Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention Trends for Family Foster Homes

Report

August 2003

This report contains data collected from each of the thirteen Districts and the SunCoast Region for February 2003 - July 2003
# Table of Contents

I. Introduction 3
II. Foster Home Licensed Capacity 4
III. Distribution of Licensed Capacity 4
IV. Homes with More Than Five Children 5
V. Summary of Licensed Capacity Data 5
VI. District/Regional Comments 6
VII. Summary of Recruitment and Retention Efforts 22

- Charts & Graphs

Over/At/Under Licensed Capacity by District 13
Graph #1, Distribution of Licensed Capacity- 14
Graph #2, Foster Home Placement Status 15
Licensed Capacity Data Sheet 16
Graph #3A, Distribution of Licensed Capacity- Statewide 17
Graph #4A, Percentage of Homes with More Than 5 Children 18
Graph #4B, Homes with More Than 5 Children Total- By District 19
I. Introduction

The Family Foster Home Over/Under Capacity Report's name is being changed to more accurately reflect recruitment and retention efforts statewide and the results of these efforts over a six-month period. This report will continue being produced twice per year in a collaborative effort between the Central Office Licensing Specialist and the Recruitment Retention Specialist, and the Licensing and Recruitment staff of each District and the SunCoast Region. The Florida Department of Children and Families 2003-2004 Comprehensive Statewide Retention and Recruitment Plan for Adoptions and Foster Care has been submitted to the Districts/Region and has been submitted to the Secretary for approval.

Efforts to achieve timely and appropriate placement of all children require retention and recruitment of an adequate pool of families capable of promoting each child's development and permanency goal regardless of the age, ethnicity, race, culture or emotional, psychological or physical needs of the child. This report will assist in providing a statewide snapshot of licensed foster home and their capacity, determining the Department's ability to meet capacity needs, monitoring compliance with operating procedures and as a self-assessment tool for improvement. The August 2003 report includes data queried from The Interim Child Welfare Services Information System (ICWSIS) July 2003 as well as information reported by each District and the SunCoast Region regarding licensing trends and recruitment and retention efforts. The next report will be queried in January and published in February 2004.

The homes reported are family foster homes (including emergency shelter family foster homes) which are used for placement of dependent children. This includes homes supervised by the department as well as homes supervised through community-based-care contracts throughout the state. Currently there are 13 of 67 counties where Community Based Care networks are providing all foster care and related service. One large county began phasing in services on July 1, 20003 and there are 53 counties where the CBC lead Agencies have start-up contracts to plan for their transition. It is anticipated that by the end of June 2004,
all counties will be transition into CBC. All districts will have community-based-care contracts by December 31, 2004.

II. Foster Home Licensed Capacity (Graph #1)

- There were 4962 family foster/shelter homes as of July 2003.
- For Distribution By District, please see Graph #2.
- 7.4% (n=369) of these homes were over licensed capacity.
- 34.3% (n=1711) of these homes were at licensed capacity.
- 58% (n=2882) of these homes were under licensed capacity.
- 27.7% (n=1374) of the homes had no foster children placed.

Comparisons to February 2003 report:
- We added 142 family foster homes.
- There was a decrease of 2.5% (n=110) in the number of homes that were over licensed capacity.
- There was a decrease of .5% (n=97) in the number of homes at licensed capacity.
- There was a decrease of 1.4% (n=55) in the number of homes under licensed capacity.
- There was a decrease of 1.7% (n=43) in the number of homes with no foster children.
- Many of the homes under capacity are reported to be used for respite or are homes limited to specific types of children. Some foster parents specialize in placements of medically or emotionally needy children, which will often result in their homes being under capacity. Other foster parents may be more suited to care for certain groups of children- infants, teens, males, females, etc., which limits the placements made.

III. Distribution of Licensed Capacity (Graphs #3A & B)

- The total licensed bed capacity statewide for this report is 12,578.
- 8% (n=1003) of the homes are licensed for 1 child.
- 15.5% (n=1953) of the homes are licensed for 2 children.
- 8% (n=987) of the homes are licensed for 3 children.
- 4.5% (n=570) of the homes are licensed for 4 children.
- 3% (n=368) of the homes are licensed for 5 children.
- 0.4% (n=81) of the homes are licensed for more than five children.

Comparisons to February 2003 report:
- We had an increase in bed capacity of 786 beds.
- The percentage of homes licensed for more than five children increased to 0.4% and the number of homes licensed for more than five children increased by 76 homes.
IV. Homes with a Total of More than Five Children (Graphs #4A & B)

- 6.5% (n=321) of the foster homes had more than five total children in the home.
- Distribution of the homes with more than five total children is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Total Children</th>
<th>Number of Homes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 or more</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons to February 2003 report:

- The number of foster homes with a total of more than five children decreased by 15 homes. There were 365 homes with more than five total children in August 2002, 350 in February 2003, and 321 homes with more than five total children for this report. The percentage of family foster homes with more than five children total decreased from 7.3% in the February report to 6.5% for this report.
- There were four homes with 15 or more children in February and there are four homes with 15 or more children in this report

V. Summary of Licensed Capacity Data

Since the February 2003 report, we had an increase of 142 family foster homes and 786 beds. There was a decrease (n=110 in the number of homes over licensed capacity and a decrease in the number of homes at capacity (n=55). The total number of homes under licensed capacity was 2882 (58% of all homes). It is important to note that having a substantial number of foster homes under capacity allows for various placement options when removing children from their homes or when needing to replace already dependent children, providing better opportunities to find the most suitable, least restrictive placement for special needs children.

The number of homes licensed for more than five children increased from five homes to eighty-one homes. SunCoast had two licensed for over five in February to a total of sixty-nine homes licensed for over five in August. By the time SunCoast validated their data, the number had increased to seventy-four in SunCoast alone. Miami had no homes licensed for over five in February and now have eight licensed for over five in August. Although this report does not include waiver information, staff need to remember that even if a home is licensed for more than five, this in no way eliminates the need for a waiver once the sixth child is placed.
VI. District/Regional Comments

District One:
- Very little statistical change has occurred during the last six months.
- The number of licensed homes has increased by ten homes, and capacity has increased by twenty-one beds.
- Homes under capacity and at capacity have remained steady.
- Of concern is the increase in homes over capacity.

District Two:
- During the last quarterly reporting period of January 2003 to July 2003, the district has experienced improvement in the number of foster homes by going from 154 to 165 which represents a 9.3% increase in homes.
- In the last two reporting periods, homes have increased by 8% and 9.3% respectively. During the current reporting period, capacity increased by 11%. Likewise, in the last two reporting periods, capacity has increased by 6.8% and 11% respectively.
- The increase in the number of homes and capacity in actuality were greater than the figures indicate due to:
  - On the positive side, District 2 met their adoption goal of 120, thus offsetting some of the gain realized through recruitment and retention contracts.
  - The movement from foster home to medical or therapeutic foster homes created a lesser number of regular foster beds.

District Three:
- As of August 31, 2003: 277 total FS&P homes in District 3
- 750 total licensed capacity in District 38 homes
- 3% over capacity
- 1 home is licensed for more than five children
- There are no homes in District 3 with more than five total children without an appropriate waiver
- The current progress of specific recruitment and retention efforts is ongoing.
- The District has consistently met its monthly goal of new homes and is confident the goal of 60 new foster homes within the District will be attained.

District Four:
- The total number of homes has increased slightly.
- The number of homes over capacity has decreased 17%.
- The homes under capacity increased slightly due to a reduction of children in out of home care in our district.
- The number of homes at their licensed capacity stayed exactly the same.
- We do not have any homes in our district that are licensed for more than five.
Recently fewer children are being detained and the numbers of children in out of home care is trending lower. This may mean an abundance of homes in the future.

**SunCoast Region:**
- The number of Foster Homes for the Region decreased from 1299 to 1293
- The capacity of those homes increased from 3243 to 3678
- The number of homes over licensed capacity decreased from 177 to 69.
- The percentage of over capacity homes decreased from 13.6% to 5.3%
- The number/percentage of homes at capacity changed from 382 (29.4%) to 421 (32.5%)  
- The number/percentage of homes under capacity has changed from 740 (57%) to 803 (62.1%)
- The number of homes licensed for more than 5 foster children increased from 2 to 74.
- The number of homes with more than 5 children including the families own children remains at 136

**District Seven:**
- There are a total of 315 FS&P homes (family foster, family group and dual licensed)
- The total licensed capacity of these homes is 692.
- There are 23 homes over capacity which is 7.3% of the homes.
- There are 146 homes under capacity which is 46.3%
- There are 146 at licensed capacity 146 which is 46.3%
- There is 1 (ICPC home) which is licensed for more than five children
- There are no homes with more than five total children without an appropriate waiver.

**District Eight:**
- We have continued to focus on securing additional foster homes, targeting potential families that are willing and best able to meet the needs of our child population.
- We have no homes that are licensed for more than five children, and homes over five must have the appropriate support services.
- Regular reports to Licensing are required of a Family Safety counselor assigned to ensure the placements in these homes are safe and stable.
- Our August statistics reflect that we have eight homes with over five children, five with six children and two with seven. The other home is listed as having ten children, but this was a typographical error that has since been corrected. That home is not overcapacity.
- We continue to close homes who remain inactive and who are not willing or able to commit to additional placements. We also try to refrain from relicensing those homes that continue to refuse placements. We reassess the capacity of foster homes on an ongoing basis.
District Nine:

- The district is seeing an increase in the volume and number of new homes.
- The total licensed capacity is increasing; however the average licensed capacity per home may be decreasing as we are seeing more homes licensed for 1-2 children.
- The number of homes under licensed capacity is being reduced as homes are relicensed each month and capacity reduced when they are found to be under capacity at the time of relicensure and noted by the district Placement Unit to usually remain under capacity.
- All homes over capacity are required to have a waiver on file.
- Overcapacity waivers are only approved to keep sibling groups together or for other reasons that are shown to be in the best interests of the children being placed.
- The number of homes with more than five children is declining as homes are only licensed or relicensed for five or more children only in order to keep a sibling group together.

District Ten:

- These numbers and percentages reflect all licensed foster homes in the district. They cannot be compared to the last semester percentages due to the transition of all cases to CBC.
- The district policy is not to license homes for more than five children.
- The homes where the total number of children in the home exceeds five, have an approved overcrowd waiver in place.
- As a result of the new contracts where emphasis is placed in better bed utilization, there have been a significant number of home closures compared to initial cases.
- The month of September 2003 reflected 30 closures and 11 initial cases. The network providers are no longer interested in relicensing foster homes that are not interested if fostering the kind of children in need for a placement. Many foster parents became resource parents believing that it is a shortcut to adoption. They are only willing to foster the ideal child ages 0-1 and in the process of TPR. The network providers are recommending these families to strictly become prospective adoptive parents. Other homes have closed because they finalized adoption, moved out of district, or have not completed a relicensing package in a timely manner and as described by contract.
- All the foster homes in over capacity status have a waiver in place. The issuance and approval of waivers has improved.
- Increase in capacity is processed in partnership with the foster family as long as there is compliance with licensing standards.
- All homes licensed that have a total of more than five children in the home have an approved waiver in place.
District Eleven:

- Number of total FS&P homes (family foster-DCF and CPA, medical foster, family group and dual licensed providers)
  
  February 2003: (901)
  August 2003: (857)

- Total licensed capacity of family foster-DCF and CPA, medical foster, family group and dually licensed providers
  
  February 2003: (1547)
  August 2003: (2171)

- Over the last six months, we have experienced a closure rate of an average of 33 homes per month. These closures were as a result of both voluntary and involuntary closures. *Voluntary Closures*-These closures occurred for a wide range of reasons to include, adoption finalizations, transfers to another provider, foster parents desiring a reprieve from foster care, relocation and their inability to complete the required re-licensing documentation. (Please note that a significant number of closures were due to transfers to various providers and the family’s inability to complete the re-licensing requirements in a timely basis.) *Involuntary Closures*-This type of closure often occurred due to confirmed abuse reports and non-compliance with licensing standards.

- There were 70 homes over capacity in August or 8.2%.
- There were 475 homes under capacity or 55.4%.
- There were 288 foster homes at licensed capacity or 33.6%.
- There are no homes licensed for more than five children as District 11 does not license foster homes over 5.
- There are currently three waivers pending DA approval for more than five total children.

District 11B:

- Due to the mobility of the population in the Keys the number of foster homes remain constant. The average number at any given time is 34 homes.
- For every home that is licensed there are at least three homes that give up their licenses. Some because their main goal was adoption and others because they move out of the Keys.
- Monroe County does not license homes for more than five children and in an extraordinary occasion when a foster home may be over capacity, a waiver is approved before the child is placed in the home. Since the Wesley House Family Services took over the recruitment and retention efforts there has been more community awareness on the need for foster/adoptive parents, and more time to spend on the retention of foster/adoptive homes. Wesley House Family Services is in its third year of managing the recruitment, retention and training contract and has been successful to date.

District Twelve:

- Trend analysis has indicated that foster home capacity has increased, but at a slower rate than the increase in out of home care population.
• Tend analysis also reflects that Port Orange, FL is the area of the district in
greatest need of foster homes, in that children removed form their homes in
that area most often have to leave their community and be placed in another
area of the district.
• The current placement resources are limited as there are more children in
need of a foster care placement than there are foster homes to support them.
• More homes are needed to adequately service the children in Volusia and
Flagler Counties.
• At least 50 more homes, totaling 100 placement beds, are needed to bring
our placement resources to a sufficient level. This increase is expected to
occur over the next 12 months.
• The most challenging placements have been for the following types of
children:
  Teenagers with a delinquency history
  Babies and children who are sick or medically needy
  Elementary school age children with Mental Health Issues
  Race and ethnicity do not appear to be deterring factors when seeking
  placements.

District Thirteen:
• There is an increase of 25 homes reflecting a 9% increase from the 322
licensed homes in July 2002.
• There is a total licensed capacity of 912 for these foster homes.
• There is an increased capacity of 59 beds reflecting a 9% increase of
capacity from the 853 bed capacity of July 2002.
• There are 12 foster homes over capacity reflecting a 6% decrease from the
27 FH over capacity in July 2002.
• There are 177 foster homes under capacity reflecting a 5% decrease from
July 2002.
• There are 158 foster homes at licensed capacity reflecting 10% increase
from July
2002.
• Two foster homes are licensed for more than 5 children.
• There are no foster homes with more than five total children placed without an
appropriate waiver.

District Fourteen:
• The number of Family Safety and Preservation homes has decreased by 9
homes.
• The total licensed capacity has decreased by 7.
• The number of homes over their license capacity has remained the same
since January 2003.
• The number of homes at their license capacity has increased by 11% since
• The number of homes under their license capacity has increased by 10% since January 2003.
• In January there were no homes license for more than five children. Currently there is no homes licensed for more than 5 children.
• Currently there are 18 homes with more than five total children without an appropriate waiver. We are trying to complete appropriate waivers on 100% of foster homes that are over their license capacity.

District Fifteen:
• The District showed a slight increase from 149 homes in February 2003 with a licensed capacity of 324 beds to 155 homes with a current licensed capacity of 347 beds for August 2003.
• There was very little change in our number of overcapacity homes from 11.4% in February to 11.1% in August.
• Under capacity homes increased from 79 homes in February to 90 homes currently.
• We have 50 homes that count as having no children in the home. This figure is slightly misrepresented as we have children residing in our District that from out-of-district and out-of-state what will not show up in our system.
• Two homes are licensed for a capacity over 5.
# Over / At / Under Licensed Capacity By District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>SunCoast</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL # of Homes</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>1307</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Over Lic. Capacity</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Over Lic. Capacity</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># At Licensed Capacity</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% At Licensed Capacity</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Under Lic. Capacity</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Under Lic. Capacity</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># with NO Children</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% With NO Children</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>32.</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>26.</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATEWIDE TOTALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Foster Homes</td>
<td>4962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes OVER Licensed Capacity</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes AT Licensed Capacity</td>
<td>1711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes UNDER Licensed Capacity</td>
<td>2882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes with NO Children</td>
<td>1374</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data indicating NO Children relates ONLY to foster children. Biological and adopted children already in the foster home are not reflected.*
Distribution of Licensed Capacity
August 2003
N = 4962

- 1-2 children: 60% (n=2956)
- 3-4 children: 31% (n=1557)
- 5 children: 7% (n=368)
- More than 5 children: 2% (n=81)
Foster Home Placement Status

- At Licensed Capacity: 35% (n=1711)
- Under Licensed Capacity: 58% (n=2882)
- Over Licensed Capacity: 7% (n=369)
# Distribution of Licensed Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL # of Homes</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>1307</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>155</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Lic. Capacity</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>3688</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>1646</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>347</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Homes Lic. 1</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Homes Lic. 1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Homes Lic. 2</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Homes Lic. 2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Homes Lic. 3</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Homes Lic. 3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Homes Lic. 4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Homes Lic. 4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Homes Lic. 5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Homes Lic. 5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Homes Lic. &gt;5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Homes Lic. &gt;5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATEWIDE TOTALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Bed Capacity</td>
<td>12878</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes Licensed for 1</td>
<td>1003</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes Licensed for 2</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes Licensed for 3</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes Licensed for 4</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes Licensed for 5</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes Licensed &gt;5</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Family Foster Homes with More Than a Total of Five Children
August 2003
N=4962

% of homes with more than 5 children (n=312)

% of homes with less than five children (n=4650)
Family Foster Homes with a Total of More Than Five Children
August 2003
N= 321
I. Summary of Recruitment and Retention Efforts

As previously mentioned, the Florida Department of Children and Families 2003-2004 Comprehensive Statewide Retention and Recruitment Plan for Adoptions and Foster Care has been submitted to the Districts/Region and has been submitted to the Secretary for approval. The strategies set forth in this plan are part of the Department’s efforts to address the transition to Community Based Care, while establishing a framework for effective statewide communication, recruitment and retention planning, special initiatives and training and support in best practices. We are working toward more effective methods of data analysis and monitoring. Retention and Recruitment of foster homes are priority for the both the Department licensing staff and community based care. Central Office staff will be working closely with the Districts, regions and zones in the development and implementation of their own individualized recruitment and retention plans.

In line with strategies to increase the number of foster families, the Department continues to supplement and strengthen district/region foster care retention and recruitment efforts with statewide initiatives to help heighten awareness of the need for additional homes on an on-going basis. Central Office Staff will continue providing technical assistance to districts which will include on-site visits and monthly statewide conference calls with district retention/recruitment teams (local DCF and CBC staff involved with retention and/or recruitment efforts).

Listed below are local retention and recruitment initiatives as reported by each district/region:

**District One:**
- Appeared as a guest on 1 television program discussing recruitment of foster parents
- Appeared as a guest on 2 radio shows discussing recruitment of foster and adoptive parents
- Assisted in design of billboard and bus bench shelter and foster parent recruitment brochure
- Obtained donation of billboard space in all four counties. Billboards posted in Escambia and Santa Rosa
- Obtained donation of bus bench space in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties.
- Recruitment posters and brochures to area businesses and churches.
• Work in progress: Adoptions brochure; Recruitment boards for display at fairs and festivals; Data base
• Presentations: Escambia Foster Parents; FFN staff in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties; Presentations to new counselor attending PDC training; Guardian Ad Litem presentations; Community Alliance presentation; Presentation to Santa Rosa County School Board members; Presentation to Santa Rosa County Psychologists and Special Education Teachers; Monthly Informational meetings held for prospective foster/adoptive parents
• Events: Booth at Fourth of July celebration downtown Pensacola; Baptist Hospital Health Fair; MAPP Class: currently facilitating class; completed one class
• Mailings: Informational packets sent out to each individual who makes an inquiry about fostering or adopting; Invitations sent monthly to all who have inquired; Mailing of class schedules and invitations to attend; Letters sent to over 400 churches with foster/adoptive information with requests to post in bulletins and offers to speak at each church; Letters sent to all Escambia and Santa Rosa schools with information about fostering/adopting and offers to speak at all schools
• Public service announcements sent out monthly to approximately 50 TV, radio and newspapers in all 4 counties.
• Appeared as a guest on 2 television programs discussing recruitment of foster parents.
• Appeared as a guest on 5 radio shows discussing recruitment of foster and adoptive parents.
• Billboards in Okaloosa and Walton Counties.
• Recruitment information posted on 3 bank signs in FWB.
• Recruitment information posted on Shalimar Town sign and Niceville City sign.
• Recruitment posters and brochures to area businesses and churches.
• Presentations for numerous organizations
• Monthly informational meetings (potential foster and adoptive parents)
• Informational packets sent out to each individual who makes an inquiry (foster and adoption)
• Letters sent to over 400 churches (all 4 counties) with info included and offer to speak at each church.
• Letters sent to 64 schools in Okaloosa and Walton Counties, with info included and offer to speak at each school.

Retention efforts include the following:

In District One the Community Based Care Lead Agency developed a District Placement Team (DPT) as a centralized unit through which all placements occur. As the first point of contact, the District Placement Team is equipped to provide accurate tracking and streamline the process for making timely and appropriate placements. The District Placement Team consists of five Placement Specialists
and seven Retention Specialists. The job of retention specialist begins at the time a placement is secured and continues throughout the time the children stay in care. Their primary responsibility is to assist the district Placement Team by performing the following functions:

- Providing, arranging, and coordinating supportive services for licensed foster families to reduce placement disruptions, improve quality of care, and retain foster homes.
- Participating in placement staffings with the DPT and relay field information to assist in identifying the most appropriate placement resources for children entering care.
- Visiting the home in which a child is placed within 24 hours or the next working day, to help with placement adjustments and to ensure that the foster parents received all necessary documents relating to the child being placed.
- Providing emergency on-call support and assistance to foster parents by addressing their problems and or referring them to the appropriate resources for specialized services. This may include utilizing basic behavior management interventions to help stabilize the child in the foster home in an effort to maintain the child's placement.
- Collaborating with network providers to develop additional placement resources and services, such as foster parent support groups.
- Serving as FFN liaison with the local Foster Parent Associations.
- Developing a reminder tickler system to assist foster parents in keeping up to date with their licensing requirements and to help coordinate and facilitate continuing education opportunities for foster parents.
- Identifying and addressing gaps in services to support foster parents care of dependent children.

Addition retention efforts in Okaloosa/Walton, particularly involving the FACES Program, consist of the following:

- 6 foster families (25 children) had respite provided to them through FACES screened sitters.
- 35 free haircuts have been provided to foster children in Okaloosa and Walton Counties
- 2 foster children have received birthday gifts from the "Birthday Angel"
- 1 sitter has been screened through the FACES program to serve as a "community sitter" (Escambia County)
- Approximately 3000 worth of gifts were donated by various community organizations during the holidays for Okaloosa and Walton County foster children/families (this does not include the Angel Tree project, the Eglin Officer's Spouses or various other holiday donations that were received).
- 84 book bags and diaper bags, valued at approximately $25 each, filled with various age appropriate items (diapers, formula, shampoo, toothbrush, stuffed animals, etc.) to give to children coming into care. The bags are being distributed to the 3 service centers in Okaloosa and Walton Counties for staff to give out as needed. This is an ongoing project.

**District Two:**
• Brochures distributed at various community locations and events to publicize foster care in hopes of getting new recruits.
• Word of mouth from other foster parents is described as the best recruitment tool.
• PowerPoint presentations to community / service groups/ faith based groups / professional organizations to create community awareness and spread the word about foster parenting. Church presentations have been most effective.
• Billboards and television commercials have produced a large number of inquires and enrollment in MAPP.
• One provider offers a stipend for foster parents who successfully recruit other foster parents.
• The provider makes quarterly (or more often) visits to foster homes to answer questions and help in any way possible. They regularly participate in Foster Parent Meetings. Regular communication prevents future problems.
• Participation in fairs, festivals, expos, etc. to publicize the program, meet people and develop interest within the community.
• Providers participate in various community meetings to network with others to build a base of support and referrals.
• Presentations to churches by provider staff and existing foster parents have been quite successful.

Retention efforts include the following:
• Monthly newsletter and foster parent website geared toward retention by keeping foster parents informed of happenings, new ideas, training opportunities and parenting assistance.
• Foster Parent Association meetings, brunches, picnics, etc. are creating networking opportunities for foster parents to assist each other.
• A Fall Fest for foster parents and children was well received. It included food, games and fun.
• Providers assist foster parents in obtaining car seats, strollers, cribs and other items needed for fostering.
• Annual Foster Parent Appreciation Banquets provide formal recognition and honor to foster parents.
• Providers provide resource information and in-service training to assist foster parents to meet training requirements as well as addressing current needs.
• Provider sends Mother’s Day, Father’s Day and birthday cards to foster parents to show appreciation.
• Door prizes are awarded to get foster parents to attend their meetings.
• Mayor’s proclamation of Foster Parent Appreciation month at several city halls throughout the district emphasized the importance of foster parents to communities.
• Participation in the monthly Recruitment / Retention conference call and monthly DCF / provider meetings provide useful knowledge for recruitment and retention.

District Three:
• District 3 uses radio and print media to promote recruitment on an ongoing basis.
• We constantly devise new ways to reach the public through verbal and written advertisements, flyers, posters, brochures and numerous speaking engagements.
• We are working toward recruitment and retention by offering a stipend to foster parents who recruit new families when those families actually complete MAPP, receive a license and take their first placement.
• We also offer extensive training through PDC’s 15-hour positive parenting classes as well as UF’s 30-hour Behavior Analysis program. The positive parenting class focuses on teaching foster families how to deal with difficult behaviors.
• We also pay a stipend as an incentive for attending all of the classes and completing the program.
• The Behavior Analysis program not only works with the foster parents in a classroom setting, it also provides in-home support because they work with the children in the home as well. This gives our foster families much needed support and a greater willingness to work with our foster children.

Retention efforts include the following:
• This information is detailed above as to licensing staff, but also, a great deal of our retention success lies with foster care staff who work with the foster homes on a daily basis.

District Four:
• The Department is actively engaged in recruitment campaigns in for counties in or District. This campaign began on July 1, 2003.
• We are conducting five MAPP classes in the four counties.
• We had a recruitment/appreciation event in each county in July/August prior to the beginning of each class.
• We are asking current foster parents to invite friends, family, and neighbors to become foster/adoptive parents.
• We have advertised in local newspapers and publications.
• We have canvassed local businesses; schools and child care centers in each county. Many of these counties are rural and present a challenge to recruit without using mass media outlets.
• We will begin new classes each quarter in each county until the Lead Agencies take over.

Retention efforts include the following:
• We have continued to utilize foster parent support funds in retention efforts.
• We are continuing the mentoring program and foster parent training through the Professional Development Center and the Behavioral Initiative.
• We have encouraged the foster parents in D4 to become involved with the Foster/Adoptive parent associations in the District. Through the associations
they receive monthly training, fellowship with other foster parents and develop valued friendships.
• We have recently helped to establish a new support group in Baker County and hope to start another in Nassau County.
• We held foster parent appreciation events this summer in the counties we serve. They were well received and attended.
• We continue to provide support and help with the foster parents who have special needs with the children in their home.
• We have a clothes closet and provide referrals to community agencies when needed.
• We have started a new in-service training program this fall in each county. This is being coordinated by foster parents and has been well received. They have facilitated training sessions weekly using professionals in their fields of expertise.
• We continue to use a foster/adoptive parent trainer in each MAPP course that we offer. We feel this a helpful for the class participants to get an experienced parents perspective each week.

SunCoast Region:
• The SunCoast Region is comprised of 7 counties which are serviced by 3 different contracted Community Based Care agencies.
• Each of these agencies have specific staff people assigned to do recruitment and retention work.
• Each CBC has been able to conduct various recruitment activities that range from broad media coverage with TV stories or newspaper articles to speaking at local community groups.

The following was submitted by HKI
• The system of care has implemented a centralized recruitment line (643-KIDS) to assist the community with a single point of contact and to ensure that information is consistent with current trends and placement needs.
• Placement provides a daily placement log which provides critical data regarding demographics and trends regarding siblings and other specifics that drive placement needs. This information is shared with prospective families when they contact 643-KIDS and again during orientation.

Retention efforts include the following:
• Each CBC has made part of their Licensing Staff’s job duties retention.
• They have tried to enable their Licensing Counselors to spend more time with foster parents and follow up on foster parent needs by giving each counselor lower caseloads.
• One of the CBC agencies, The Safe Children Coalition (formerly known as the Partnership for Safe Children) still has one staff member with the primary function of retention.
The following was submitted by The Safe Children Coalition (Sarasota, Manatee & Desoto Counties)

- A Transition Specialist works with new foster parents for the first four weeks after their initial placement:
  - Makes a home visit within 48 hours of their first placement
  - Assesses the foster parents’ needs and determines possible resources to meet these needs
  - Helps the family “navigate the system”/provides a personalized list of contact people
  - Assists with school/childcare issues
  - Troubleshoots potential concerns
- Each foster home has an assigned Relicensing/Retention Specialist who:
  - Can be called when foster parents need information or reassurance
  - Acts as an advocate for foster parents
  - Offers training resources
  - Make additional visits to a foster home upon request
- Special events are held to support foster parents and show appreciation for their efforts:
  - Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner in May
  - Back to School celebration which includes distribution of backpacks and school supplies
  - Holiday party in December with gifts for the children

The following was submitted by HKI

- Retention efforts primarily are served through the Family Development Specialist service.
- The role of the FDS is to directly impact retention through support and advocacy for foster homes.
- The FDS provides in home visitation, support, training, assistance with placement matching, and liaison with care management and the system of care.

**District Seven:**

- District seven is presently working in partnership with Florida Hospital, a large metropolitan hospital in Orlando. We will be conducting orientations and MAPP training for perspective adoptive and foster homes, addressing hospital staff, which is estimated at 15,000 employees. This will be a collaborative effort with CMS and DD to increase capacity of medical foster homes.
- On November 6, 2003, through November 8, 2003, District seven’s local One Church One Child board will be hosting a BI-annual education and training conference at Caribe Royale, Orlando.
- On November 15, 2003, a statewide walkathon will be sponsored by One Church One Child. District seven will participate in this event.
- On November 1 and November 2, 2003, an adoption and foster care recruitment event will be held at Fiesta in the Park, Lake Eola, Orlando. This draws over 5,000 people each day.
• On November 15, 2003, an adoption and foster care recruitment event will be held at Peniel Christian Church in Orlando.
• On November 22, 2003 an adoption-matching event will be held at Sea World. This event has found permanent homes for over a hundred children over the past twelve years.
• A partnership with channel 27 local television is in the process of being explored. This partnership will heighten awareness of adoption through television spots and web sites.
• Regal Movie Theatres; big screen advertisements will be launched November 7th to run for three months at five different REGAL CINEMA theatre locations.

Retention efforts include the following:
• Foster Parent Association president’s monthly meeting to discuss, share and clarify information and dispel rumors. This forum is also used to rational problem solve any issues that might arise.
• Quarterly meetings with the ALL foster parents (DCF and CPA). The meeting is held by the DA. Barriers and solutions to better relations are discussed and answers provided in written format at the following meeting. Partnership and Training meetings held monthly to provide continued communication and training to legislative changes and clarification on any issues. Ie: this month is a legal forum to discuss Foster Parent’s role in the dependency process, what to expect and clarification on issues such as signing for medical procedures, etc. District provides continual interactive training opportunities to the foster parents from Medicaid and WIC to Disaster preparedness.
• District has provided all foster parents with a muster of ALL employees’ office numbers and work cell numbers… including the chain of command.
• The department has provided 1-800 #’s for the licensing office and the placement office due to the size of the district and these offices are centralized.

District Eight:
• A new recruitment plan for FY 2003-04 was developed and is attached with this report.
• All providers have offered MAPP classes since July 1 of 2003. These are offered in various areas of the district to increase accessibility, including a number of different locations within Lee County.
• Two providers have offered MAPP classes since February 2003, and classes have significantly increased since July 1.
• Also since July 1, a foster parent newsletter has been published and is expected monthly.
• Recruitment efforts by one of the recruiters have focused on Hispanic homes, and MAPP for speakers of Spanish is currently being offered.
• A huge media event to recruit for adoptive and foster to adopt homes has been planned for November 6th.

Retention efforts include the following:
A contract initiated July 1 has provided a support worker for every foster home in the district. The support workers are contacting all foster homes and visiting most to assure foster parents are receiving the services they need. They are also contacting foster homes shortly after new placements are made to assure that the foster parents have received the necessary paperwork and information about the children.

The foster parent newsletter has been distributed to all foster parents and includes relevant articles and information about inservice training sessions being offered.

The department is currently offering a fifteen-hour positive parenting class. Behavioral training and in-home instruction with a Behavior Specialist is available upon referral.

In addition, the DCF Licensing unit is in the process of distributing an updated foster parent handbook. The DCF Licensing unit in District 8 produced the handbook, entitled “Touch A Life”. It is a valuable tool for our foster parents as it provides answers to many of their questions, includes Statute and Code requirements, and outlines resources for training and support.

**District Nine:**

- The community currently supports a local Foster Parent Association that provides support to foster parents including telephone support, group meetings, training, a resource library, and a clothing/supply closet.
- The district has contracted with Child and Family Connections to provide support and retention services. Their system design to retain foster parents includes a Family Support Specialist for every foster home (1:30 caseload average). This Family Support Specialist will be available to the foster parent(s) at all times. The Specialist will advocate for the foster parent’s needs and will assist the foster parent in navigating through the system. Additionally, the specialist will be responsible for monthly home visits, annual relicensing home studies, corrective action plans, training, dissemination of benefits information and other licensing related issues.

**District Ten:**

The Teen Permanency Project is a concentrated effort to increase the number of beds available to dependent teens in Broward County. This coupled with the contractual recruitment and licensing requirements of other child placing and case managing agencies of Broward will yield an increase in the number of out of home placements for children.

- The total of homes over the rule of five decreased from 14 to 8. These are homes that historically have been licensed with a total of more than five children. The district’s plan is to close them by attrition. Meanwhile, there is an overcrowded waiver in place in each one of them approved by ChildNet, Inc. CEO.
- ChildNet is working diligently in obtaining a waiver on all over capacity placements. The effort is placed in increasing capacity if possible before the
30-day waiver expiration date. If the capacity increase is not possible, a 90-day waiver extension is approved and issued by ChildNet, Inc. CEO. All approved and signed waivers are sent back to the network provider and a copy is submitted to DCF’s licensing file.

- This is the first report ChildNet has done and the count included homes that have children not placed under Chapter 39. The next report will more accurately reflect the actual homes where there are more than 30% or more under license capacity.”

**District Eleven-A:**
Current recruitment efforts continue to include but are not limited to the following:

- Ongoing orientations and presentations focusing on the district’s targeted needs;
- Community partnerships to include but not limited to the following: Metro-Dade County libraries, Metro-Dade Police Department, radio and television, Department of Corrections, hospitals, schools, civic organizations, fairs, and local churches;
- Bilingual staff to assist in the recruitment, training and retention of our families;
- Articles in local newspapers regarding children specific available for adoption;
- Monthly participation in the Recruitment and Retention Statewide Conference Call;
- Availability of recruitment materials in English, Spanish and Creole. (These include posters, flyers, brochures, CD’s and other recruitment paraphernalia);
- A Recruitment and Retention Task Force that meets on an ongoing basis to review recruitment and retention strategies in place;
- Partnerships with foster and adoptive families as they are our best recruiters;
- During orientations the benefits of adopting our children are emphasized, to include the new Tax Credit;
- Partnership with the One Church, One Child Program;
- Participation and attendance of the Home finder during an orientation or presentation;
- Statewide recruitment telephone numbers (1-800-96-ADOPT or 1-800-981-KIDS) for families interested in the foster or adoption programs.

**Retention efforts include the following:**

Current retention efforts include but are not limited to the following:

- In-Service Training Calendar to Foster Parents (topics presented therein are targeted to our children’s characteristics and behaviors and/or required trainings for foster parents, e.g., Water Safety, HIV/AIDS, Sexual Abuse, etc and are available in English and Spanish);
- Mentoring meetings;
- Quarterly Foster Parent Newsletters for our English-speaking and Spanish-speaking families: A Foster Parent Connection and ENTRE PADRES;
• Quarterly periodical entitled TALK TO TALK for foster parents addressing common asked questions and their answers;
• Development of a 15-hour and 30-hour In-Service Training entitled “Parenting Tools for Positive Behavior Change” to assist foster parents in approaching the challenging behaviors of our children (NOTE: The 30-hr curriculum has recently become available in Spanish and is being offered to our Hispanic families);
• Developed the Fostering the Sexual-Aggressor/Victim – Train-the-Trainer In-Service Training for District 11 staff;
• LIVESCAN fingerprinting machine installed in the MAPP Unit so to facilitate/expedite the initial screening process (Consequently, fingerprint results are available within 24 – 48 hours);
• In-house access obtained for viewing/printing Caretaker Screens (abuse and criminal clearances) for our prospective families;
• Creation of a monthly MAPP activities calendar outlining orientations, pre-service and in-service training to be provided to prospective and already licensed foster and approved prospective adoptive families;
• Availability of funds for Foster Parent Travel to state conferences and training Appreciation Events for foster and adoptive parents (some events have been done in partnerships with providers);
• Availability of a Home Finder, Resource Foster Parent Coordinator, and Foster Parent Liaison to assist in meeting our foster and adoptive families needs;
• The District developed a Foster Parent Survey to be used whenever a foster home is closed voluntarily/involuntarily;
• Foster Parent Association Meetings;
• Reimbursement to foster parents satisfactorily completing the 15 and 30-hr “Parenting Tools for Positive Behavior Change” In-Service training;
• Creation of a Caregiver Mediation Board;
• Participation from foster and adoptive parents, Guardian Ad Litem, courts, Foster Parent Liaison, Home Finder, to the last meeting of the Florida MAPP Pre-Service Training for prospective foster and adoptive families;
• Promotion of a “Buddy” system among foster families;
• Creation of a support group for Hispanic foster and adoptive families;
• Resource Packet given to prospective foster families during the last Florida MAPP Pre-Service training meeting.

District Twelve:
Current recruitment efforts include:
In March of 2003, the Volusia/Flagler Community Alliance created a Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Task Force, made up of experienced foster parents, foster care agency administrators, and DCF & CBC staff. The Task Force is planning several innovative approaches to foster care recruitment and retention.
• Task Force recruitment teams have launched a recruitment effort targeted toward area churches. The Task Force will focus on churches within the geographic areas with the highest rates of removal (the 32114 and 32117 area codes).
• Foster Care “Open Houses” are being held throughout the district. Here, people interested in foster parenting can come to learn about the critical impact they can make in a child’s life. They hear presentations from a current foster parent, a licensing expert, and a CBC manager.
• Effective July 1, 2003, subcontracts with local foster care agencies have been amended to provide incentives for recruiting and licensing new foster homes.
• Effective July 1, 2003, a $200 award will be given to any current foster home that recruits a new foster home, once the new home become licensed.
• Members of the Task Force have made recruitment speeches at civic groups, such as Rotary and Kiwanis, throughout the community.

Retention Efforts - Current retention efforts include:
• Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Task Force will be developing community strategies ongoing for foster home retention.
• The Task Force includes a foster home retention subcommittee that focuses on methods of improving and enhancing MAPP training, and identifying methods of providing additional training opportunities for foster parents.
• CBC’s foster care provider agencies are visiting their foster homes every 30-60 days to identify training needs and provide one-on-one training when necessary. In addition, frequent phone calls are being made to foster homes to monitor their status and provide support.
• A $200 incentive award will be given to any foster home that maintains a child placed from initial placement to permanency.
• Foster care agencies hold annual foster parent appreciation events in conjunction with CBC.
• Monthly newsletters are being sent to foster homes to keep them informed.
• In October 2003, CBC distributed a foster parent survey. The survey outcome is being evaluated. Changes based on the issues identified from the foster parents’ feed back will be incorporated.
• Foster care agency sub-contracts were amended July 1, 2003 to require more supports and interventions into the foster home to manage difficult child behavior. This will provide additional support for the foster parent and prevent disruption.
• The Task Force has kicked off the “Adopt-a-Foster-Family” program. Here, individual and group sponsors provide resources and support to foster families, connecting foster parents with the community. Eleven groups have committed to sponsoring a foster home so far.
District Thirteen:

- Recruitment Plan outlines specific tasks and responsibilities as an on-going process.
- Identify the number of foster homes in the district
- Review the district’s over-capacity reports
- Conduct an assessment to determine the types of placement needs (including foster parent community input)
- Analyze the needs assessment to target recruitment homes to meet the identified needs of children in substitute care
- Develop a Speaker’s Bureau to educate the community on the need for foster homes
- Conduct recruitment fairs at various community activity days
- Conduct mass mailing to churches and organizations through the district
- Continuous media request for prospective parents
- Implement the mentoring program for the experience foster parent to help the new foster parents
- Implement the grandparent program to help with respite care and life experiences for our children in care
- Works in conjunction with PIO to ensure positive media coverage of successes
- Recruit for and develop a district pool of certified foster parents leaders and co-leaders with a minimum of two trainers in each of the five (5) counties in the district

Current/Upcoming Recruitment and Retention Efforts:

- Implemented the Foster Care & Adoption Committee for the District. The committee will plan, organize and execute various events to raise awareness for the need of children in care
- Bank on this! Area banks are investing in the Department of Children & Families by allowing Recruiters to recruit on site
- Schedule and set up a Parent Information Center in area Libraries throughout the county, i.e. flyers, brochure, registration forms for MAPP training
- Conduct recruitment fairs at various community activity days
- Continue with speaking engagements at Community Agencies, Churches, Schools and other Organizations throughout the District
- Continue to have quarterly meetings with the Foster Care and Adoptive Advisory Committee
- Continue the Awareness & Image event that will be used to increase and improve visibility throughout the communities. The Department along with the Leesburg Police Department hosted a softball competition. Hopefully, this will become an annual affair.
- Conduct home visits to newly licensed foster parents within 30-45 days of initial placement in the home
- Conduct an exit interview for foster parents that decide to not relicense
- Quarterly foster parent newsletter to keep foster parents abreast of district activities, policies and procedural changes
- Conduct quarterly meeting with foster parents to discuss recruitment and retention inputs
- Schedule and coordinate Foster Parent Appreciation Events during the month of May
- Identify a Foster Parent of the Year in each County
- Respond to foster parent issues and concerns in a timely manner
- Conduct a minimum of 2 visits per year with foster parents
- Ensure that Certified Behavior Analysts work with foster parents as needed
- Positive Parenting Training available to foster parents through PDC and the Behavior Analysts

**District Fourteen:**
- Current Recruitment and Retention efforts include a Recruitment and Retention Plan that is being updated through the District Recruitment Team.
- A calendar of Recruitment activities has been developed that includes participation of the faith community, foster parents, and neighborhood partnerships
- MAPP classes are being held on weekends in various locations within the District
- Incentive payment authorized for current foster parents who recruit families that become licensed

Retention efforts include the following:
- The foster parent Liaison logs requests for assistance from foster parents and arranges the appropriate response to address the need. The log entries are analyzed to identify trends that might suggest system issues.
- The foster parent liaison also reviews the services identified by both the foster parent and the licensing counselor in the waiver service plans to insure that the needs are being met.
- The licensing supervisor makes visits to newly licensed homes to provide follow-up to and oversight of licensing counselors, and provides personal welcome and delivery of the license.
- Financial assistance is provided to foster parents to attend area and statewide training and conferences.
- Foster Parents are receiving training as MAPP co-trainers.
- The Recruitment and Retention Plan supports Foster Parent Appreciation Activities throughout the year.

**District Fifteen:**
- Our local provider has submitted its 2003-2004 Marketing Plan for recruitment which focuses on educating the public about the need for foster homes through public service announcements on cable television, radio shows, newspaper advertisements, and presentations to civic groups.
• The recruiters advertise by distributing bumper stickers, magnets and flyers. They send copies of their MAPP Training schedules to churches, schools to include in their newsletters. Information booths are set up in libraries, malls, county fairs and at other public events.

Retention Efforts include the following:
• Returning calls within 24 hours.
• Providing new families with supplies such as diapers, clothing, toys, furniture, car seats sheets, towels, cribs, etc.
• Training by Certified Behavioral Analysts to enhance their parenting skills. A CBA is available to work with the foster parent and child in the home. Foster parents are reimbursed for training.
• Enhanced rates for difficult to place children.
• Provide new foster parents with a mentor when requested.
• District Foster Parent Handbook which is a "where to turn to" guide.
• Assist foster parents by providing for school related expenses not covered by the board payment: prom, special attire, field trips, etc.
• Adopt A Family Christmas Program.
• Reimburse for foster parent travel and attendance to conferences.
• Foster Parent Recognition and Celebration