Human Services Policy Advisors Institute

Leveraging Innovative Technologies in Human Services
Housekeeping Items

MEETING IS NOT FOR ATTRIBUTION
During this meeting we hope to generate a frank and open dialogue. For that reason, our discussion today is closed door and not for attribution.

CHAT IS OPEN
Please leverage the chat functionality to share materials, ask questions, provide feedback, etc.

CONTACT FOR TECHNICAL HELP
For technical issues, please chat or email Jess Kirchner – Jkirchner@nga.org

INCLUDE STATE IN NAME
Please re-name yourself to include your name and state (John, DE)
Agenda

Adoption Share

Deloitte

New and Emerging Issues
Leveraging Innovative Technologies in Human Services
Adoption Share
Thea Ramirez, Founder and CEO
Adoption-Share is a nonprofit 501 (c ) 3 organization.

www.adoption-share.com
Our Main Premise

There are children in the US foster care system who are eligible for adoption and do not have a family identified to adopt them. Yet, prospective adoptive families outnumber children who are waiting to be adopted by a ratio of 5:1.¹

Technology can help increase efficiency and appropriate connections between these waiting children and waiting families.

Kamarck et al. (2011). Eliminating Barrier to the Adoption of Children in Foster Care.

This document is proprietary and confidential. No part of this document may be disclosed in any manner to a third party without the prior written consent of Adoption-Share.
WE OPERATE ON THE PREMISE THAT THE ADOPTION CRISIS IS SOLVABLE.
THERE ARE PLENTY OF FAMILIES AND CHILDREN READY TO CONNECT—AND WE PROVIDE THE TOOL.

IT'S NOT A NUMBERS PROBLEM—IT'S A CONNECTION PROBLEM.
Long-term Impacts

Failure to provide a stable home for foster youth affects jails, education, and social services for everyone.

- 40% of former foster youth have been incarcerated, costing the US $5.1B per year.\(^2\)
- More than 40% of former foster children become homeless within two to four years of leaving the system.\(^2\)
- Children who age out of care without a family are 3X less likely to live in a financially secure household and a safe and supportive neighborhood.\(^3\)
- Youth who age out of foster care without a permanent family are 3X less likely than their peers in the general population to graduate high school or earn their GED and 6X less likely to earn a postsecondary degree.\(^4\)
Here’s How We Do It

Family-Match provides a tool to match children and families. We bridge technology driven efficiencies with workers' clinical skills in order to streamline the process from early identification of families through finalized adoption.
1. **Inverse the Outreach:** Traditional matching tools are driven by families expressing interest in a child they believe works best with their family. By inverting the outreach to be driven by workers— we focus on finding the best family for a child's needs.

2. **Visibility is Key:** We build out a centralized repository of families to allow workers to access a broader pool of candidates quickly.

3. **Leverage the Data:** We gather critical data from the families and children and use it to make the best possible matches that go beyond a family's preferences on age, gender, ethnicity, and number of children in a sibling set. We then follow our placements to learn what predicts success and leverage those lessons to make the system better.
The Family-Match Assessment measures key attributes of children and resource families to predict disruption in foster care placement.

**Key attributes include:**

*For Families*
- Personality
- Attachment
- Marital Adjustment
- Parenting Experience
- Expectations
- Foster Experience

*For Children*
- Personality
- Affect
- Foster Experience
- History of Maltreatment
- Behaviors
- Resiliency

Assessments completed by prospective parents and families are scored and processed by our matching algorithm to determine which pairings of children and families are the least likely to disrupt. Caseworkers are then able to view families in the repository ranked by their degree of compatibility with the child(ren).
In July 2018, Adoption-Share partnered with the Selfless Love Foundation to implement the Family-Match Program for adoption matching in Florida.

Key Outcomes

- **700+ Children Matched**
- **450+ Children Placed**
- **310+ Adopted**

Estimated **savings of over $38M** the state of Florida can realize over the next 8 years.\(^5\)

- **2000+ Families** have created profiles
- **100% Participation** by all 19 community-based care circuits and their subcontractors statewide
- Maintained on average an open and **active pool of 800 children**

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Of the 300+ adoptions facilitated by our Family-Match Program in Florida:

- 100% Are considered special needs
- 39% Were 10+ years old
- 42% Have a disability
- 50% Spent time in residential treatment programs/congregate care homes.
- 63% Are part of sibling groups
- 47% Occurred outside the child placing agency’s area

*Base rate = 0: these are the children who most workers thought would never be adopted.*
Family-Match is also providing unprecedented visibility into this area of child welfare in Florida, enabling us to improve our own program and advocate for broader system change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tr>
<td>47% of adoptions occurred outside of child placing agency’s area, impacting the “credit” balance of each agency with the state child welfare department.</td>
<td>Advocate for updated “credit” formula, awarding agencies more appropriately for their efforts. This was enacted in 2020.</td>
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<td>Parenting experience and expectations are significant contributors to placement disruptions.</td>
<td>Incorporate parenting experience and expectations into second version of algorithm. Currently in progress for fall 2022.</td>
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Next Steps: Removing Barriers

1. Flip the script on how your state matches children without families-
   introduce us to your child welfare leaders in adoptions.
   - Application is SOC 2 Type 2 Audited
   - Can work in all state child welfare contexts
   - Nonprofit status allows us to be flexible
   - Provides workers with a solution to make their job more efficient + effective.
   - Protects child privacy.

2. Make every child count- Track children who have a goal of adoption and no
   identified family.

3. Open Up Pathways for Families- Streamline the licensing track for families who
   want to adopt waiting children.

4. Remember- there is no substitute for family.

Contact: Thea Ramirez, CEO 912-222-8819 thea@adoption-share.com
Currently families and case workers assess characteristics that research has shown are critical to the success of the parent. These assessments are stored in the Family-Match data warehouse and used to compute a relational fit score for each potential pair.
Workers Access Pool of Eligible, Approved Families for Matching

For each child, the caseworker sees potential families who have high relational fits and fulfill the preferences of the family. They can then review and contact any families they believe are the best for the child.
Workers Assess Families Based on Compatibility & Capability

Sarah and Richard
- Family Match approved
- Palm Beach County

Larry and Shawna
- Family Match approved
- Okaloosa County

Frank and Joseph
- Family Match approved
- Spotsylvania County

Age
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Number of children
- Disability

Add to Top 3
Match Family
Dismiss family

N/A

96%

90%

88%
Map View of potential matches.
5. Calculated based on average number of years adoptee would remain in care (8 years) multiplied by the cost of one year of traditional foster care ($15,480 per year) and the number of adoptions through Family-Match.
New and Emerging Issues
Upcoming Call

April 20th
One-on-one support and technical assistance is available
The Children and Families team

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