



Working With Your Partners in Service (P.I.N.S. Partners)

PINS Partners are an invaluable resource to each district. These are teams of civic-minded volunteers from local groups with a goal to support area children. Many PINS Partners are from faith-based organizations while a few are from banks and other businesses. These are very giving, caring individuals who want to serve children in some peripheral way.

How do PINS help? Often they will offer financial resources that will be directly applied to children, such as a summer camp or special activities. With some education about our system, PINS partners are willing to offer free space for events or trainings and they are sometimes willing to donate money or food towards a Retention Activity. In addition to financial support, DCF staff are always looking for transporters and respite providers to help us out with meeting the educational needs of the children and youth in care. Traditionally PINS Partners are very eager to provide any support within reason.

PINS Partners are also amazing recruiters for our system. Most PINS Partners are willing to put letters or articles in their weekly bulletin or newsletter. May is an especially good time to work with PINS Partners on acknowledging Resource Families and providing a tool for recruitment. Some PINS partners will hold events specific to Mothers or Fathers Days to honor our Resource Families and provide specific goods for foster families. A baby shower or hosting a dinner is common activities in May. Often they are willing to solicit for funding to secure gas cards to initially offset the cost of the transportation needs.

Another traditional PINS activity has been supporting **Back to School Backpacks for kids**. This is the type of donation that volunteers can easily get behind and is a good way to involve a new group.

Up until 2011, the PINS Program had a liaison who worked out of DCF and helped facilitate connections between organizations and DCF districts. While this position no longer exists, many of the former relationships endure. Resource Coordinators are also encouraged to build new connections on their own. There are often community groups looking for a way to get involved and they are pleased to learn that the PINS Program exists. **It is helpful if you can share a specific, concrete need** that they can publicize to in their organization. For example:

- \$150 is needed to buy a child new school clothes.
- We would like to host a party. Can we use your church hall?
- We have a family that needs help with Christmas. Here's what would be appreciated...

