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# Overcoming Barriers – Older Child Permanency



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DESIGN  
RESOURCES

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**2015 AEA Conference**

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# Overcoming Barriers

## ■ Agenda

- ❑ Barriers –
- ❑ Review of components
- ❑ “The Numbers”
- ❑ A Few Words from Our Teens
- ❑ Questions & Wrap Up



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# Barriers

- Significant special needs
- Family prep for older youth
- Not thinking “out of the box”
- Family / child proximity
- Lack of placement services
- Failure to consider family finding
- Resistance to more units of service



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# Barriers

- Communications -
  - Children moving, notifications
  - Visitation @ residential facilities
- Resistance to referring for needed services
- Label “unadoptable”
  - Child to worker
  - Caseworker to recruiter



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# Barriers

- Goal changes
- Placement with single or same sex couple
- Excessive requirements of families
  - Long visitation periods
  - Lengthy drives to, from child
- Children comfortable in residential placement



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# Barriers -

- Lengthy transports to matching events
- Children w/ gender identity issues
- Supports for families after matching & after placement
- Cancellation or postponement of
  - **Meetings**
  - **Therapy sessions**



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# The Plan

- Child Focused Recruitment
- Empower youth
- Use relative, non-relative
- Use PAE resources
- Respond to leads w/l 24 hours
- 16 youth/caseworker
- Use state, agency websites
- Facebook page
- Special recruitment events



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# The Plan

- Build strong rapport
- Visits monthly as indicated
- Use kin / fictive kin resources
- Family finding in support role
- Detailed review of case record
- Support team including youth
- Updated child profiles
- Diligent searches





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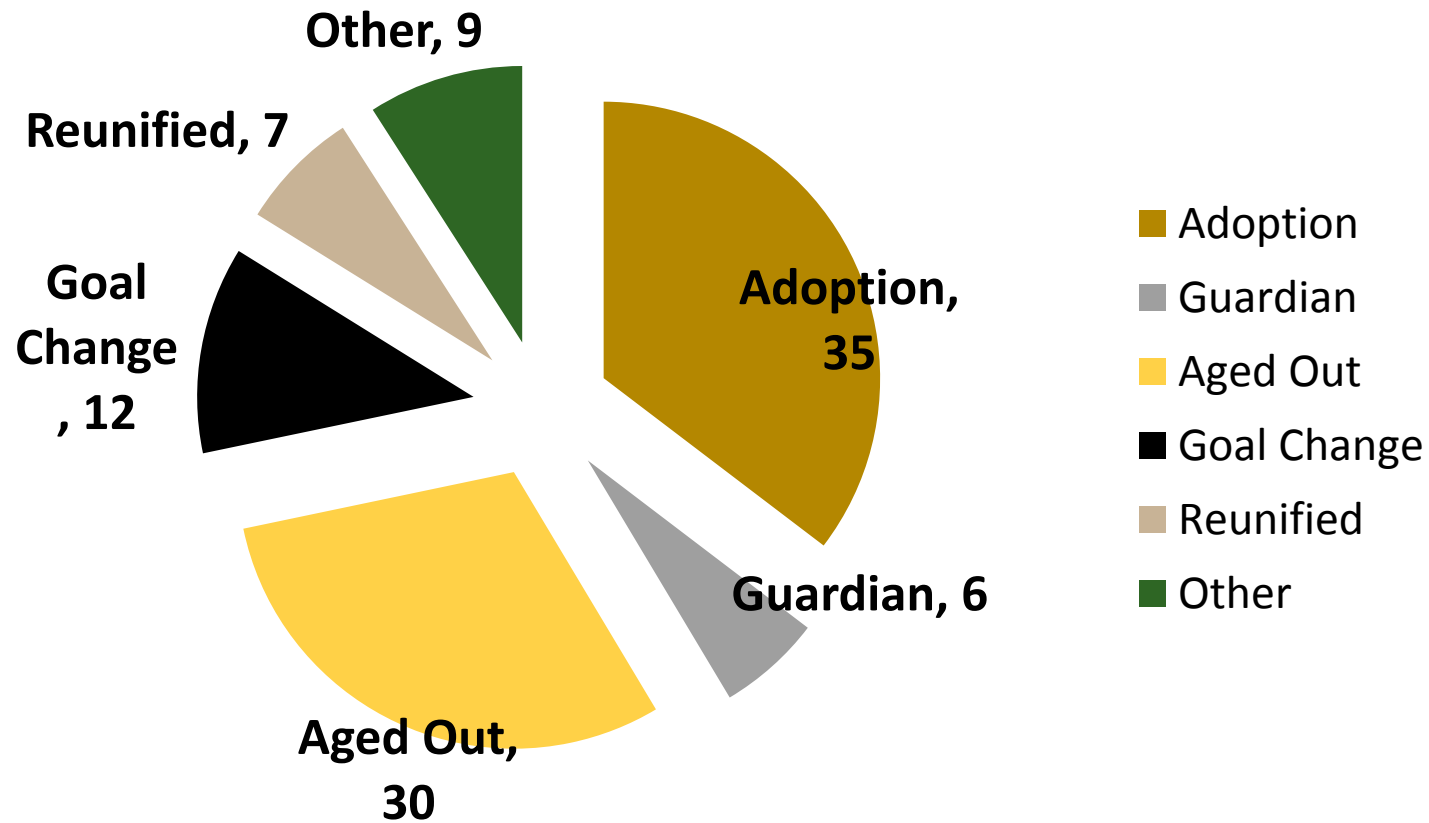
# Target Population

- Youth over 10
  - Multiple placements
  - Multiple special needs
  - Sibling groups
  - Must have goal of adoption
  - Must be registered w/ PAE (extended time)
- The Team:
    - Family Pathways
    - Project Star
    - Diakon Adoption & Foster Care
    - Bethanna

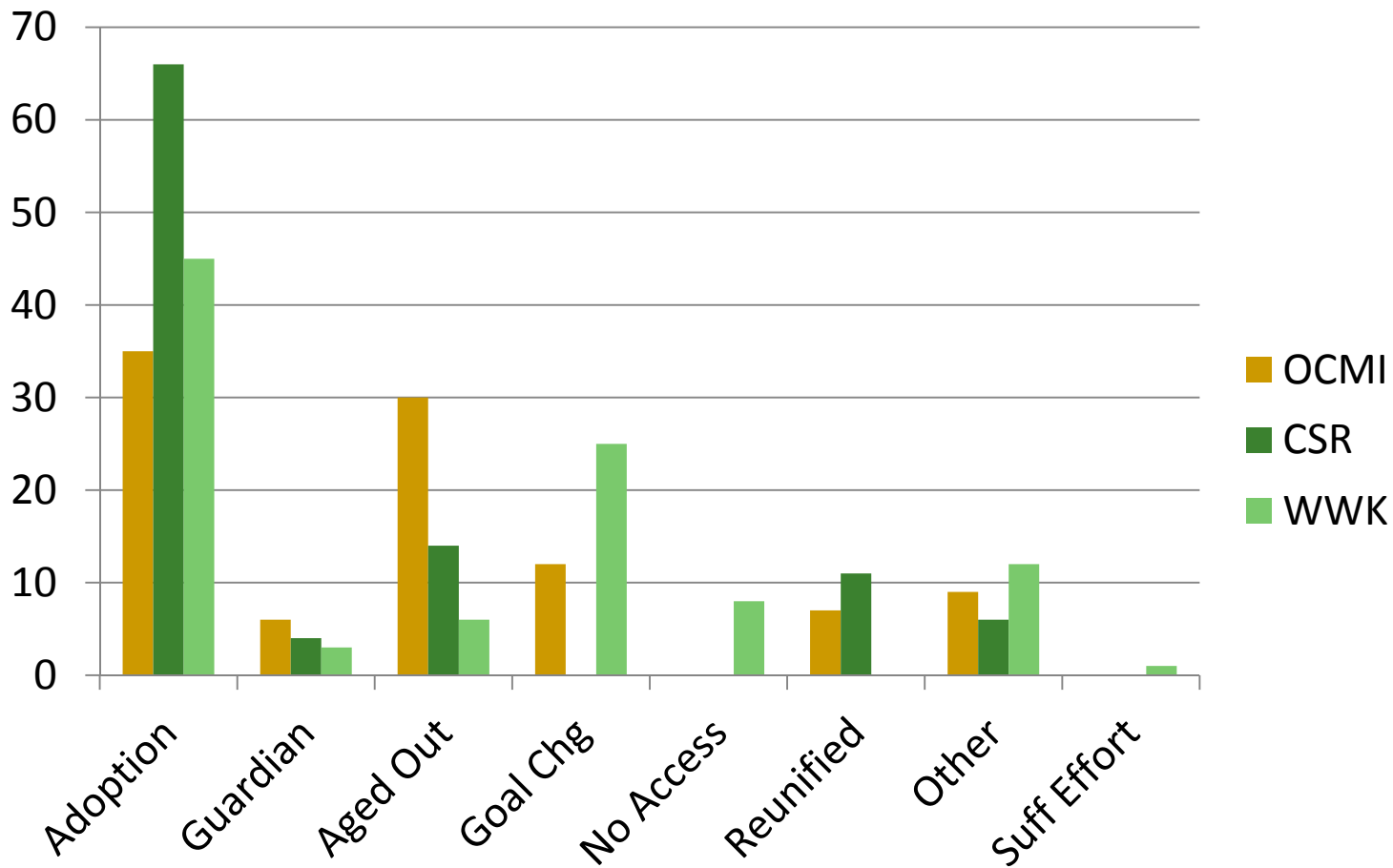


# Outcomes

Older Child Matching Initiative, N= 171

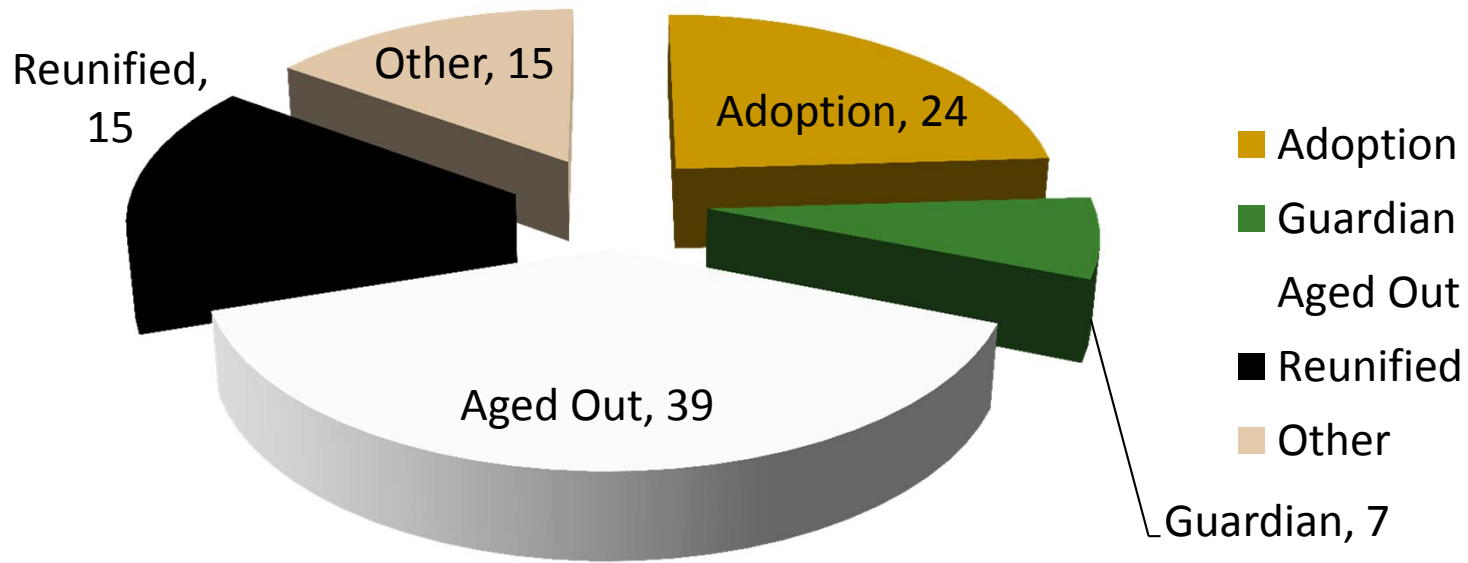


# Outcomes - Comparison



# Outcomes

Matching Parties, % N = 46



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# Recruitment Strategies

- TV Tapings
- Waiting Child CD
- Electronic & Customized Match
- [www.adoptpakids.org](http://www.adoptpakids.org)
- Child specific recruitment
- Child prep
- Child profile
- Professional photo (On-line Heart Gallery)



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# Match Parties

- Older youth 12 – 21
- Actively seeking Family
- Families looking for older youth
- Recruiters attend
- Many contacts to families
- Convenient to youth and families
- Fun activities planned
- Family oriented activities
- Utilize an MC
- Open setting allowing for flexibility



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# #MeetTheKids

- Focus of media campaign
- Older Youth – over 12 years
- Legally free
- Facebook
- Radio & TV Ads
- [https://www.facebook.com/adoptpa?v=app\\_601735633191973](https://www.facebook.com/adoptpa?v=app_601735633191973)



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# Tips For Social Workers

- Caseworker preparation
- Selecting the youth
- Youth preparation
- The event
- Meeting families
- After the event





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# Overcoming Barriers - Result



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# Overcoming Barriers - Result



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# Overcoming Barriers - Result



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# Overcoming Barriers - Result



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# Overcoming Barriers – Plus 1



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# Overcoming Barriers – Lessons Learned

- Successful families are ...
- Characteristics that equal success
- Causes of disruption
- Need for additional supports



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# Overcoming Barriers – Youth

- Being heard
- Learning adoption process pros, cons
- Processing their feelings
- Driving recruitment process
- Understanding why, how of permanency through adoption



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# Overcoming Barriers

If you do a good job for others, you heal yourself at the same time, because a dose of joy is a spiritual cure. It transcends all barriers.

Ed Sullivan



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# Overcoming Barriers - Wrap

- Comments
- Questions
- Evaluations



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