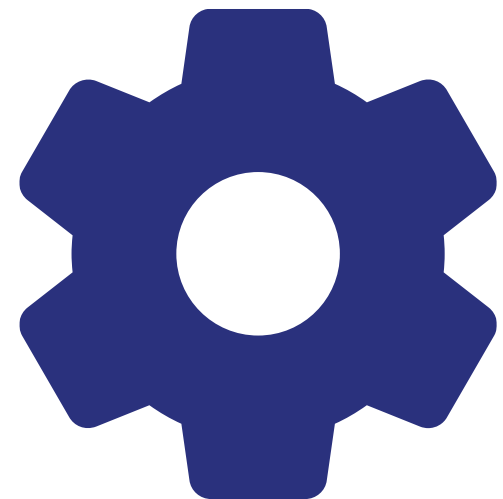# This training is presented to you by Switchboard.

Switchboard is a one-stop resource hub for refugee service providers in the U.S.

Here's a quick overview of your settings.

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This is a webinar, so you're joining on listen-only mode.

Due to the large number of learners on today's webinar, we've disabled the chat box.

Though disabled for learners, keep an eye on the chat for messages from Switchboard and links to various resources we'll be mentioning throughout.

You do have the option to send messages to the speakers and co-facilitators via the Q&A.

Today's webinar will run for 90 minutes and is being recorded.
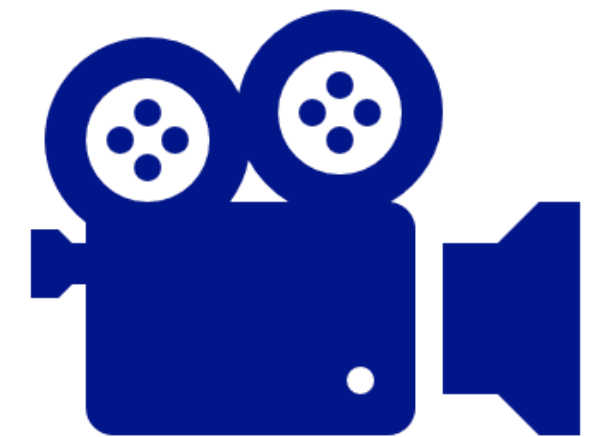
You'll receive an email with the recording, slides, and recommended resources within 24 hours.

The webinar transcript, along with the recording, will also be posted on the Switchboard website.

Last, we ask that you kindly complete our webinar satisfaction survey at the conclusion of our session.

This short, five-question survey helps us here at Switchboard continuously improve our training and technical assistance offerings to you all.

Thank you for joining today's training!

We will begin momentarily.

Today's Speaker

Claire Hopkins, she/her

Training Officer, Child and Family Services

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

1 **2** **3** **4**

GATHER
and leverage demographic and motivational data of current URM foster parents to enhance recruitment efforts

APPLY
community engagement techniques to amplify voices and stories of URMs and foster parents

DETERMINE
when and how to effectively use targeted recruitment approaches

DEVELOP
accessible, inclusive, equitable, and flexible recruitment approaches using diverse communication and marketing methods

Gathering and Leveraging Data

of Current URM Foster Parents as a Recruitment Approach

slido

What words or phrases come to mind when you think about recruiting foster parents for URMs?

Understanding the Data

Household Demographics

Age

SOGIE

Language

Youth in home

Race

Religion

Number of caregiver(s)

Location

Occupation and volunteer experience

Parenting experience

Support system

Schooling
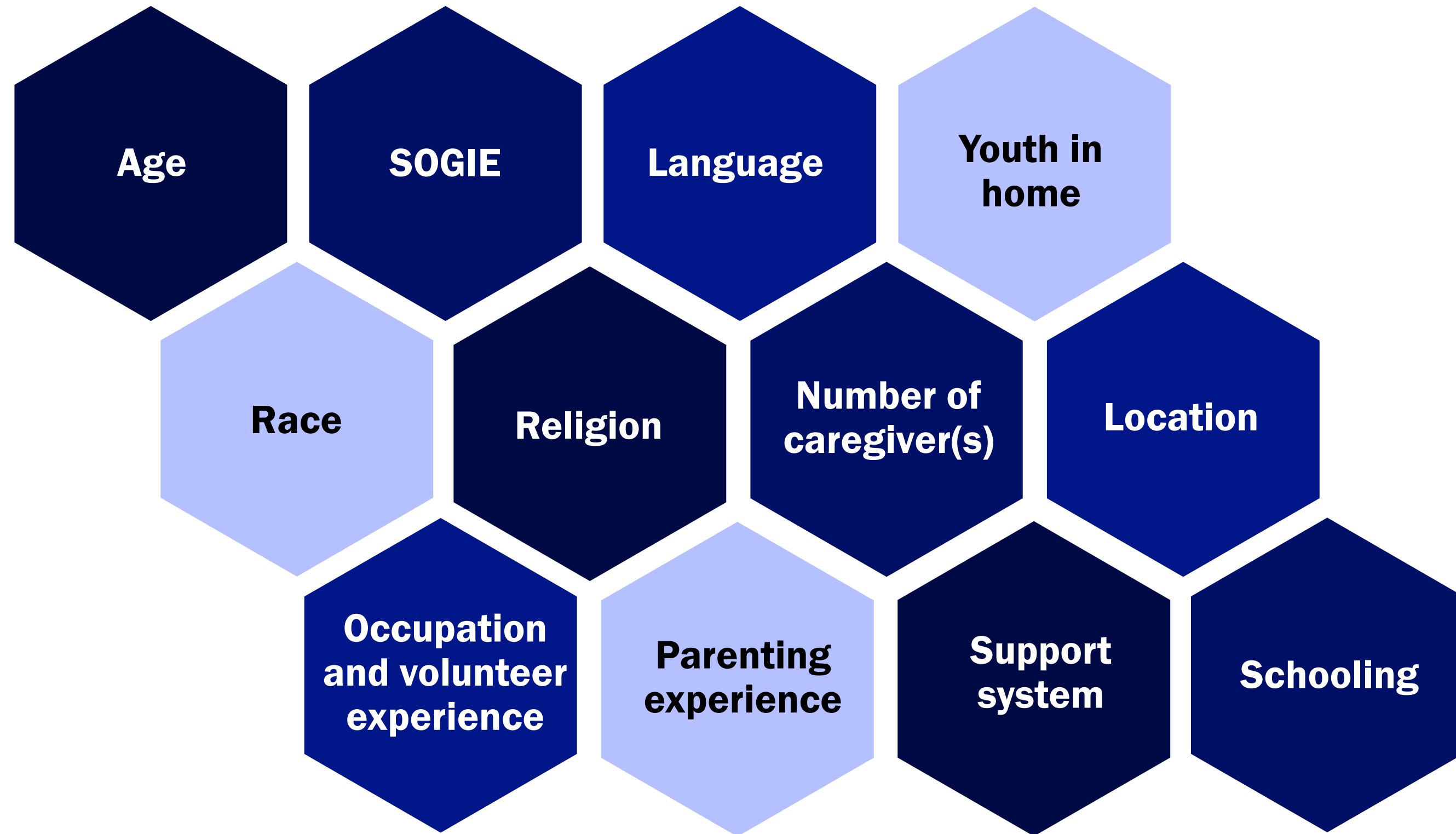
Motivational Data

Benefits of Gathering Data

Tracks trends

Track positive and negative trends and characteristics of foster homes

Identifies gaps

Identify gaps of foster parent demographics

Identifies strengths

Use strengths of current foster parents to enhance retention rates

Benefits of Leveraging Data

Highlights data and patterns

Share your current foster pool to highlight commonalities and areas of need

Reframes myths

Reframe myths and fears about fostering (age, experience, language, location)

Makes connections

Use foster parent testimonials to ease fears and build connections with foster parent inquiries

Using Surveys to Gather and Leverage Data

- Explain the what, why, and how of the survey

- Ensure the survey is clear, simple, and accessible

- Ask foster parents' and youth's preferences about involvement in recruitment and retention

- Consider distributing post orientations, in monthly newsletters, at home visits, quarterly check-ins, closures

- Keep distribution consistent, and adapt the survey and its content to the audience you are trying to reach

Community Engagement Techniques

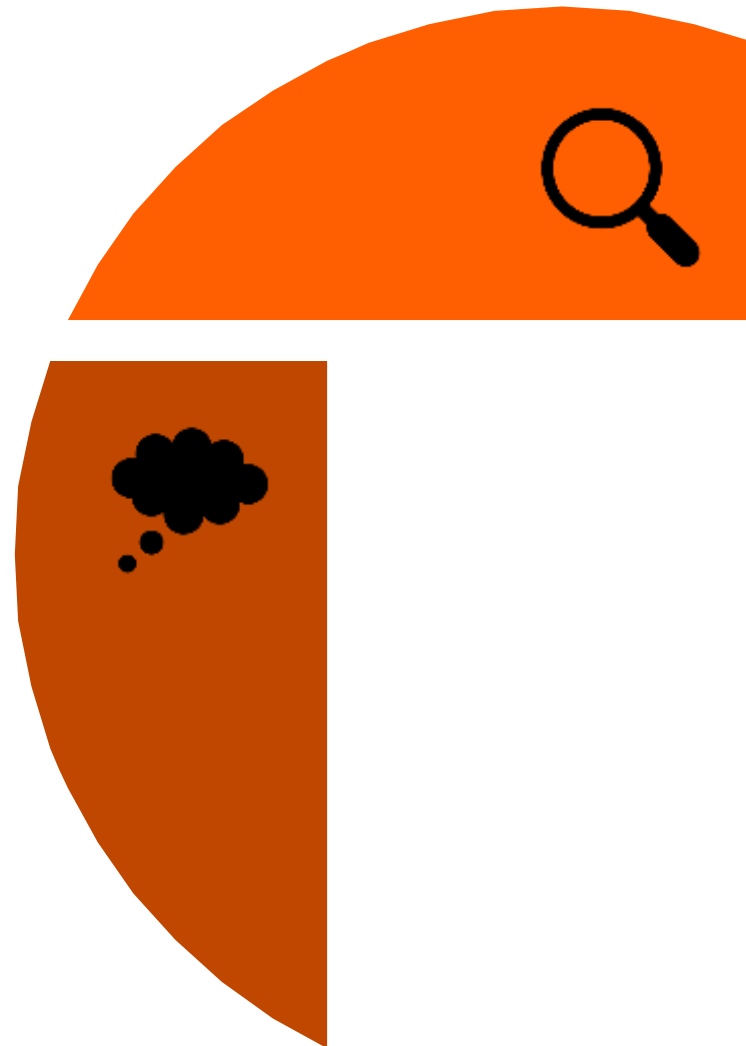to Amplify Voices and Stories of URMs and Foster Parents

What makes community engagement beneficial?

Strategic Planning for Effective Community Engagement

ASSESS

What communities do you already have relationships with?

REFLECT

Are these communities you want to continue engaging with? What communities are you missing?

Assess and Reflect

- **Are these communities you want to continue engaging with?**

  - Are they aligned with your current goals and needs for the program?
  - Are they active supporters?
  - Are they beneficial or less resourceful?

- **What communities might you be missing?**

  - Schools, adult education, libraries, book clubs, literacy centers, volunteer programs/groups?

  - Gyms, group exercise classes, sporting events, plays, performances, festivals?

  - Coffee shops, restaurants, ethnic grocery stores?

Assess and Reflect

- **What communities might you be missing?**

  - Social service agencies, BIPOC and small businesses?

  - Family friendly events, i.e., "stories in the park," playgrounds, dog parks, neighborhood associations?

  - Current foster parents, current staff, previous staff, volunteers, donors, youth who have transitioned out?

Strategic Planning for Community Engagement

PLAN

Will you be building, repairing, and/or maintaining relationships?

How will you use your data in these efforts?

INITIATE

How will you engage with these communities to benefit recruitment?

How will you track your efforts?

Plan

■ **How will you begin building, repairing, and maintaining relationships?**

- Organize communities
- Consider your program's capacity and timelines
- Determine a community engagement plan including priorities, needs, goals, and time frames (i.e., weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly)
- Identify any support needed to complete this plan, as well as which data and voices will be included

Initiate

- **How will you engage with these communities to benefit recruitment?**
  - Determine which voices to use to lead engagement, e.g., yourself, an established and respected community leader, a previous point of contact
  - Determine the community's interest in and capacity to support recruitment and retention
  - Offer a variety of paths to become involved and listen and adapt to new ideas
    - Put up flyers; collaborate through social media platforms, newsletters, or bulletins; host info meetings and collaborative events

Strategic Planning for Community Engagement

ASSESS

What communities do you already have relationships with?

PLAN

Will you be building, repairing, and or maintaining relationships?

How will you use your data in these efforts?

REFLECT

Are these communities you want to continue engaging with? What communities are you missing?

INITIATE

How will you engage with these communities to benefit recruitment?

How will you track your efforts?

Targeted Recruitment Approaches

Determining When and How to Use Them

slido

What does "targeted recruitment" mean or look like to you?

When is targeted recruitment used?

Using targeted recruitment for therapeutic and treatment foster care and specialized needs

1

- Determine the reality of being able to identify a new foster home and license them in time

- Consider the pressure put on this home

- Stay confident in your decision if you face resistance to or misunderstandings about using a different approach

- Use your existing resources
  - Mentors, foster home and community support, unaccompanied children (UC), domestic, closed or respite foster homes

Using targeted recruitment to identify specific communities

2

- Use this approach for long-term benefits

- Understand and give grace that this approach may not look effective in the short term

- Explore if an emergency approach is needed and use that information to incorporate into your ongoing recruitment efforts

Recruitment Approaches

Making Them Accessible, Inclusive, Equitable, and Flexible Using Diverse Marketing Methods

What do accessible, inclusive, equitable, and flexible recruitment approaches mean and look like to you?

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Marketing strategies

Reflect diversity and realistic expectations

Depict diverse ages, races, genders, and family dynamics

Avoid tokenizing and exploitative imagery

Do not overrepresent specific demographics

Tailor to your audience

Know your audience

Be creative

Consider flyers, cards, t-shirts, etc.

Use various delivery methods

Explore Q&As, news articles, movie screenings, lunch-and-learns, etc.

Tap into your community

Ask current foster care parents to tell their story

Marketing language

Create materials in multiple languages and be mindful of translation errors

Adjust language to different generations to represent their different motivations and values

Use language that your audience understands and can relate to

Consider who should be presenting the material and lean on trusted voices

Why is it important to create accessible, inclusive, equitable, and flexible licensing processes?
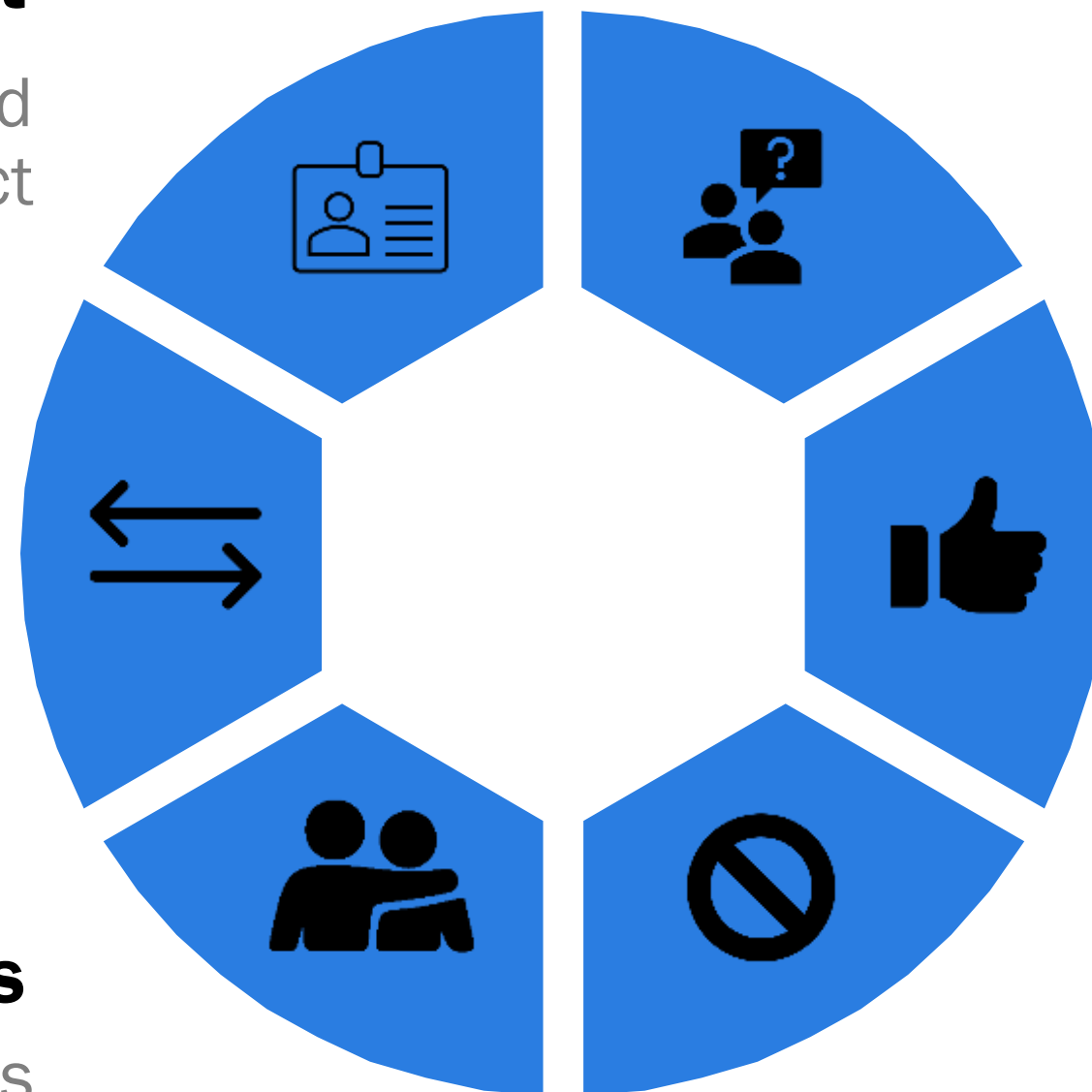
Licensing

Be honest

Provide clear steps, expectations, and reliable points of contact

Adapt to your population

Be mindful, empathetic, and adaptable to newcomer and SOGIE minorities

Normalize fears

Identify and normalize fears towards licensing and use data to ease fears

Minimize barriers

Advocate for expectations to minimize barriers

Improve

Take notes and utilize experiences to enhance future recruitment efforts

Do not discriminate

Implement and uphold anti-discrimination policies

Sample Monthly Recruitment Plan

Community Engagement and Foster Parent Inquiries

- Engage 1-3 new community contacts based on identified needs
- Follow up with community contacts and foster parent inquiries 2x
- Check in with homes in licensing process 2x
- Document contacts, information, dates, notes, and follow-up actions

Recruitment Events

- Host 2-3 recruitment events (including community events)
- Host 2-4 information meetings
- Post in 1-2 community newsletters, bulletins, or social media groups/pages
- Attend 1-2 community meetings or recruitment support opportunities
- Document contact person, information, attendees, date, notes, follow-ups, pros/cons, and cost

Internal Engagement

- Distribute a foster parent newsletter; consider sharing with staff and community
- Implement and update recruitment and retention events calendar
- Meet monthly to discuss marketing and public relations needs
- Consider bi-weekly staff meetings to discuss updates, successes, challenges, and support needed

Closing Tips and Tricks

- You know your program best; advocate for its needs

- Don't give up when things don't go perfectly—remember why you're doing this work

- Document your efforts

- Stay consistent and reliable; follow up with your inquiries and community connections

- Ask someone to foster, see what happens!

Questions?

Type your question in the **Q&A**

What specific topics related to URM foster parent recruitment would you most like to see addressed by future Switchboard learning experiences?

Help us help you!

Scan the QR code or click the link in the chat to access our feedback survey!

- Five questions
- 60 seconds
- Help us improve future training and technical assistance

Recommended Resources

- Switchboard, Blog - Parenting My Sibling: An Afghan American Social Worker's Integration Journey (2022)

- Switchboard, Webinar - Recruiting And Engaging Foster Parents In Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) Programs: Focus On Strategies For Remote Services (2021)

- Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services (BRYCS) - Fostering Immigrant Children

- Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services (BRYCS), Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS), and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) - Developing Refugee Foster Families: A Worthwhile Investment

- National Resource Center for Adoption, the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections, and the National Resource Center for Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents at AdoptUSKids - Strategies For Recruiting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, And Transgender Foster, Adoptive, And Kinship Families

- ORR URM Policy 2.5.3 - ORR Guide to Eligibility, Placement, and Services for Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM): Section 2

Recruiting and Engaging Foster Parents in Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) Programs

Focus on Strategies for Remote Services

June 8, 2021

Archived Webinar

FILES

Webinar Slides – Recruiting Foster Parents

Learning Objectives

Now you are able to:

1	2	3	4
GATHER	**APPLY**	**DETERMINE**	**DEVELOP**
and leverage demographic and motivational data of current URM foster parents to enhance recruitment efforts	community engagement techniques to amplify voices and stories of URMs and foster parents	when and how to effectively use targeted recruitment approaches	accessible, inclusive, equitable, and flexible recruitment approaches using diverse communication and marketing methods

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