Recommendations for LGBTQ+ Foster Parent Retention in MO

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National Council
For Adoption

National Council for Adoption

Mission:

"Passionately committed to the belief that every child deserves to thrive in a nurturing, permanent family, National Council For Adoption mission is to meet the diverse needs of children, birth parents, adopted individuals, adoptive families, and all those touched by adoption through global advocacy, education, research, legislative action, and collaboration." – Source: NCFA

About the Project:

- Parent Recruitment and Retention Project
  - Partnership with NCFA, Northeastern University, & Dr. Elise Dallimore
- Studying foster and adoptive families' experiences with public agencies in UT, MI, & MO
- **Goal:** develop a set of best practices regarding the recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families.

Because all children, everywhere, deserve to thrive in a permanent, nurturing family.

Engagement Overview

Problem:

- Despite the extensive recruitment and training strategies implemented by the state, many foster parents close their homes to children in need of care shortly after receiving their licenses.

Objectives:

- To assess existing recruitment and training practices
- To identify opportunities to further support prospective LGBTQ+ foster parents

Research Findings

Training Available Resources

- PRIDE Training (MO) vs S.T.A.R.S.Training (NJ)
- New Jersey's partnership with the HRC's AC-AF initiative
  - Implementation of LGBTQ+ inclusive representation and resources
  - MO's effort in recruiting LGBTQ+ foster parents (LGBTQ+ Facebook community)
- Impact of perceived support and inclusion on retention rates of foster parents
  - Specifically LGBTQ+

Workforce and Parent Engagement

- High Rates of Turnover in Staff
  - Increased caseloads due to increase of children in foster-care
  - Work overload
  - Cannot delegate appropriate time towards cases
    - Timely Investigations
    - Difficulty assessing and mitigating risks and safety concerns
- Regional Inconsistency in Training Delivery by Contracted Agency
- High Turnover Rates' effect on engaging and supporting families and foster parents

MO Performance Outcomes

Lack of quality in assessing risks and safety concerns explains the lower score for items in Permanency Outcome 1 and Well-Being Outcome 1

Performance Outcome Measures
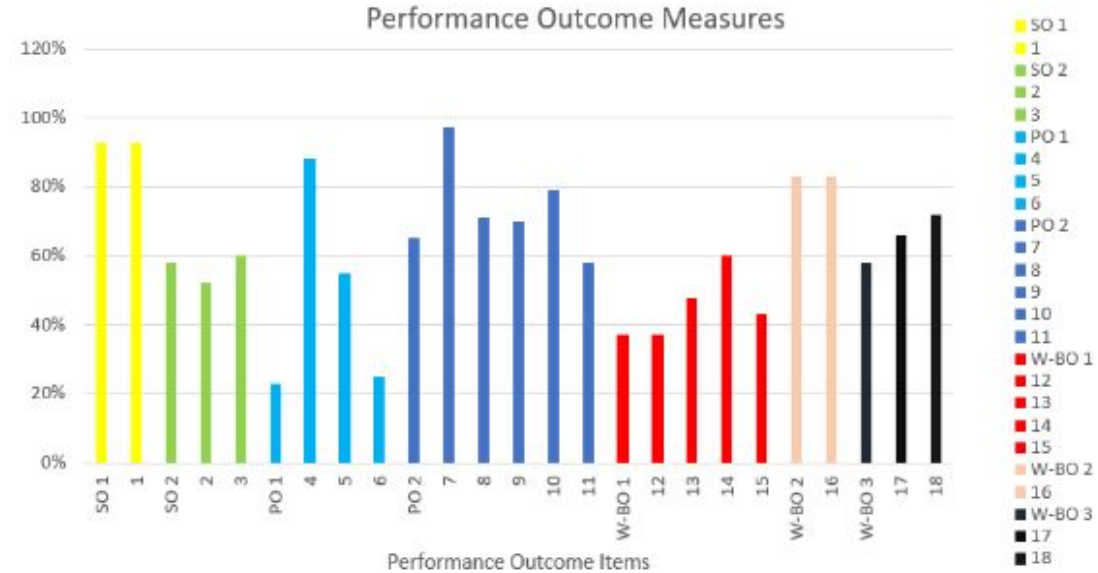
"Authentizotic" Organizations

- Meta-values that foster a sense of belonging, enjoyment and meaning
- Members find meaning in and captivated by work
- Recommendations provided are created on the basis of developing MO DSS' further to progress towards a more "authentizotic" organization
  - In return, higher levels of satisfaction, retention, and engagement will be observed in internal and external stakeholders

Recommendations

Peer Mentoring Program: MO LGBTQ+ Individuals & Families

all children
all families

HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
FOUNDATION

Partnership with the HRC All Children -All Families Initiative

Panel Discussions for MO Caseworkers & Foster Families

Evaluation

Pre and Post Training/Event Surveys

- Applicable in all three highlighted recommendations
- Measures baseline competencies and beliefs
  - Pre-Training/Event
- Gauges changes in participants' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs
  - Post-Training/Event
- Incorporates timely and candid feedback
  - Event and Individuals (trainers, speakers, ect.)
  - Promotes ongoing growth and development of Training/Event