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National Institute for Permanent
Family Connectedness



NIPFC Permanency Blast

December 13th, 2017

Greetings!

One of the goals of our blasts is to build greater connectedness and networking amongst programs nationally and internationally. So for 2018, we invite and strongly encourage you to submit your stories and lessons learned from the implementation of Family Finding and other connection/permanency work information, and we will spread the good word/work! Our collective action is invaluable to the lives of thousands of families in the United States and Canada, and is now rapidly spreading via Kevin Campbell's outreach to Australia and Western Europe. As the research demonstrates the harm of "casework as usual" resulting in isolated youth languishing in care, more and more state laws, procedures and protocols either mirror or surpass federal legislation to ensure relatives and family members are notified and involved in the lives of their kin. Now that we understand the dangers of such practice, we can no longer stay silent and allow this "casework as usual" practice to continue.

Specifically for this issue, we bring a total of 5 articles and examples from programs around the United States to share with you. We begin with an article authored by Kevin Campbell and Jill Borgeson, initially published by the Chronicle for Social Change on 11/17/2017, in which Kevin and Jill identify the changing nature of the child protection system and lessons learned from previous work to better address the opioid crisis and economic disparities that are challenging to families. We then share a program update from the Permanent Connections program operated by the San Diego YMCA. This story denotes the transformative journey a young man served by the program makes from a lonely and isolated existence in care to achieving a sense of belonging amidst loving family relationships.

Next, we bring a story of another young man who has lived in the Chicago child welfare system for many years. This feature outlines the work of Chicago Home and Aid, a

leading child and family service agency in Illinois, using Mobility Mapping to help him reconnect with his mother and siblings, and ultimately spend the Thanksgiving holidays with his birth family for the first time in his life. We also include an article from the Orange County Register, which narrates the journey of two sisters who grew up apart and unaware of each other's existence, and their account of searching for two younger brothers they were also unaware of. They cite the assistance of CASA Orange County and Seneca Family of Agencies to support their search, reconnection, and relationship building. Finally, we share another article from the Chronicle for Social Change, authored by Kim Phagan-Hansel on 12/4/17, which highlights work in Nebraska, Colorado, and Hawaii to increase the identification and involvement of kin in the lives of the children in care and notes the positive impacts of such work.

Happy reading!

The Path Out of Foster Care Crisis Runs Through Family

by Kevin Campbell and Jill Borgeson, November 17, 2017

"The language of family finding is evolving in response to years of learning from practice and research. The family finding name itself came from these central questions:

Is it true this child has no one?

Is it true this child has no father?

Is it true this parent has no one who will help today or tomorrow?

....In asking these questions, we seek to find the people who will circle around the child and become the Family Finding network for safety and healing....But there remains a tension in many child welfare systems between a stronger connection with family and the outdated framework of removal and placement with strangers, or the use of outside services to promote behavioral change (or to prove it is not likely)."

To read the full article [Click Here](#)

YMCA Permanent Connections Program Highlight

San Diego YMCA, October, 2017

"The Permanent Connections Program of the San Diego YMCA was developed to establish a lifetime network of support for children and youth in the Child Welfare & Probation systems who have become disconnected from their family and loved ones, or who are at risk of disconnection via placement outside of their home and community. Children and youth referred to the Program are engaged and involved in a process which supports them to tell their story and build/renew/restore the relationships they want and need in order to experience the belonging and love essential for healthy child development. Periodically we provide stories of successful work with our children and families to highlight their courage and strength, while portraying opportunities to help families heal and succeed through this approach."

To read the full article [Click Here](#)

Building a Network of Support for Children and Youth in Care

by Erin Sharkey, November 17, 2017

"The residents at Rice have been some of the first at Children's Home + Aid to take part in Mobility Mapping, a process where children work with their caseworker or therapist to draw

out their life story - from their earliest memory to present.

Once children have completed their maps, Children's Home + Aid works with the National Institute for Permanent Family Connectedness. They analyze the maps and locate and engage the people who have loved and supported the children and bring those adults back into their lives. The goal of Mobility Mapping is to build a network of life-long connections."

To read the full article [Click Here](#)

Happy Ending? For Long-Separated Sisters, Finding Each Other is Only the Start

by Theresa Walker, November 16, 2017

"Sisters Angela Johnson and Andrea Hill have the same biological mother but grew up without knowing each other existed. Seven years apart in age, both were taken into protective custody as youngsters. Johnson and Hill, who share the same blue eyes and taste for fashionable high heels, found each other only through the services of volunteers and professionals who re-connect relatives separated as youth when they were taken into foster care. In that world, their story isn't unusual."

To read the full article [Click Here](#)

Relative Growth: Three States Increasingly Rely on Kin for Kids in Foster Care

by Kim Phagan-Hansel, December 4, 2017

"When Dana Murdock's newborn niece Dahlia entered Hawaii's foster care system in 2016, she flew from Arkansas to Hawaii as quickly as possible. Having aged out of the child welfare system herself, Murdock knew she couldn't let her sister's child languish in the system, and she couldn't blame her sister for spiraling into drug addiction and losing Dahlia to foster care....Since the enactment of The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, states have had greater access to funding to help pay kinship caregivers who step up. It allows states to tap federal Title IV-E funds, which is a foster care funding stream provided through the Social Security Act, to pay licensed kinship providers who assume legal guardianship of children. Other policy and legislative changes dating back to welfare reform in 1996 have helped to streamline licensing requirements and funding streams for relative caregivers."

To read the full article [Click Here](#)

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