

# 2020-2024 Child and Family Services Plan Requirements

## 7. Targeted Plans

### i. Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan

► *Description of the activities to be conducted over the next five years to ensure that there are foster and adoptive homes that meet the needs of the infants, children, youth, and young adults served by the child welfare agency.*

**A description of the characteristics of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.**

DFPS continues to recognize that diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive homes must generate foster and adoptive families that meet the demographic characteristics of children in care. Demographic data of the characteristics of the children needing foster and adoptive homes is available to all staff through the Data Warehouse reports that are updated monthly. Current demographic information on children and families is being used to establish recruitment targets and track progress. In August 2017, a statewide Foster Care Needs Assessment was published. HHS provided forecasting data which, in conjunction with an historical analysis of placement practices, provided an assessment of statewide foster care capacity needs. The August 2019 needs assessment is currently in development. CPS will use this data to project the locations and types of foster care services needed over the next several years and to help determine an annual procurement schedule. Using the completed needs assessments and other available data, CPS will develop plans to address the substitute care capacity needs in each region. DFPS involves external stakeholders in discussions regarding placements, and their input is included in the development of strategic planning regarding recruitment efforts. Stakeholder meetings will be held in all the regions and include, by invitation: the judiciary, political advocates, universities, faith based groups, child welfare advocates, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Child Care Providers and staff. There will not be a percentage goal established as a result of these findings.

As of August 2018, the following demographic information was available for youth ages 0-17 in substitute care.

Table 1: AGE

0-2 years	3-5 years	6-9 years	10-13 years	14-17 years
29 %	19.5%	19.3%	15.9%	16.2%

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Table 2: GENDER

Male	Female
49.2%	51.3%

Table 3: RACE/ETHNICITY

African American	Hispanic	Anglo	American Indian	Asian	Multiple	Unable to Determine/None Listed
22.4%	41.1%	29.5%	.0011%	.003%	.05%	.02%

Table 4: CHARACTERISTICS

Physical	Medical	Drug/Alcohol	Emotional	Learning	Sibling	Teen Parent
.007%	.03%	.07%	13.3%	14.1%	13.1%	.002%

DATA SOURCE: DATA WAREHOUSE SA\_04S

Table 5: FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES BY RACE/ETHNICITY: ANGLO

Home Category	Anglo by Number	Anglo by Percentage
Adoptive	174	42.1%
Foster	39	42.4%
Foster/ Adoptive	553	52.9%

Table 6 FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES BY RACE/ETHNICITY: AFRICAN AMERICAN

Home Category	African American by Number	African American by Percentage
Adoptive	58	14.0%
Foster	33	35.9%
Foster/ Adoptive	180	17.2%

Table 7: FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES BY RACE/ETHNICITY: HISPANIC

Home Category	Hispanic by Number	Hispanic by Percentage
Adoptive	154	37.6%
Foster	18	19.6%
Foster/ Adoptive	261	25.%

Table 8: FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES BY RACE/ETHNICITY: NATIVE AMERICAN

Home Category	Native American by Number	Native American by Percentage
Adoptive	0	0.0%

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Home Category	Native American by Number	Native American by Percentage
Foster	0	0 %
Foster/ Adoptive	0	0%

Table 9: FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES BY RACE/ETHNICITY: ASIAN

Home Category	Asian by Number	Asian by Percentage
Adoptive	0	0.0%
Foster	0	0.0%
Foster/ Adoptive	0	0%

Table 10: FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES BY RACE/ETHNICITY: OTHER

Home Category	Other by Number	Other by Percentage
Adoptive	27	6.5%
Foster	2	2.2%
Foster/ Adoptive	52	5.0%

### Specific strategies to reach out to all parts of the community

DFPS is committed to reaching out to all parts of a community and will work in collaboration with faith-based and community-based organizations to accomplish this goal. DFPS will collaborate with partner child placing agencies on information meetings. DFPS will collaborate with the Advisory Committee on Promoting Adoption of Minority Children to target areas of need in a community. DFPS has also entered into numerous Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with external partners such as The Way Home, Upbring, Children Awaiting Parents, and Wendy's Wonderful Kids, that are dedicated to finding adoptive placements for children in DFPS care.

DFPS participated in Regional Provider Meetings and continues to hold these meetings at least quarterly across Texas. The meetings facilitated open communication between providers and DFPS, included training and education, and provided information on placement needs of the local region which resulted in Regional Capacity Strategic Plans, which are available on the DFPS website. DFPS and private Child Placing Agencies held foster/adopt inquiry meetings in multiple locations within each region to generate interest in fostering and/or adopting. DFPS Regional Provider Meetings and foster/adopt inquiry meetings will continue to be the emphasis for recruitment over the next several years.

DFPS regional staff worked with local media outlets to provide recruitment information to local communities. Campaigns included activities as "A Forever Family," "Wednesday's Child," "The Gift of Love," "Children are a Gift," and Heart Galleries displayed across the state. Giveaways, such as pens and magnets are provide at different events and community stakeholders. DFPS participated in a variety of contracted provider and trade organization meetings across the state. Information regarding the type of placement needs was shared with many of these coalitions/organizations. These efforts are effective and will continue to be the emphasis for recruitment over the next several years.

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DFPS has a reinvigorated collaboration between the faith-based community and the child welfare system in Texas and will continue to emphasize this approach over the next five year period. Representatives from both systems pledged to work jointly and differently than before in providing service to children, youth and families. The approach developed for collaboration reflects both the faith-based community's mission and the state's commitment to safely reduce the need for foster care through a clearly articulated prevention to permanency model. Another notable recruitment effort is the use of the Adoption Forums facilitated by the Advisory Committee on Promoting Adoption of Minority Children. These Forums are held three to four times a year in different locations across the state. DFPS will continue to participate in these Forums by sharing local, regional and state data to provide a profile of placement needs.

### **Diverse methods of disseminating both general information about being a foster/adoptive parent and child specific information**

DFPS uses a variety of information sharing methods to communicate the ongoing need for additional foster and adoptive parents and provide general information to the public. DFPS will continue to increase collaboration with faith-based and community-based organizations to share general information. One such collaboration is between DFPS and private child placing agencies conducting joint information meetings. DFPS will continue to maximize the use of internet resources such as the DFPS public website, Facebook, and the DFPS YouTube channel. The DFPS social media policy has been revised to provide staff with additional guidance on the use of social media sites. Data is posted on the public website to share the demographics of children in local areas to educate the general public about placement needs.

The Texas Adoption Resource Exchange continues to be a primary recruitment avenue for specific children, and each child registered on the exchange is simultaneously registered with A Family for Every Child, Children Awaiting Parents, Adoption.com, Adoption.net, AdoptUSKids, and the local Heart Gallery, if applicable.

DFPS staff will continue to participate in recruitment activities during existing national recognition months, such as Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, Foster Care Month in May, and National Adoption Month in November. As part of the increased faith-based collaboration, DFPS has emphasized participation in special events such as Go Blue day and Blue Sunday. These efforts will continue to expand over the next several years. Various community recruitment activities, including information meetings, adoption fairs and expositions, match parties, and print and electronic media stories on television and radio, will continue. A video depicting what foster and adoptive children wish for was developed for use in future events to encourage families to consider fostering and adopting. The video was placed on the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange website home page and the DFPS You Tube channel for ease of access. DFPS created strategies to ensure that all prospective foster and adoptive parents have access to agencies they can rely upon to become verified and approved, including the expansion of locations and hours of services that can be accessed by all members of the community. Contact information, designated by region, for partner Child Placing Agencies and for CPS recruitment staff are now shared on the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange website, maintained and accessible to the general public. Prospective families who contact the toll free Foster and Adoption Inquiry line will be informed of Child Placing Agency information. Information packets provided to prospective foster

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and adoptive families include a list of partner Child Placing Agencies in the area. DFPS staff and Child Placing Agencies have a shared commitment to continue to hold collaborative information meetings.

### **Strategies for training staff to work with diverse communities including cultural, racial, ethnic, and socio-economic variations**

DFPS increases the cultural competence of staff through multiple training opportunities and has a sustainable means to continue this practice. All new caseworkers are required to participate in "Knowing Who You Are: Racial and Ethnic Identity Training" during basic skills development training. A new version of "Knowing Who You Are" for supervisors and managers was implemented and can be delivered upon request. CPS is aware that there is a need for greater exposure to information regarding socio-economic variations in cultures through training. This awareness led to collaboration between CPS and the DFPS Center for Learning and Organizational Excellence to develop courses on working with African American and Latino families and a course on "Working with families Who Are Impoverished" for child welfare caseworkers. The Missouri Community Action Poverty Simulation is delivered to internal and external stakeholders. CPS developed and implemented a course for caseworkers to enhance knowledge of the Indian Child Welfare Act. Future projects include development and implementation of courses related to working with African American and Latino families. These trainings will be offered to all staff to increase the cultural competence of staff.

During FY 2019, CPS staff used knowledge of Disparity in the child welfare system and Trauma Informed Care to create a creative approach for understanding how Trauma and Disproportionality are connected. Two sessions, totaling six hours, were piloted and well-received. DFPS intends to use this approach over the next several years to enrich the understanding of root causes for Trauma and Disparity.

### **Strategies for dealing with linguistic barriers**

DFPS recognizes that prospective foster and adoptive parents may encounter some linguistic barriers. The agency continues to connect families as needed with an interpreter by phone or in person or a staff who speaks the family's primary language. Information is shared with staff on how to request sign language interpreters as needed and a message was placed on the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange website to ensure that prospective families know that they can contact Recruitment staff to request a sign language interpreter. When possible, DFPS continues to seek prospective staff and contract agencies who have the skills to communicate with families in diverse ways and through multiple languages.

### **Non-discriminatory fee structures**

DFPS does not charge a fee to prospective families and only contracts with agencies that are governed by strict minimum standards requirements related to fees.