Best Practices for **One Church, One Child** Model Programs

Compiled by

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Best Practices

Building the capacity of network members to use the **One Church, One Child** concept to achieve permanency for waiting children.

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Report Author

The National Network of Adoption Advocacy Programs (NNAAP) engaged the services of Jane C. Talley, a retired social work administrator and adoption specialist, to collect and edit the information and produce this document on Best Practices of One Church, One Child (OCOC) Programs. Her insight and knowledge of the OCOC concept has been significant in this process. Jane is no stranger to OCOC; she spearheaded the effort to bring the program to Virginia (VA) in 1985 and was integrally involved in its initial stages of its development. She also served as a coordinator of the VA OCOC's first four statewide conferences. While employed as an adoption supervisor with the City of Richmond Department of Social Services, she served on a statewide committee to increase the adoption of African American children and initiated a citywide collaboration to increase the adoption of African American children in the Richmond metropolitan area, "Black Homes for Black Children," in the late 70s and early 80s.

Acknowledgement

Data Collection

Although a manual for the implementation of an OCOC program, "Implementing a Minority Recruitment Program: A Manual for Child Welfare Administrators, Social Workers and Adoption Recruiters (Revised 1999)" was produced by the Illinois Department of Social Services in the initial stages of the development of the OCOC program, the primary focus of the document was on the implementation of the program rather than the identification of best practices. This document lists and describes the best practices and organizational structures identified as universally effective by programs across the United States operating under of the One Church, One Child concept. Consensus on these practices was reached through group discussions, personal interviews, phone surveys and written reports from OCOC program directors, board members and other program representatives.

One of NNAAP's goals is to support and enhance collaborative effectiveness of new and existing adoption advocacy programs modeled after the OCOC concept of faith-based partnerships. A technique used to accomplish this end is to sponsor recurrent meetings of the network programs referred to as Peer-to-Peer Workshops and Meetings." Data collection of best practices started as early as July, 2005 in a Peer to Peer meeting sponsored by NNAAP in Bloomington, MN. Representatives from the following OCOC programs participated in this discussion, which resulted in a preliminary list of best practices:

- All God's Children of Bogart, GA
- OCOC of Oklahoma (OCOC OK)
- Metropolitan OCOC of Texas, Inc.
- Virginia OCOC (VA OCOC)
- OCOC of Maryland (OCOC MD)
- Mississippi Families for Kids, Jackson, MS
- For Keeps, Inc., West Henrietta, NY
- Child Share, Glendale, CA
- OCOC of Pennsylvania (OCOC PA)
- Department of Social Services, Rowan Co., NC
- Dunbar Association Inc., Syracuse, NY
- OCOC of Florida (OCOC FL)
- OCOC of Nevada (OCOC NV)
- OCOC of Dallas-Fort Worth, TX (OCOC DFW)
- Agape Adoption Agency of Phoenix, AZ
- Department of Social Services, Cumberland Co, NC
- UJIMA/OCOC, WA
- Rejoice Inc., Harrisburg, PA

In September, 2006 a Peer to Peer meeting was held in Richmond, Virginia and the following OCOC programs and related programs participated in discussion and refinement of the list:

- OCOC of Dallas Fort Worth, TX (OCOC DFW)
- Virginia OCOC (VA OCOC)
- OCOC of South East Texas (OCOC SeTX)
- Mississippi Families for Kids (MFFK), Jackson, MS
- Child Share, Glendale, CA
- OCOC of Oklahoma (OCOC OK)
- New Life for All Children, West Henrietta, NY
- OCOC of Maryland (OCOC MD)
- Dunbar Association Inc., Syracuse, NY
- OCOC of Pennsylvania (OCOC PA)
- OCOC of Florida (OCOC FA)
- Heritage Family Preservation Center, Orlando, FL
- Rejoice Inc., Harrisburg, PA
- UJIMA/OCOC, WA

Further refinement of the identified practices was accomplished in the form of written reports and extensive telephone interviews conducted between November 2007 and January 2008.

Background

Since 1980, the adoption recruitment programs utilizing the One Church, One Child concepts have been credited with having placed for adoption hundreds of primarily African American children across the country. The One Church, One Child's inaugural program was founded in Chicago Illinois by Father George Clements, priest of the Holy Angels Catholic Church, as the Illinois Department of Social Service was struggling to increase adoption opportunities for hundreds of waiting African American children across the State of Illinois. Father Clements took leadership in persuading faith institutions to buy into the concept that if each church would accept the challenge of recruiting a least **one Parrish** family to adopt **one** child, it would solve Illinois's minority child-waiting backlog. Not only did Father Clements take this challenge seriously for the faith institutions, he also took it seriously and personally by becoming the first Catholic priest to adopt a child himself. The effectiveness of this movement was profound, successfully reducing the rolls of African American children waiting to be adopted in Illinois.

The core elements of the OCOC model concept included the following:

• Collaborate with churches as they identify potential foster or adoptive parents, willing to adopt or care for at lease one child;
• Target a particular cultural group (i.e. Hispanic, African American, Indian);
• Provide training for leaders of faith institutions, parents, adoption and foster care workers, church coordinators and others;
• Partner with child-placing agencies on state and local levels; and
• Provide support to foster and adoptive parents before and after placements.

The state of Illinois received funding to replicate this concept in other states to reduce the number of waiting African American children across the country. In 1985, Virginia was among the first to replicate the concept as part of the Virginia Department of Social Services efforts to increase adoption placements for its waiting African American population, which was overly represented in the foster care system. Again, this fresh concept of the church and state working in a strong collaborative partnership proved to be a successful avenue for hundreds of successful adoptions for Virginia's waiting African American children.

Following such application of the One Church, One Child concept among African American communities, its versatility became clear. A satellite program of Virginia One Church, One Child, subsequently named **National Network of Adoption Advocacy Program (NNAAP)**, received funding from the Children's Bureau of the Federal Department of Health and Human Services to (1) support and enhance the collaborative effectiveness of new and existing adoption advocacy programs modeled after the OCOC concept of faith-based partnering and (2) develop programs in diverse culture communities that utilize the OCOC concept.

It is from this experience, that the following lessons were learned and a menu of **Best Practices** has been extrapolated.

Core Competencies

The identified Best Practices listed below are organized in four major sections. The list is intended to be instructive in nature but not exhaustive in its replication potential for faith based partnering with the OCOC concept. These concepts with other additions, have been extracted from a document prepared by NNAAP in 2006 entitled *One Church, One Child Program (OCOC) Best Practices: National Network of Adoption Advocacy Programs Preliminary Report Amended August, 2007* in which the best practices were divided into the following four categories:

I.   **Best Practice in Organizational Development**

II. **Best Practice in Board and Staff Development**

III. **Best Practice in Adoption Recruitment**

IV. **Best Practice in Service Delivery**

Section I

Best Practice in Organizational Development

Best Practice

The creation of a partnership between the Faith Community of Churches, Temples, Mosques, Synagogues and public or private child welfare agencies is central to the core concept of OCOC model programs. (The word church is used generically in this document to represent all of the houses/communities of faith.)

Conceptual Application

The purpose of the partnership is to address the needs of waiting children. The focus of organizations utilizing the OCOC concept is the recruitment of adoptive and foster homes within the faith institutions. Each church joining the partnership is committed to recruiting at least one or more adoptive and foster family from its congregation for the purpose of placing one or more children in foster or adoptive homes. Initially the OCOC model recruited adoptive homes only. Success has also been found using the OCOC concept for the recruitment of foster homes in the same milieu.

Best Practice

Most accomplished OCOC models are best carried out on the state level.

Conceptual Application

Programs utilizing the OCOC concept have negotiated with state departments of human services to galvanize the strength of faith institutions across a broad spectrum of diversified faiths in each state. State structures are better able to attract funding from state legislatures, create broader collaborating networks and are positioned better to expand organizational capacity. Additionally, centralized state programs are able to support and enhance the collaborative effectiveness to place children in permanent homes statewide.

In its inaugural program in Chicago, the OCOC program was started by Illinois State Department of Children and Family Services. African American ministers from across that state partnered to successfully reduce the disproportionate number of African American children waiting for permanent homes in the state of Illinois.

Best Practice

Best OCOC recruitment strategies for bringing faith-based institutions and leadership into this partnership are relational in nature.

Conceptual Application

Churches are recruited best by utilizing existing relationships of current staff with the faith leaders (pastors, bishops, imams, rabbis, priests, etc). Where relationships are not present, the program should seek to hire staff or utilize friends of the agency who have some entrée into the faith community to assist with recruitment of pastors. Church cultures have their unique nuances with which the staff recruiter

should be familiar. Churches may additionally be influenced to join the partnership by the status of churches that are already associated with the project.

Best Practice

Leaders of faith institutions across a state possessing significant influence in their communities are invited to be a part of an OCOC program's State Advisory Board or Board of Directors to serve as resources for organizational and programmatic development.

Conceptual Application

The best practice is to organize boards of directors of the OCOC programs that are composed primarily of pastors or faith leaders of churches. Heads of faith institutions that recognize the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children are able to use their influence to touch the masses of faith believers and to provide insight on the most effective ways to involve the faith community. On boards of directors, the pastors use their knowledge of faith communities to shape policies and program practices best suited to sustain the partnership and produce the best outcomes for children.

Best Practice

Successful programs recognize that the primary work of the faith-based partnership is done by OCOC staff and the church coordinator with the least amount of legwork falling on the heads of the faith-based institution.

Conceptual Application

Relieving already burdened pastors of an additional responsibility has been found work best. Pastors are more inclined to sign on with the knowledge that little additional responsibility will fall on them. The OCOC staff in collaboration with a church appointed or designated church coordinator keeps the church informed about OCOC program activities, supplies the church with literature, and works to set up and implement recruitment activities at the church. It is that coordinator that makes or breaks the success of the program in a particular church.

Best Practice — **OCOC programs collaborate and/or are contracted by local and state departments of social services/human resources, which have custody of waiting children, to do the home-study process on behalf of recruited families.**

Conceptual Application — Once the OCOC programs have recruited the families, the child custody holding agency completes the approval process of the family and determines which child will be placed with which family based on their assessment. Child placement agencies should exercise due diligence to ensure swift and timely home studies of the OCOC-recruited families to maintain the integrity of the partnership. Where child placing agencies are over burdened and can not complete the assessment process in a timely fashion, OCOC agencies may be contracted by such agencies to complete the assessment process in a timely fashion. In some instances, OCOC programs may request that the child placing agency designate a worker or workers (depending on the need) to to help the applicants recruited by the OCOC program finish their part of the assessment in a timely fashion.

For OCOC programs that are not child placing agencies, it is effective for a social worker to be assigned to a OCOC program site. This can be done through memoranda or partnership agreements. Through such agreements an adoption worker working under the auspices of a public or private agency is assigned to complete home studies and other adoption services for families recruited by the OCOC. This approach helps to retain families that are recruited by the OCOC program.

Best Practice — **OCOC model programs require the appointment of a church coordinator in each faith institution to carry out the work of the partnership.**

Conceptual Application — The appointment of a church coordinator is a standard practice in the OCOC program. This person acts as the primary contact for the faith institution. Coordinators, usually members of the faith institution, are selected by the faith leader of the church to act as the liaison between the faith institution and the OCOC program. In some instances, the coordinator may be the chairperson of the church's mission arm.

Coordinators are generally developed and guided in the partnership by the OCOC staff through the provision of ongoing technical assistance, training and recognition. It cannot be stated enough that church coordinators are the cornerstone of the ongoing success of the partnership.

Best Practice — **While funding for the majority the OCOC faith-based partnership programs is provided by governmental allocations, diversified sources of funding are encouraged for organizational viability.**

Conceptual Application — Currently, governmental funding is the primary source of funding for most OCOC programs. However, OCOC programs are being encouraged to diversify their funding sources for viability. These sources may include but not be limited to United Way funding, signature fund raising events, fee-for-service events, additional government and private grants, private donations, church contributions, profit rendering conferences and workshops, AmeriCorp Vista, interns, volunteers, university students, "America I can" volunteers, and foster and adoptive parent volunteers.

USE OF VOLUNTEERS – In an effort to reach deeper into the community, some OCOC programs recruit community coordinators much like church coordinators. They train volunteers from community groups to be presenters, to serve on speakers bureaus, to make brief presentations and distribute literature at community festivals, events, or even large conventions. These volunteers assist staff or extend the recruitment effort in regions or communities where there is limited OCOC staff.

One agency in the review sought auxiliary grants that were not necessarily targeted for adoptive children but children in general or parents in general. For example, they persued a RFP that was promoting healthy relationship among married couples. This agency applied for and was funded to strengthen healthy relationships among adoptive families. These funds were used in post-adoption services to strengthen adoptive couple's relationships, in a retreat setting, as these couples addressed the pressures related to adopting older children. Looking for creative opportunities in funding is the key to success.

Section II

Best Practice in Board and Staff Development

Best Practice

OCOC model programs are guided by boards of directors or advisory committees that establish policies and procedures and have general oversight over programmatic operations.

Conceptual Application

Incorporated OCOC programs have governing bodies that hold legal authority. Boards are composed of selected faith leaders and in some instance other professionals in the services arena. Expectations and criteria for board membership are carefully crafted and followed for responsible leadership and accountability.

In the initial formation of the OCOC program, boards were made up exclusively of pastors of churches with no authority to formulate policy or give oversight. These pastors served at that time as promotional images. They were the up-front figures that spoke at press conferences to foster the partnerships.

Today, the boards of incorporated programs are legal entities who are hands- on and are ultimately and legally held accountable for the effective operation of the program. The best practice today is that these boards are trained, effective and competent in their roles. Many OCOC programs have taken advantage of board training provided by NNAAP.

Advisory committees associated with non-incorporated programs work similar to boards but without the legal accountability.

Best Practice

Boards of OCOC model programs develop a strategic plan for their long-term program operation, reviewing it annually to ensure that specific outcomes and organizational safeguards are achieved and maintained.

Conceptual Application

The more successful OCOC programs have developed a strategic plan for their programs that guide the programmatic activities and future development. Training for strategic plan development where applicable is carried out with mandatory attendance by board and staff.

The process of strategic planning is equally as important as the final product. Full and mandated participation of board, staff and in some instances stakeholders, is critical to the process. In strategic planning, programs must know where they are going, how to get there and when and if they have achieved the intended outcomes.

Best Practice

Well defined expectations of OCOC board members and staff responsibilities, legal requirements and conflict of interest should be established and provided to each member of the OCOC board and staff during orientation and training.

Conceptual Application

In the more successful OCOC programs, consistent training, reviews and evaluation of both board members and staff have been evident. To accomplish this, clearly defined job descriptions and role expectations for both members of the board of directors and staffs of OCOC programs are necessary. Generally, this information has been included in a personnel manual.

The board of directors establishes personnel policies for all staff.

Best Practice

Where applicable, the OCOC board of directors recruits and hires the executive director.

Conceptual Application

Cost effective and time efficient implementation of a strategic plan is based largely on the skill, abilities and vision of an executive director (ED). This individual creates the organizational culture that drives the success of the project. Day-to-day operation of the organization and keeping the staff motivated is the ongoing responsibility of the ED. It is the OCOC board's responsibility to recruit, hire and evaluate the performance of the executive director in accomplishing the mission of the OCOC program in an annual review.

Best Practice

Boards and executive directors of OCOC programs are responsible for fiscal accountability, which includes an annual independent audit.

Conceptual Application

The staff and especially the executive director are held accountable for accurate fiscal accounting, record keeping and reports that must be submitted to the OCOC's board of directors, which are included in annual reports provided to community stakeholders. OCOC organizations have developed systems that track both revenue and expenses, which meet both the expectations of funders and the demands of required reporting. Ultimately, the board of directors is responsible and accountable for fiscal management and reporting and an annual audit.

Section III

Best Practice in Adoption Recruitment

This section is the cornerstone of the OCOC model

Best Practice

OCOC programs utilize a variety of recruitment strategies.

Conceptual Application

While the OCOC model is dedicated to recruitment strategies within the church, members of the faith community are also members of the broader community. Thus, recruitment is also conducted through opportunities in other venues. As one OCOC director stated, "Saturate the community ... we go where the people hang out." Note the following responsibilities.

Media

- TV – PSAs
- TV Child of the Week
- TV news spotlight
- Cable TV appearances
- Radio talk and call-in shows
- Radio PSAs
- Employee newsletters
- Newspaper feature stories
- Newspaper Child of the Week
- Newspaper ads
- Media conferences

Collaborative Recruitment

- Match retreats
- Match receptions
- Adoption parties
- Adoption conferences and workshops
- State round table
- Adoption fairs and festivals
- Statewide recruitment meeting
- Statewide staffing meeting

Business and Community Outreach

- Billboard ads
- Literature distribution and displays at businesses, such as those in shopping malls and Wal-Mart stores; national, state and local conferences and conventions; civic groups, sororities, school events, fraternities, PTA meetings, sports events, grocery stores, fast food chains, doctor offices, barber shops, and beauty shops
- Bus posters and signs
- Promotion of original adoption plays, songs and books
- Ongoing informational group and individual meetings
- Website recruitment
- Video presentations

Special Emphasis/Recognition

- Promotion of National Adoption Month - November
- Promotion of National Foster Care Month
- Promotion of National Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Target specific audience
- Gender recruitment
- Older children recruitment

Best Practice

OCOC programs identify, recruit and train local church coordinators (ambassadors, advocates, representatives) to serve as liaisons for the recruitment.

Conceptual Application

Church coordinators are the backbone of the successful engagement of the churches in the OCOC model. The coordinators keep the mission and partnership of the OCOC program before the church with recruitment strategies. Coordinators are identified at the time a church makes its partnership commitment.

The effectiveness of the church coordinator is directly related to the effective training of the coordinator by the OCOC staff. Church coordinators are not only given continuous training, but they are also kept amply supplied with the latest recruitment and promotional materials, photos and updates. Public recognition of their contribution annually has been found to be a significant factor in maintaining the services of church coordinators. These recognition opportunities may be at annual conferences/meetings of the church or special luncheons dedicated for this purpose

Best Practice

OCOC programs identify and measure a variety of participation levels that identify how churches are supportive and are in partnership.

Conceptual Application

When churches are committed to the partnership, they determine the level of involvement to which they can commit beyond the recruitment of one family for one child during the course of a calendar year. The level of their participation may be measured in the following manner:

- Number of times recruiters make presentations at the church
- Number of sermons preached on adoption during the year
- Amount of adoption/foster care material distributed at the church
- Pastor of the church serves on the board of directors/advisory board
- Amount of financial support from the church
- Number of recruitment activities sponsored by the church
- Number of families recruited by the church

Section IV

Best Practice in Services Delivery

Best Practice

Full service OCOC programs include post-adoption services and advocacy on behalf of children.

Conceptual Application

As compared to typical child placing agencies, OCOC programs have more time and resources to accommodate the post adoption needs of families. Services range from extensive post-adoption weekend retreats to ongoing weekly or monthly support groups. Some support groups include pre-adoptive families as well.

Post-adoptive retreats, sometimes including the entire family, range in topic from parenting training, core issues of adoption (i.e. separation and loss) and marriage enhancement to schools and adoption and family entertainment, including movie nights where adoptive parents can meet one another.

Best Practice

OCOC programs provide consistent follow-up and communication with adoptive families.

Conceptual Application

During the post-placement process, OCOC program staff maintain the same the positive, supportive relationship created with families during the placement process. The OCOC program is known for its recruitment of adoptive families for for sibling groups and children previously described as hard to place, older, or having health, behavioral or mental challenges. The need for continuous support, training and contact is still necessary. Families in the best program are not abandoned once the final order is drawn up. Programs were found to use such tools as newsletters, e-mail distributions, website postings, mailings and telephone calls as methods of staying in touch. Such other program-sponsored events as family retreats, movie and game nights, and topic workshops can also help sustain relationships.

Best Practice

OCOC programs in partnership with child placing agencies, or who themselves are child placing programs, ensure that those placements are culturally sensitive and flexible in service delivery.

Conceptual Application

OCOC programs, whether for child placement or recruitment, reflect in their activities and publications the diversity of the populations they serve. This is evident in the cultural and ethnic nuances of their brochures, presentation displays, educational materials and office decor, which can reflect the full age spectrum as well as racial and ethnic inclusion.

In serving diverse cultures groups, service delivery expands beyond traditional work hours of nine to five or weekday-only days of operation. Language and culture translators are included as staff resources. Culture translators may be paraprofessionals from the community or culturally knowledgeable individuals who can give insight into the cultural nuances in need of explanations. One OCOC program specifically hired staff who could speak Spanish for this purpose.

Best Practice

OCOC programs encourage churches to organize ministries to support child advocacy **efforts in general.**

Conceptual Application

As stewards of the spiritual well being of a people, the faith community must also safeguard the well being of its children. An OCOC program encourages churches to move beyond partnership and incorporate or institutionalize their ministries to support adoptive/foster families. Where this has been done, the organized ministries became an arm of the church's missionary organization. Creative approaches have been instituted, such as having an entire church sponsor a single child to meet the extracurricular needs of the child while he or she is in foster care or until adopted (i.e. piano lessons, baseball camp, school trips, etc.).

As advocates, faith institutions and agencies alike examine public policies and practices that impact on the well being of children and appeal for and support changes that result in positive outcomes for children.

Best Practice

Where applicable, OCOC programs administer parent training programs that meet or exceed local and state requirements.

Conceptual Application

While state training requirements vary by state to state, rarely do you find OCOC programs staying with their state's minimum training standards. Successful programs provide continuous training for potential adoptive parents utilizing an exhaustive training curriculum and extensive educational opportunities in the form of workshops, conferences and retreats, For example, one agency sponsored a "Support Adoptive Family Retreat" weekend that was designed to build capacity and support for families who had adopted special needs children. Another example of the training that has been administered by an OCOC is a workshop entitled "Making Playtime Work-Enhancing Parent-Child Relationship." It was designed to foster healthy relationships.

Conclusion

With 28 years of productive outcomes for children in the foster care system, OCOC model programs have demonstrated the benefits and potential of collaborative partnerships between the faith community and public agencies in child welfare that has survived the context of changing times. Evidence of this is readily available in the current activities and operation of OCOC programs around the country. The core services of the OCOC model include the following.

- Partnership between the faith community and public agencies
- Recruitment for adoption/foster families within the faith community
- Education with increased awareness for the faith community and the public in general about adoption/foster care
- Advocacy for adoption in the faith community

The current network of OCOCs and their related programs have determined that developing and employing these best practices is critical to the successful implementation and operation of an OCOC program. While the list of practices is not exhaustive, the areas noted were deemed to be critical to the viability of the programs and the positive outcomes in the placement of waiting children.

Appendix

Adoption Recruitment and Activities Descriptions

ADOPTION DEDICATION - A ceremonial activity used similar to a baby dedication. New adoptive parents dedicate their new child (ren) to God and themselves with the commitment of the Church congregation to support them.

ADOPTION PLAYS, POEMS AND SONGS - Solicit original art forms from adoptive families and adoptees. Review them for authenticity and accuracy as they relate to the adoption process; and then showcase them.

ADOPTION SUNDAY - A designated Sunday set aside to promote adoption in a church to raise the congregation's awareness to the availability of waiting children. Activities may include but not be limited to focused sermons, inserts and adoption literature put in bulletins, displays set in churches' common areas, and adoption orientation session after church.

CALLING OUT - An activity utilized by One Church, One Child organizations or child placing agencies to spotlight children waiting for adoption. The names of these children are read aloud in churches or public places in a ceremonial fashion followed by the ringing of a bell. Standardized scripts and instructions are developed to provide consistency in this activity. Please note: This same term is used differently by some agencies to describe a different activity.

CHILD-SPECIFIC RECRUITMENT - Specific adoption recruitment efforts are directed at one child or a sibling group of children. Typically this recruitment method is used when a child or sibling group requires special attention.

CHURCH PRESENTATIONS - Commonly used term to describe adoption information sessions given to church congregations. Facts are share relative to adoption processes, policies, and practices at which time churches are encourages to participate in the OCOC program.

CHURCH TEXT MESSAGING RECRUITMENT - Get with the technology. Put your recruitment message in a text massage. Cellular phone numbers have become a part of most church membership databases..

INFORMATIONAL TEAS -Informational sessions held in the home of a perspective adoptive family where other perspective families are invited to learn about the adoption process. Generally light refreshments are served.

MATCH RETREAT - An adoption networking meeting for adoption and foster care workers in a stress-free environment. It is an opportunity for workers across a geographic area (multi-jurisdictions) to relax while learning about waiting children and families. Workers come and share information about families and children so that matches can be made. It's a time to network, to get to know those folks you talk to only by phone. Selected prospective families may attend so workers can meet and talk with them.

STATE ROUND TABLE - Community leaders come together to discuss their programs. It makes a perfect time to share recruitment material for area waiting children.

STATEWIDE RECRUITMENT MEETINGS - A meeting designed to promote collaboration, network and recruitment strategies across the state.

STATEWIDE STAFFINGS - A meeting of workers from across the state, designed to give them an opportunity to present their waiting children in one-page profiles. It is also a time that the workers can network. Usually these meetings last only part of the day as compared to Match Retreats.

THEME ADOPTION PARTIES - Adoption parties with a new twist. Develop a unique theme in the way of different venues, such as a basketball or baseball camps, or with different focused activities, which may include costumes that don't cover the face.

Survey Questions

National Network of Adoption Advocacy Programs (NNAAP)
Best Practice Survey Questions

Please give details on the following components of the One Church, One Child concept as they apply to your agency

Name of Organization _____

Name of Person Completing the Survey _____

Section I. Best Practice in Organizational Development

A.   OCOC programs recruit potential foster/adoptive families primarily in communities of faith.
B.   OCOC programs utilize advisory committees as a resource for organizational and programmatic development.
C.   OCOC programs utilize computer technology for tracking and reporting information on recruited families, clients, volunteers, child placements, and participating churches.
D.   OCOC programs provide key stakeholders with an annual report of the programs activities, including statistical and financial data. (NNAAP)
E.   OCOC programs develop and produce promotional materials that include up-to-date photographs of adoptable children in their service area.
F.   OCOC programs conduct annual program evaluations and make programmatic decisions and adjustments based on the results.
G.   OCOC programs utilize interns and volunteers. (i.e. AmeriCorp VISTA, "America I can" volunteers, church and community volunteers, university students, etc.)
H.   OCOC programs collaborate and network with public and private child welfare agencies.
I.   OCOC programs develop and maintain current lists of participating churches that support their program.
J.   OCOC programs develop, publish and distribute policies and procedural guidelines (personnel policies, program policies and procedures) for their program. (NNAAP)
K.   OCOC programs develop and maintain ongoing, positive relationships with local, state and national media.
L.   OCOC programs develop and maintain diversified funding sources to support program services and initiatives. (NNAAP)
M.   OCOC programs develop and execute a strategic plan that is reviewed and evaluated periodically. (NNAAP)
N.   OCOC programs collaborate and/or contract with local and state departments of social services/human resources to recruit potential adoptive and foster families and to facilitate the home study process and the placement of children.
O.   OCOC programs incorporate the use of technology (i.e. email, conference calls, video conferencing, etc.) to communicate and interact with clients, churches, staff, governing bodies, child welfare agencies and the public at large.

Section II. OCOC Best Practice in Board and Staff Development

A.   OCOC programs operate under the guidance and direction of a board of directors or an advisory committee of selected faith leaders and other professionals within the local community or service area.
B.   Where applicable, OCOC programs develop and maintain criteria and expectations for OCOC board membership.
C.   OCOC programs provide specialized training for their board, staff and volunteers on an annual basis. (NNAAP)
D.   OCOC programs require members of their governing body (i.e., board, management team staff and volunteers) to participate in development training.
E.   Where applicable, OCOC programs develop and maintain criteria and expectations for program staff and volunteers. (NNAAP)

Section III. Best Practice in Adoption Recruitment

A.   OCOC recruitment is conducted primarily in local communities of faith.
B.   OCOC programs utilize a variety of strategies (displays, presentations, adoption fairs, Internet, etc.) to recruit potential adoptive and foster families within the faith community. (NNAAP)
C.   OCOC programs provide displays and orientation classes on adoption at local, state and national conferences, and conventions.
D.   OCOC programs recognize religious and denominational leaders annually for their support of OCOC programs.
E.   OCOC programs identify, recruit, and train local church coordinators (ambassadors, advocates, representatives) to serve as liaisons for the recruitment of potential adoptive and foster families in the local church.
F.   OCOC programs train local church coordinators to present and advocate for adoptive and foster care in other churches in the community.
G.   OCOC programs identify levels of participation (i.e. Gold, Silver or Platinum level churches) for churches to support their program that may include the following:

   i.   Number of times recruiters make a presentation at the church
   ii.   Number of sermons preached on adoption during the year
   iii. Amount and distribution of adoptive and foster care materials by the church
   iv.   Pastor of church serves on the board of directors and advisory boards
   v.   Financial support from the church
   vi.   Recruitment activities sponsored by the church
   vii. Number of families recruited during the year

Section IV. Best Practice of Service Delivery

A.   Full-service OCOC programs include post adoption services.
B.   OCOC programs provide consistent follow-up with client families.
C.   OCOC programs provide child placements that are culturally sensitive.
D.   OCOC programs encourage churches to organize ministries to support adoptive and foster families.
E.   Where applicable, OCOC programs administer parent training programs that meet or exceed local and state requirements. (NNAAP)
F.   The core services of One Church, One Child adoption programs include:
   i.   Recruitment for adoptive and foster families
   ii.   Educate and increase the awareness of the faith community and general public about adoptable children in foster care.
   iii. Advocacy for adoption in the faith community