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State and Local Efforts to Mitigate Disproportionality

In the Child Welfare System

Distributed by: Adoption Exchange Association.
Collaboration to AdoptUSKids 8015 Corporate Drive Suite C
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This publicity kit was developed to equip local agencies to participate in the Answering the Call campaign to recruit Hispanic adoptive families for children in foster care. The kit includes fact sheets, sample press releases, an outline of talking points, public service announcements, and an order form for campaign materials. Agencies are asked to disseminate the information to the print, radio, and television stations in their community.

Publication Information: Hartford, CT: Catholic Churches/Catholic Family Services, Capitol Region Office.
Distributed by: National Adoption Information Clearinghouse
330 C St. SW
Washington, DC 20447
Tel: 888-251-0075 703-352-3488
naic@caliber.com
Distributor's Website: http://naic.acf.hhs.gov
Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau
The Hartford-based Latino Foster Care and Adoption Project received a grant from the federal Administration for Children and Families to increase the number of foster and adoptive homes for Latino children in the child welfare system. The project focused on recruiting and licensing Latino homes for children older than five years. Planning for the project was conducted and implemented by a culturally-
sensitive collaborative that consisted of the state child welfare agency, the Catholic Family Services/Institute for the Hispanic Family, the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, and Latino religious organizations. This report summarizes activities intended to increase placements in Latino homes, improve the efficiency of the licensure process, and achieve permanency for children. Strategies included hiring a bilingual and bicultural program coordinator and part-time church coordinators to engage the Latino community. Implementation of the project was affected by the limited resources of the participating churches, the need for training church staff, the capacity of the Department of Children and Families to process the number of applications received, and the lack of staff time to collect data for evaluations. An outcome evaluation of the project found an increase in the number of Latino families inquiring about foster care and adoption and in the number of licensures compared to other jurisdictions using traditional recruitment methods. Placements of Latino children in Latino foster and adoptive homes also increased. The success of the project is attributed to the interagency collaboration, especially the involvement of the Latino religious community. Bilingual and bicultural staff and social work students also contributed to positive outcomes. Recommendations include: establish guidelines for roles and responsibilities within the collaboration, modify child welfare staffing and application patterns to accommodate the increase in applicants, and dedicate resources for data collection.

**Familias para niños: final report, 2000-2003.**
DePelchin Children's Center. United States. Children's Bureau.
2004
Distributed by: National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20447
Tel: 888-251-0075 703-352-3488
naic@caliber.com
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Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau
This final report discusses the activities and outcomes of a 3-year federally funded program designed to involve and support the Hispanic/Latino community in adoption services, and to promote adoption for Hispanic/Latino children waiting in out-of-home care. The Familias Para Ni os program was a collaborative effort between the Texas DePelchine Children's Center and Spaulding for Children. In order to increase Hispanic/Latino awareness of the need for adoptive families, a two-part media campaign was designed that focused on the need for adoptive families and Hispanic/Latino children awaiting adoption. The campaign resulted in 1,651 calls from families interested in adopting a Hispanic/Latino child, with 1,128 from Hispanic/Latino families. Families who responded to the recruitment campaign and subsequently completed an adoption application totaled 196, with 85 Hispanic/Latino families. Interested families were enrolled in the next adoption training cycle, including Spanish PRIDE curriculum cycles. During the project 120 Hispanic/Latino families completed Spanish PRIDE and 53 families were approved as adoptive families. A total of 124 Hispanic/Latino children were placed, with 59% of the total over the age of 5. The Familias Para Ni os program also sought to modify the adoption system to be sensitive to the Hispanic/Latino culture through the translation of training materials and evaluation materials and by implementing a Hispanic/Latino network support system. The report discusses the challenges the program faced, the lessons learned, and recommendations for future programs targeting Hispanic/Latino families. Appendices include a success story and assessment instruments.

**Final report and evaluation: innovations to increase permanency options for children in kinship care / Institute for Black Parenting.**
Institute for Black Parenting.
2003
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Washington, DC 20447
Tel: (703) 385-7565 (800) 394-3366
nccanch@caliber.com
Distributor's Website: [http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov](http://nccanch.acf.hhs.gov)
The Institute for Black Parenting in California received a grant from the Administration of Children and Youth to help foster children achieve permanency by educating kinship caregivers about adoption and legal guardianship. The primary goals of the project were to support kinship caregivers throughout the home study process and to finalize 75 kinship adoptions and 40 permanent placements. Activities included training programs for kinship caregivers about permanency options, tangible assistance to caregivers undergoing a home study, a community awareness campaign, training for adoption agency staff, and annual kinship care conferences. The agency collaborated with several public, private, and faith-based organizations, such as Bienvenidos Children's Center, Inc., Grandma's Angels, the Alliance for Children's Rights, and the Orange County Caregiver Resource Center. A total of 52 foster children were adopted and 22 legal guardianships were finalized over the three year grant period. The project found that most of the relatives of the children were more interested in legal guardianship than adoption. However, problems filing paperwork with the court, the return of the child's parent, and the lack of legal assistance inhibited the completion of guardianships. Public service announcements and other community education activities were very successful in recruiting relative caregivers.

Willingness to adopt black foster children: implications for child welfare policy and recruitment of adoptive families.
Brooks, D. James, S.
University of Southern California, Los Angeles.
2003
Children and Youth Services Review
25 (5/6) 463-489
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Orlando, FL 32887
Tel: 877-839-7126
usjcs@elsevier.com
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Little is known about racial disparities in adoption dynamics and pathways for foster children, specifically the willingness of parents to adopt Black foster children. This study responds to gaps in adoption and foster care knowledge by examining the differences between parents willing to adopt Black foster children and those who are not. Data from the California Long-Range Adoption Study were analyzed to identify the level of willingness to adopt a Black child, parent preferences, attitudinal and motivational factors, worker response, and child characteristics. Findings show that parents who are willing to adopt Black foster children differ notably from those who are not, particularly with regard to attitudinal factors impacting their decision to adopt and their experiences with adoption workers and agencies. Willing parents were more likely to be interested in older and special needs children and to have adopted a non-White child. Willing parents also have fewer defined preferences for an adopted child. The results of the study have important implications for child welfare policy and recruitment of adoptive families, such as the importance of confronting misconceptions about Black children. These implications, along with those for future research, are considered. (Author abstract modified) 43 references, 6 tables.

Effective collaboration for timely adoptions final report, including final evaluation / Sitka Tribe of Alaska.
Sitka Tribe of Alaska.
2003
Publication Information: Sitka, AK : Sitka Tribe of Alaska.
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330 C St. SW
Washington, DC 20447
Tel: 888-251-0075 703-352-3488
naic@caliber.com
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Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau
This final report discusses the activities and outcomes of a federally funded project designed to increase
the timely adoption of children from the Sitka Tribe in Alaska. The project required the involvement and collaboration of the tribe and tribal partners across Alaska, primarily from regional non-profit corporations and with the State of Alaska, Division of Family and Youth Services. The grant resulted in the purchase of a new Progeny Enrollment System to enable extended family trees to be looked up faster, resulting in more timely placement for adoptions and guardianships. The project also allowed for the chronicling of Tlingit Traditional Law. A "For Our Grandchildren" Committee was established that developed a Statement of Children's Rights. The members of this committee agreed to act as cultural mentors for children in out of home placements in homes that are not familiar with the Tlingit culture. The project created a computer database to hold information relating to the Indian Child Welfare Act, and promoted cooperative relationships with social services to remove current barriers to timely adoptions in every region of the State. The report summarizes the project's objectives, discusses the fulfillment of goals, and provides the final evaluation results of the project. Extensive attachments include information on the Tribal Assistance System database, the Progeny Enrollment System, work projects from the tribal law chronicling, the Statement of Children's Rights, and the Tribal State Collaboration Group.

Juntos somos familia = Together we are family: a project to increase adoptive placements of Hispanic children.
Weaver-Parker, Deborah. Apodaca, Katherine.
Adoption Exchange (N.M.)
2003
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naic@caliber.com
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Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau
The Adoption Exchange in Albuquerque, New Mexico received an Adoption Opportunities Grant to promote the adoption of Hispanic children who are older than 10 years or members of sibling groups. The project involved an assessment of the needs of Hispanic adoptive families and available resources, as well as the engagement of key stakeholders in the service planning process. Targeted recruitment efforts included weekly television and radio programs featuring children waiting for adoption and the development of Spanish versions of the Adoption Exchange website and photo book. The agency also increased the cultural competency of adoption procedures and established support networks for adoptive families in the Hispanic community. Finally, training programs for community service providers helped to improve pre- and post-adoption support for Hispanic families. The impact of these activities is unknown because the Children, Youth and Families Department did not collect ethnicity data for adoption records. The appendices to the report provide sample forms, public awareness materials, and curricula.

Final evaluation: innovations increasing adoptive placements of Hispanic/Latino children (including, Latino Family Institute replication manual and draft of Formalizing family ties through adoption = Formalizando lazos familiares a través de la adopción).
Tello, Jerry. Quintanilla, Maria.
Latino Family Institute.
2003
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Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau
The Latino Family Institute utilized a three-year demonstration grant to recruit adoptive Latino families for Latino children aged ten or older or part of a sibling group. The agency utilized several strategies to increase awareness about the need for adoptive families, including culturally-responsive print and electronic media, presentations to community groups, support groups for waiting adoptive parents, bi-
lingual staff, and education programs for adoption applicants and child welfare workers. The agency surpassed the goals for the project and successfully placed 69 Latino children with Latino families. More than 200 child welfare professionals attended training about considerations for working with the Latino population. The effectiveness of the program was attributed to bicultural administrators, long-term participation in the community, and personal contact between staff and Latino families. Administrators are advised to integrate all of these components when replicating the model. In addition, public and private adoption agencies should work with ethnic organizations to improve cultural competency. A replication manual with sample forms and handouts is included in the final report.

Empowering Latino adoptions in Rhode Island project: final report / The Urban League of Rhode Island, Inc.
Urban League of Rhode Island.
2003
Publication Information: Providence, RI : Urban League of Rhode Island.
Distributed by: National Adoption Information Clearinghouse
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Washington, DC 20447
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naic@caliber.com
Distributor's Website: http://naic.acf.hhs.gov
Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau
This final report describes the activities and outcomes of a federally funded program designed to increase adoptive placement of Latino children in Rhode Island. The project extended the reach of the Urban League's existing Minority Recruitment and Child Placement Program to recruit families of all races, with an emphasis on recruiting Latino and racially mixed families and individuals to become foster and adoptive parents for Latino children, and to place Latino children in these homes. The project found that hiring bi-lingual staff within the community was a challenge. However, the benefits of staff being well-connected with the Latino communities was an invaluable asset to gain access the target population. Word of mouth and individual recruitment was helpful in establishing rapport with families and exposing myths regarding adoption. Education initially centered on requirements to be adoptive parents. Recruitment activities were focused on individual presence at relevant community events and targeting of key stakeholders to increase awareness of the project. Case management of the families was found to be essential and early assessment of families to determine suitability reduced the dropout rate substantially. Barriers to adoption included the preference among the majority of the families for adopting children less than six years old, while most of the children waiting for permanent placement were over eight years old. Social workers were also reluctant to place children in homes that were solely Spanish speaking because they were not able to effectively communicate with the homes to provide services. The project resulted in the registration of 33 families during the implementation of the program and 4 children have received permanent placement. Recruitment materials are included.

La esperanza para los ni os que esperan = Hope for children who wait.
New York Council on Adoptable Children.
2003
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Washington, DC 20447
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naic@caliber.com
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Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau
La Esperanza Para los Ni os Que Esperan (Hope for the Children Who Wait) was established with an Adoption Opportunities Grant to increase the adoption of Hispanic children older than ten years old or placed with siblings in the New York City foster care system. These children were considered difficult to place because of disabilities or the effects of neglect, abuse, and frequent changes in placement. Community-based strategies such as adoption parties, public service announcements, and mother-
centered marketing were used to recruit Puerto Rican and Dominican families to adopt waiting children. Parent and child preparation services, support groups, and crisis intervention services also were provided in a culturally competent environment. Outcomes were slightly lower than expected: 98 prospective adoptive families were retained, 36 matches were made, and 16 children were placed with 12 families by the end of the grant period. Success was attributed to child-specific recruitment strategies, interagency collaboration, realistic expectations, involvement of the prospective family in the process, and post-placement support. A majority of English and Spanish-speaking applicants noted high levels of satisfaction with the response of the agency, the preparation process, and the helpfulness of project staff. 14 tables.

**Practices that mitigate the effects of racial/ethnic disproportionality in the child welfare system / Casey Family Programs.**
Dougherty, Susan.
Casey Family Programs.
2003
Publication Information: Seattle, WA : Casey Family Programs.
Distributed by: Casey Family Programs
1300 Dexter Avenue North Floor 3
Seattle, WA  98109
Tel: 206-282-7300 800-228-3559
info@casey.org
Distributor's Website: [http://www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)
Disproportionality refers to the representation of a particular ethnic group in foster care at a different rate than its proportion in the general population. Except for Hawaii and Indiana and four other states for which data are unavailable, African American children are over-represented in the foster care population. Native American children are over-represented in 25 states, Hispanic children in 22 states, and Asian/Pacific Islanders in Hawaii. A practice that can help overcome these discrepancies is family group conferencing, involving the extended family in planning for a child, a technique that has successfully kept children of color living with parents or kin and decreased their time in foster care. Other recommendations and innovations may also prove useful. A disproportionate number of families of color live in communities experiencing high unemployment, poverty, and drug abuse, yet drug abuse recovery is often unachievable in the time allotted in foster care before termination of parental rights begins. Timely treatment for drug abuse, implementation of alternative and non-traditional drug treatment practices, and providing more post-reunification services and supports all could help promote family reunification in drug abusing families. Likewise, relatives should be broadly defined to include paternal relatives and such culturally sanctioned kin as godparents. Economic parity between non-relative and kin caregivers also needs to be established. Subsidized legal guardianship is a viable alternative to adoption. Foster placements should be made, as much as possible, in children's own neighborhoods and with families sharing their racial, ethnic, and religious heritage. Such families need to be more vigorously recruited using culturally appropriate techniques. Cultural competency training should be offered to white parents willing to adopt transracially. Agency procedures need to be streamlined and speeded up and planning for either reunification or adoption undertaken concurrently. Dual licensure applies the same procedures to foster and adoptive parents, facilitating foster parent adoption. Agencies need to work with the court system to insure timely decisions. All child welfare client groups should have input into agency training and procedures. Educational reforms and better access to health services can help prevent child welfare interventions. Taken together, these changes can reduce ethnic disproportionality in child welfare.
Numerous references and one index chart.

**Racial disproportionality in the U.S. child welfare system: documentation, research on causes, and promising practices.**
*Working paper #4*
Roberts, Dorothy E.
Annie E. Casey Foundation.
Institute for Policy Research (Northwestern University).
2002
This report explores why African American and Native American children are overrepresented in the national foster care population, with African American children making up two-fifths of the foster care population, although they represent less than one-fifth of the nation's children. It begins by documenting the racial disproportionality in the U.S. child welfare system and then cites reasons for this overrepresentation. Reasons include the incidence of poverty in the African American community and child welfare practices that result in higher reporting rates of child abuse for African American children, higher substantiation rates of reports against Black and Latino families, and the placement of more African American children in foster care rather than reunifying them with their families. A 1997 federal report is cited that concluded that although African American children in the child welfare system tend to have more problems than other children, these problems could not explain their disproportionate representation in the foster care population. Strategies are provided for reducing racial disproportionality in the child welfare system while providing the services and supports that children and their families need. Recommendations include the transformation of the child welfare system's orientation, from its current focus on child protection and removal to one of child and family well-being, and the creation of a family-centered services system that provides economic supports, housing, health care, child care, and preschool education. Family preservation programs are described, along with strategies that allow clients to more actively participate in child welfare policy and practice, family group decision making programs, kinship foster care, subsidized guardianship, and relative caregiver programs. Numerous references.


Northwest Institute for Children and Families. Medina Children's Services (Seattle, Wash.)


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Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau
The Washington State Division of Children and Family Services Region 4 African American Children's Section and Medina Children's Services formed a partnership to establish the African American Kinship Adoption Project (AAKAP). The project was designed to expedite the kinship adoptions of African American children through strengths-based family assessment, pre-adoption preparation of the child and the family, financial assistance, interagency collaboration, recruitment, and post-adoption support. This report summarizes the achievements of the pilot program from October 1999 through July 2002. During the study period, 43 children were adopted by relatives or fictive kin and seven children were placed in permanent guardianships. The African American kinship adoptions included adoptive parents who were older and had lower incomes than non-relative adoptive parents. The kinship families also were less likely to have the opportunity to determine goodness of fit than typical foster parents and in most cases, had established relationships with the children in their care. In addition, kinship adoptive families were more likely to have contact with the child's birth parents than children placed with non-relatives. The program successfully reduced the wait time for African American children who participated by 24 months, when compared to African American children in traditional services. The most effective components of the program were the comprehensive assessment of the child and the family, parenting skill training, boundaries with birth parents, and post-adoption support services. Adoptive parents expressed satisfaction with the services. Project administrators are advised to develop a policy and procedures manual to articulate all processes and to arrange for interagency training programs about child welfare.
and adoption. Adoption agencies and professionals should recognize the need to prepare kinship families to adopt children and modify licensing requirements to meet the circumstances of relative caregivers. 10 references, 4 figures, 6 tables.

**African-American kinship adoption project: final performance report.**
Dobrowolski, Diane.  
2002  
Publication Information: Seattle, WA : Medina Children's Services.  
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330 C Street SW  
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naic@caliber.com  
Distributor's Website: [http://naic.acf.hhs.gov](http://naic.acf.hhs.gov)  
Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau  
The African-American Kinship Project in Seattle, Washington finalized 43 adoptions and 7 guardianships during the entire grant period, from October 2001 through September 2002. The goal of 70 adoptions was not achieved because only 68 referrals were forwarded to the program from the Department of Children and Family Services. In general, length of time in care was shorter for program participants than children receiving traditional services. Problems with the adoption process were alleviated when specialized adoption workers were transferred to the African-American Children's Unit.

**Project A-HUG closing summary / Westside Children's Center.**
Ornelas, Laura A.  
Westside Children's Center.  
2002  
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Washington, DC  20447  
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naic@caliber.com  
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Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau  
Project A-HUG utilized grant funds to recruit Latino and African American families to adopt waiting children. Activities included the hiring of Spanish-speaking social workers and a designated recruiter for the African American community, presentations at community fairs, adoption preparation classes, radio and television commercials, and advertising at a movie theater. The program placed 51 children in adoption or foster-adopt placements over a three year period. Thirty of the children with finalized or planned adoptions were African American, nine were Latino, and nine were part of a sibling group.

**Todos los ni os project: final report / Aid to Adoption of Special Kids (AASK-AZ).**
Aid to Adoption of Special Kids (Ariz.)  
2002  
Publication Information: Phoenix, AZ : Aid to Adoption of Special Kids.  
Distributed by: National Adoption Information Clearinghouse  
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Washington, DC  20447  
Tel: 888-251-0075 703-352-3488  
naic@caliber.com  
Distributor's Website: [http://naic.acf.hhs.gov](http://naic.acf.hhs.gov)  
Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau  
This final report discusses the activities and outcomes of the Aid to Adoption of Special Kids (AASK-AZ) Todos Los Ni os project, a program that focuses on increasing the number of Hispanic/Latino families to be recruited and the number of Hispanic/Latino children to be placed in adoptive families. The project conducted outreach and recruitment activities using a wide range of media, including Hispanic television, radio, newspaper, community events, and translating all existing recruitment materials into Spanish. The
AASK office telephone system was also changed so that if a Spanish speaking person inquired about adoption, the call would automatically be transferred to a bilingual staff member. Recruitment strategies included increasing public service announcements, newspaper articles, dissemination of posters, brochures, flyers, and other adoption materials. Recruitment procedures were also changed from meeting with parents in a group format to more one-on-one counseling with families, and training was extended to allow staff to help families complete necessary paperwork. The report provides information on specific recruitment activities, barriers and obstacles to adoption for Hispanic/Latino families, and training. Statistics are provided that indicate caseloads for Todos Los Niños family specialists continue to increase at a rapid pace. Developed recruitment materials are attached. 7 charts.

**Link of Hope 2000.**
O'Donnell, J. M.
Lifelink, Bensenville, IL.
2001
Publication Information: Lifelink, Bensenville, IL.
Distributed by: National Adoption Information Clearinghouse
330 C St. SW
Washington, DC 20447
Tel: 888-251-0075 703-352-3488
Sponsoring Organization: Children's Bureau (DHHS), Washington, DC.
Partially funded by a three year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Link of Hope 2000 was designed to increase the number of adoptions of older African American children and sibling groups in the Chicago area. The project featured strategies such as neighborhood recruitment meetings, visual advertisements, relationships with churches, a toll-free information line, and assistance to prospective adoptive families. The most successful recruitment methods were the radio and television advertisements and referrals from other agencies. Few people contacted the agency as a result of neighborhood recruitment meetings and presentations at churches, even though those activities required the most staff time. Of the 54 families (82 adults) who attended an initial meeting with project staff, approximately half included married couples. Eighty-three percent were African American and the majority of prospective parents were aged 31-50 years old. Eighty-seven percent graduated from high school and 35 percent had a college degree. Twenty-one of the families indicated that they wanted to adopt a child as a way to add children to their family, while 13 reported that they wanted to help children. Eleven of the families preferred a child older than 10 years old and 8 noted that they preferred a sibling group. Thirty-seven of the families continued to the next phase of the adoption process after the initial meeting. Of these families, 10 did not complete the application for a license or were denied a license. As of October 1, 2001, 2 families had adopted a project child, 14 families had adoptions pending, 2 had adopted a non-project child, 5 had a project child removed from their home, and 4 did not have an adoptive placement. Adopting families were more likely than non-adopting families to be married, have more education, and have two incomes. The project was successful in expediting initial meetings with families after first contact and helping families complete the license application. A total of 30 children placed with adoptive families remained with the families at the end of the project, fewer than the project goal of 44 children. Five of the children were older than 10 years old and 25 were placed with siblings. Thirty-one other project children were being adopted by their foster parents. The proportion of children placed through the Link of Hope program was greater than the percentage of comparison children placed through other agencies in Illinois. The Link of Hope program also influenced several changes to state policies regarding written notice by foster parents considering adoption and evaluating the feasibility of waivers for prospective parents who have been convicted of a felony. The agency is continuing its recruitment efforts on behalf of older children and sibling groups after termination of the grant.

**Fulfilling the Dream: Finding Families for Waiting Minority Children.**
Jones, M.
Adoption Center of Delaware Valley, Philadelphia, PA.
2001
Publication Information: Adoption Center of Delaware Valley, Philadelphia, PA.
Distributed by: National Adoption Information Clearinghouse
330 C St. SW
Washington, DC 20447
The Fulfilling a Dream demonstration project was initiated by the Adoption Center of Delaware Valley (Pennsylvania) to increase adoptions of minority children and sibling groups. The project utilized an array of recruitment and retention strategies to attract prospective parents, including an adoption preparation course, public service announcements, an adoption fair, targeted neighborhood meetings, cultural sensitivity training for agency staff, and the reduction of barriers to prospective families. Sixty-three children were placed during the demonstration project, 13 more than predicted. The project also exceeded its goal to recruit and refer 250 families, with a total of 254 prospective families during the three-year grant period. More than 700 families attended three annual Adoption Fairs, which were the first adoption information events held in the area. Representatives from 22 adoption organizations attended the fair to provide information about their activities. Fair attendees also attended panel presentations that highlighted the perspectives of social workers, adoptive parents, and adopted children. Meetings held in targeted neighborhoods especially were popular, with a total of 1,000 people attending over the three-year period. Other recruitment strategies included the distribution of printed material for prospective adoptive families, information nights at the agency office, and relationships with community organizations.

An evaluation of the project found that families responded well to the adoption preparation course, which was offered 18 times. Attendees at the course reported that the instructor was excellent and that they appreciated the opportunity to meet other prospective adoptive parents. Staff participants in the cultural competency training indicated that the course was relevant to their work. The project will be sustained after the termination of the grant. 1 table.

**Innovations increasing adoptive placements of minority children: Cherokee Nation state/tribal adoption approach.**

Woodward, L.
Cherokee Nation, Tahlequah, OK.
2000
Publication Information: Cherokee Nation, Tahlequah, OK.
Distributed by: Cherokee Nation
PO Box 948
Tahlequah, OK 74465
Tel: 918-456-0671
Distributor's Website: [http://www.cherokee.org/](http://www.cherokee.org/)

Sponsoring Organization: Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.
The Cherokee Nation State/Tribal Adoption Approach demonstration project was designed to improve permanency for hard-to-place Indian children. This final report summarizes the project's activities on seven primary goals: hire staff who qualify under the Indian Preference Guidelines; provide adoption training and assistance to Cherokee Nation child welfare staff; train prospective adoptive parents; recruit relatives and other Indian families to adopt children; develop partnerships with state court judges and social workers to improve the identification of Cherokee children who need placements; develop a directory of resources for adoptive parents; and train public child welfare staff on issues regarding Indian culture and laws. During the three-year grant period, the program successfully hired four social workers who met the Indian Preference Guidelines and achieved goals for the number of certified adoptive homes for hard-to-place Indian children with special needs. The goal to place 15 children was exceeded every year and the average length of stay in foster care was less than the target goal of 8.684 months. Tribal representatives attended an increasing number of court hearings to identify Cherokee children and develop relationships with judges and district attorneys. By the end of the grant period, Cherokee Nation child welfare officials were providing information and technical assistance to an average of 132 public and private adoption and service providers about compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act. Overall, the grant helped the Cherokee Nation child welfare agency to initiate policies that improved permanency through concurrent planning and cooperation with the state child welfare system.

**Tribal perspectives on over-representation of Indian children in out-of-home care.**

Cross, T.
National Indian Child Welfare Association, Portland, OR.
American Indians children are over-represented in the child welfare system, with more than 12 of every 1,000 Indian children placed in substitute care. This article examines those circumstances and attempts to put the situation in a historical context. Reasons for over-representation are discussed, including historical removal of Indian children from their tribes, to present legal and political relationships among tribes, states, and the federal government, to the cultural bias faced by Indian families experiencing social ills associate with persistent poverty and racism. Historical trends are examined from the 1600s until the present day, with events leading to passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. The implications of the act are examined—the author asserts that while regarded as one of the best permanency policies to be enacted by the federal government, it remains misunderstood and maligned, and while data indicate that it has brought a reduction in the over-representation of Indian children in the system, there remains serious problems, primarily because the act provided little in the way of funding for implementation. Furthermore, problems remain because Indian children who need out-of-home placement must often become wards of the state, thus taking from the tribe its capacity to respond directly to its members’ needs. The author makes recommendations for policy and practices that have the potential for improving the accessibility and quality of services for Indian families and their children, such as providing greater access to funding, development of demonstration projects, and implementation of provisions under the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 to complement provisions under ICWA. Fifteen references.

**Minority recruitment in Urban Core Cities Project.**
Zienowicz, C.
Urban League of Rhode Island, Providence.
2000
Publication Information: Urban League of Rhode Island, Providence.
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naic@caliber.com
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The Minority Recruitment in Urban Core Cities Project was implemented in Rhode Island to increase the number of minority families interested in adopting foster children. Activities in three pilot cities included co-location with social service agencies in the community, target newsletter articles, paid advertisements on television and billboards, booths at community festivals, and collaboration with churches and other community organizations. During the final year of the three-year project, 23 families qualified for pre-service training, 14 completed training, and 10 completed the home study process. Eight children were placed during the year and nine families are being considered for future placement. Project staff noted an increase in non-traditional families who wished to adopt. The most effective recruitment strategies were television and radio advertisements, adoption forums, and community education.

**In-Care Network, Inc.: Billings, Montana, December 11-13, 2000 / Georgetown University Child Development Center.**
*Meeting the health care needs of children in the foster care system. Site visit report.*
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This report describes In-Care Network, Inc., a non-profit corporation in Montana that provides therapeutic foster care services for American Indian youth who have serious health or mental health conditions. Currently, the agency serves 60-70 youth and draws from a resource of 90-100 therapeutic foster homes. Two-thirds of the foster parents are American Indians and the majority of the staff is also Indian. American Indian foster care youth are directly referred to In-Care by a social service agency. A treatment manager is chosen to manage the child's care and a treatment team is developed based on the individual needs of the child. The following therapeutic foster care services are provided: coordination of In-Care services; In-Care support services to the foster families, including respite care; counseling and other supportive services to the natural and extended families; comprehensive case management services; cooperation with the referring child placement agency in permanency planning; support groups for Indian youth; a transitional living program for youth ages 16-21; services for expectant mothers or teen parents; and a 24 hour on-call service. Information is provided on the Montana child welfare system, the Indian Child Welfare Act, health issues of Indian children in foster care, the development and implementation of the In-Care approach, components of the approach, the benefits and challenges of the approach, essential elements, and recommendations and advice for other States and communities.

http://www.georgetown.edu/research/gucdc/fcsvmt.pdf