Overcoming Barriers – Older Child Permanency

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
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
Barriers

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

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

- Adoption, 35
- Guardian, 6
- Aged Out, 30
- Reunified, 7
- Goal Change, 12
- Other, 9

Legend:
- Adoption
- Guardian
- Aged Out
- Reunified
- Goal Change
- Other
Outcomes - Comparison

- Adoption
- Guardian
- Aged Out
- Goal Chg
- No Access
- Reunified
- Other
- Suff Effort

Categories: OCMI, CSR, WWK
Outcomes

Matching Parties, % N = 46

- Adoption, 24
- Guardian, 7
- Aged Out, 39
- Reunified, 15
- Other, 15
Recruitment Strategies

- TV Tapings
- Waiting Child CD
- Electronic & Customized Match
- www.adoptpakids.org

- Child specific recruitment
- Child prep
- Child profile
- Professional photo (On-line Heart Gallery)
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
#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)
Tips For Social Workers

- Caseworker preparation
- Selecting the youth
- Youth preparation
- The event
- Meeting families
- After the event
Overcoming Barriers - Result
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Overcoming Barriers – Plus 1
Overcoming Barriers – Lessons Learned

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

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

- Comments
- Questions
- Evaluations