



Resource Family Recruitment is Everybody's Job

From the District Director to the person who answers the telephone, family finding and recruitment is everybody at DCF's job.

- Successful DCF offices and their Resource Coordinators encourage all staff and resource parents to be mindful of the need for families wherever they go.
- Other child welfare organizations, local school personnel, and other community partners can also help with the outreach, education, and supportive activities that go into successfully recruiting, engaging, placing and sustaining families for children in care in Vermont.

Here are several ways in which recruitment can be part of everybody's job.

Regardless of what their job is, anyone can volunteer to participate in resource family recruitment projects.

- Being customer-friendly matters. Kin, foster and adoptive parents are the most important resource we have to give the children in need of homes. How they are treated will determine whether they stay in the process and, ultimately, become part of the team.
- Speaking optimistically and honestly of the children who need care and the role of the foster and adoptive parent is vital. Kin, foster and adoptive parents should be provided enough reliable information to make an informed decision about fostering and/or adopting.
- Working to rule people in, not out, of the process. The most ordinary, and sometimes unusual, people have grown into amazing resource parents with training and support.
- Including seasoned foster and adoptive parents to help support new parents through the process.
- Collaborating with other community workers and organizations. Networking with community groups and partnering on family-finding and recruitment efforts can be satisfying, supportive and productive.
- Being a team player. Everybody who has a hand in recruiting and preparing families to foster and adopt can be made to feel that they are part of a team in a very important endeavor. All involved should value, and have a sense of urgency about, the need for well trained and supported families.
- Being sensitive to the prospective foster and adoptive parents' sense of time. The longer it takes to move from step to step, the less likely the family will stay in the process. However, if a parent is treated well and helped to feel part of the team early on, he or she is more likely to stay the course.

This material is adapted from AdoptUSKids. <http://www.adoptuskids.org/for-professionals/free-resources>

