Trends in Licensed Out-of-Homes Care

August 2004

This report contains data collected from each of the thirteen Districts and the SunCoast Region for February 2004 - July 2004
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I. Introduction

The Trends in Licensed Out-of-Home Care August 2004 report information was pulled for the period February 1, 2004 through July 31, 2004. The information contained in this report is intended to more accurately reflect recruitment and retention efforts statewide and the results of these efforts over a six-month period. This report is produced twice per year in a collaborative effort between the Central Office and the Licensing and Recruitment staff of each district and the SunCoast Region. Each district, region and Community-Based Care provider has submitted a copy of their recruitment and retention plans to Central Office. Monthly Recruitment and Retention conference calls and monthly Licensing conference calls are held in order to work through problems encountered, as well as to share best practice and ideas throughout the state.

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 2004 report includes data queried from The Interim Child Welfare Services Information System (ICWSIS) as well as information reported by each district and the SunCoast Region regarding licensing trends and recruitment and retention efforts.

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 community-based-care contracts throughout the state. Prior to the current reporting period, child-placing agency foster homes have not been included in the data pull. Community-based care providers statewide have subcontracted with other providers to provide foster care services and those homes have now been included in this report. This elevates the number of foster homes in comparison to the number of foster homes in the August 2003 report.
This comparison between the August 2004 report and the February 2005 report should be a more appropriate comparison of the current situation statewide.

II. Foster Home Licensed Capacity

- There were 5734 family foster/shelter homes as of August 2004.
- For Distribution By District, please see Graph #2.
- 7% (n=420) of these homes were over licensed capacity.
- 33% (n=1875) of these homes were at licensed capacity.
- 60% (n=3439) of these homes were under licensed capacity.
- 26% (n=1516) of the homes had no foster children placed (This is a subset of the 60% of homes under capacity).

Comparisons to August 2003 report:

- There has been an addition of 772 family foster homes.
- There was a decrease of .4 % (n=52) in the percentage of homes that were over licensed capacity.
- There was a decrease of 1% (n=164) in the percentage of homes at licensed capacity.
- There was an increase of 2% (n=557) in the percentage of homes under licensed capacity.
- There was a decrease of 1.7% (n=142) in the percentage 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

- The total licensed bed capacity statewide for this report is 12,685
- 22% (n=1103) of the homes are licensed for 1 child.
- 44% (n=2539) of the homes are licensed for 2 children.
- 21% (n=1179) of the homes are licensed for 3 children.
- 8% (n=473) of the homes are licensed for 4 children.
- 6% (n=355) of the homes are licensed for 5 children.
- 1% (n=53) of the homes are licensed for more than five children.

Comparisons to February 2003 report:

- Bed capacity increased by 107 beds.
• The percentage of homes licensed for more than five children decreased to 1% and the number of homes licensed for more than five children decreased to 53 homes.

IV. Homes with a Total of More than Five Children

Section II and Section III addressed the actually licensed capacity of a foster home. This section addresses homes with more than five children in the home, which includes biological and adoptive children.

• 5% (n=307) 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 Homes</th>
<th>Total Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>152 homes</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>64 homes</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>39 homes</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>25 homes</td>
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<td>4 homes</td>
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<td>3 homes</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 home</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 homes</td>
<td>15 or more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons to August 2003 report:

• The number of foster homes with a total of more than five children decreased by 14 homes. There were 365 homes with more than five total children in August 2002, 350 in February 2003, and 321 in August 2003. The percentage of family foster homes with more than five children total decreased from 7.3% in the February report to 6.5% for August 2003 and to 5% this report.
• There were four homes with 15 or more children in February and August and five homes with 15 or more children in this report.

V. Summary of Licensed Capacity Data

Since the August 2004 report, we had an increase of 772 family foster homes and 107 beds. There was a decrease of .4% (n=52) in the percentage of homes over licensed capacity and a decrease in the number of homes at capacity (n=164). The total number of homes under licensed capacity was 3439 (60% 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 during this period for more than five children decreased from 81 to 53 homes.

VI. District/Regional Comments
This was the first time several providers were asked to analyze the data and compared the data pulled for August 31, 2004 to the number of homes at the current time. The numbers that they calculated did not therefore agree with what was shown in ICWSIS on that date and may be reflected in their comments.

**District One:**
- District 1 has experienced a 10% increase in the number of homes licensed (253) and a 4.2% increase in total bed capacity (575) since August 2003.
- The majority of the increase in bed capacity has occurred in homes licensed for 2 children. 90% of the District 1 homes are licensed for a capacity of 3 or under, capacity of 1 (21%), capacity of 2 (47%), capacity of 3 (22%).
- During this period of time the percentage of homes over capacity has decreased from 10% (23 homes) to 7% (18 homes). At the same time the District has experienced a decrease in the number of homes with no children placed from 25.2% to 24.5%.
- The number of homes under their licensed capacity has increased slightly from 50.4% to 51.4%.
- The percentage of homes in District 1 with a total of more than 5 children in the home has increased from 1.3% (4 homes) in August 2003 to 4% (10 homes) in August 2004. All homes have waivers as required by statute approved by the Community Based Care Executive Officer. All ten of the homes have a total of 6 children each.

**District Two:**
- District 2 has experienced a 21% increase in the number of homes licensed (203) and a 19% increase in total bed capacity (482) since August 2003. The bulk of both increases occurred between August 2003 and February 2004. From February 2004 to August 2004, District 2 has experienced a much more modest growth of 3% in both the number of homes licensed and the total bed capacity.
- The majority of the increase in bed capacity has occurred in homes licensed for 2 or 3 children. 76% of the District 2 homes are licensed for a capacity of 2 (50%) or 3 (26%). This trend appears to be linked to an increase in the number of foster homes that have been licensed with a single foster parent.
- Of the 203 homes licensed, 62% are licensed with two foster parents, 38% are licensed with one foster parent.
- During this period of time the percentage of homes over licensed capacity has increased from 3.6% (8 homes) to 8% (16 homes). While at the same time the District has experienced an increase in the number of homes with no children placed from 33.9% to 38%. The number of homes under their licensed capacity has increased from 63.7% to 73%.
- The percentage of homes in District 2 with a total of more than 5 children in the home has increased from 2% (3 homes) in August 2003 to 3% (6 homes) in August 2004. All 6 homes are located in Sub-district 2A and have waivers as required by statute approved by the Community Based Care Executive Officer.
Officer. Four of the homes have a total of 6 children each and two homes have a total of 7 children each.

District Three:
- District 3 has 271 homes licensed. 18 of the homes are Child-Placing Agency (CPA) and 22 of the homes are now closed. The remaining homes total 231 compared to 277 homes in August 2003.
- PSFS has contracted with Florida Mentor to implement targeted recruitment for at least 50 new foster homes. The Partnership transitioned the licensing department on July 12, 2004. Since the transition we have licensed 12 foster homes.
- The licensed capacity at the beginning of the transition date on July 12, 2004 is 689.
- The report shows district 3 as having 175 homes under capacity. The actual number is 112 homes or 48% compared to 39.3% reported January 2003. There are 73 homes or 31% at capacity, compared to 42.7% reported January 2003. Currently there are 9 or 3% over capacity, compared to 4% reported January 2003.
- District 3 does not have any homes licensed for more than 5 children.
- District 3 has 9 homes or 3% with a total of more than 5 children each in a home.

District Four:
Family Support Services of North Florida (FSS)
- Although total system capacity was reduced by approximately 8% over the last year, the total number of children in placements dropped by approximately 10% resulting in increased capacity. Changes that have occurred over the last year, as indicated by a comparison of Monthly Activity Reports for August of 2003 and August of 2004, are as follows:
  - The total number of homes decreased by 7.96% (from 339 to 312) over the year. It should be noted that a significant amount of foster parents adopted children and subsequently did not wish to renew their licenses.
  - The total number of licensed beds decreased 8.58% (from 920 to 841) over the year. However, the total number of children placed decreased by 10.36% (from 704 to 631) over the least year, negating the effect of the reduction.
  - The number of homes over capacity was relatively stable, increasing by two homes (from 36 to 38) over the year. The decrease in the number of children placed resulted in a stable rate of utilization of foster homes. Capacity exceeded placement by 210 in August of 2003, and by 216 in August of 2004.
  - There are no homes licensed for over five children.
  - There are no known homes with more than five children without an appropriate waiver.
Clay Baker Kids Net (CBKN)

- CBKN does not have data from August 2003. However, since privatization CBKN has had 5 new homes licensed and 2 transfer homes from other agencies.
- CBKN has 4 prospective foster homes in the licensing process. There are also 12 participants in the Model Approach to Partnership in Parenting (MAPP) course to end October 25th.
- The most recent MAPP course (began Oct. 2nd) has 28 participants – the majority of those are prospective foster parents. This Saturday class noted an increase in responses after the Public Service Announcement’s (PSAs) were aired on local stations.
- CBKN has had 21 foster homes close. The majority of those homes were closed at the foster family’s request – mainly due to adoption of foster children in their homes.
- Based on the 2004 data, CBKN has 177 licensed capacity beds. CBKN has 3 homes over capacity and 1 home with a rule of 5 waiver in effect.
- CBKN has 17 homes at capacity and 38 homes under capacity.

St. Johns County

- The number of total homes (family foster, family group and dual licensed) is 21.
- The total licensed capacity of homes above is 46.
- The percentage of homes over licensed capacity is 10%
- The percentage of homes under licensed capacity is 43%.
- The percentage of homes at licensed capacity is 47%.
- There are no homes licensed for more than five children.
- There are no homes with more than five children without an appropriate waiver.
- Progress of specific recruitment and retention efforts:
  - MAPP Classes conducted
  - Recruited
  - Graduated
  - Licensed
  - Re-licensed
  - License in-process
- Completion and implementation of an annual district-wide written Recruitment and Retention Plan through the district/Lead Agency and contracted agencies.

Family Matters

- Family Matters took over the foster care recruitment/retention/licensing program in March of 2004. The only information available to report on is from the previous seven months.

SunCoast Region:
Hillsborough Kids Incorporated (HKI)
August 2004
Trends in Licensed Out-of-Home Care

- No significant increase in the total number of homes has been realized. Approximately 25% of adoptions were by foster parents.
- FHAN licensed about 100 new homes, but lost the same amount through adoption, QA or family requests to close.
- The number of licensed foster homes and their bed capacity has remained about the same.
- Likewise, the number of homes with more than 5 children remains about the same. We have approximately 6 homes out of 227 homes with more than 5 total children

District Seven:
Family Services of Metro Orlando (FSMO)
- The progress of our specific recruitment efforts has been evidenced by the development of both speaker’s bureaus and capacity building Advisory Boards in both Orange and Osceola counties. We have spent substantial dollars in marketing materials, public service announcements, movie theatre commercial advertisements, numerous presentations at local civic groups, churches, Rotary Clubs, hospitals, and schools.
- The submitted recruitment plans of our provider agencies have included an additional 14 full time equivalent positions within those agencies that are dedicated to operate recruitment and retention efforts in concert with FSMO.
- FSMO hosts a monthly recruitment meeting whereby all CMO recruitment personnel gather to report progress, share best practices, and exchange resources. In addition, FSMO hosts weekly conference calls to review individual agency performance from inquiry to licensure. The objective is to support and troubleshoot ‘trigger points’ in the recruitment process flow.
- Finally, FSMO conducts Leadership Meetings two times monthly with the provider agencies to review performance issues with their senior management.

District Eight:
Recruitment and Retention Plan is on file at central office. No additional information was submitted.

District Nine:
- The total number of homes is 267.
- The total licensed capacity of homes is 432.
- The number of homes over capacity is eight.
- The number of homes under capacity is 124.
- The number of homes at licensed capacity is 125.
- The number of homes licensed for more than five children is two.
There are no homes with more than five total children without an appropriate waiver.

**District Ten:**
- The District had approximately 573 foster homes with a bed capacity of 1,124.
- There were 509 foster homes managed by District 10 Child Placing Agencies with a total number capacity of 920 beds.
- The number of foster homes has unsurprisingly decreased as a result of the transition of many previously managed state homes over to the private sector. As reported by the CPA’s, they have additionally set a higher standard of quality for their homes and thereby have closed many homes over the past 12-months. Specifically, over 110 foster homes have been closed since April 2004.
- The number of homes over the rule of 5 children has deceased from 8 to 4 over the last year and for the most part, over capacity waivers remains the same. Such waivers though are often short term as they are a direct product of a respite placement or a temporary request while an increase in licensed capacity is processed.
- The District is seeing a larger number of children who require placement in a home or room by themselves. As this trend continues, emphasis continues to be placed on the recruitment of special homes with capacity restrictions.

**District Eleven:**

Recruitment and Retention Plan is on file at central office. No additional information was submitted.

**District Twelve:**
- The total number of home is 227 up from 136 in August 2003.
- The total licensed capacity is 521, up from 337 in August 2003.
- The total of homes at capacity is 70.
- The number of homes under capacity is 101.
- The number of homes over capacity is 21.
- The number of homes licensed for more than 5 children is zero.
- There are no homes with more than 5 children without an appropriate waiver.
- We have increased our number of homes by approximately 91 homes.
- We have increased out total licensed capacity by 184 beds.
- There are 31 homes are licensed for 1, 113 are licensed for 2, 39 are licensed for 3, 28 are licensed for 4, and 16 are licensed for 5.
District Thirteen:
- There have been significant changes in the out of home care resource base during our first 7 months of service.
- A number of homes have decided not to make the transition and have closed, we have closed a number of resources due to issues with quality of care/abuse reports, and adopting out. There have been 30 homes lost during the transition and 17 homes licensed for a total of 716 licensed beds in 273 foster homes.
- Currently there is only one home in D13 licensed for over 5 children (6), however several homes have more than five in them with the highest being 8.
- Of the 59 providers listed on the over-capacity report from ICWSIS, 48 are providers with over caps by 1-2 children. What we have encountered is a large collection of homes with licensed capacities that don't reflect the actual bed capacities and the caregiver's ability to provide for a safe and stable home. We will be now focusing on correcting capacities, which will greatly reduce this number, which at this time is 26%.
- All appropriate waivers are completed and on file with the Intake and Assessment Services Office.

District Fourteen:
- There are a total of 188 licensed foster homes in District 14. This is an increase of 18 homes from the August 2003 report.
- The total licensed bed capacity of homes is 433. This is an increase of 56 form the August 2003 Trends Report.
- There are 35 homes (18.6%) over licensed capacity. This reflects a decrease of 9 homes from the August 2003 Trends Report.
- There are 70 homes (37.2%) under licensed capacity. This reflects an increase of 2 homes from the August 2003 Trends Report.
- There are 83 homes (44.2%) at licensed capacity. This reflects an increase of 25 homes from the August 2003 Trends Report.
- There are 2 home licensed for more than five children. This reflects an increase of 2 homes from the August 2003 Trends Report.
- There are 10 home with more than five children that do not have an appropriate waiver. This reflects a decrease of 8 from the August 2003 Trends Report.

District Fifteen:

Recruitment and Retention Plan is on file at central office. No additional information was submitted.
### AUGUST 2004

**Over / At / Under Licensed Capacity By District**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No. of Homes</th>
<th>Over Lic. Capacity</th>
<th>At Lic. Capacity</th>
<th>Under Lic. Capacity</th>
<th>NO Children</th>
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<td>70</td>
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**STATEWIDE TOTALS**

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<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Foster Homes</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes OVER Licensed Capacity</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes AT Licensed Capacity</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes UNDER Licensed Capacity</td>
<td>3439</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes with NO Children</td>
<td>1516</td>
<td>26%</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. The percentage of homes with no children is also included in the homes that are under capacity.*
Out-of-Home Capacity Status
August 2004

N=5734

- At Licensed Capacity: 33% (n=1875)
- Under Licensed Capacity: 60% (n=3439)
- Over Licensed Capacity: 7% (n=420)

August 2004
Trends in Licensed Out-of-Home Care
August 2004
Trends in Licensed Out-of-Home Care

Distribution of Licensed Capacity
August 2004
N=5734

- More than 5 children: 1% (n=53)
- 3-4 Children: 29% (n=1540)
- 1-2 Children: 66% (n=3642)
- 5 Children: 6% (n=355)
Family Foster Homes With A Total of More Than Five Children
August 2004
N= 307

Number of Homes

Districts/Region

District 1  District 2  District 3  District 4  Suncoast  District 7  District 8  District 9  District 10  District 11  District 12  District 13  District 14  District 15  STATE

10 6 9 34 124 12 7 12 3 20 13 27 21 9 307
I. Summary of Recruitment and Retention Efforts

In keeping with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) 2003-2004 Comprehensive Statewide Recruitment and Retention Plan for Adoptions and Foster Care, the Multi-ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) of 1994, and the Indian Child Welfare Act (1978), each district, Community-Based Care Lead Agency and contracted agency responsible for providing foster care and adoption services for children must diligently recruit foster and adoptive families that reflect the specific placement needs of their communities. The Recruitment and Retention Plan must reflect the demographics, diversity and special needs of the children in need of placement. Areas of diversity and individual needs include ethnicity, race, age, health, and geographic proximity to birth family, education and other unique needs of children needing foster and adoptive families. 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. Each district, Community-Based Care provider and contracted agency has submitted a copy of their recruitment and retention plan to central office.

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 efforts submitted by the providers.

District One:

- Press releases and public service announcements were sent to local media before each monthly orientation sessions
- Orientations/Informational sessions are each month in Pensacola, Niceville and Fort Walton Beach.
- Outreach information on daily newspaper wrappers and on two Sundays additions monthly
- Front page article with pictures in the News Journal on Easter Sunday
- Sign board advertising in Niceville and Gulf Breeze
- Weather crawl ad in Gulf Breeze ran for 6 weeks
- Partnered with UWF students to distribute brochures and posters in Okaloosa County describing the need for foster homes
- Billboard in Okaloosa County provided by UWF students.
• Booths at event in Pensacola, Gulf Breeze, DeFuniak Spring and Santa Rosa Beach
• Emerald Coast Jr. League Foster Care Fair in Fort Walton Beach distributed promotional materials
• WEAR-TV foster parent appearance on “Angels in Our Midst” segment
• Foster parents’ appearances on WEAR-TV “Straughn & Company” show
• Four Radio and TV interviews in Okaloosa and Walton counties
• Article in the Gulf Breeze Chamber of Commerce newsletter
• Announcement in Walton County Ministerial Association newsletter
• Contacts with individual churches in DeFuniak Springs
• Presentations to FamiliesFirst Network staff in Santa Rosa and Walton counties
• Presentations to Foster Parent Support Groups Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties
• Established Foster Parent/Adoptive Parent Recruiter’s Group which is comprised of all Child Placing Agencies throughout the district
• Respond to all calls including child specific and ICPC spell out acronyms with mail-out and invitation to Orientation and MAPP classes

Developed a tracking system for inquiries, attendance at Orientation and GPS/MAPP attendance. Radio and television ads running quarterly with billboards coordinated at the same time in the same areas. Foster parent and staff recruitment programs have begun. Foster Parent Support Groups, Advisory Councils, specialized training (FFAST) were scheduled throughout the year.

District Two:

Recruitment and Retention Plan is on file at central office. No additional information was submitted.

District Three:

Recruitment and Retention Plan is on file at central office. No additional information was submitted.

District Four:

**Family Support Services of North Florida (FSS)** Recruitment strategies and activities initiated by FSS over the last year include the following:
• Advertised for Foster Parents through the use of billboards.
• Advertised on Radio for 8-10 weeks.
• Developed TV promos on fostering and adoption.
• Distributed printed materials including brochures, flyers and promotional items.
• Operated a phone bank on a local television station specifically for recruitment of foster and adoptive parents.
• Established working alliances with church groups (A.M.E.) for targeted recruitment.
• Participated in media events promoting public awareness.
• Presented information and materials to numerous community organizations.
• FSS intends to continue these types of activities in the coming year and will also be sending out 10,000 informational packets for a targeted recruitment effort scheduled to begin next week (10/11/2004). In addition to the recruitment efforts of FSS, most of the Service Centers under subcontract with the lead agency engage in additional foster/adopt recruitment efforts.
• Most Service Centers have implemented retention activities, although there is considerable variation in the Service Center strategies. Many of the Service Centers employ retention specialists, who work with the foster parents at relicensing, visit the homes during the course of the year and address various issues throughout the year.

Clay Baker Kids Net
• Mailings to local churches, clinics, daycares, etc. announcing MAPP courses and requesting time to meet with staff/families to discuss foster care.
• Continue PSA’s on local radio, newspaper, and television to announce need for foster families, specifically adolescent homes.
• Collaboration with local hospital on a recruitment plan for future foster parents…Be a Lifesaver.

Retention strategies include the following:
• Continued participation in the local Foster Parent Associations. Working collaboratively on activities, such as, Christmas.
• Placement Coordinator to visit families each month to develop.
• Development of the Kids Net Clothing Closet.
• Locate alternative in-service training methods within the local communities.

St. John’s CBC
• Visit 12 churches and have information about fostering children placed in the church bulletin in addition to scheduling presentations to church groups.
• Place recruitment materials in businesses, organizations and schools throughout Nassau County (brochures, posters, flyers, business cards, etc.).
• Participate in community events with a display and brochures.
• Contact current foster parents in the community to solicit support in recruitment.
• Make use of media to peak awareness such as radio and television and have local newspapers run feature articles on families and foster/adoptive issues.
• Schedule presentations with local schools, parent groups and community organizations to educate on the need for foster parents and the services that Family Matters provides.
• Make use of child contact and involvement in the community to target families that work well with older children.
• Meet with middle school and high school teachers and staff to inform them of the need for teenage homes and to assist in recruitment efforts.
• Develop a Quarterly Newsletter that is distributed to all foster parents advising them of changes, upcoming events and recruitment needs.
• Have local newspapers run a feature article on a quality foster home outlining the foster parents’ accomplishments and strengths.
• Hold Quarterly Foster Parent Meetings to allow foster parents to voice concerns, express needs and offer ideas regarding child welfare.

St. John’s CBC:
Progress of specific recruitment and retention efforts:
- MAPP Classes conducted
- Recruited
- Graduated
- Licensed
- Re-licensed
- License in-process
- Completion and implementation of an annual district-wide written Recruitment and Retention Plan by district through the district/Lead Agency and contracted agencies.

Recruitment strategies and activities include the following:
• Provide a minimum of 4 MAPP classes, schedule in-service training for foster parents, establish a foster parent mentoring program, schedule regular Foster & Adoptive Parent Association meetings, and establish a Foster Parent Advisory Board.
• Meet with State Representatives Dick Kravitz, Jennifer Carole and Doug Wiles regarding continuing legislative and local support for foster care.
• Contact First Coast News satellite office for assistance in promoting foster care in St. Johns County.
• Canvass and distribute recruiting materials throughout the county.
• Contact all current foster parents to offer support and information on transition of services.
• Attend and complete licensing workshop and training with DCF.
• Develop a 3-year re-licensing cycle.
• Become MAPP certified.

SunCoast Region:
Hillsborough Kids Incorporated (HKI)
• Centralized recruitment phone (813) 643-KIDS
August 2004
Trends in Licensed Out-of-Home Care

- A minimum of Monthly Community Orientation – facilitation is rotated by each Foster Home and Adoption Network (FHAN) partner while all FHAN partners attend to recruit and register families for MAPP.
- Monthly consolidated MAPP calendar for all FHAN agencies is published and made available to public.
- Focus on system / placement needs during recruitment activities and training.
- Individual agencies can also engage in their own recruitment activities including media, community events and fund/awareness raisers.

Retention efforts include the following:

HKI
- Annual Foster Parent Banquet
- Development and distribution of Foster Parent Handbook
- Foster Parent Advisory Board
- Foster Parent representation on FHAN QA Committee
- FHAN Flex Funds to assist families with financial needs
- HKI Clothing Closets
- Foster Angels program – ALL foster children and foster families eligible
- FDS position created to provide family-specific support for foster homes – ensure compliance with licensing, ensure family is linked with supports and services, liaison with system of care, provide training, assist with placement matching in home.

District Seven:
Summary of recruitment strategies:
- Family Services of Metro Orlando (FSMO) has contracted with four case management organizations that are all charged with the additional responsibility for the recruitment and retention of foster families. Their individual plans are electronically attached for your review.
- We require that each agency incorporate specific recruitment activities and events for the purpose of educating and recruiting a diverse population of families throughout Orange and Seminole counties.
- FSMO maintains a detailed database that tracks points on the continuum towards licensing our foster homes. This affords us the opportunity to analyze trends and patterns that depict drop-out and address them aggressively i.e.
- We observed the most significant drop-out points to be from ‘inquiry’ to ‘orientation’ then from orientation to MAPP. As a result, we have worked with our CMOs to the point at which they decreased the ‘wait-time’ for enrollment into MAPP.
- We have increased the availability and locations for MAPP training and encouraged the sharing of resources from one CMO to another so that we better accommodate the prospective families.
• FSMO has added to these efforts our own marketing and recruitment initiatives. We have contracted with each Child Advocacy Center in Orange and Osceola counties for the purpose of implementing a ‘grass roots' approach at reaching out to our local communities.
• We have worked closely with the Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) in developing Advisory Boards whose membership reflect the business, civic, spiritual, and professional communities. The board assists in guidance and connects us to the community to more effectively educate and recruit families.
• We have also instituted ‘speakers' bureaus’ that reflect existing foster and adoptive families supported by community members to go out and speak to groups of all sizes. This has proven to be effective in getting the word out while developing stakeholders that we would not have otherwise acquired.
• Family Services of Metro Orlando continues to invest much of its contractual dollars from the state in the area of foster home development. We have brought on highly skilled staffs that provide technical assistance to the case management organizations everywhere from point of inquiry through home studies and licensure.
• We continue to pursue community involvement to include the role of both counties’ Alliances, who have each developed a specific subcommittee devoted to capacity building.
• To enhance background screening procedures, FSMO purchased ‘live scan’ machines for all service centers with start-up dollars.

Retention Strategies include the following:
• Family Services of Metro Orlando, the Case Management Organizations, and the Department of Children and Families collaborated this past year on a very successful foster parent appreciation event that overwhelming response in attendance, many accolades noted, Secretary Regier was a surprise guest speaker who thanked the efforts and ongoing commitment of the foster community, and numerous gifts were handed out to our families.
• FSMO and its case management organizations agreed early on in our startup that we would provide financial incentives for current foster families that recruit new families to the point at which they become licensed and receive their first placement.
• FSMO, its CMOs and DCF participated collaboratively this past year in the “Fiesta in the Park” in Orlando. Many booths and activities were developed for the purpose of engaging prospective families and educated them with regards to the need for foster families and provided them with a brief overview of what it entails. Prospective families were later contacted by the CMOs with an invitation to attend agency specific orientations and detailed explanations as to the process flow of becoming a licensed foster home.
• We developed a newsletter that is geared toward providing information specific to foster and adoptive families regarding the status and progress of the transition into community based care.
• Finally, one of the strengths of having a network of provider agencies working collaboratively towards building foster care capacity is the sharing of
resources. We have established an understanding that we will do whatever possible to expedite the process and be responsive to these prospective families. We take pride in the fact that the majority of inquiries are responded to within 24 hours of their initial call by the agency that will not only license their home but also their case management provider. We realize the value of engagement and invest in the establishment of relationship with our families.

- Although the first half of our first contracted year in D7 regarding capacity building was slower than anticipated, we are confident by year's end we will double the capacity of foster homes in Orange and Osceola counties.

Our current challenges are the following:

- Limited skills capacity of workforce to complete home studies;
- Obstacles in licensing approval process;
- Lack of training dollars to get MAPP trainers;
- And problems of background screening.

**Seminole County:**

- Each of the five child placing agencies that contract with CBC of Seminole are required to have a recruitment plan.
- CBCS has held bi-weekly meetings with the Child Placing Agencies as a group through out transition, and has began meeting individually with the agencies on a monthly basis as well.
- All five of the agencies operate in other counties within the district and state as well. At least quarterly the contract manager will meet with the agencies for the specific purpose of further defining target areas for their recruitment efforts. This will be based on information gathered during analysis of the placement activities for the quarter (to include replacements) as well as the demographics of children currently in care.
- CBCS has requested the individual recruitment plans from each of the five child placing agencies and will request that the plans be amended as the needs of Seminole are further defined.

**District Eight:**

Recruitment and Retention Plan is on file at central office. No additional information was submitted.

**District Nine:**

Recruitment strategies and activities include the following:

- Utilizing Foster Track to track trends within our district.
- Utilizing Foster Track to assist with identifying lags in the application process then adjusting the process to run more efficiently.
- Utilizing Foster Track to monitor licensing goals.
- Offering “bounty fees” to our foster parents to assist with recruitment.
- Continue our monthly collaboration with Network providers to identify system wide concerns that are within our control to address and or correct.
• Continue our collaboration with The Faith Based Advisory Board.
• Continue our collaboration with the Faith Base Foster Parent Coalition
• Continue our collaboration with the Foster/Adoptive Foster Parent Association

Retention strategies and activities include the following:

• Currently, our strategies for retention include a Family Support Specialist for every foster home. This specialist is available to the foster parents at all times. The specialist advocates on behalf of the foster family. They assist parents with the navigation of the foster care system. The specialist visits the homes bi-monthly, prepares the annual relicensing homestudy, initiates corrective action, is available for training and disseminates information pertaining to benefits and other licensing issues.
• Child and Family Connections (CFC) hosted two events: The Red Dress Tea and The Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner. Both events were successful and received favorable responses from our foster parents.
• Additionally, we were able to partner with District 15 to air a commercial to recruit foster parents in our area. The commercial aired on TV34. During the commercial slot, we promoted our need for families who could foster teens and siblings groups. We were able to involve foster parents as well as foster children from both districts.

District Ten:

• At this time, ChildNet is more concerned with the quality of our foster homes as opposed to the basic numbers and utilization. In referencing strategies though to address these and other related issues, ChildNet participates in may activities including:
  □ Ongoing meetings with recruitment providers, placement staff and adoption staff.
  □ Internal recruitment efforts for teens and adoptive homes
  □ New partnerships with faith based and minority agencies to target foster home recruitment in specific areas of the community
  □ Monthly meetings with placement providers to staff shelter children
• While these activities are important, the primary emphasis of recruitment and specific strategies are developed by individual agencies as they strive to meet the overall needs of the District. Specific recruitment and retention activities can be found in their attached plans.
• Over the course of the next 6 to 9 months, ChildNet will be working closely with the Child Placing Agencies as a group to streamline the training curriculum of foster parents, brainstorm retention ideas, and “up the bar” of the quality of foster homes from “good to great.” This latter effort will be in collaboration with all of placement providers, ChildNet’s Contract Management and Licensing unit, ChildNet’s CQI team, and Nova Southeastern University.
District Eleven-
Recruitment and Retention Plan is on file at central office. No additional information was submitted.

District Twelve:
- This District created a Recruitment and Retention Task Force that is comprised of foster parents, Community Based Care staff, Department of Children and Families staff, and community volunteers and business representatives.
- The Task Force has implemented a Recruitment and Retention Plan that includes tasks for Community Based Care, Department of Children and Families, and the Network Providers. Some of the completed tasks include:
  - Speaking engagements on local radio shows, this was done twice by CBC staff and a foster parent who is on the Task Force.
  - Attendance at Flagler County Home Show
  - Attendance at the Prevention Summit at Volusia County Health Department
  - Attendance at Community Meetings, including the Alliance, the Leadership Council, and the Survey Groups, all of which focus on assisting foster parents.
  - Distribution of thousands of brochures to Rotary Members, Kiwanis Clubs, schools, churches, doctor’s office, business, etc.
- CBC, the Providers and Task Force Members have also been involved in the Reinvention of the Foster Adoptive Parent Association.
- CBC has created the Adoption Home Finder Position and Foster Care and Adoption Manager positions. These positions focus on recruiting prospective families for fostering or adopting and assisting the current families.
- These individuals will be offering monthly Open Houses to prospective families through advertising in the community and through the Providers.
- The Foster Care and Adoption Manager currently attends the community Rotary meetings with the Task Force Chair to promote awareness of fostering/adopting and to recruit prospective families as well as donations from area businesses.
- CBC also offers a $200.00 incentive to the Provider agencies when one of their current foster families recruits another foster family. The incentive is awarded after the new family becomes licensed and receives their first placement.

Recruitment efforts by individual Providers have included:
- Offering monthly or quarterly trainings at their facilities.
- Weekly or monthly phone calls and letters to interested foster parents who call
- CBC’s Intake Line.
- MAPP classes offered by each agency
- School presentations
- Church presentations
Retention Efforts - Current retention efforts include: The Task Force has also implemented some retention strategies that include:

- Providing new foster families and new Case Managers training in how to work with one another. This will be facilitated by both CBC and the Providers. The Providers will have Case Managers attend MAPP classes and CBC will have an experienced foster parent attend the new Case Management trainings.
- Completion of the CBC website for foster/adoptive parents that includes resources in the community.
- Completion of a new Foster Parent Survey that includes more questions for foster parents to share their comments, concerns, and questions with their Providers and CBC.
- Implementation of The Adopt a Foster Home Program where a business sponsors a foster family and donates monetary or other services, such as mentoring, Prom dresses, extracurricular activities, to them to assist with retaining the children in the household.
- Mail quarterly updates to the foster families from CBC that includes any areas of interest to them, such as upcoming community meetings, events and incentives.
- CBC offers a $200.00 incentive to the Provider when their foster family maintains the child in the same home from the day of removal to the day the child reaches permanency, the Child Maintenance Incentive.
- CBC, the Providers, and Task Force Members have been involved with the Reinvention of the Foster Adoptive Parent Association. CBC’s Foster Care and Adoption Manager’s role is to act as a liaison between the Association and CBC.
- The foster parents overall comments and concerns will be addressed with senior CBC staff.
- CBC created the Foster Care and Adoption Manager position. This person assists current families with issues they may be having and offers solutions to families. This person attends all community meetings to act as a representative for CBC and coordinate the community’s efforts to assist the foster families.
- CBC’s Community Resource Manager distributes backpacks, school supplies, Christmas presents, food baskets, etc. to the foster children in the homes.

Retention efforts by individual providers have included:
- Visits to foster homes every 30 to 60 days
- Foster Parent Appreciation Events
- Distribution of school supplies and Christmas presents to foster children and gift certificates to foster families.
- Offer on-site or in-home psychiatric and therapeutic support services to the foster children

District Thirteen:

- We are presently working with the agency contract under Kids Central Incorporated (KCI) to actively recruit and license foster and adoptive homes. MAPP classes are running consecutively in each service area, and target recruitment for demographic –specific needs is being addressed. We have held radio campaigns in Marion, Lake and Citrus counties and will be starting a billboard ad campaign soon. At present, we are waiting on our budget to know the specific number of recruitment and support dollars available to hold mass marketing campaigns.
- We have engaged local resources such as church and community groups, Guardian ad Litems, and the local Foster Parent Association’s (FPA’s) to aid us in finding greater numbers of community resources. We will be starting a district wide recruitment workgroup in November, which will pull all of these players in to the mix with the licensing agencies to come up with as many “outside the box” recruitment campaigns as possible/. This workgroup will continue to meet bi-monthly
- We have identified the demographics and areas of greatest needs via analyzing the first quarter of placements data which has aided us in know exactly where our strengths and needs are rather than just anecdotal planning.
- With the new data, we plan to update our RnR plan to accurately reflect our needs for the present and the next year of services.
- We have held the first of what will be quarterly meetings to review and address concerns with the data regarding the flow of children through our out of home care system. This workgroup includes DCF, KCI, Partner Agencies, FPA’s, Guardians Ad Litem’s (GAL), school officials, and local resources.

District Fourteen:

- The recruitment approach includes a collaborative effort to work with local agencies, foster parents, and leaders in the community, to enhance recruitment efforts and to raise awareness of foster and adoption needs.
- Panel groups were formed and presented to interested parties to answer questions related to teen programs, foster care, cultural diversity, behavioral services and educational benefits available specifically to out foster children in d-14.
- A spaghetti dinner was added to compliment and encourage potential foster parents to learn about the needs of fostering and adoption in Hardee, Highlands and Polk counties.
- In order to improve customer service and satisfaction, orientation was changed form once per month to weekly sessions. The format for orientation
was redesigned to combine introductions, add psycho-education (child – welfare quiz) utilization of the latest technology with still imaging videos and discussion of the 10 most frequently asked questions on how to become a foster home.

- Cultural diversity and sensitivity was fostered by making MAPP training and related curriculum available in Spanish.
- Recruitment strategies were restructured to target each county to increase capacity.
- Additional MAPP classes were also offered in each county to increase capacity. The increased recruitment strategies have also allowed Heartland for Children’s (HFC’s) Intake/Placement Unit to work with each Case Management Organizations (CMO) in their region to service children coming into care.
- Compliance with state and National adoption initiatives remain a focal point for Recruitment, Retention, and Licensing (RRL) beginning with recruitment efforts and activities. Orientation was redesigned to immediately capture potential adoptive homes and work in partnership with the CMO to identify children available for adoption and initiate matching parents with children early in the process.

Recruitment and retention strategies for D-14 focused on including the media, faith based ministries, civic group s and local business, which are captured in the following activities:

- Recruitment utilizing various media venues (radio, newspaper ads, church bulletins and community flyers) to encourage foster/adoptive needs specific to each geographical area.
- Speaking engagements include GAL program, local schools, churches, Adoption Coalition, local business (realtors) and forums associated with CBC (Steering Committee, Foster Parent Associations and Faith Based organized groups).
- Banks throughout the Tri-County Area were solicited and agreed to run ongoing messages on their marquees promoting & recruiting new foster homes.
- “Spring Fling” a festival of fun and games was held to celebrate foster parents and children. RRI staff along with DCF and CMO’s worked on committees and volunteered. The local Foster Parent Association (FPA) members attended in order to recruit new homes just graduating from MAPP classes.
- Publix Corporation is working with RRL to implement a recruitment plan for potential foster/adoptive parents.
- RRL participates with the Adoption Coalition on panel night to recruit adoptive homes and raise awareness.
- Kids-Page web site has been initiated by HFC to foster communication between foster parents, RRL and CMO’s.
- Victory Assembly of God worked with RRL to offer a series of free parenting classes including guest speakers and videos, free of charge to all foster parents.
• Quarterly foster parent luncheons are held (two have already occurred in Polk County, 1 for Hardee county and a luncheon for Highlands County will transpire in November and December of FY-04).
• Chamber of Commerce was contacted in Wauchula resulting in the recruitment of a foster home for that area.
• Community Facilitator in Highlands worked with RRL to recruit 6 homes for that area to start a MAPP class.
• Quarterly Steering committee’s are held by HFC for the foster parents and attended by RRL to offer support and address needs/concerns.
• MAPP classes have been added to include Hardee, Highlands and Polk Counties. Licensed homes in each county foster frequent visitation with biological parents while continuing to meet the child’s educational needs without missed days from school.
• MAPP training’s were revised to include day, evening and weekend classes. Training options have proven successful with meeting contractual goals and increasing foster/adoptive homes.
• Orientation is now offered every Monday and includes activities to foster child-welfare knowledge address cultural issues and identify adoptive homes for CMO’s.

Retention strategies and activities include the followings:
• Retention efforts include monthly visits available to all foster parents (if requested) in addition to quarterly visitation.
• 10 YMCA scholarships were donated and foster parents were with a 50% membership discount if their teenagers wanted to attend.
• All newly licensed homes have a "welcome visit" within a week after licensure to support and aid with new foster care arrivals.
• A beeper number was provided available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to assist all foster parent with personal and family emergencies.
• Cell phones were provided to all Retention Counselors (formerly called Licensing counselors) for direct contact and prompt service to all foster parents.
• Quarterly luncheons are held to promote discussion, provide training hours, and encourage communication between foster/adoptive families and staff.
• Foster parents are encouraged to participate in workshops, staffings for the foster children and attend the Foster Parent Association meetings.
• Donated items such as beds, diapers, baby formula, school supplies, Wal-Mart gift cards, etc. are given to foster parents in need when they become available.

District Fifteen:

Recruitment and Retention Plan is on file at central office. No additional information was submitted.