



State of Rhode Island
Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families



**2024/2025 STATEWIDE PLAN FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND
RETENTION OF FOSTER FAMILIES (9.12.2024)**



Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. System Leadership
3. Recruitment Partners
4. Building on Our 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan
5. Measures of Success
6. Strategies
7. Conclusion
8. Appendix 1: Glossary
9. Appendix 2: Diligent Recruitment Plan
10. Appendix 3: Children's Rights, Inc. Settlement Agreement
11. Appendix 4: Updated Assessment 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan
12. Appendix 5: 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan Process Measures Updates
13. Appendix 6: Baseline Data



Introduction

The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is committed to the goal that all children and youth should be cared for in a safe, supportive family setting. To support this goal, DCYF is focused on partnering with the community, its leaders and organizations who can Be An Anchor for children and families involved in Rhode Island's child welfare system.

DCYF recognizes all Resource Families as Anchors to children in care. Resource Families include families caring for a family member or child known to them otherwise known as kinship caregivers, traditional (DCYF) foster families, therapeutic (Private Foster Care Agency) foster families, and pre-adoptive families. The Rhode Island 2024/2025 Statewide Plan for the Recruitment and Retention of Foster Families reflects the philosophy and strategic initiatives to ensure that DCYF and its partners can recruit a diverse pool of individuals who can Be An Anchor, and that our Anchors are well prepared and supported to care for children. This partner-based plan focuses on four (4) key pillars **Our Children, Our Families, Our Communities, and Our Commitment.**





System Leadership

The Department of Children, Youth and Families has combined responsibility for child welfare, juvenile justice, children’s services, and behavioral health for



the State of Rhode Island. DCYF was established in 1980 and is statutorily designated as the “principal agency of the state to mobilize the human, physical, and financial resources available to plan, develop, and evaluate a comprehensive and integrated statewide program of services designed to ensure the opportunity for children to reach their full potential.” ([RI General Law §42-72-5](#))

DCYF’s mission is to partner with families and communities to raise safe and healthy children and youth in a caring environment. In this mission, it is the Department’s responsibility to be a leader in the statewide efforts to recruit and retain foster families.

The Department’s Division of Licensing and Resource Families (LRF) includes units to support the recruitment, training and development, licensing, matching, placement, support, and retention of foster families.

The Rhode Island foster care system is built on a public-private partnership. In this model, DCYF holds contracts with Private Foster Care Agencies. The entities work together to support all foster homes in the state. If a child requires out-of-home care, and DCYF is not able to identify a suitable kinship caregiver, there are two types of non-kinship foster families:

1. Traditional Foster Families who are supported directly through DCYF, and generally care for foster children with typical needs.
2. Private Agency Foster Families who are supported by their chosen agency, tasked with recruiting homes for foster children who have higher levels of need with the support of specialty services and clinical supports from the agency.

This mixed-delivery partnership seeks to ensure a diverse pool of foster families who care for children who require out of home care, while ensuring that foster families receive the supports to help them be successful in their foster care journey.



Recruitment Partners

The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (<http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/>) partners with several entities to support the child welfare system and the recruitment and retention of foster families. The importance of engaging and empowering the voice of children, youth and families served by our system, and who serve our system, is paramount. They are experts, and their knowledge, experiences, views, and ideas must be central to our goals. Government entities contracted private agencies, and other community partners also collaborate closely on this effort.

Government Entities

1. [Office of the Child Advocate](#)



The Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) serves as the oversight agency to the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). In this role, the OCA is responsible for monitoring the operation of each unit within the Department to ensure compliance with internal policies and protocols, state law, and federal law. In addition, the OCA monitors data, and trends to ensure DCYF operates within the best practices of child welfare and identifies systemic change needs when necessary.

The OCA monitors each child open to DCYF to protect the legal rights of children in State care and to promote policies and practices which ensure that children are safe, that children have permanent and stable families, and that children in out-of-home placements have their physical, mental, medical, educational, emotional, and behavioral needs met.



2. [Rhode Island Children's Cabinet](#)

The Children's Cabinet is a committee consisting of state agencies that serve children and families.

Together, state agencies collaborate to put families at the center of government services, supports, and programs to ensure that children ages birth to twenty-four can thrive. Previous, RI Governor Gina Raimondo in 2020 charged the Children's Cabinet with increasing third grade reading proficiency in Rhode Island -- a key focus of this effort has been connecting children in DCYF care with the highest quality services and supports, including evidence-based Family Home Visiting and high-quality child-



care and Pre-K. Key Partners include: Executive Office of Health and Human Services (<http://www.eohhs.ri.gov/>); Department of Human Services (<http://www.dhs.ri.gov/>); Department of Health (<https://health.ri.gov/>); Department of Education (<https://www.ride.ri.gov/>).

Community Organizations¹

1. [Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families](#)
2. [Adoption Rhode Island](#)
3. [Foster Forward](#)
4. [The Village for Rhode Island Foster and Adoptive Families](#)



Building on Our 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan

The DCYF 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention plan included a series of activities to diligently build a stronger foundation for the recruitment and retention system. These activities have developed into the below ongoing strategies:

1. Using federal grant funds, DCYF expanded programming to support traditional Caregivers including but not limited to a Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Programs, Support Groups (contracted through two community organizations) and the Rhode Island Foster Parent Advisory Council
2. The Division of Resource Families in Partnership with the Division of Contracts and Division of Performance Improvement hold weekly Agency Partnership Meetings (APM) with our current 9 Private Foster Care Agencies. The goal of these strategic meetings is to:
 - a. Support the Private Foster Care Agencies in their efforts to recruit and retain families who can support children with a higher level of need.
 - b. Match open for placement families through monthly youth presentations by our Family Service and Foster Care Placement Unit of children and youth in need of foster care placement.

¹The Division of Resource Families in Partnership with the Division of Contracts and Division of Performance Improvement currently partner with 9 agencies who hold existing contracts for therapeutic foster care support and will continue to partner with agencies awarded a foster care contract from this reprourement. Once the Department has finalized private foster care contracts, the Department will continue to engage in discussions with the private foster care providers on best practices for recruitment and will monitor the number of families licensed by providers as outlined in the current process.



- c. Ensure the clinical and case management service delivery standards are consistent and targeted towards children with those higher levels of needs.
3. Implementation of the Call-to-Action Step Down initiative aimed to step down youth from congregate care and psychiatric hospital programming into a family-based setting. DCYF offers enhanced foster board maintenance payments to families who match with a child ready for step down.
4. Expanded messaging scope of current placement needs and championing partners to engage in recruitment and matching efforts by:
 - a. Facilitating targeted recruitment and retention events with the support of peer mentors.
 - b. Accumulate branded giveaway materials to incentivize engagement and spread brand awareness.
 - c. Strengthened family consultation practices in partnership with licensing and our private foster care agencies, aimed to facilitate early matching discussions with families in the licensing process.



Measures of Success

As we reflect on the successes and challenges of the outcomes in our 2023/2024 plan, we know DCYF must be nimble in our approach and innovative in our strategies to support desired outcomes. Leaning into feedback and creating space for family and voice led outcomes is critical to the recruitment, development and retention of families who feel well prepared to support our most vulnerable children. Ongoing recruitment and retention efforts are most successful when we acknowledge challenges within our system and recognize the opportunities to strengthen success.

These include:

1. Youth and family voice must be central to inform larger system change and improve retention efforts. It is the responsibility of all of us to retain foster families through the process of authentic engagement and responsiveness to needs.
2. Efforts must be ongoing to ensure that the diversity of our resource families represent the races, ethnicities, spoken languages, cultures, identities, geographies, and experiences of the children, youth, and families we serve.
3. Open dialogue must occur with families from the onset of the recruitment process to ensure a full understanding of a family's expectations, needs, and abilities, to set them up for success in their match and care of children.
4. Creating a balanced system of foster families with varying levels of experience with the support of community partners is critical to maximizing matching and placement capacity.
5. Targeted recruitment for special populations requires a private, public approach with innovative strategies that are data driven. Further critical team members must be diverse with varied experience who are focused on achieving goals to maximize successful outcomes for children and youth.

DCYF's 2023/2024 goal was to recruit and license 125 new non-relative foster families. The Department licensed 52 families between July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. The data below reflects both the number of families recruited and licensed by DCYF and by the Private Agency Foster Care providers during this timeframe including numbers of families open to placements for adolescents ages 12 and older, sibling groups and children with special health care\medical needs.



Table 1. Baseline Data as of July 1, 2024

In accordance with Children’s Rights; DCYF shall publish and make publicly available an annual report setting forth the findings of the assessment including: (a) the numbers of homes recruited and retained by category, (b) the actual number of homes recruited in each of these categories during the twelve-month implementation period, and (c) the total number of homes available for child placement in each of the categories at the beginning and end of the twelve-month implementation period.

12.1 a, b, c	2023/2024 Target	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	125 families	52	49
Licensed families open to placement of child 12 years of age or older	25 families	14	14
Licensed families open to placement of siblings	62 families	32	30
Licensed families open to placement of children who have mental health or physical disabilities	31 families	52	49
Emergency response program licensed foster homes for children 12 years of age or younger	5 families	3	3

Continued page 12



12.3 a, b	2023/2024 Target	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	125 families	52	49
Licensed families open to placement of child 12 years of age or older	31 families	51	48
Mental Health or Physical Disability Characteristics			
Medical (Mild)	31 families	43	40
Learning/School Issues		44	42
Mental Health Issues		32	30
Intellectual Disability		24	23
Oppositional/Defiant Behavior		12	12
Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior		3	3
Medical (Severe)		2	1
Physical Disability		5	5

Data Source: RICHIST 809_FY Report 07/01/2023-06/30/2024 and RICHIST 430 PRVD RPT pulled on 07/01/2024.

Data Notes: Children who have a mental health or physical disability are defined using the following categories: Intellectual Disability, Medical (Mild), Medical (Severe), Mental Health Issues, Physical Disability, Learning/School Issues, Oppositional/Defiant Behavior, or Recent Sexually Reactive Behaviors



12.3 c	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	430	389
Licensed families open to placement of child 12 years of age or older	150	138
Licensed families open to placement of siblings	87	144
Licensed families open to placement of children who have a mental health or physical disability	409	373
Emergency response program licensed foster homes for children 12 years of age or younger	36	32

Data Source: RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 07/01/2023 and RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 07/01/2024.

Data Notes: Emergency response is from the License Designation of Emergency/Respite Only, Adoption/Emergency & Respite, and General Placement/Emergency & Respite. Children who have a mental health or physical disability are defined using the following categories: Intellectual Disability, Medical (Mild), Medical (Severe), Mental Health Issues, Physical Disability, Learning/School Issues, Oppositional/Defiant Behavior, or Recent Sexually Reactive Behaviors

12.3 c	Number of families at the beginning of the July 1, 2023, 12-month reporting period (Total and by Category)	Number of families at the end of June 30, 2024, 12-month reporting period (Total and by Category)
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	430	389
Licensed families open to placement of child 12 years of age or older	150	138
Females 12 years of age or older	11	14
Males 12 years of age or older	18	16
Either gender 12 years of age or older	121	108

Data Source: RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 07/01/2023 and RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 06/30/2024.

12.3 c	Number of families at the beginning of the July 1, 2023, 12-month reporting period (Total and by Category)	Number of families at the end of June 30, 2024, 12-month reporting period (Total and by Category)
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	430	389



Licensed families open to placement of children who have a mental health or physical disability	409	373
Mental Health or Physical Disability Characteristics		
Learning/School Issues	362	334
Medical (Mild)	350	330
Oppositional/Defiant Behavior	213	182
Mental Health Issues	218	221
Intellectual Disability	135	145
Physical Disability	22	31
Medical (Severe)	18	22
Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior	14	16

Data Source: RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 07/01/2023 and RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 06/30/2024.

Data Notes: Children who have a mental health or physical disability are defined using the following categories: Intellectual Disability, Medical (Mild), Medical (Severe), Mental Health Issues, Physically Disabled, Learning/School Issues, Oppositional/Defiant Behavior, or Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior



2024/2025 Recruitment and Retention Plan Performance Measures

Achieving the performance measures set forward in the 2024/2025 Recruitment and Retention Plan is an ongoing process that requires the diligent effort of all the recruitment partners. For children to feel safe and successful, we must ensure we have a holistically prepared child welfare system equipped with best practice resources, therapeutic foster home capacity, and strong public and private partnerships to meet the needs of all children in care. The goals and special populations listed below were selected in collaboration with the Children's Rights monitoring team and in discussions with our Private Foster Care Agency Providers, internal DCYF team, and through comprehensive review of current qualitative and quantitative data. The goals identified aim to meet the needs of children in care including the special populations of female youth 12 years and older, children with physical and/or behavioral health needs, and sibling groups. Goals and data will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to classify gaps and successes allowing for modification to goals as appropriate for system needs.

2024/2025 Continuing Licensing Goals

1. License 85 new non-relative foster families by June 30, 2025, and increase the number of foster families who can support targeted populations which include:
 - a. Out of the new non-relative licensed foster homes 25 will be open to match with youth 12 and older.
 - i. At least 50% of homes will be open to match with females.
 - b. Of new non-relative licensed foster homes at least 50% of homes will be licensed to support sibling placements.
2. Increase the current number non-relative foster families who will be open to match with children/youth who have mental health or physical disability to 98% of total licensed non-relative foster homes. Mental health and physical disability are inclusive of:
 - a. Learning/School Issues
 - b. Medical (Mild)
 - c. Oppositional/Defiant Behavior
3. Increase the current number of non-relative licensed foster homes by 25% who will be open to match with children/youth who identify as LGBTQ+.
4. Of 85 new non-relative licensed foster homes at least 30% of homes will identify as BIPOC.



2024/2025 Retention Goals

1. Among the total newly licensed families from July 1, 2024 to July 2025, 94% of homes will be retained as of June 30, 2025.
2. Utilization of open slots among DCYF-licensed non-relative families will be 70%.
3. Licensed family participation in retention events and in-service training will increase by the following measures:
 - a. 18% increase in total training hours completed.
 - b. 25% increase in family attendance at virtual or in-person training sessions.
 - c. 15% increase in family attendance at retention events and activities.

Strategies

Our Children, Our Families, Our Communities, Our Commitment

To achieve desired outcomes, our system must remain focused on the needs and perspectives of the families and children we serve. This includes using a versatile approach to developing strategies.

Planning & Operations

1. Collaborate with community stakeholders on Statewide Recruitment and Retention Plan Revision, and its implementation.
2. The Department incurs the cost for fingerprinting, completion of safety/lead inspections and CPR/First Aid, legal and financial subsidies for adoption/guardianships regardless of one's own personal financial situation.
3. Facilitate ongoing Agency Partnership Meetings (APM) with our Private Agency Foster Care providers with a focus on sharing recruitment and retention data and strengthening outcomes for children and families.
4. Ongoing portfolio expansion of branded resources for coordinated and efficient communication and targeted recruitment efforts for special populations.
5. Continue implementation of Binti, the web-based portal for foster care recruitment, licensing, and matching.
6. Convey all resources available to meet the linguistic needs of foster families.
7. Coordination with New England Child Welfare Commissioner's Group of Foster Care Managers to



discuss regional challenges and strategies.

8. The Division of Licensing and Resource Families had an ongoing workplan to ensure that ongoing strategies related to race equity are reviewed at least quarterly. The data is consistently monitored and focused on the following areas: Race & Ethnic Equity in the Distribution of First Placement, Race & Equity of newly licensed homes and Race & Ethnic Equity in Retainment of DCYF Traditional Resource Families to ensure that BIPOC families are retained. The Division also uses a peer review approach prior to the licensing of any newly licensed home to eliminate bias.

Recruitment & Awareness

1. Expand messaging scope of Be An Anchor by championing staff to practice the philosophical approach in their daily interactions with all children and families we serve.
2. Support goal awareness through promotion of the 2024/2025 “Rhode to 85 new foster homes” campaign.
3. Ongoing timetable of virtual information events to occur every two weeks at family friendly hours, and flexibility for personal meetings.
4. Partner with organizations that support and represent youth in foster care to highlight youth voice and establish recruitment partnerships.
5. Facilitation of pre-in-service meetings with all recruited families to clarify intention and matching further ensuring we identify families committed to supporting the needs of our system.
6. Ongoing scheduling of pre-service TIPS MAPP trainings to ensure an average of two TIPS MAPP sessions to start every other month.
7. Engage education system leaders in strengthening partnerships to recruit foster homes and encourage fictive kinship connections.
8. Re-engagement with kinship families who are closing and in good standing.
9. Identify recruitment and retention champions who can support a recruitment and resource family retention task force specifically for special populations of:
 - a. LGBTQ+ youth
 - b. Youth 12 years of age or older



- c. Children/Youth who demonstrate Learning/School Issues, Medical (mild) and/or Oppositional/Defiant Behavior
10. Facilitate monthly meetings with recruitment and retention task force of special populations assessing goals, successes, challenges, and outcomes.

Matching & Placement

1. Engage in a variety of forums to informally connect youth and families. (i.e. community events, training opportunities, family retreats.)
2. Complete monthly targeted matching reviews for DCYF and Agency families to include youth voice. . The use of exchanges and interagency efforts such as Adoption exchanges and collaboration between agencies in state to help broaden the pool of prospective foster providers. Non-discriminatory practices such as MEPA to ensure there is no delay in placement of a child. As a State our diligent recruitment plan reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of children in need of homes. The plan identifies strategies to reach all parts of the community, diverse methods of disseminating information and ensuring access to the home study process for all prospective foster providers.
3. Engage in new licensed home presentation meetings with licensing and placement teams to clarify matching and recommendations for placement.
4. Engage in feedback forums with families who have found success with accepting challenging placements in the effort to duplicate factors of success.
5. Ongoing implementation of call-to-action step down initiative highlighting the recent stipend increase and the home-based service array.
6. Ongoing implementation of Emergency Response Foster Care Programming (ERP)

Support & Retention

1. Ongoing support of Foster Family Advisory Council.
2. Ongoing facilitation of peer-to-peer mentoring program, Supporting Our Anchors for traditional families.
3. Use enrichment activities and statewide foster care appreciation events to highlight families, create opportunities for family engagement, and increase a natural support network for foster families.
4. In partnership with DCYF Division of Performance Improvement, facilitate ongoing resource family



satisfaction survey to be distributed two times per year to gather data and inform Department practices.

5. Continued implementation of pre-service training (TIPS-MAPP) and in-service training (Foster Parent College,) an online resource library for easy access to information and strategies for addressing challenging situations (articles, resources, videos, etc.). The Department currently promotes and supports all languages. Foster Parent training is currently held in both English and Spanish. If a person speaks another language, an interpreter is identified to accompany the provider to training to ensure that the provider is able to learn in their preferred language. Documents are translated into other languages. The Department also utilizes services and supports of the hearing impaired population. The use of hearing and signing interpreters are always secured. Overall the Department ensures that any provider, regardless of language has access to supports and services to be available in their preferred language.
6. Facilitation of 2 open feedback forums aimed to learn from resource families about opportunities for strengthened retention and ongoing recruitment efforts.
7. As noted under Recruitment and Awareness: Facilitate monthly meetings with recruitment and retention task force of special populations assessing goal success, challenges, and outcomes.



Conclusion

The 2024/2025 Recruitment and Retention Plan demonstrates a range of strategies to highlight that the work of foster care recruitment and retention is a collaborative process. DCYF is committed to the goals highlighted in the 2024/2025 recruitment and retention plan by using data to inform processes and working collaboratively with our stakeholders. DCYF will continue our commitment to the philosophical approach of Be An Anchor by:

Voice: Empowering the voices of children and families. Resource Families and the children/youth we serve are active members of the team and are empowered to use their voice to improve system practice.

Matching: The presenting needs of children and youth must drive our recruitment focus and align with best practice in support and stabilization efforts. Understanding, resource families have autonomy to their home and are encouraged to maintain an environment that aligns with their family vision and goals. Children/youth will be cared for by families who can best support their needs, with lens to racial and cultural identity.

Engagement: Authentic family engagement is important to build relationships, assess parental capacity, enhance the caregiver experience, and strengthen retention. Further, creating opportunities for impactful investments in re-engagement of experienced resource families and ensuring access to meaningful supports. **Our children, Our families, Our communities, Our commitment.**



Appendix 1: Glossary

1. *Kinship Caregiver* – A kinship caregiver is someone who is known to the child and has been identified as someone who can provide foster care. There are two types of kinship caregivers:
 - a. Relative Kinship – a family member to the child (often a grandparent, aunt, uncle, or adult sibling)
 - b. Fictive Kinship – someone who has a relationship with the child but not as family (often a teacher, coach, neighbor, or family friend)
2. *Traditional Foster Families* – Foster families who are supported directly through DCYF, and generally care for foster children with typical needs.
3. *Private Agency Foster Families* – Foster families who are supported by their chosen agency, and generally care for foster children who have higher levels of need with the support of specialty services and clinical supports from the agency.
4. *Resource Family* – This term is inclusive and often used when referring to all types of foster families. Kinship caregivers, traditional foster families, and Private Foster Care Agency foster families are all critical partners for the child welfare system because they provide care for children who cannot live safely at home.
5. *Be An Anchor* – Rhode Island’s community engagement strategy to support foster care recruitment and retention. Our Resource Families are “anchors” for children in DCYF care. It is critical that our “anchors” can care for children/youth in a safe and reliable family setting that is well supported and able to care for the child’s individual needs.
6. *Rhode to 85* – DCYF’s current foster care recruitment campaign. DCYF must have the right plan in place to recruit a diverse pool of individuals who can Be An Anchor for all children and youth in DCYF care.
7. *Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)* – A CANS assessment is a multi-purpose tool developed for children’s services. Versions of the CANS are currently used in all 50 states in not only child welfare, but also, mental health, juvenile justice, and early intervention applications. The tool is used to support decision making. It helps to identify the level of care and service planning a child or



youth might need.

8. *Level of Need (LON)* – An assessment tool DCYF uses for all children and youth requiring out-of-home care. The goal of the LON assessment is to clearly identify what each child’s needs are, what type of homes would be a best fit for their needs, and what services might be needed for that child. The LON assessment tool is the cornerstone of the foster care system.



Appendix 2: Rhode Island 2020-2024 Diligent Recruitment Plan

Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan

Section 422(b)(7) of the Act requires that the state provide for the diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed. For the 2025-2029 CFSP, the Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment Plan should reflect the activities to be conducted over the next five years to ensure that there are foster and adoptive homes that meet the needs of the infants, children, youth, and young adults (including those over the age of 18 who are in foster care) served by the child welfare agency.

In developing the plan, the state should consider its assessment of performance on the CFSR Systemic Factor Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention and ensure that the plan will support improved performance in this area

CB expects that a comprehensive recruitment plan will include:

- A description of the characteristics of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed;
- Specific strategies to reach out to all parts of the community;
- Diverse methods of disseminating both general information about being a foster/adoptive parent and child-specific information;
- Strategies for assuring that all prospective foster/ adoptive parents have access to agencies that license/approve foster/adoptive parents, including location and hours of services so that the agencies can be accessed by all members of the community;
- Strategies for training staff to work with diverse communities including cultural, racial, and socio-economic variations;
- Strategies for dealing with linguistic barriers;
- Non-discriminatory fee structures; and
- Procedures for a timely search for prospective parents for a child needing an adoptive placement, including the use of exchanges and other interagency efforts, provided that such procedures ensure that placement of a child in an appropriate household is not delayed by the search for a same race or ethnic placement.



Appendix 3: Children’s Rights, Inc. Settlement Agreement

The Department is responsible for adhering to the following recruitments related to a recruitment and retention plan:

Section 12. Foster Home Array

- 12.1 *DCYF will develop an annual recruitment and retention plan for foster homes in consultation with the Monitoring Team. The plan shall include:
 - a. *Targets for number of foster homes, including targets for special populations, for example adolescents, sibling groups, children with disabilities and medically fragile children, relevant during the period of the plan; and*
 - b. *Foster home retention strategies, such as respite homes, enhanced foster parent training opportunities, and increased visitation with foster parents.**
- 12.2 *DCYF shall implement the annual recruitment and retention plan and make diligent efforts to meet the targets set forth therein, including requests for any additional resources required to meet them.*
- 12.3 *DCYF shall conduct an annual assessment of implementation of the plan over the preceding twelve months to identify any systemic factors that may have contributed to any shortfall in recruitment. DCYF shall publish and make publicly available an annual report setting forth the findings of the assessment including: (a) the numbers of homes recruited and retained by category, (b) the actual number of homes recruited in each of these categories during the twelve month implementation period, and (c) the total number of homes available for child placement in each of the categories at the beginning and end of the twelve month implementation period, and making recommendations for corrective actions to assure sufficient recruitment and retention of homes under the plan.*
- 12.4 *Once all of the Commitments in Sections 1-10 of this Agreement have been deemed to be satisfied and the Court no longer has jurisdiction over those other Commitments then the Commitment contained in Section 12 shall also be deemed to be satisfied and the Court will not have jurisdiction over DCYF with respect to Section 12, or the Commitments contained in Sections 12.1 through 12.3.*



Appendix 4: Updated Assessment 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan

2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan Assessment July 30, 2024

The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) is committed to the goal that all children and youth should be cared for in a safe, supportive family setting. To support this goal, DCYF is focused on partnering with the community, its leaders, and organizations who can Be an Anchor for children and families involved in Rhode Island's child welfare system. Be An Anchor is focused on 4 core pillars: Our Children, Our Families, Our Communities, and Our Commitment.

DCYF recognizes all Resource Families as Anchors to children in care. Resource Families include families caring for a family member or child known to them, otherwise known as Kinship Caregivers, traditional (DCYF) foster families, therapeutic (Private Foster Care Agency) foster families, and pre-adoptive families. DCYF and its partners work collaboratively to recruit a diverse pool of individuals who can Be An Anchor and ensure that our Anchors are well prepared and supported to care for children.



The 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan includes a series of activities to diligently build a stronger foundation for the recruitment and retention system. These activities have developed into the ongoing strategies below:

1. Using federal grant funds, DCYF expanded the array of programming to support Kinship and Traditional Caregivers including two Peer to Peer Mentoring Programs (Kinship Connections and Supporting Our Anchors), Support Groups, the Rhode Island Foster Parent Advisory Council, and the implementation of Foster Parent College.
2. The Division of Resource Families, in partnership with the Division of Contracts and Data Performance Improvement Team, holds weekly Agency Partnership Meetings (APM) with our Private Foster Care Agencies. The goal of these strategic meetings is to:
 - a. Support the Private Foster Care Agencies in their efforts to recruit and retain families who can support children with higher levels of need.



- b. Match open for placement families through monthly youth presentations by our Division of Family Services and Foster Care Placement Unit. Of primary importance is to match children and youth in need of foster care placement, and to ensure that the clinical and case management service delivery standards are consistent and targeted toward children with higher levels of need.
 - c. Collaborate across Private Foster Care Agencies to align efforts and resources, discuss strategies, and problem-solve challenges.
3. Ongoing facilitation of the Call-to-Action Step Down initiative to step-down youth from congregate care and psychiatric hospital programming to a family-based setting.
4. Provide education on the philosophical best practices of foster care for new and existing Division of Resource Families' staff, other DCYF staff, and agency and community partners.

2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan Performance Measures

To support positive outcomes for the health, safety, well-being, and permanency of children and youth in foster care, DCYF set the following goals to be accomplished by June 30, 2024. The special populations listed below were selected based on DCYF research demonstrating that recruiting and licensing families who are open to placements for these special populations face more challenges than other populations: e.g., children 11 years and younger, without medical, physical and/or behavioral health needs, single children, or small sibling groups.

1. License 85 new non-relative foster families by June 30, 2024, and increase the number of foster families who can support *targeted populations to include*:
 - a. Of 85 new non-relative licensed foster homes; 25 families will be open to match with *youth 12 and older*.
 - b. Increase the current number of non-relative foster families by *25%* who will be open to match with children/youth who have a *mental health or physical disability*.
 - c. Of 85 new non-relative licensed foster homes *50%* will be licensed to support *sibling placements*.
 - d. Recruit and onboard *5* new *Emergency Response Program* foster parents who can support Emergency Placement needs of *children and youth under 12 years of age*.



- e. Increase the current number of non-relative licensed foster homes by 15% who will be open to match with children/youth who identify as LGBTQ+



Status of the 2023/2024 plan as of June 30, 2024

In accordance with Children’s Rights; DCYF shall publish and make publicly available an annual report setting forth the findings of the assessment including: (a) the numbers of homes recruited and retained by category, (b) the actual number of homes recruited in each of these categories during the twelve-month implementation period, and (c) the total number of homes available for child placement in each of the categories at the beginning and end of the twelve-month implementation period.

Table 1

12.1 a, b, c	2023/2024 Target	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	125 families	52	49
Licensed families open to placement of child 12 years of age or older	25 families	14	14
Licensed families open to placement of siblings	62 families	32	30
Licensed families open to placement of children who have mental health or physical disabilities	31 families	52	49
Emergency response program licensed foster homes for children 12 years of age or younger	5 families	3	3

Continued page 27



12.3 a, b	2023/2024 Target	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	125 families	52	49
Licensed families open to placement of child 12 years of age or older	31 families	51	48
Mental Health or Physical Disability Characteristics			
Medical (Mild)	31 families	43	40
Learning/School Issues		44	42
Mental Health Issues		32	30
Intellectual Disability		24	23
Oppositional/Defiant Behavior		12	12
Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior		3	3
Medical (Severe)		2	1
Physical Disability		5	5

Data Source: RICHIST 809_FY Report 07/01/2023-06/30/2024 and RICHIST 430 PRVD RPT pulled on 07/01/2024

Data Notes: Children who have a mental health or physical disability are defined using the following categories: Intellectual Challenge, Medical (Mild), Medical (Severe), Mental Health Issues, Physical Disability, Learning/School Issues, Oppositional/Defiant Behavior, or Recent Sexually Reactive Behaviors



12.3 c	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	430	389
Licensed families open to placement of child 12 years of age or older	150	138
Licensed families open to placement of siblings	87	144
Licensed families open to placement of children who have a mental health or physical disability	409	373
Emergency response program licensed foster homes for children 12 years of age or younger	36	32

Data Source: RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 07/01/2023 and RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 06/30/2024

Data Notes: Emergency response is from the License Designation of Emergency/Respite Only, Adoption/Emergency & Respite, and General Placement/Emergency & Respite. Children who have a mental health or physical disability are defined using the following categories: Intellectual Disability, Medical (Mild), Medical (Severe), Mental Health Issues, Physical Disability, Learning/School Issues, Oppositional/Defiant Behavior, or Recent Sexually Reactive Behaviors

12.3 c	Number of families at the beginning of the July 1, 2023, 12-month reporting period (Total and by Category)	Number of families at the end of June 30, 2024, 12-month reporting period (Total and by Category)
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	430	389
Licensed families open to placement of child 12 years of age or older	150	138
Females 12 years of age or older	11	14
Males 12 years of age or older	29	30
Either gender 12 years of age or older	121	108

Data Source: RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 07/01/2024 and RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 06/30/2024

12.3 c	Number of families at the beginning of the July 1, 2023, 12-month reporting period (Total and by Category)	Number of families at the end of June 30, 2024, 12-month reporting period (Total and by Category)
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	430	389



Licensed families open to placement of children who have a mental health or physical disability	409	376
Mental Health or Physical Disability Characteristics		
Learning/School Issues	362	334
Medical (Mild)	350	330
Oppositional/Defiant Behavior	213	182
Mental Health Issues	220	221
Intellectual Disability	137	145
Physical Disability	22	31
Medical (Severe)	18	22
Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior	14	16

Data Source: RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 07/01/2024 and RICHIST 595_01 RPT pulled on 06/30/2024.

Data Notes: Children who have a mental health or physical disability are defined using the following categories: Intellectual Disability, Medical (Mild), Medical (Severe), Mental Health Issues, Physical Disability, Learning/School Issues, Oppositional/Defiant Behavior, or Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior

Building on Our 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan

Reflecting on the successes and challenges of the outcomes noted in the 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan, DCYF must respond in real-time to system needs by adapting approaches and innovating strategies to support desired outcomes. Leaning into feedback and creating space for family and youth voice-lead outcomes is critical to the recruitment, development, and retention of families who feel well prepared to support our most vulnerable children. Further, a holistically prepared child welfare system equipped with best practice resources and strong public and private partnerships is necessary for children to feel safe and successful, and to meet the needs of all children in care.

Ongoing recruitment and retention efforts are most successful when challenges are acknowledged within the system, and opportunities to strengthen successes are recognized. These include:

1. Youth and family voice must be central to inform larger system change and improve retention efforts. It is the responsibility of all DCYF staff and Private Foster Care Agency Partners to retain foster families through the process of authentic engagement and responsiveness to needs. The Director’s Listening and Learning series, which began in September 2023, provides critical feedback to assist the Recruitment, Development, and Support Teams in developing and implementing strategies to support the 2024/2025 Recruitment and Retention Plan.



2. Efforts must be ongoing to ensure that the diversity of our Resource Families represents the races, ethnicities, spoken languages, cultures, identities, geographies, and experiences of the children, youth, and families we serve, with the priority of identifying Kinship Caregivers first.
3. Open dialogue must occur with families, from the onset of the recruitment process, to develop a full understanding of a family's expectations, needs, and abilities to ultimately ensure success for children and Resource Families.
4. Creation and support of a robust system of Resource Families of varying levels of experience with the support of community partners is critical to maximize the matching children's needs and placement capacity.
5. Targeted recruitment for special populations requires a private and public approach with innovative, data-driven strategies. Further, diversity of critical team members with varied experience must focus on achieving goals to achieve successful outcomes for children and youth.

Conclusion

The 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan demonstrated a range of strategies which highlight the work of Division of Resource Families Team as a continuing and collaborative process. The Division of Resource Families Team successfully executed the strategies outlined in the 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan, moving closer to set goals. The demonstrated progress toward achieving outcomes of recruiting and retaining new Resource Families correlates to the recruitment of families for targeted populations and the strengthening of communication with Resource Families regarding system needs.

Successful strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Expansion of proactive print and digital media outreach, with the support of administration and community partners, highlighting initiatives and families to maximize messaging reach of the Be An Anchor recruitment campaign.
- Facilitation of pre-in-service home visits with all recruited families clarifies their intention and matching and works to identify families who are committed to supporting system needs. This provides Recruiters an opportunity to see families in their homes, early in the process, to identify areas that may require attention within their environment, and to accurately assess individuals as early as possible in the licensing process.



- Expansion of two Peer to Peer Mentoring Programs (Kinship Connections and Supporting Our Anchors) to further support Resource Families in recruitment and retention activities, navigating and advocating within the system, building natural support networks, and improving awareness and access to community resources, services, and support, with the ultimate goals of preserving placements, supporting case goals, and retaining Resource Families.
- DCYF and Private Foster Care Agency conduct family matching reviews to align with the needs of children and youth.
- Ongoing education on the philosophical best practices of foster care for new and existing Division of Resource Families' staff, other DCYF staff, and agency and community partners.
- Enrichment activities and statewide foster care appreciation events to highlight families, create opportunities for family engagement, and increase a natural support network for Resource Families.
- Development of Resource Families, in partnership with Licensing Teams and Family Service Units, to accept respite placement of children within their matching criteria, while providing access to training to improve their skills which directly expands their matching criteria to include children with higher levels of need.
- The comprehensive needs assessment plan and RFP has been developed and is in process now.

DCYF is committed to the ongoing enhancement of the 2024/2025 Recruitment and Retention Plan to realign with the desired outcome of strengthening the foster home service array for all children in need of a family-based setting. Using data to inform processes, and working collaboratively with our stakeholders, DCYF will continue our commitment to the philosophical approach of Be An Anchor by:

Voice: Empowering the voices of children, youth, and families. Resource Families and the children/youth we serve are active members of the team and are empowered to use their voice to improve system practice.

Matching: The needs of children and youth must drive our recruitment efforts and align with philosophical best practices for foster care. Resource Families have autonomy in their home and are encouraged to maintain an environment that aligns with their family vision and goals. Children and youth will be cared for by families who can best support their needs, with sensitivity to racial and cultural identity.

Engagement: Authentic, open family engagement is vital to building lasting relationships, assessing parental capacity, enhancing the caregiver experience, and strengthening retention. Creating opportunities for re-



engagement with experienced Resource Families is accomplished through ongoing purposeful investments in proactive communications, improved access to meaningful supports, and the further development of skills tailored to family-specific needs.

Appendix 5: 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan Process Measures Updates

Progress Updates to 2024/ 2025 Strategies

RI DCYF Licensing and Resource Families Division provides an update on the 2024\2025 RI DCYF Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention Plan Process Measures in this document as part of the CRI Settlement. Table 1. *2024/2025 Process Measures with Annual Plan* includes updates on the recruitment and retention strategies and references supportive documentation, Appendix 5.

The information includes the process measures (strategies) between the months of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

- Planning and Operations
- Recruitment and Awareness
- Matching and Placement
- Support and Retention

Data Tables begin on the following page.



Table 1: 2023/2024 Strategy Process Measures with Annual Plan		
Planning & Operations	Narrative/Important Dates	Folder & Document Name
<p>1. Collaborate with community stakeholders on Statewide Recruitment and Retention Plan Revision, and its implementation.</p>	<p>This reporting period, the 2023/2024 Recruitment and Retention Plan was discussed within the following settings during the corresponding dates.</p> <p>Monitoring Team Weekly meetings: 7/19/23-9/18/23</p> <p>Rhode Island Foster Parent Advisory Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07/17/23 Planning • 09/18/23 Planning • 09/28/23 Planning • 10/16/23 Planning Session • 11/2/23 Leadership meeting • 11/13/23 Planning Session • 11/20/23 Planning Session • 11/30/23 Full Council Meeting • 12/11/23 Planning Meeting • 01/08/2024 (Leadership Meeting) • 01/22/2024 (Planning Meeting) • 01/25/2024 (Full Council Meeting) • 02/12/2024 (Leadership Meeting) • 03/25/2024 (Planning Meeting) • 03/28/2024 (Full Council Meeting) • 04/25/2024 (Leadership Meeting) • 05/13/2024 (Planning Meeting) • 06/06/2024 (Full Council Meeting) • 06/25/2024 (Leadership Meeting as Listening and Learning) 	<p>Folders - Planning and Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Partnership • Monitoring Team



	<p>Agency Partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 07/1/2023• 07/11/2023• 08/15/2023• 09/15/2023• 10/3/2023• 10/17/2023• 11/7/2023• 11/14/2023 & 11/15/2023 (agency data profile reviews)• 11/21/2023• 11/28/2023• 12/5/2023• 12/19/2023• 01/02/2024• 01/16/2024• 01/30/2024• 02/27/2024• 03/05/2024• 03/12/2024• 04/01/2024 – Pipeline Review/youth presentations• 04/16/2024 – May Events + Training/youth presentations• 04/23/2024 – Prudent Parenting Training• 04/30/2024 – May Events/youth presentations• 05/07/2024- No Agency lead/youth presentations• 05/14/2024 – May event coordination/ youth presentations• 05/28/2024 – Placement Discussion/Pipeline and youth presentations• 06/04/2024- June events/youth presentations• 06/11/2024-No agency lead/youth presentations• 06/18/2024 – Targeted Recruitment Groups/Youth Presentations	
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--



<p>2. Facilitate ongoing Agency Partnership Meetings (APM) with our Private Agency Foster Care providers with a focus on sharing recruitment and retention data and strengthening outcomes for children and families</p>	<p>The Division facilitates a series of Agency Partnership Meetings that include larger team discussions and individual meetings known as Data profile meetings. Specific to this reporting period APM meetings and Data were reviewed on the following dates: Agency Partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07/11/2023 • 07/18/2023 • 07/25/2023 • 08/01/2023 • 08/08/2023 • 08/15/2023 • 08/22/2023 • 09/05/2023 • 09/12/2023 • 09/19/2023 • 09/26/2023 • 10/03/2023 • 10/17/2023 • 11/07/2023 • 11/21/2023 • 11/28/2023 • 12/05/2023 • 12/19/2023 • 01/02/2024 • 01/16/2024 • 01/30/2024 • 02/27/2024 • 03/05/2024 • 03/12/2024 • 04/01/2024 • 04/16/2024 • 04/23/2024 • 04/30/2023 • 05/07/2024 • 05/28/2024 • 06/04/2024 • 06/11/2024 • 06/18/2024 <p>Individual pipeline data was reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11/14/2023 • 11/15/2023 • 02/27/2024 • 04/01/2024 	<p>Folder - Planning and Operations Agency Partnership</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------



<p>3. Ongoing portfolio expansion of branded resources for coordinated and efficient communication and targeted recruitment efforts for special populations.</p>	<p>• 05/28/2024</p> <p>The Division consistently updates materials to reflect current resource needs and important information to families and agencies.</p> <p>Example resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Foster Care Agency descriptions • Monthly newsletters and events <p>Foster Parent College Training Guides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Behaviors • Working with Schools • Foster Care to Adoption • Foster Care and the Holidays training session • Building Trust, Motivating Change • Children Entering Care: Mental Health Issues • Autism: A Strength-Based Approach • Working Together with Primary Families • Working with Birth Parents - Visitation <p>Evergreen resources to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAQs • Branded Resource Guides • Rate Memo • Call to Action/ERP memo • New Hire training • Be An Anchor Power Point • Nuts and Bolts of Foster Care • Prudent Parenting & Normalcy for Youth in Care Training and Resource Guide (English and Spanish) 	<p>Folders- Support & Retention: Resources and Training</p> <p>Folder Planning & Operations: Resources and Division Training</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



<p>4. Continue implementation of Binti, the web-based portal for foster care recruitment and licensing, as well as matching.</p>	<p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of Placement portal in October 2023 • Ongoing implementation of BINTI via weekly BINTI check-ins and open office hours. • Additional office hours to support the placement module implementation. • RDS staff consistently review active pipeline and application status of inquiries. • Reviews added with agency partners for data integrity. • RDS staff consistently review active pipeline and application status of inquiries. • Support and implementation collaboration with the Private Foster Care Agencies • Weekly licensing/RDS team meetings with BINTI and the addition of office hours for staff with BINTI for troubleshooting. • Full BINTI project scope can be found in BINTI folder, BINTI Amendment. 	<p>Folders - Planning and Operations: BINTI</p>
<p>5. Engage in Active Contract Management to ensure accountability for private agency operations and develop solutions to challenges served in these family settings.</p>	<p>The division engages in ongoing Active Contract Management through facilitation of the weekly ACM workgroup meeting. These meetings are referred to as Agency Partnership Meeting (APM). Meeting structure can be located in Planning and Operations folder, Agency Partnership.</p>	<p>Folder - Planning and Operations: Agency Partnership</p>

Continued on page 38



<p>6. Convey all resources available to meet the linguistic needs of foster families.</p>	<p>All Licensing paperwork, FAQ, Peer to Peer mentoring, RI Foster Parent Advisory Council and Division emails to families are available in both English/Spanish. Resources can be found within the recruitment and retention folder/ Provider Forms in Spanish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The traditional peer mentor program has maintained two (2) Spanish speaking mentors. • The kinship peer mentor program remains staffed with three (3) Spanish speaking peer mentors. • Foster Family Advisory Full Council Meeting Presentations presented with an interpreter (06/06/2024) <p>Example documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Reimbursement Forms for Resource Caregivers • Prudent Parenting & Normalcy for Youth in Care resource Guide • Kinship Connections and Supporting Our Anchors Family Satisfaction Survey • Peer Mentor Contact Form • Resource Family Post Placement Survey • Resource Family Training Satisfaction Survey • Peer Mentor Training Satisfaction Survey 	<p>Folder - Support & Retention: Provider Forms in Spanish</p>
<p>7. Coordination with New England Child Welfare Commissioner’s Group of Foster Care Managers to discuss regional challenges and strategies.</p>	<p>Administrator of Recruitment, Development and Support meets with the NASFCM team throughout the year. This reporting period there have not been any NASFCM meetings scheduled.</p>	<p>n/a</p>



Recruitment & Awareness	Narrative/Important Dates	Folder & Document Name
<p>1. Expand messaging scope of Be An Anchor by championing staff to practice the philosophical approach in their daily interactions will all children and families we serve.</p>	<p>The Division of Licensing and Resource Families is committed to ensuring we have a diverse group of families who can Be An Anchor for children and that our Anchors are well prepared and supported to care for children in foster care. Be An Anchor branding is weaved throughout the fabric of our Agency and is incorporated into resources provided to both families and staff.</p> <p>Implementation of the Divisions peer to peer mentor programs: Kinship Connections and Supporting Our Anchors have a been a critical strategy to supporting holistic practice of lifting the voice of families.</p> <p>Branded material shared across Divisions and with all families in the various stages of recruitment through placement has resulted in more awareness of “Be An Anchor.”</p> <p>In addition, the voices of our Anchors have been incorporated into new hire training. Members of the RI Foster Parent Advisory Council have presented to new hires in partnership with the Divisions leadership.</p> <p>New Hire Trainings:</p> <p>The team attended a meet and greet with new staff on 9/27/2023. Division Resource guides were provided. New hire trainings did not include Resource Families the remainder of the year. This collaboration is being planned currently for the next quarter.</p>	<p>Folder - Recruitment & Awareness: Branded Resource Guides</p> <p>Folder - Planning and Operations: Resources and Division Training</p>
<p>2. Support goal awareness through promotion of the 2023/2024 “Rhode to 125 new foster homes” campaign.</p>	<p>Rhode to 125 has been highlighted throughout this reporting period, internally and externally. Social Media highlights can be found using the Be An Anchor Facebook link and the RI-DCYF Facebook link.</p>	<p>Folders Recruitment and Awareness: Recruitment Tracker</p>



	<p>Facebook link: https://www.facebook.com/BeAnAnchorRI/ https://www.facebook.com/ridcyf</p> <p>A social media calendar was developed in October. Document included in the social media folder.</p> <p>This reporting period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facebook followers have increase by 3.25% from 676 to 698.• Content published on the Be An Anchor Facebook page has reached 9,581 individual Facebook users.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This is a 14.7% increase from the previous reporting period from July 1 to September 30, 2023.• The Be An Anchor Facebook page has received 937 total page visits.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This is a 42.6% increase from the previous reporting period from July 1 to September 30, 2023.• The content published to the Be An Anchor Facebook page has received 566 engagements in the form of content likes, shares, comments, and link clicks.• This is a 66.5% increase from the previous reporting period of July 1 to September 30, 2023. Facebook followers increased by 3.6% from 698 to 723 in quarter 3.• Content published on the Be An Anchor Facebook page reached 9,498 Facebook users.• This is a decrease of 0.87% from the previous reporting period from October 1 to December 31, 2023.• The Be An Anchor Facebook page received 889 total page visits.• This is a 5.1% decrease from the	<p>Folder – Planning and Operation: Agency Partnership</p>
--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------



	<p>previous reporting period of October 1 to December 31, 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The content published to the Be An Anchor Facebook page received 974 engagements in the form of content likes, shares, comments, and link clicks.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This was a 72.1% increase from the previous reporting period of October 1 to December 31, 2023. <p>The Division of Licensing and Resource Families transitioned support for the RI-DCYF Facebook page which included the development of a strategy and content plan. Content creation and page management began on April 1, 2024.</p> <p>A social media content calendar was maintained throughout the reporting period. This reporting period, reach among Facebook users has remained flat while content engagements have increased providing evidence that Be An Anchor content is reaching qualified Facebook users with increased frequency and those users are finding the content valuable and compelling enough to interact. Direct page visits to the Be An Anchor page have declined further reinforcing content is being delivered to Facebook users in their “activity feeds.”</p> <p>In this reporting period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be An Anchor Facebook followers have increased by 3.7% from 723 to 750.• Content published on the Be An Anchor Facebook page has reached 10,889 Facebook users.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This is an increase of 14.6% from the previous reporting period from January 1 to March 31,	
--	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 2024.• The Be An Anchor Facebook page has received 1,509 total page visits.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This is a 70% increase from the previous reporting period of January 1 to March 31, 2024.• The content published to the Be An Anchor Facebook page has received 720 engagements in the form of content likes, shares, comments, and link clicks.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This is a 26.1% decrease from the previous reporting period of January 1 to March 31, 2024.○ This would indicate social media users are increasingly being exposed to Be An Anchor Facebook content but are not feeling compelled to share or comment on the content. <p>This reporting period, the Division of Licensing and Resource Families transitioned support for the RI-DCYF Facebook page which included the development of a strategy and content plan. Content creation and page management began on April 1, 2024.</p> <p>In this reporting period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RI-DCYF Facebook followers have increased by 2% from 1,691 to 1,723.• Content published on the RI-DCYF Facebook page has reached 11,417 Facebook users.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This is an increase of 33.1% from the previous reporting period from January 1 to March 31,	
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--



	<p>2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The RI-DCYF Facebook page has received 2,524 total page visits.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This is a 102% increase from the previous reporting period of January 1 to March 31, 2024.• The content published to the RI_DCYF Facebook page has received 3,618 engagements in the form of content likes, shares, comments, video views and link clicks. Video content received 2,361 plays.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This is a 54.9% increase from the previous reporting period of January 1 to March 31, 2024. <p>Recruitment goals are also discussed within Agency Partnership and the Division’s Recruitment Team meetings.</p> <p>During Agency Partnership meetings this reporting period, recruitment goals have been discussed with the private foster care agencies. The Recruitment Plan has been reviewed with partners and groups have self-selected their participation for targeted recruitment efforts based on the following categories: 12+, LGBTQ+ and Social, Emotional, Behavioral challenges.</p> <p>Agency Partnership Dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 07/11/2023• 07/18/2023• 07/25/2023• 08/01/2023• 08/08/2023• 08/15/2023• 08/22/2023• 09/05/2023• 09/12/2023• 09/19/2023• 09/26/2023	
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10/03/2023 • 10/17/2023 • 11/07/2023 • 11/21/2023 • 11/28/2023 • 12/05/2023 • 12/19/2023 • 01/02/2024 • 01/16/2024 • 01/30/2024 • 02/27/2024 • 03/05/2024 • 03/12/2024 • 04/01/2024 • 04/16/2024 • 04/23/2024 • 04/30/2023 • 05/07/2024 • 05/28/2024 • 06/04/2024 • 06/11/2024 • 06/18/2024 <p>Working groups continue to use the Recruitment Contact Sheet to conduct outreach to local organizations to schedule virtual and in-person recruitment information sessions.</p>	
<p>3. Ongoing timetable of virtual information events to occur every two weeks at family friendly hours, and flexibility for personal meetings.</p>	<p>Informational sessions have included prospective families who are interested in exploring licensing through the DCYF for the purposes of foster care and/or adoption. The Recruitment Team facilitates virtual sessions with families along with a peer mentor with lived experience. Once a month the DCYF Recruitment Team co- facilitates an information session with staff from Adoption Rhode Island.</p> <p>Virtual and In-Person information session dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07/06/2023 • 07/12/2023 • 07/15/2023 	<p>Folder - Recruitment & Awareness: Info Sessions</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 08/05/2023• 08/10/2023• 08/17/2023• 09/07/2023• 09/13/2023• 09/17/2023• 10/05/2023• 10/12/2023 with Adoption RI• 10/28/2023• 11/02/2023• 11/08/2023 with Adoption RI• 12/06/2023• 12/07/2023• 12/16/2023• 01/04/2024• 01/11/2024 with Adoption RI• 02/01/2024• 02/07/2024 with Adoption RI• 02/17/2024• 03/07/2024• 03/14/2024 with Adoption RI• 04/04/2024 (Virtual)• 04/11/2024 with Adoption RI• 05/08/2024 with Adoption RI• 05/16/2024 (In-Person)• 05/25/2024 (Virtual)• 06/19/2024 with Adoption RI• 06/22/2024 (In-Person) <p>In-person in Partnership with Community Organizations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12/08/2023 – Friendship Baptist Church• 12/16/2023 – Groden Center and UCAP• 02/18/2024 PVD Children’s Film Festival• 02/25/2024 PVD Children’s Film Festival• 05/11/2024 Learn 365 WaterFire in Providence• 05/16/2024 and 6/22/2024	
--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--



	<p>information sessions were hosted in partnership with the Girl Scouts of Rhode Island</p>	
<p>4. Partner with organizations that support and represent youth in foster care to highlight youth voice and establish recruitment partnerships.</p>	<p>This reporting period the team has facilitated discussions within agency partnership on increasing opportunities to engage with system youth. As the team continues to define targeted recruitment strategies for special populations, youth voice will be a critical component.</p> <p>DCYF presents with youth in pre-service TIPS sessions as well as at panel presentations.</p> <p>The division began planning in the first quarter to collaborate with community providers to create a safe space to learn from our youth in care to drive best practice recruitment, retention, and resource family training strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began populating a shared Community Contact Sheet for targeted outreach. • Conducted small group/special population task force brainstorming session. <p>Developed a shared list of strategies and tactics for recruitment for special populations.</p> <p>DCYF presents with youth in pre-service TIPS MAPP sessions as well as at panel presentations.</p> <p>The Division of Resource Families is working closely with the Director’s Listening and Learning tour in order to gather meaningful feedback from youth that will support recruitment and retention efforts.</p> <p>DCYF created additional opportunities to highlight youth voice in agency partnership presentations. Youth voice was directly represented in the following meetings this</p>	



	reporting period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 06/25/2024 	
5. Facilitation of Pre Inservice meetings with all recruited families to clarify intention and matching further ensuring we identify families committed to support the needs of our system.	<p>This reporting period the Division expanded targeted matching discussions to support the evolving process of matching and placements.</p> <p>As the recruitment team continues to assess best practice for making connections with potential families and streamlining the licensing process, we returned to a format used pre-COVID for meeting in-home with families prior to their participation in pre-service training classes.</p> <p>Pre-service meetings were held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 07/06/2023 07/10/2023 07/11/2023 07/17/2023 09/01/2023 09/05/2023 09/06/2023 09/07/2023 09/11/2023 09/12/2023 09/14/2023 09/15/2023 01/03/2024 (Virtual Next Steps to TIPS group session) <p>In-home consultations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 03/09/2024 03/13/2024 (2) 03/14/2024 (2) 03/15/2024 (2) 03/19/2024 03/20/2024 (2) 03/21/2024 03/22/2024 03/23/2024 (2) 03/26/2024 03/27/2024 (2) 03/30/2024 	Folder - Recruitment and Awareness: TIPS MAPP, Family Consultation



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 04/03/2024 • 04/04/2024 (3) • 04/09/2024 • 06/08/2024 • 06/12/2024 • 06/13/2024 (3) • 06/18/2024 (2) • 06/20/2024 • 06/22/2024 • 06/25/2024 (3) • 06/26/2024 • 06/28/2024 • 06/29/2024 	
<p>6. Ongoing scheduling of preservice TIPS MAPP trainings to ensure an average of two TIPS MAPP sessions to start every other month.</p>	<p>This reporting period 3, 30-hour Pre- Service TIPS MAPP trainings were facilitated. Each series is 10 weeks, 3 hours each. Series start dates are below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07/11/2023 • 09/13/2023 • 09/16/2023 • 01/13/2024 • 01/16/2024 • 01/17/2024 • 04/10/2024 • 04/13/2024 • 05/20/2024 Spanish-Speaking Families 	<p>Folder - Recruitment and Awareness: TIPS MAPP, schedule</p>
<p>7. Engage Education System leaders in strengthening partnerships to recruit foster homes and encourage fictive kinship connections.</p>	<p>The Recruitment and Retention Team has coordinated ongoing efforts with Schools and School Departments. Community Block Party, 9/2/23</p> <p>On 8/5/23 Meeting Street School hosted a community resource fair and the recruitment team was able to participate with the intention of connecting for future events. Cornerstone school, a branch of Access Point Rhode Island, met with our community services coordinator on 9/22/23. Discussions are focused on expanding outreach and support to current and incoming resources families being recruited into the pipeline. Their program supports children with social/emotional/behavioral</p>	<p>Folder - Support & Retention: Resources, Training and Events</p>



	<p>challenges and has able to connect families with community resources through their extended services array.</p> <p>The community services coordinator met with staff from two elementary schools in Cranston during the month of September. Both schools are open to facilitating meetings with the recruitment and retention team for a specialized information session regarding kinship care and traditional foster care. Dates will be confirmed.</p> <p>On September 18th, traditional peer mentors met for their monthly supervision and discussed efforts to outreach their community schools and connections for opportunities to present for a recruitment information session. As a result of the conversation, peer mentors will provide specific contacts at the November meeting and coordination will be reflected in the next quarter.</p> <p>The recruitment and retention team has coordinated ongoing efforts through the collaboration with the Pawtucket School Department connection with the YMCA and participated in the following event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trunk or Treat <p>*Peer mentors and RDS staff continue making connections with school departments that can host information sessions and share recruitment materials. Shared agency partnership targeted workgroups are compiling a list of school departments who are currently supporting recruitment efforts.</p> <p>The Recruitment and Retention Team has coordinated ongoing efforts with Schools and School Departments. The Providence Children’s Film Festival hosted the Be An Anchor recruitment and peer mentor team in</p>	
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--



	<p>February and three events were held at Wheeler School. Information was shared among the school population and was attended by approximately 160 people.</p> <p>The Recruitment and Retention Team is engaged in ongoing conversations with the Pawtucket YMCA for inclusion in community events. Additional conversations include working in partnership with Child Protective Services to support program coordination and recruitment among Schools and School Departments.</p>	
<p>8. Re-engagement with kinship families who are closing and in good standing.</p>	<p>Following the closing of each kinship home the licensing worker engages in a discussion with providers in good standing their interest in traditional foster care. Names are provided to the RDS team for follow up and re-engagement. Guidance regarding this process can be found in the licensing playbook.</p> <p>The alignment of the peer mentor programs continues to support the recruitment of kinship families to the traditional foster care process. Teams can connect on the strengths and needs of kinship families and families have a solid foundation with their peer mentors to move forward and continue to support the system where possible.</p>	<p>Folder - Recruitment and Awareness: Recruitment Tracker Planning and Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing closing coversheet • Licensing Playbook
<p>9. Identify recruitment and retention champions who can support a recruitment and resource family retention task force specifically for special populations noted above:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. LGBTQ+ youth b. Youth 12+ c. Children/Youth who demonstrate Learning / School Issues, Mild Medical and/or Oppositional/Defiant behavior 	<p>Monthly Agency Partner meetings included the creation of self-selected task forces responsible for executing and reporting on strategies to recruit and retain for special populations. Agency Partners identify preferences for special populations and task forces were created. First strategy session among task forces were completed and members reported on ideas, plans and resource needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 09/26/2023 • 10/03/2023 • 11/21/2023 	<p>Folder - Planning and Operation: Agency Partnership</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 01/02/2024 • 01/30/2024 • 03/12/2024 • 05/28/2024 • 06/18/2024 	
10. Facilitate monthly meetings with recruitment and retention task force of special populations assessing goal success, challenges, and outcomes	<p>Through the Private Agency Foster Care Collaboration meetings, the recruitment and retention task force met on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 09/26/2023 • 05/28/2024 • 06/18/2024 <p>The agenda items were specifically related to ongoing community outreach efforts, event attendance and takeaways.</p> <p>Several Agency partners participated in the Providence Pride Fest to share information about foster care about task force special populations. In this reporting period, three Agencies consistently executed 1-3 monthly, virtual information sessions.</p>	Folder - Planning and Operation: Agency Partnership
Matching & Placement	Narrative/Important Dates	Folder & Document Name
1. Engage in social events to informally connect youth and families.	<p>This quarter provided an array of opportunities for families to connect with each other in the community. Engagement activities brought our resource families to events where children and youth participated in family focused fun alongside other children and youth in care. Peer mentors were key to encouraging families to attend events and coordinating connection among families experiencing similar journeys resulting in ongoing natural supports for resource families and the children placed with them. Being able to gather together for these opportunities created innate interest in “Be An Anchor” and drew awareness to foster care and the need for more resource families.</p> <p>Events took place on:</p>	Folder - Recruitment & Awareness: RDS Calendar Recruitment Spreadsheets; tracker



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 07/01/2023 Culturefest• 07/26/2023 Midweek Munchies• 07/29/2023 Game Night at the Pinball Museum• 08/02/2023 Movies on the Beach• 08/13/2023 ARI Duffle Bag Bash• 08/19/2023 Afternoon at the Carousel• 09/02/2023 Pawtucket YMCA Community Block Party• 9/22/2023 Roger Williams Food Truck Friday• 10/14/2023 Families participated in trunk or treat Halloween activities in partnership with our partner agencies Devereux and NAFI• 10/17/2023 Trunk or Treat Pawtucket YMCA• 10/27/2023• 12/02/2023• 12/05/2023 <p>Families participated in a family holiday craft night in partnership with Friendship Baptist Church on 12/08/2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 02/18/2024 (two separate tabling events)• 02/25/2024• 04/19/2024• 05/16/2024• 05/23/2024• 05/25/2024• 06/03/2024• 06/27/2024 <p>In this reporting period, the Recruitment Team began hosting and participating in events in alignment with the previously created calendar of summer recruitment events and opportunities.</p> <p>These events allow current resource families</p>	
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--



	with placement to bring their children and families to the community to connect with others and influence the larger recruitment effort through a positive presence.	
2. Complete monthly targeted matching reviews for DCYF and Agency families.	<p>Each 4th Tuesday of the month youth in need of placement are presented to DCYF staff and our Private Agency Foster Care Teams with a lens to targeted recruitment and matching for waiting you in need of a foster home. Emergency placement needs are discussed weekly.</p> <p>In quarter one, 9 youth were presented. In quarter two, 10 youth were presented. In quarter three 16 youth were presented.</p> <p>This reporting period, 15 youth were presented during agency partnership.</p>	Folder - Planning and Operations: Agency Partnership Agenda(s)
3. Engage in new licensed home presentation meetings with licensing and placement teams to clarify matching and recommendations for placement.	The Division meets Daily to discuss new licensed families and placement needs for the day. Meeting occurs Monday-Friday at 11:00am.	Folder - Planning and Operations: RDS playbook
4. Engage in feedback forums with families who have found success with accepting challenging placements in the effort to duplicate factors of success.	<p>The Division continues to partner with the Village for RI Foster and Adoptive families to host events with a focus on learning from our families on their success and challenges of placement, support, and retention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10/14/2023 • 10/17/2023 • 12/02/2023 • 12/05/2023 <p>The recruitment team has worked with the peer mentors to develop these events as both recruitment and retention efforts. Seasoned families who attend provide incoming families with perspective from their experience and gain their own support from staff attending. The connections formed have created natural matches with peer mentors and among families new and with years of experience.</p>	n/a



	<p>This quarter, the Director’s Listening and Learning tours served as the primary feedback forums with families as the focus was on success and challenges. Those sessions were held with families on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 01/09/2024 • 02/22/2024 • 02/26/2024 • 03/23/2024 • 04/17/2024 • 05/16/2024 • 06/25/2024 	
<p>5. Ongoing implementation of call-to-action step down initiative.</p>	<p>The call-to-action initiative is discussed with families throughout their licensing process and with Private Foster Care Agencies as an agenda item within Agency Partnership. Call to Action implementation is noted on each agencies data profile.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter one, 4 youth were supported through Call to Action. • Quarter two, 4 youth were supported through Call to Action. • Quarter three , no youth were supported through Call to Action. • This quarter two (2) youth were supported through the call-to-action step down. <p>Twenty-eight (28) youth have been supported through the Call-to-Action initiative since its start in 2021. Tracking can be found under matching and placement, call to action.</p>	<p>Folder - Matching and Placement: Call to Action</p>
<p>6. Ongoing implementation of Emergency Response Foster Care Programming (ERP).</p>	<p>The ERP program is discussed with families throughout their licensing process and with Private Foster Care Agencies as an agenda item within Agency Partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter one, two new families were licensed for ERP. • Quarter two, two new families began ERP. Quarter three, one new family began as ERP. • This quarter no new family began as an Emergency Response foster home. 	<p>Folder - Matching and Placement: ERP</p>



Support & Retention	Narrative/Important Dates	Folder & Document Name
<p>1. Ongoing support of Foster Family Advisory Council.</p>	<p>During Quarter one, The Rhode Island Foster Parent Advisory Council took the summer to focus on planning and exploring their capacity and agreement as a group to formalize as an official charter. With a change in Director at the Department of Children Youth and Families, they regrouped to set goals and outreach additional members who can best represent the current vision as the voice of Rhode Island’s resource families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10/16/2023 Planning Session • 11/02/2023 Leadership Meeting • 11/13/2023 Planning Session • 11/20/2023 Planning Session • 11/30/2023 Full Council Meeting • 12/11/2023 Planning Meeting • 01/08/2024 (Leadership Meeting) • 01/22/2024 (Planning Meeting) • 01/25/2024 (Full Council Meeting) • 02/12/2024 (Leadership Meeting) • 03/25/2024 (Planning Meeting) • 03/28/2024 (Full Council Meeting) • 04/25/2024 (Leadership Meeting) • 05/13/2024 (Planning Meeting) • 06/06/2024 (Full Council Meeting) • 06/25/2024 (Leadership Meeting as Listening and Learning) • <p>In this reporting period, the Foster Family Advisory Council continued to translate Council presentations and documentation into Spanish to improve experiences for Spanish-speaking resource families.</p> <p>To support family recruitment and participation, the Foster Family Advisory Council Leadership Committee provided an informational postcard in family gift bags at the Foster Family Appreciation Zoo event.</p>	<p>Folder - Planning and Operations: Foster Parent Advisory Council</p>



<p>2. Ongoing facilitation of peer to peer mentoring program, supporting our Anchors for traditional families.</p>	<p>Through the support of grant funding the Division has been able to support ongoing Implementation of 2 peer to peer mentor programs: Kinship Connections (9 total mentors) and Supporting Our Anchors (10 Total Mentors). Both programs have a been a critical strategy to supporting holistic practice of lifting the voice of families.</p> <p>In this reporting period, one (1) Kinship Connections mentor and one (1) Supporting Our Anchors mentor resigned their position.</p> <p>Traditional DCYF Families formally received a Foster Parent Champion (Peer mentor) assignment upon licensure or prior depending on the family need. We have shifted to assigning a mentor during the pre-service training process to engage families sooner and assist with navigating the licensing process.</p>	<p>Folder - Support and Retention: Peer Mentor – OPRE Report</p>
<p>3. Use enrichment activities and statewide foster care appreciation events to highlight families, create opportunities for family engagement, and increase a natural support network for foster families.</p>	<p>In quarter one, Foster Parent Champions attended seventeen (17) recruitment and retention events and informational sessions to recruit new foster families and to support the retention of currently licensed families.</p> <p>In quarter two and three, Foster Parent Champions attended ten (10) recruitment and retention events, informational sessions to recruit new foster families and to support the retention of currently licensed families.</p> <p>Foster Parent Champions attended twelve (12) recruitment and retention events and informational sessions to recruit new foster families and to support the retention of currently licensed families.</p>	<p>Folder - Support and Retention: Peer Mentor</p>
<p>4. In partnership with DCYF Division of Performance Improvement facilitate ongoing resource family satisfaction survey to be distributed two times per year to gather data and inform Department practice.</p>	<p>During quarter one, stakeholder feedback questions were developed in partnership with the advisory group. Initial Survey was launched 3/31/2023. The initial survey received a 18% response rate. Summary or Stakeholder Feedback Survey results were shared with families and the Advisory Council</p>	<p>Folder - Support and Retention: Stakeholder Feedback Survey</p>



	<p>on June 1, 2023. Feedback from Resource Families included: a request for the survey to be re-submitted with a confidentiality clause and to also be sent to recently closed families.</p> <p>A second Stakeholder survey was launched on 10/10/23 to current and recently closed Resource Families. Materials to support increased response rate were shared with Peer Mentors and the Foster Family Advisory Council.</p> <p>The foster parent survey closed March 15th, 2024. Response rates were 16%. DPI will create a data report with results to share with The Division of Resource Families. A focus next quarter will be analyzing and sharing data.</p>	
<p>5. Continued implementation of Foster Parent College; online resource library for easy access to information and strategies to address challenging situations (articles, resources, videos, etc.).</p>	<p>Families were previously registered for Foster Parent College upon licensure. We have shifted the timeframe to invite families earlier to help them access materials and training and engage with other families earlier in the process. All families are invited to view the catalog of courses and enroll in a class of interest. In addition, families are invited to participate in Monthly training cohorts. Upon completion the Divisions holds a training objective discussion supporting best practice implementation.</p> <p>During quarter one, we identified that resource families had utilized 1,362 hours of foster parent college training. We have since shifted to analyzing the use of the platform in more detail for each quarter and training topic.</p> <p>This reporting period, families have completed approximately 50 hours of synchronous training augmenting Foster Parent College courses and have completed approximately 206 hours of training on FosterParentCollege.com.</p>	<p>Folder - Support and Retention: Foster Parent College</p>



	<p>Topics in this reporting period were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism: A Strength-Based Approach • Working Together with Primary Families • Working with Birth Parents - Visitation 	
<p>6. Facilitation of 2 open feedback forums aimed to learn from resource families on opportunities for strengthened retention and ongoing recruitment efforts.</p>	<p>In the first quarter, the plan focused on facilitating targeted open feedback forums in the winter 2023 and spring of 2024.</p> <p>This quarter, the Director’s Listening and Learning tours served as the primary feedback forums with families as the focus was on success and challenges. Those sessions were held with families on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 04/17/2024 • 05/16/2024 • 06/25/2024 	<p>n/a</p>
<p>7. As noted under Recruitment and Awareness: Facilitate monthly meetings with recruitment and retention task force of special populations assessing goal success, challenges, and outcomes.</p>	<p>Meetings are held Monthly within the cadence or Agency Partnership. The task force initiated on September 5th.</p> <p>Task force meetings were discussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 09/26/2023 • 10/03/2023 • 11/21/2023 • 01/02/2024 • 01/30/2024 • 03/12/2024 • 05/28/2024 • 06/18/2024 	



Appendix 6: Baseline Data and Goal Determination

The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) partners with public/private stakeholders to support the child welfare system and the recruitment and retention of foster families. Contracted private foster care agencies, and other community partners collaborate closely on this effort. The recruitment goals and special populations listed below were selected based on both qualitative and quantitative methods and analysis. The qualitative methods involved discussions with our Private foster care agency providers, internal DCYF team and with review of current data and research (quantitative method) demonstrating that recruiting and licensing families who are open to placements for these special populations face more challenges than other populations.

The quantitative analysis was conducted by the Department and included data based on the 2023\2024 goals to assess progress toward the goals and identify priority areas from the previous plan goals that would be carried over to this year's plan. Recruitment and retention providers have reviewed the below, Table 1 and 2 baseline data in determination of the 2024/2025 Recruitment and Retention Plan goals.

2024/ 2025 Goal Determination

1. License 85 new non-relative foster families by June 30, 2025 and increase the number of foster families who can support targeted populations.
 - a. DCYF and our Private Agency Foster Care providers collectively licensed a total of 52 new families, retaining 49 of those families. Following discussions with our foster care agencies, internal DCYF teams and following review of the respective recruitment pipelines the department in collaboration with our partners believe the goal of 85 new homes will allow for a strengthened targeted approach to the recruitment of new homes who can meet the identified need of the Rhode Island child welfare system.
2. Of 85 new non-relative licensed foster homes 25 will be open to match with youth 12 and older. Of the 25, 50% of homes will be open to match with females.
 - a. 2023/2024 recruitment plan outcomes reflect DCYF in partnership with our Private Agency Foster Care providers licensed a total of 14 new homes open to match with youth 12 and older and retained 100% of those homes. The department believes a goal of 25 with a 50% increase in families open to match with females will support current system needs. Efforts will continue



to expand goals as outcomes are assessed.

3. Of 85 new non-relative licensed foster homes 50% will be licensed to support sibling placements
 - a. 2023/2024 recruitment plan outcomes reflect DCYF, in partnership with our Private Agency Foster Care providers, had 144 families who are open to placement of siblings. In our efforts to continue this trend, we would like to ensure 50% of our licensed families are able to support siblings.
4. Of 85 new non-relative licensed foster homes 30% will identify as BIPOC
 - a. 2023/2024 recruitment plan outcomes reflect DCYF in partnership with our Private Agency Foster Care providers newly licensed 8 Black Non-Hispanic families and 10 Hispanic families. Of those, we retained 8 Black Non-Hispanic families and 9 Hispanic families.
5. Among the total newly licensed families from July 1, 2024 – July 2025, 90% be retained as of June 30, 2025.
 - a. 2023/2024 recruitment plan outcomes reflect DCYF and our Private Agency Foster Care providers collectively licensed a total of 52 new families, retaining 49 of those families. DCYF and its partners are committed to maintaining a 94% retention rate consistent with last year's plan.
6. Maintain 98% of licensed providers who will be open to match with children/youth who have Mental Health or Physical Disability of: Learning / School Issues, Mild Medical, Oppositional/Defiant behavior.
 - a. 2023/2024 recruitment plan outcomes reflect DCYF in partnership with our Private Agency Foster Care providers had 409 total families at baseline (07/01/2023) that were open to placement of children who have Mental Health or Physical Disability and at the end of the 12 months (06/30/2024) have 376 total families. The breakdown data of families open to characteristics of children with mental health or physical disability characteristics reflects an overall positive trend of increasing. We saw slight increases in families open to supporting children and youth with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, severe medical issues, and recent sexually reactive behaviors. A decrease in families open to learning/school issues (decrease of 28 families,) a decrease in medical needs that are classified as mild (decrease of 20 families) and a decrease in openness to oppositional/defiant behavior (decrease of 31



families,) highlights the need for continued conversations with families around the behavioral presentation of these characteristics, as well as providing families with resources and services to manage these needs.

7. Increase the current number of non-relative licensed foster homes by 25% who will be open to match with children/youth who identify as LGBTQ+
 - a. Current DCYF data reflects 21 licensed resource family homes are open to match with youth who identify as LGBTQ+. National data reflects 30% of children in foster care (out of home placement) identify as LGBTQ+. DCYF is committed to the targeted recruitment of new homes and to increase capacity of current resource families to meet the needs of children in care who may identify as LGBTQ+.

Table 1: Baseline newly licensed data

Baseline Newly Licensed Data

Total Newly Licensed	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Total NEW Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	52	49
Total New Licensed Homes by Race and Ethnicity	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and license July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Black Non-Hispanic	8	8
Hispanic All Races	10	9
Multiracial/Other Non-Hispanic	2	2
White Non-Hispanic	27	26
Did Not Disclose	5	4
Total New Licensed Homes by Primary Language	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
English	39	37
Spanish	11	6
Other	0	0



Did not disclose	2	6
Total New Licensed Homes Open to placement of Special populations	Number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	Among number of new families recruited and licensed July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the number and percent retained on July 1, 2024
Open to placement of children 12 years of age or older	14	14
Females 12 years of age or older	1	1
Males 12 years of age or older	4	1
Either gender 12 years of age or older	24	41
Licensed families open to placement of siblings	32	30
Licensed families open to LGBTQ youth	21	18
Licensed families open to placement of children who have mental health or physical disability	52	49
Emergency response program licensed foster parents for children 12 years of age or younger	3	3
Mental Health or Physical Disability Characteristics		
Medical (Mild)	43	40
Learning/School Issues	44	42
Mental Health Issues	32	30
Intellectually Challenged	24	23
Oppositional/Defiant Behavior	12	12
Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior	3	3
Medical (Severe)	2	1



Physically Disabled	5	5
---------------------	---	---

Data Source: RICHIST Report 809 pulled 7/3/24 and RICHIST report 430 pulled 7/3/24

Table 2: Baseline Data

Total Active Licensed	Number of families at the beginning of the July 1, 2023, 12-month reporting period	Number of families at the end of the June 30, 2024, 12-month reporting period
Total Licensed Non-Kinship Foster Homes	430	389
Total Licensed Homes by Race and Ethnicity	Number of families at the beginning of the July 1, 2023, 12-month reporting period	Number of families at the end of the June 30, 2024, 12-month reporting period
Black Non-Hispanic	49	50
Hispanic All Races	91	77
Multiracial/Other Non-Hispanic	8	8
White Non-Hispanic	272	239
Did Not Disclose	10	15
Total Licensed Homes by Primary Language	Number of families at the beginning of the July 1, 2023, 12-month reporting period	Number of families at the end of the June 30, 2024, 12-month reporting period
English	357	324
Spanish	54	57
Other	15	7
Did not disclose	4	1
Total Active Licensed Homes Open to placement of Special populations	Number of families at the beginning of the July 1, 2023, 12-month reporting period	Number of families at the end of the June 30, 2024, 12-month reporting period
Open to placement of children 12 years of age or older	150	138
Females 12 years of age or older	11	14
Males 12 years of age or older	29	30
Either Gender 12 years of age or older	121	108
Total Licensed Non- Kinship Foster Homes	430	389



Licensed families open to placement of children who have Mental Health or Physical Disability	409	376
Licensed families open to placement of siblings	87	144
Open to LGBTQ+ youth	73	84
Licensed families open to placement of children who have Mental Health or Physical Disability	409	373
Emergency response program licensed foster parents for children 12 years of age or younger	36	32
Mental Health or Physical Disability Characteristics		
Learning/School Issues	362	334
Medical (Mild)	350	330
Oppositional/Defiant Behavior	213	182
Mental Health Issues	220	221
Intellectually Challenged	137	145
Physically Disabled	22	31
Medical (Severe)	18	22
Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior	14	16

Data Source: RIC HIST 595_01 Report pulled on 7/1/23 and RIC HIST 595_01 Report pulled on 6/30/24

Data Notes: Children who have a mental health or physical disability are defined using the following categories: Intellectual Disability, Medical (Mild), Medical (Severe), Mental Health Issues, Physical Disability, Learning/School Issues, Oppositional/Defiant Behavior, or Recent Sexually Reactive Behavior

Table 3: Baseline Data Out of Home Placement by Placement Type As of July 1, 2024	
Relative Kinship	465
Non-Relative Kinship	203
Not Kinship	277
Semi-Independent Living	38



Residential	162
Group Home	96
Assessment and Stabilization	15
Out of Home Placement by Race and Ethnicity	As of July 1, 2024
Black Non-Hispanic	183
Hispanic All Races	372
Multiracial/Other Non-Hispanic	153
White Non-Hispanic	547

Data Source: RICLIST Report 776 pulled 7/1/24

Data Notes: For the purpose of this report, 'Out of Home Placement' is defined as youth in either foster care or congregate care living arrangements. Youth with "Unknown" race/ethnicity are <10 and therefore not reported.