for resource families	Rate increase approved and implemented	July 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted rate increase proposal to DHR Executive Team (September 2005) • Present proposal to DBM and Governor's staff (October 2005) • Rate increase approved and budgeted (July 2006) 	Resource families receive adequate support to meet the needs of the children placed in their care. Rate increase of \$25 effective 12/05	
15. Establish ongoing evaluation of retention issues from initial family contact to family system exits.	Exit Interviews and satisfaction surveys are conducted with all families withdrawing from the application/approval process as well as closing their approved home.	February 28, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and initiate policy to require that all LDSS conduct exit interview with all prospective and active parents leaving the system (February 1, 2006 by JE) • Develop and test fp satisfaction surveys (February 28, 2006) JE/FP assoc) • Implement surveys (March 1, 2006 JE/LDSS) 	Retention of applicants through approval process increased by 5% Retention of approved families increased by 5%	

The Social Services Administration provides ongoing support and assistance to local jurisdiction in implementing recruitment activities. SSA is available to speak at and participate in events hosted by local departments. The DHR Office of Communication develops marketing materials and is able to assist in connecting local departments to a variety of media outlets. Please find below a chart which highlights local activities, the outcomes they plan to achieve, the current number of families that have been recruited, the number who have completed PRIDE, the number who are waiting training and to complete the home study process, and the number who are waiting for the local department to contact them regarding orientation and/or training. This data was collected in October 2005 by survey of the local departments.

Jurisdiction:	Recruitment Efforts	Projected Outcomes	Current Number of Families	Number of Completed PRIDE Training	Number of Awaiting Training & Study	Number of Awaiting Invitation
Allegany County	Articles and ads in the local Newspaper, orientation meetings, bill boards on buses and ads at local movie theatres, booths at community events and speaking engagements.	Projected outcome is 4 or 5 inquiries per month	4	0	0	8
Anne Arundel County	Publicity in local newspaper, and publicity in kiosk in Arundel Mills Mall and bus shelters. Radio Ads, recruitment event at a beach, partnership with churches, and Radio series on WFS. Monetary bonuses to recruiting families.	Goal is to successfully recruit, train and approve at least one family from each church.	19	14	6	0
Baltimore County	TV shows & Ads on local and cable, local and community newspapers, ads on Taxi cabs, recruitment at churches & community groups, collaborations with court for adoption day, fairs, encourage staff to recruit friends, relatives, etc, workshops, website, internal changes to speed up process.	Expect greater number of interested families returning applications	66	57	45	151

Jurisdiction:	Recruitment Efforts	Projected Outcomes	Current Number of Families	Number of Completed PRIDE Training	Number of Awaiting Training & Study	Number of Awaiting Invitation
Calvert County	Recruitment fair, share a recruiter with Charles and St. Mary's Counties	We know that recruitment efforts that involve churches and faith based organizations work; therefore, we will encourage our recruiter in this effort as well.	10	10	8	0
Carroll County	Booths at local fairs/festivals	Project inquiries regarding becoming a foster/adoptive parent.	2	1	9	2
Cecil County	County Fair and local town's summer events, ran ads in local newspaper, two letters to the editor and agency director did an interview with cable TV.	We average about 175 inquiries Per year re: foster care/ Adoption.	8	5	4	100
Charles County	Hired new recruiter for tri county area (Charles, Calvert, St Mary's), billboards, newspaper ads, radio, community events.	Expect to increase number of providers by 10% for the Tri-County area.	19	7	10	0
Frederick County	Weather channel Crawl, Recruitment dinners, print ads, misc talks-events	Project - 10 from Weather crawl, 12 from dinners, and 10 from events	28	21	20	0
Garrett County	News paper ads, billboards, radio, brochures in church bulletins.	Expect to get 10 to 15 families Per quarter.	5	5	8	8
Harford County	County fair, event for older children	Targeting foster parent interest in older children.	10	4	16	0
Howard County	Referrals by current Foster/Adoptive families, news articles.		8	8	60	60
Montgomery County	Newspaper Ads, Web Links, Community Events, Spanish Speaking Radio, Flyers at Libraries and Community Centers, Recruitment Presentations at organizations and alumnae functions	Anticipate increase in minority resources. Web link & newspaper will continue to be consistent sources of resource applicants.	74	51	21	0

Jurisdiction:	Recruitment Efforts	Projected Outcomes	Current Number of Families	Number of Completed PRIDE Training	Number of Awaiting Training & Study	Number of Awaiting Invitation
Prince George's County	Participation in the Work at Heart program which includes three FP consultants who recruit at local churches and groups, FP consultants who contact applicants who did not follow through, recruitment at local events,	Increase community awareness, develop relationships with local council members, increase pool of FPs	35	29	20	61
Somerset county	Same as Wicomico	Same as Wicomico	2	2	0	0
St. Mary's County	Tri-county effort, billboards, radio, churches, letter writing, Adoption Month activity, Christmas activity.	Looking for 10 families in the Tri County Area to complete training.	1	4	7	6
Talbot, Kent, Dorchester, Caroline & Queen Anne's	Bi-monthly Foster Care Resource Development Committee, Public Notices in the Community Calendar sections of the local papers re: quarterly Foster Care/Adoption Info Meetings for the region. Quarterly radio announcements, Monthly Foster Parent Support Groups with opportunity to bring along a friend. Responses to local groups requesting information on foster care/adoption	Anticipate 4 families per quarter will express interest in providing foster care/adoption resources	12	5	4	62
Washington County	News paper ads, Carnival in the park, TV commercials	Expects that these efforts will continue to generate calls from interested persons.	18	18	21	0

Jurisdiction:	Recruitment Efforts	Projected Outcomes	Current Number of Families	Number of Completed PRIDE Training	Number of Awaiting Training & Study	Number of Awaiting Invitation
Wicomico County	Tri County Info sessions, Newspaper articles, Interviews on TV and commercials, Quarterly newsletter, billboards & fliers, Tea party info sessions, Post Office and other local business Recruitment, display at events and fairs, Speak at local events, Door to door campaign, matching events, Advisory boards, word of mouth.	Project that 1/3 of families who express interest will proceed with PRIDE training and home study process	3	3	2	0
Worcester Somerset	Same as Wicomico	Same as Wicomico	4	4	2	0
Baltimore City	Radio and TV ads, weekly radio show, outreach at hospitals, churches, and community events, match events.	Goal to receive at least three 319's per event	255	195	65	110
Totals			583	443	328	568