



FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PLAN

Brevard Family Partnership
July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021



- A continuum of care model is used that prescribes the training, services, skills, and competencies required of foster parents serving in each level. The foster family assumes the responsibility of a surrogate parent, ensuring the child's educational, medical, social, recreational, spiritual, and emotional health needs are met.
- Each home is consistent with the child's best interest, special needs, cultural characteristics, and sensitivity to the cultural preferences of the child.
- Children are within their home community and same school zone to preserve the child's connections and proximity to biological families.

Whenever possible, children are placed with their siblings. Any sibling group that is separated is staffed monthly to expedite the facilitation of a placement together.

Innovations and Strategies

BFP contracted with Binti who provides foster care software with the goal of streamlining the licensure process. The program, known as a *Turbo Tax* for foster and adoptive family matching process, replaces spreadsheets with a dashboard, tracks due dates/deadlines and multiple modules to serve all areas of the system. On average, agencies experience a 70% increase of families approved per year for licensure, mainly due to the ability to track families from inquiry to licensure. Workers estimate a 20% savings in time. The system includes a parent/caretaker portal to allow for uploading, viewing, etc. The system can operate in Spanish, English, and has screens adaptable for color blindness.

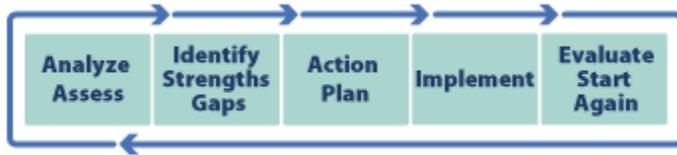
Information is stored in Google Cloud and is fully HIPAA compliant. Data feeds enter and exit systems to eliminate duplication. Binti is constantly evolving and creating new innovations for organizations to better serve children and families. BFP expects that the use of this cloud-based software will streamline current practices and reduce unnecessary delays and administrative duplication.

Recruitment Evaluation and Analysis

BFP recognizes that recruitment of high-quality, committed foster parents is fraught with challenges, but also presents many opportunities for new strategies and techniques. As an organization, BFP is committed to diligent recruitment and therefore continues to utilize a systematic approach to recruiting, retaining, developing, and supporting foster families to meet the needs of children and youth in our community. Evaluation of key data points aids our organization in making informed decisions and drives our recruitment efforts to meet specific needs. We have included feedback and input from key stakeholders including current foster parents serving on our Foster Parent Advisory Board in evaluating the data, to review recommendations, and facilitate cross-collaboration.

BFP collects and critically analyzes data in the following three tracks:

1. Strengths and bottlenecks in the recruitment process,
2. Characteristics of current and needed foster homes; and
3. Retention successes and challenges (e.g., homes that have continued to foster, families that have stopped fostering and the reasons why, etc.).



BFP collects and analyzes data about the strengths and weaknesses of current recruitment processes to identify the effectiveness of the current process and determine what changes are needed to increase effectiveness, including timeliness. BFP utilizes data collection to assess processes and procedures and to identify opportunities to enhance or modify current practices.

The following data points are essential for assessing our recruitment strategies:

- The number of inquiries received in a given time (e.g., past six months, past year, etc.).
- How inquirers learned about BFP’s foster/adoption program.
- Who responded to the inquiries and how quickly a response was received.
- The number of families that attended orientation.
- Whether those who attended orientation started and completed pre-service training.
- Whether those who completed the training went on to be licensed.
- The timeframe in which parents who were licensed had a child placed with them.
- The percentage of inquirers who were licensed within a given time, and
- The reasons given by families who dropped out of the process, including the reasons given most often.
- Effectiveness of using technology and virtual platforms to assist with social distancing and convenience.

Needs Assessment

Cohorts for Targeted Recruitment

- **Increase total of beds by June 30, 2021.**
 - BFP Licensing Specialists (LSP) will continue to assess the number of homes that have a current bed capacity of 2 or less each quarter. The LSP will assess the families’ ability to increase beds in their home. Through increasing bed availability, Intake and Placement will be better able to make matches of children and families based on their shared similar characteristics.

- 21 homes were on over capacity beginning July 1, 2019. We assessed the homes that were over capacity and were able to increase the bed capacity some of the homes. Currently we have 21 homes on over-capacity waivers and have identified 9 homes we will assess the family's ability to increase their bed capacity this fiscal year.
- **Increase family-like placements for older youth and sibling groups, including recruitment of new families as well as building the capacity of existing foster families.**
 - Develop a marketing campaign to recruit homes for older youth and sibling groups.
 - Enlist the help of experienced foster parents currently caring for teens to discuss the benefits of fostering teens with foster parents who currently care for younger age groups.
 - BFP Recruitment Specialist will engage in targeted recruitment activities to increase the number of families to foster teens and sibling groups This includes the Just One campaign, engagement in community outreach events, and targeted social media campaigns.
- **Increase involvement of current foster parents and all BFP staff in the recruitment and training process. It is well known that our best recruiters are our foster parents. We will ensure that all foster parents and staff are properly equipped with tools for recruiting.**
 - Foster Parents are provided with business cards to distribute to those inquiring about foster care. Space is allotted on the back of the card to write in their name and phone number if they choose to do so. Incentive program being considered to provide a drawing for those foster parents that refer interested applicants to foster care/adoption orientation meetings.
 - Foster parents co-train pre-service training.
 - A new outreach program titled "The Real Deal" will feature foster parents, youth and BFP staff on monthly BFP Facebook Live broadcasts where prospective foster parents can learn what fostering is really like, straight from the source. "The Real Deal" will be implemented in October 2020. The Facebook Live schedule will be posted on BFP website and Facebook.
 - Staff will be encouraged through education and support to actively recruit for children in all venues they are in attendance.
 - Staff will be provided the necessary tools, talking points, and support to be able to articulate the needs of the community and to use their

time in meetings, conferences, venues and speaking engagements to support and promote foster care.

- BFP leadership will ensure that foster care education and promotion are standing agenda items and talking points in all meetings and venues.

Existing Environment

Currently, Brevard County has 158 family foster homes and bed capacity of 320. BFP retained 77.6% foster homes with a closure rate of 22.4% to date which is an increase from last fiscal year. 38 homes closed during the FY 19-20. Of the 38 homes, 9 were closed within their first year of licensure. For FY 2020-2021, BFP has set a target to retain 80.6% of homes. Based on the current performance target, this will be an increase of 5%.

In preparation for the Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), BFP has set a goal of 200 family foster homes by October 2021. To achieve our goal, we are continually assessing our retention efforts of homes and seeking new opportunities to support our families. We continue to strive to retain as many families as possible and utilize closure data to drive our processes and implementation of new strategies. BFP has set a retention goal of 80.6% for the coming year based on evaluation of the previous 3 years of retention data reviewed.

Year	Retention Rate
2017-2018	77.5%
2018-2019	71.6%
2019-2020	77.6%

In FY 2019-2020, BFP averaged a net reduction of 3 licensed foster homes per month. Of the families who chose to close their licenses in FY 2019-20, the majority did so due to the following reasons: adopting a child, relocating, ICPC homes, no longer interested and personal reasons such as divorce, pregnancy, and health concerns.

Efforts to retain licensed foster homes have increased, including the following practices: licensing supervisors calling families who have expressed an interest in closing their home chosen to discuss their current needs, as well as future plans to become relicensed. Retention efforts also include quarterly retention events, CEO updates, and support from the community.

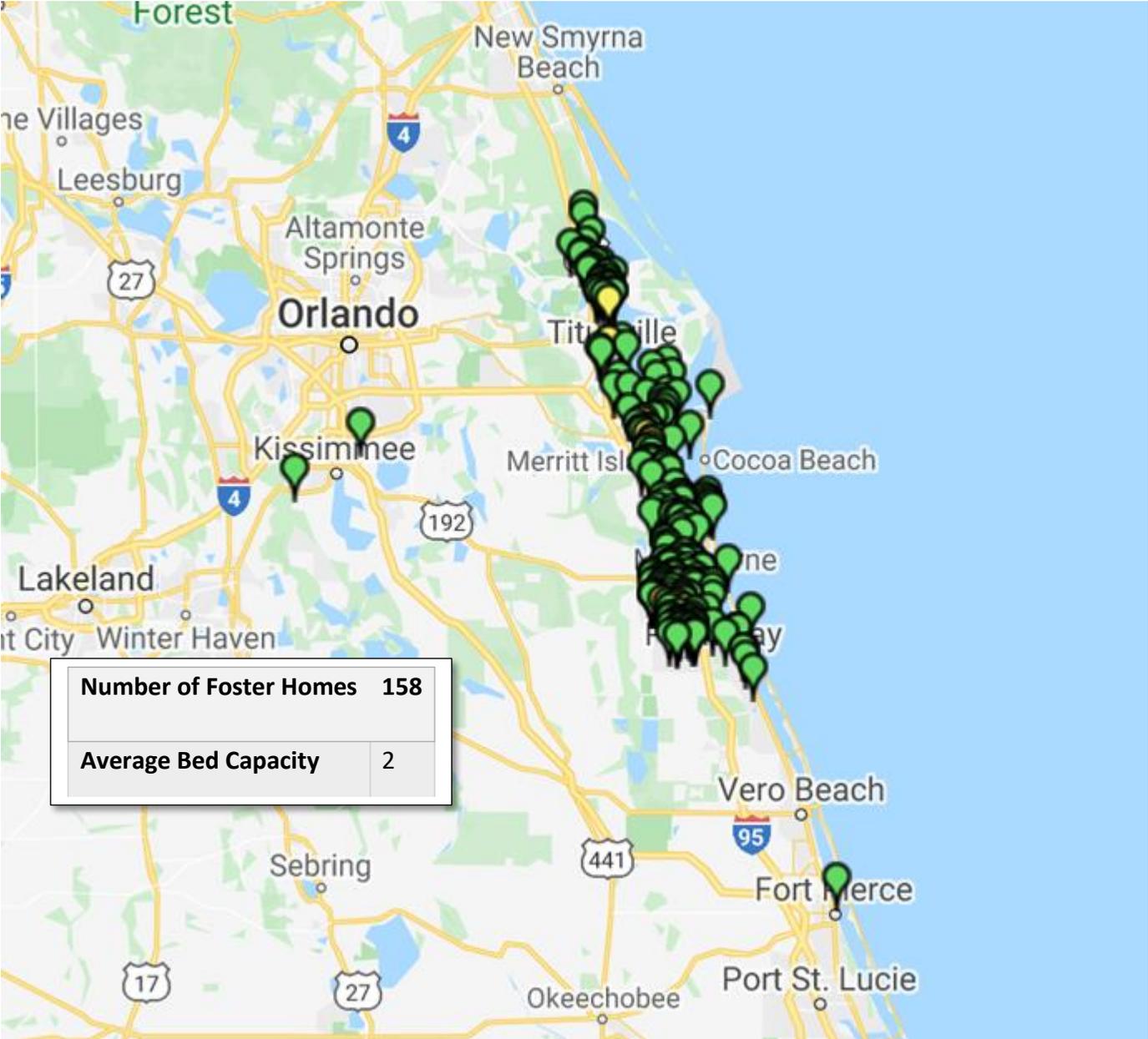
Licensed homes	158	Currently vacant beds	57
Licensed beds	317	Currently overcapacity homes	21

Foster Home Locations

The map shown on the following page illustrates the geographic locations of our foster homes.

The mapping shows that the highest capacity of available foster beds are located in the Southern end of the county in the cities of Palm Bay followed by West Melbourne and Melbourne. Geo mapping also indicates that targeted recruitment is needed to increase capacity in the following locations: North Brevard County (Mims, Titusville, Port St. John and Canaveral Groves) Central Brevard County (Rockledge and Viera) and coastal areas (Cape Canaveral, Port Canaveral, Cocoa Beach and Satellite Beach).

Brevard County Foster Homes



The tables below give more insight about the children currently in care, as well as their placements.

AGE	CHILDREN IN LICENSED CARE
0-2 years	79
3-5 years	52

6-12 years	68
13-17 years	49
TOTAL	248

The following chart provides information related to the race and ethnicity of children in out-of-home care, age birth through 17, and of existing foster parents.

	White	Hispanic	African American	Native American	Other
% of child population	31%	33%	13%	1%	22%
% of foster home population	30%	40%	10%	1%	19%

Recruitment Goals through June 30, 2021 for Level 1-5 Foster Homes

The coming fiscal year’s target was calculated based on several data points and areas of need assessment. Current capacity of family foster homes based on patterns of age, geographical location, specialty categorization (medical, traditional, enhanced, etc.) and length of stay were analyzed. The utilization of group care, separated siblings and homes placed on Over Capacity Waiver were also reviewed.

BFP reviewed previous performance to create a realistic baseline by which our community profile supports fostering. Data from the past three fiscal years was used to create internal and external licensing targets.

FISCAL YEAR	HOMES LICENSED
2016-2017	52
2017-2018	45
2018-2019	45

To respond to the ever-changing needs our community, BFP executed a Memorandum of Understanding and a contract with two additional Child Placing Agencies:

1. **Pinnacle Family Services Therapeutic Foster Care** who specializes in serving children with emotional, behavioral, and medically complex challenges.
2. **One More Child** who provides Christ-centered services to children and families in need.

BFP is confident that this array of supports and outreach will assist in meeting our community needs to serve Brevard’s most vulnerable children while allowing the match children to home that meet their unique needs.

BFP recruitment goals for FY 2020-2021 for Level 2-5 Foster Homes are as follows:

Agency	Goal
BFP	49 homes
One More Child	12 homes
Pinnacle Family Services	4 homes

In July 2019, BFP added Level 1 Foster homes (child specific). Level 1 foster homes enable children to live with people they know and maintain extended family ties.

BFP alongside DCF did a mapping to ensure we meet the Level 1 4DX target. BFP will license 10 homes per month to meet the goal of 40% by January 2021.

BFP implemented the following support for our Level 1 foster homes until permanency can be achieved.

1. Caregiver Support Specialist to assist caregiver with navigating the System of Care. The caregiver support specialist work closely with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), Child Protective Investigators (CPIs), ACCESS caseworkers, Guardians Ad Litem (GAL), Family Allies, Dependency Care Managers (DCMs), and the BFP Clinical Services. The caregiver support specialist assist caregiver with apply for benefits such as TANF and food stamps.
2. Clinical Services Specialist contact every caregiver to discuss what the immediate needs of the children are and how to meet them and inform them about the program. The Clinical Services Specialist also facilitate stabilization meetings.
3. Caregiver Support Group Meetings - 2nd Tuesday of each month.
4. Licensing Specialist provide support and advocate for the caregivers.
5. Flexible Funding allows BFP to assist caregivers with getting their home in compliance when they cannot financially afford it.

Recruitment Strategies

Recruitment of quality foster families is a chief priority of BFP. Recruitment efforts focus on recruiting, training, supporting, and advocating for foster families to promote and adhere to the principles of the Quality Parenting Initiative, as well as Trauma Informed Care through the Brevard Youth Thrive Initiative.

BFP has implemented an assertive community engagement and communications plan under the direction of the Senior Executive of Programs that utilizes various platforms to recruit foster homes. As part of that plan, the BFP has developed a recruitment strategy that delivers consistent images and messages designed to provide education and awareness of the need for foster families through multiple engagement vehicles.

BFP's recruitment plan is broken into four parts: Agency Branding, External Communications, Internal Communications, and Community Involvement. An outline of each section is listed below with more detail following in pages 8-14.

I. Agency Branding

- Development of consistent branding in collateral materials (printed and web-based) that focus on the benefits and joy of providing foster care while raising awareness of the need for more foster homes in Brevard County.
- Distribution of printed educational materials at recruiting events, and other agency events.

II. External Communications: Owned, Earned, and Paid Media

- Implementation of targeted print and web-based advertising.
- Participation in related awareness weeks/months with online posts and community events (for example: February Foster Parent Appreciation, March Social Worker Appreciation, April Child Abuse Prevention, May Foster Family Awareness, etc.).
- Targeted Foster Care Recruitment through various media campaigns, including social media, the use of free and earned media, as well as paid advertising. Campaigns focus on the need for teen and sibling group foster parents in targeted areas of Brevard County.
- Implementation of new virtual tools for recruiting sessions.

III. Foster Family Referral Incentive Plan

- Disseminated information to current foster parents and staff related to the referral incentive program. Engaging foster parents and staff as partners is the key factor in both recruiting and retaining foster families.

IV. Community Involvement and Engagement

- Continual development and implementation of a schedule of recruitment events for prospective foster and adoptive families, including live and virtual events.
- Continual fostering relationships at local community groups for their continued support.
- Maintaining a consistent presence at community events, community partnership meetings, and associations to articulate the need for quality foster parents.
- Continued use of “Foster Care Ambassadors” that include representatives from Brevard Youth Leadership Council, current foster parents, and staff members that encourage, educate, and dispel myths about fostering to present at PRIDE Panel, orientation and recruitment events.
- Continual development and expansion of the Help Us Give (HUG) volunteer program as an entry point for community members to become interested in helping foster youth.
- Continual development and expansion of the “JUST ONE” campaign, a faith-based initiative to identify and partner with faith-based organizations to encourage recruitment and support of foster families in religious organizations.
- Continued partnership with Brevard Public Schools foster care recruitment marketing materials will be featured in monthly employee electronic newsletters, reaching 9,000 staff members each month.

I. Agency Branding

A brand is more than just a logo. Words, imagery, colors, typography, music, and tone are the building blocks of BFP’s identity as a community-based care agency.

The BFP brand connects our mission to the identity of the organization, giving members, staff, volunteers, and the community a common sense of why the organization does what it does and why it matters. It is more than just a visual identity; it’s the psychological construct held in the minds of all those aware of our organization. The BFP brand is the most powerful when our

internal identity and public image align with each other and our mission, “Protecting children, strengthening families, changing lives.”

The BFP brand consists of four parts: message, tone, design, and delivery

1. **Message:** The BFP brand message clearly defines our positioning and aligns with our core mission of “protecting children, strengthening families, and changing lives.” Messages included in design will be succinct and impactful, showing the benefits of providing foster care to both the caregiver and the child.
2. **Tone:** The tone of the BFP brand is optimistic and always shows genuine care for the well-being of Brevard’s children and families. The brand shows empathy, while being positive, respectful, genuine, and nurturing.
3. **Design:** As perhaps the most obvious element of our brand, communication pieces will be colorful, light and bright, making use of white space to create emphasis, improve readability. Imagery and graphical elements will be thoughtfully and strategically curated to build visibility, evoke positive emotion and increase community recognition and engagement in our cause.
4. **Delivery:** Beyond these fundamental elements, the delivery of the BFP brand through timing and across channels significantly contributes to the consistency of experience. The channels used in external communication, as well as the frequency of contact, create a rhythm of communication.

II. External Communications: Owned, Earned, and Paid Media

Communication is a strategic activity designed to raise awareness, inform, enlighten, and guide stakeholders and key decision-makers in understanding, supporting, and sustaining the Brevard System of Care (SOC). External communication informs the public about the SOC to generate support from the community.

Media can be divided into three subcategories: owned, earned, and paid.

Earned media refers to media exposure earned through word-of-mouth. BFP can earn media through press mentions/articles, positive reviews, reposts, recommendations, and contributing content. BFP actively develops relationships with local media outlets, agency partners, and local reporters to share compelling, positive agency stories as they arise to encourage awareness of the need for foster care in Brevard County. BFP Marketing staff have a goal of one positive story shared locally each quarter within the broadcast media.

Owned media refers to web properties owned by the agency, including our websites, electronic newsletters, and social media channels. BFP hosts information on its websites outlining how to become a foster parent and includes contact information for prospective parents to reach out directly to our Foster Parent Recruitment team. This online tool is intended to provide ease of access to information to assist families who are interested in fostering better understand the process.

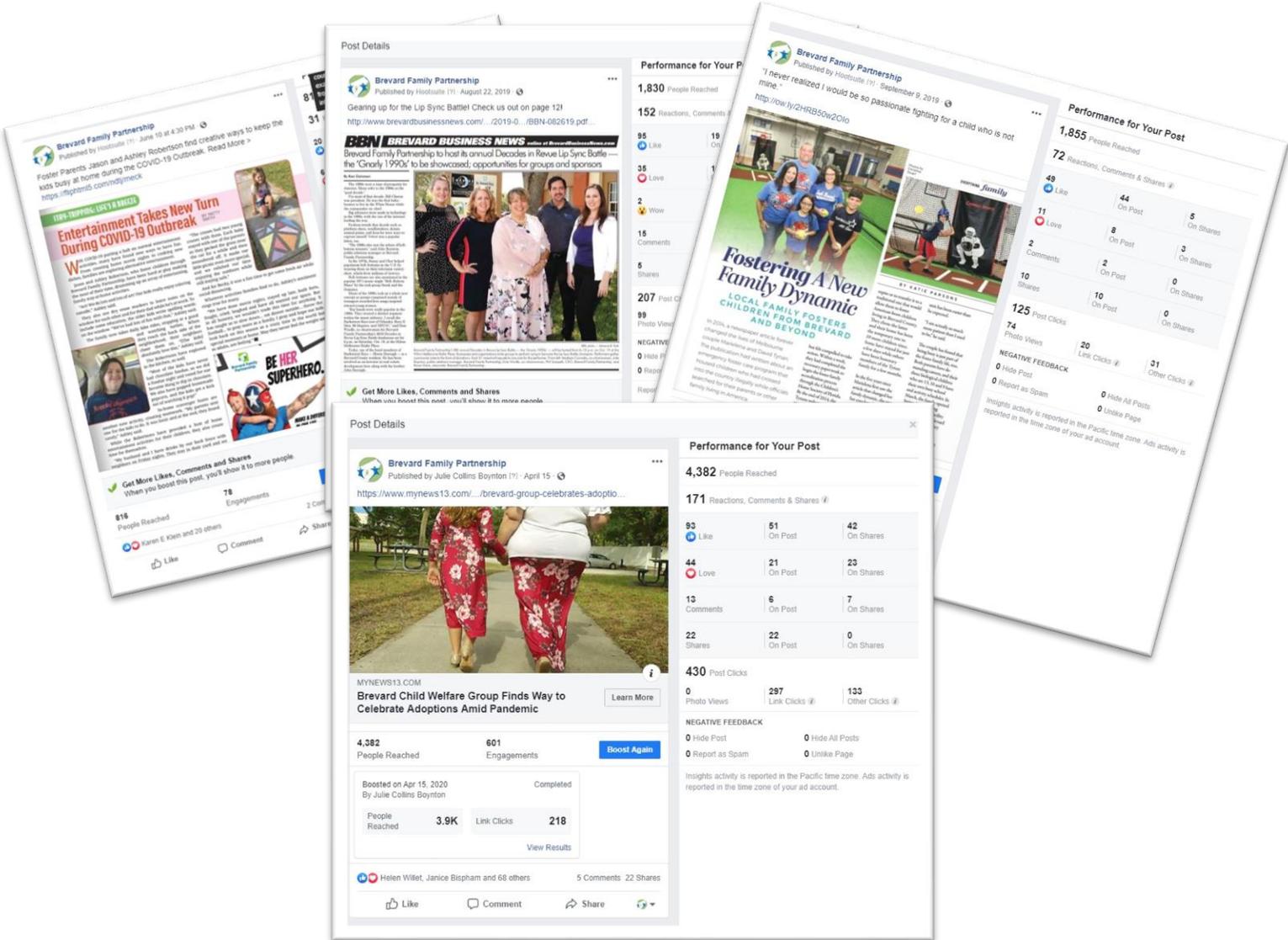
Paid media refers to traditional advertising, or any marketing that the agency pays for, including: radio spots, print advertising, search engine advertising, paid social media advertising, etc. All paid advertising focuses on general recruitment, with some ads targeted specifically for teen recruitment and/or sibling recruitment. During the upcoming fiscal year, ads and/or sponsorships will be placed in the following sites / publications:

- Brevard Business News;
- Social Media Advertising (primarily Facebook);
- Search Engine Advertising;
- Space Coast Daily;
- Public Service Announcements with other community leaders, and
- Local cultural events, venues, and sponsorships.

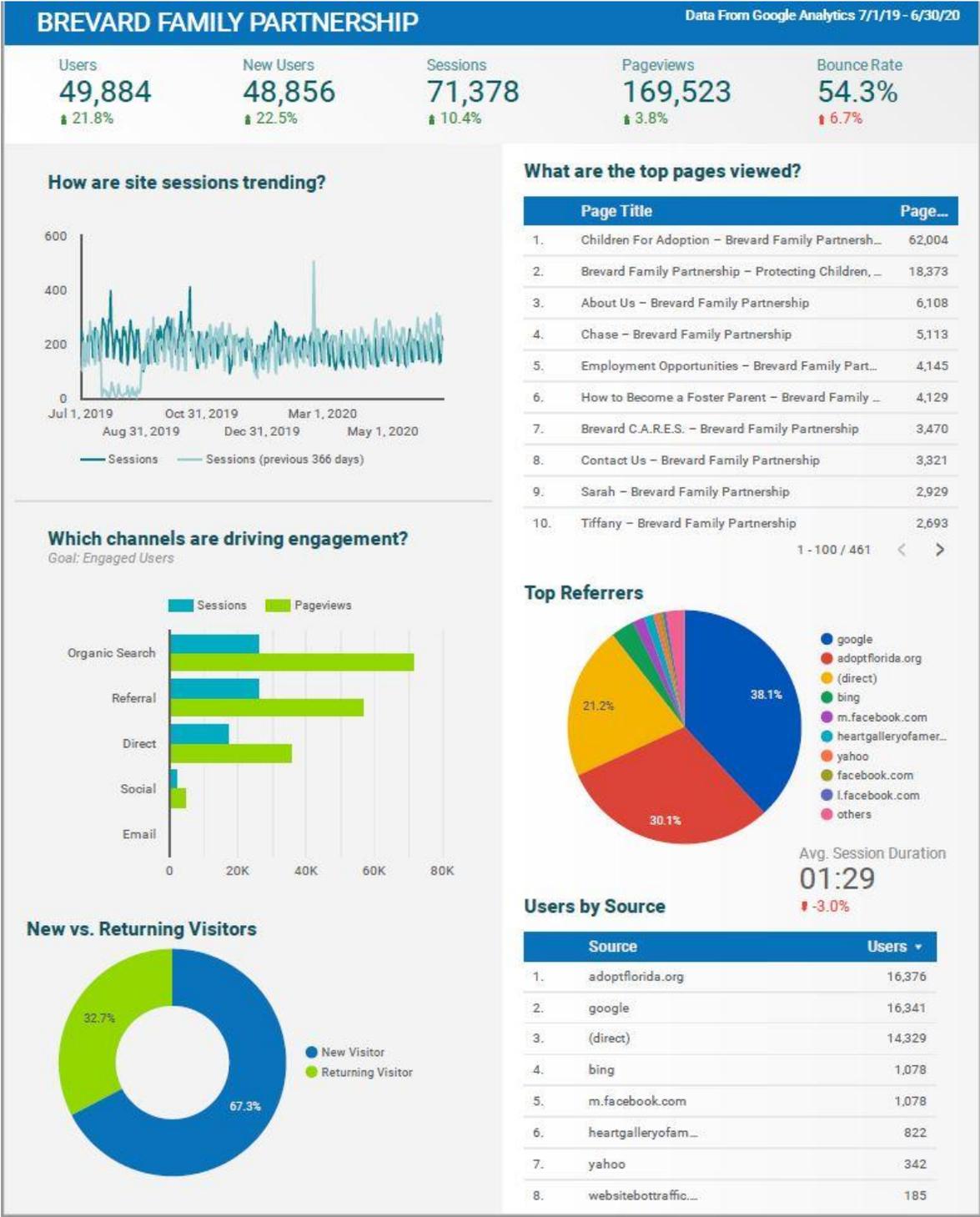
External Communications Tracking and Results FY 2019-2020

The public relations team tracks results from media stories through increased traffic observed on the BFP website. In FY 2019-2020, four stories regarding foster care showed notable increases in traffic:

1. **Brevard Business News** Article on our annual fundraiser to raise awareness of the need for foster homes in August 2019.
2. **Everything Brevard** Article on the need for foster families county-wide published in September 2019.
3. **News 13** story on foster and adoption amidst coronavirus in April 2020.
4. **Titusville Vine** article on foster parents during Coronavirus pandemic in June 2020.



Year over year analytics from the BFP website presented below indicates a 21% increase in users. Traffic to informational pages regarding becoming a foster parent doubled in the past year, making it the sixth most visited page on our site.



Virtual Tools for Recruiting

To implement social distancing in the wake of COVID-19, many of our recruiting information sessions transitioned to virtual platforms (Facebook Live and/or other videoconferencing). Due to its success and broad reach, we will continue offering virtual and live information sessions. Additionally, we will implement **The Real Deal**, a new monthly interactive broadcast where staff and members of our Foster Parent Advisory Team answer audience questions and discuss what it really means to be a foster family.

III. Foster Family Referral Incentive Plans

BFP offers a \$250 referral incentive to foster families who refer new foster families to the System of Care. Incentives are distributed upon completion of licensure and placement of the first child.

BFP launched a Family of Agencies and Stakeholder referral incentive and employee campaign. Those who refer foster families will receive a \$100 gift card upon licensure and first placement of a child.

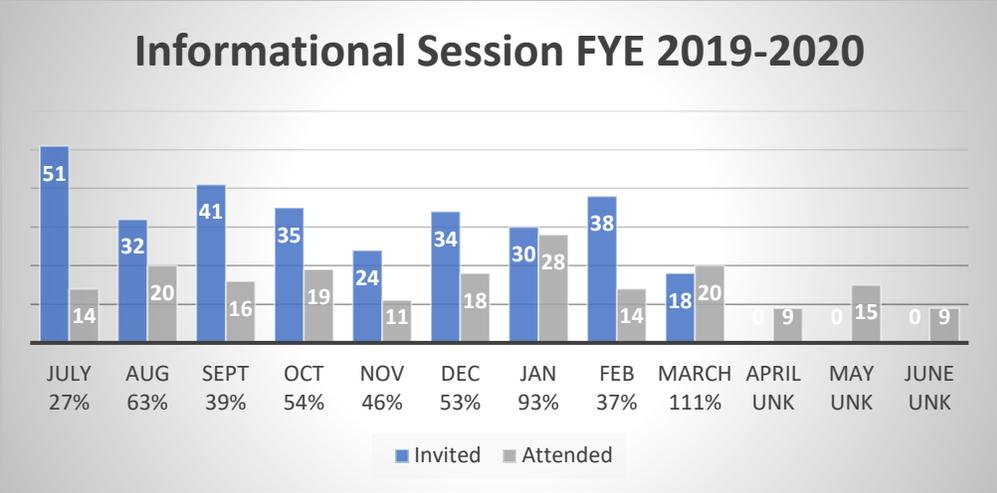
IV. Community Involvement and Engagement

BFP regularly hosts information tables at various community events and provides presentations and brochures to assist people in learning more about how prospective foster families can support the children in foster care in Brevard County. BFP has seen much success in recruiting.

FY 2019-2020 Recruitment Tracking Measures

WEB AND PHONE INQUIRIES	
Website Inquiries	117
Phone Inquiries	94
Direct Emails	56
Total	267

ORIENTATION ATTENDANCE → PRIDE → LICENSED HOMES	
Orientation	183
Families invited to PRIDE	124
Licensed Homes	39



Informational Session 2019-2020	
Invitations sent	303
Attendance	193
Conversion Rate	63%

JUST ONE Faith-Based Initiative

Launched in late 2018, the JUST ONE initiative was designed to bring a personal level of awareness to faith-based agencies to serve as advocates in helping with the foster home recruitment. The JUST ONE campaign was designed to identify and partner with faith-based organizations to find additional foster homes for children in our community.

With 411 churches in Brevard County, the foundation of the JUST ONE campaign is the fact that if every church included JUST ONE foster family, BFP would be able to better meet the needs of each child coming into the system of care. Non-foster families and other church members are encouraged to support the foster family in their congregation. Each month, nine faith-based agencies will be identified; the County has been divided into three regions (north, central, and south) and three churches are targeted from each region every month.

BFP will continue to increase recruitment opportunities among the faith-based organizations within Brevard County through JUST ONE by continuing our outreach and relationship building within the faith community. This fiscal year BFP will be able to measure how many homes we gain through this initiative with our new formalized tracking system.

Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Recruitment Meetings, Events and Activities:

- Cocoa Chamber of Commerce Event: Wednesday Friends Day
- Center Pointe Church Back 2 School Event
- City of Palm Bay Chamber of Commerce Event

- Just ONE Campaign & Informational Session
- Center Pointe Church
- The Grove Church
- Croton Elementary
- Victory Christian Church
- East Coast Christian
- Friends of Children Superhero Run
- Cocoa Beach Chamber Event
- Just ONE Pastor Brunch
- Taste of Titusville
- Pizza with a Purpose Event
- Suntree United Methodist Church
- Life Point Church: Focus 31
- First Baptist Church of Merritt Island
- Northrop Grumman Foster Care Recruitment Event
- Health First Health Fair
- West Melbourne Little League Opening Day
- Parrish Medical: Community Health Partnership Meeting
- Lucky's Supermarket: Open House Style Event
- Palm Bay Chamber: Multi-Cultural Networking Event
- Collins Aerospace: Health and Wellness Fair
- School Board Event: Parenting in Today's World
- Saturn Elementary School: Community Services Event
- Rotary Club Meetings
- Calvary Chapel Church: Foster Parent Q&A
- Titusville Christmas Parade - Foster Parents
- Tacky For Tots Fundraiser - Iron and Oak
- Melbourne Chamber of Commerce
Delta Alpha Sorority Event

Tracking Effectiveness of the Plan:

- BFP will utilize the new Binti licensing to track prospective parents through the recruitment, training, and home study process. This will be reviewed to determine what the recruitment strategy was used for the families who completed the process.
- BFP will continue to record the source of each referral received (website, call in, orientation, community event, social media, etc.) They will be compiled monthly.
- BFP will continue to review each recruitment activity after its completion. The following questions will be asked retrospectively:
 - Was this recruitment activity successful and what defines this success?
 - Did the activity spread the word to its intended audience?
 - Are there any changes or revisions that could make it more successful?
 - Could this activity, with revisions, be used with another targeted audience?

- Should this a strategy be discontinued?
- Was the effort (staff time/costs) worth the outcome?

- BFP will produce monthly/quarterly/annual reports and critically analyze the outcomes of past recruitment efforts. At times, this may mean dropping an activity or event that the agency has done for many years as it produces no prospective parents.

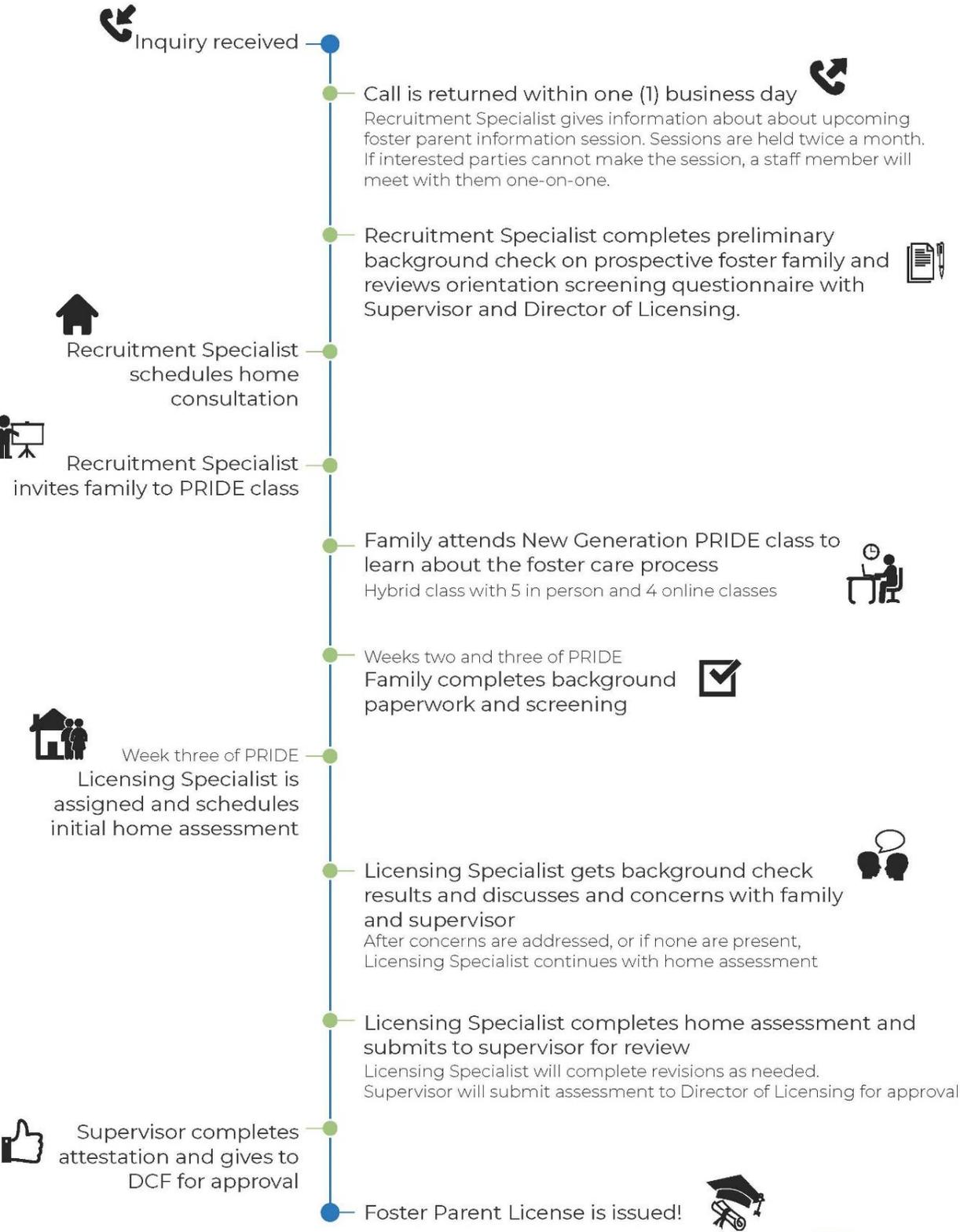
New Engagements with the Community

BFP is developing new relationships with local large employers and community organizations to promote awareness of the need for foster homes in Brevard. New relationships include partnerships with Northrop Grumman Family Engagement Committee, all 17 Brevard County CrossFit Gyms, local Realtor offices, and Urban Surf 4Kids, an organization dedicated to using “surf therapy” as an outreach program for youth in foster care.

Recruitment Follow-Up and Prospective Family Engagement

All recruitment efforts are conducted by BFP Foster Recruitment Ambassadors. Identified families are then referred to BFP's bi-weekly information sessions that are designed for all families who may be interested in learning more about fostering. The Brevard Family Partnership Foster Parent Recruitment Specialist receives information on prospective foster parents, aggregates the information and monitors and tracks progress and timelines for engagement. The Foster Parent Recruitment Specialist schedules the prospective family for the next available upcoming PRIDE class that is conducive to the family's scheduling needs. The Foster Care Recruitment Specialist engages in a pre-screening process and completes the Screening Questionnaire form for each family as well as a preliminary background screening. The families are then reviewed with the Director of Licensing and Initial Licensing Supervisor. The Foster Parent Recruitment Specialist confirms the family's attendance of PRIDE 72 hours in advance of training.

Specific Timeframes Associated with Recruitment and Home study:



Educational Resources

BFP provides PRIDE Pre-Service Training Classes annually to all prospective families interested in fostering. Twelve PRIDE classes are scheduled for FY 2020-2021; classes are added to the training schedule as needed to expedite foster parent training and to better accommodate prospective foster parent needs, including location, cultural, and socio-economic variations. The classes are conducted in both the central and southern regions of the county.

The Child Welfare League of America endorsed New Generation of Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE is organized into five groups in person sessions and four online clusters of courses (27 total hours). BFP requires participation and attendance at four (4) additional training classes at the end of each PRIDE Pre-Service Training cycle. Becoming a trained medical foster home is an option available through Children's Medical Services (CMS). BFP works in partnership with CMS to recruit and identify foster homes for medically complex children. BFP works in collaboration with CMS to monitor, support and provide services as needed (from both on a licensing and clinical standpoint) to assist in maintaining medically complex children in the least restrictive and most nurturing environment available. Becoming a trained therapeutic foster home is an option available through Pinnacle

Foster Parent Retention Plan

Retaining quality foster homes is an integral part of our System of Care. BFP regularly evaluates retention rates and hosts activities to boost foster parent engagement in the SOC. An annual foster parent survey is distributed and exit interviews are conducted on homes that voluntarily close to assess any opportunities, gaps in the system and to identify where services and support to foster families may be enhanced.

Foster Parent Support Group Meetings

BFP has representation at the Foster Parent Support Group monthly meetings. BFP and members of the Foster Parent Support Group establish contact and communication on an ongoing basis and foster parents are key partners in all major initiatives at BFP. Foster Parents have an option to attend the South or North County Foster Parent Support Group meetings. The North County Foster Parent Support Group was established in FY 2016-2017. BFP works with the Foster Parent Support Group leaders to plan trainings and activities appropriate to recruit, support, and recognize foster parents. Activities include recruitment/appreciation picnics, book clubs, clothing closets, birthday baskets, and foster parent mentoring programs, etc.

Foster Parent Advisory Board

The Foster Parent Advisory Board initiative was added in August 2015 and continues to meet monthly to discuss such initiatives as the Quality Parent Initiative and Foster Parent Mentor program. Each fiscal year the Foster Parent Advisory Board identifies goals and other areas of

needed support or improvement. The Foster Parents are BFP's best recruiters and they have volunteered to host mix and mingle recruitment information sessions at their homes.

Foster Parent Appreciation Events

BFP hosts quarterly foster family appreciation events, including, but not limited to:

- Foster Appreciation Week (February)
- Foster Appreciation Month (May)
- Back to School Supply Distribution (August)
- Thanksgiving Luncheon (November)
- Breakfast with Santa (December)
- Dinner on the Go sponsored by faith-based organizations (throughout the year)

Partnership with Faith-Based Foster Family Care Teams

Continue active partnerships with faith-based and community organizations. BFP frequently posts on various forms of social media to give appreciation to the faith-based community partners and volunteers who give their time, efforts, tangible items, financial support, etc., to create positive outcomes for children in care. Examples of services include, but are not limited to:

- Delivering meals
- Providing respite care (background check required)
- Donating goods or services (i.e. cribs, diapers, car seats, lawn mowing, laundry)
- Assisting with household tasks

Foster Parent Mentoring Initiative

This initiative was added in August 2015. As a result of the Foster Parent Mentoring Initiative, the following outcomes have been achieved since implementation:

- Improved retention of Licensed Foster Homes by providing short term and intensive coaching, training, support, encouragement, and skill reinforcement.
- Increased placement stability for children and the prevention, whenever possible, of any unnecessary disruptions and transitions due to stress and discouragement. This includes the addition of placement stabilization staffing's.
- Increased foster parent recruitment activities.
- Improved satisfaction with BFP and provider agencies across the System of Care.

- Newly learned strategies to equip newly approved foster parents with a wide variety of parenting strategies unique to providing out-of-home care.
- Assists newly approved foster parents in applying skills that make their experience both satisfying and successful.
- Increased trauma informed care trainings and access of the agency's Mobile Response Team for immediate crisis.
- Increased demonstration of the understanding of the value of the Quality Parenting Initiative with an emphasis on the importance of working with biological families to meet the best interest of children in care.
- Increased understanding of the roles of child welfare professionals and enhanced opportunities to build effective partnerships with team members and key stakeholders.

First Placement Supports

BFP is implementing a First Placement Support Program that will start August 2020 and will provide extra support and care to foster parents during their first placement. The staff who contact the family will enter a note in FSFN under the provider cabinet. The First Placement Protocol will anticipate potential challenges for foster parents during the first weeks of the first placement and support them through these challenges. The protocol will include:

- Frequent, friendly check-in to see how things are going
- A thank-you card in consideration of their efforts
- A foster parent mentor to serve as a source of quick information and support
- Access to training

CEO Livestream and Foster Parent Chat Café

Phil Scarpelli, the CEO of Brevard Family Partnership, began a series of livestream broadcast to our closed foster and adoptive Facebook communities. On a biweekly basis, he discusses current happenings within our agency and answers any questions posed to him. The broadcast has been very popular amongst our foster families to connect with the highest leadership of BFP.

The Foster Parent Chat Café forum is an opportunity for foster parents a venue to come together to seek and give emotional support, share experiences, and have a place to network to fellow foster parents who truly understand how difficult, tiring, rewarding, joyful and exhausting parenting children who have experienced trauma. There are six chat cafes that are led by experienced foster parents from the Foster Parent Advisory Committee. The chat cafes meet twice a month.

Host Homes

Homes who choose to no longer provide foster care services are encouraged to consider becoming a host home to a youth who has exited the foster care system and is entering the Extended Foster Care Program. This allows families flexibility and choice in who they serve while remaining active within the SOC and further supports youth development.

QPI Steering Committee

Through the QPI Initiative, BFP ensures active participation and involvement from the leadership of the agencies; engages foster parents to collaborate in meetings and staffing's (transparency); provides open and honest communication between all parties (open-door policy); ensures foster parents have a voice and issues are resolved (notification) and provides support and empathy.

In Brevard, families who foster:

- are full partners, committed to supporting our mission of protecting children, strengthening families, and changing lives.
- build lasting relationships with children, youth, and their families; and,
- are trained, skilled, dedicated and invested in parenting and mentoring.

In addition, BFP continues to build positive relationships and support the current homes that are licensed by providing excellence in customer service:

- "24-hour Contact after Initial Placement" - When a child is placed in a foster home, the Licensing Specialist assigned to that foster home contacts (typically by telephone) that foster parent to review the information, provide reminders of medical and dental appointments needed; and, provides support and services that may be identified from removal and placement.
- Warm Calls - The Foster Parent Navigator maintains constant communication with families and provides informational updates, conducts home visits, fields questions, and offers an additional layer of support.
- Single Point of Contact for Placements, Movement and Respite -Establishes that all daytime placements, movement and respite are made through one single point of contact (Licensing Specialist) to provide the foster parents with a direct line regarding placement needs, issues, and to both better establish and sustain relationships between BFP and foster parents.

- Monthly Foster Parent Trainings at the Brevard Foster Parent Support Group Meetings provides BFP the ability to deliver required trainings and, build relationships through monthly contact with communication and collaboration in a process of continuous quality improvement.

BFP will continue to effectively monitor and evaluate foster family recruitment and retention activities to seek opportunities in the community to better support our foster homes and ensure their continued involvement for the children entrusted to our care.

BY DIRECTION OF THE VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS:



Dr. Valerie Holmes PhD
Vice President of Operations