
Foster and Adoptive Diligent Recruitment Plan

Targeted Plan for:

FFYs 2025-2029 Child and Family Services Plan

FFY 2026 Annual Progress and Services Report



Utah Department of
Health & Human Services
Child & Family Services

June 30, 2025

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ATTACHMENT B.

Introduction

This report is an update on the Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan. It includes progress and accomplishments in implementing the plan and identifies changes made to the plan.

Progress and Accomplishments in Implementing the Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan

Foster and adoptive parent recruitment, training, and retention activities have been implemented according to Utah's 2024 Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan.

- Utah Foster Care has continued as the organization responsible for foster parent recruitment, training and retention of foster families that care for children in lower levels of Care (levels 1-3). The year-over-year number of new foster parent graduations has stabilized; however, the number of newly licensed foster parents has continued to decline in SFY 2024
- UFC has continued to utilize the National Training and Development Curriculum for pre-service training to provide both in person or virtual classes for prospective foster and adoptive parents in both English and Spanish. This year, UFC has also provided 10 full Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) Caregiver Series Trainings plus multiple implementation sessions, totaling 212 hours of in-service training to foster and adoptive parents, DCFS staff, and has provided a TBRI overview to teachers to help them better understand and respond to trauma.
- UFC also supports foster family retention through the UFC Mentor Program, which matches veteran foster parents with inexperienced foster parents, and also provides individual and group clinical support, provided free to all licensed providers by trained UFC mental health therapists. In SFY 2024, UFC provided 213 individual therapy sessions and 78 clinical support groups.
- UFC also provides child welfare-specific trauma-informed training as part of Care Communities. During FFY 2024, approximately 100 community members around the State received this trauma-informed training.

- The table below contains UFC recruitment, training, and retention efforts data.

Utah Foster Care					
	SFY 2020 ¹	SFY 2021 ¹	SFY 2022 ²	SFY 2023	SFY 2024
Number of Consultations with Prospective Foster Parents	1,205	1,194	885	781	686
Number of New Foster Families Trained and Graduated	746 (543 Foster/Adoptive; 203 Kinship)	687 (465 Foster/Adoptive; 222 Kinship)	523 (333 Foster/Adoptive; 190 Kinship)	421 (236 Foster/Adoptive; 185 Kinship)	435 (256 Foster/Adoptive, 170 Kinship)
Hours of Training for Current and Prospective Foster Parents	3,838 (2,060 pre-service training hours and 1,778 in-service training hours)	8,401 (5,766 pre-service training hours -1,644 live and 4,122 recorded - and 2,615 in-service training hours - 615 live and 2,000 recorded)	7,779 (4,288 pre-service training hours - 1,661 live and 2,627 recorded - and 3,491 in-service training hours - 677 live and 2,814 recorded)	7,285 (3,944 pre-service training hours - 1,705 live and 2,239 recorded - and 3,341 in-service training hours - 573 live and 2,768 recorded)	7,527 (4,074 pre-service training hours - 4,074 live and 0 recorded - and 1,124 in-service training hours - 1,110 live and 14 recorded)
Number of Foster Parent Support Meetings, which include cluster group meetings and retention activities	242	399	399	330	340

NOTES: ¹ In SFYs 2020 and 2021, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UFC switched from in-person to online classes.
² In SFY 2022, many classes continued to be held virtually. However, near the end of the year, more in-person classes were held. In some regions, particularly in rural areas, requests to continue providing virtual classes were made. UFC now offers in-person and virtual classes, which has made it possible for UFC to offer classes in all areas of a region every month and has removed the barrier of traveling long distances to attend a class.

- Licensed child placing agencies in Utah support two levels of family home placements. DHHS contracted with 24 child placing foster agencies for proctor care (level 4), providing 200 proctor homes for child placements. DHHS also contracted with additional 21 child placing foster agencies for professional parent homes (levels 5-6), focusing on services for

children diagnosed with a developmental disability or mental health condition.

- DCFS retained contracts with 14 agencies that have residential treatment licenses and account for the availability of 214 beds for youth in care experiencing a high level of behavioral and mental health needs that cannot be managed in family home settings.

Demographic data for children in foster care reflects a continuing decline in the number of children in care, while race and ethnicity of children in foster care has not significantly shifted. UFC is continuing to focus on recruiting African American, Native American, and Hispanic foster families, and recruiting age-appropriate foster families, particularly for youth aged 13 and over.

Number of Children in Foster Care		
FFY	Served During Federal Fiscal Year	Last day of Federal Fiscal Year September 30
2020	4,076	2,377
2021	3,878	2,132
2022	3,589	2,066
2023	3,301	1,819
2024	3,064	1,680

Race and Ethnicity of Children Served in Foster Care ¹										
Race	FFY 2020		FFY 2021		FFY 2022		FFY 2023		FFY 2024	
	Count	Percent								
AI/AN	233	5.7%	236	6.1%	185	5.2%	182	5.5%	142	4.6%
Asian	48	1.2%	55	1.4%	53	1.5%	21	0.6%	29	0.9%
Black or African American	292	7.2%	285	7.3%	271	7.6%	275	8.3%	284	9.3%
Multiracial, Other Race Not Known	65	1.6%	65	1.7%	80	2.2%	72	2.2%	52	1.7%
Native Hawaiian or Other AAPI	71	1.7%	65	1.7%	84	2.3%	92	2.8%	89	2.9%
Unable to Determine	17	0.4%	22	0.6%	13	0.4%	9	0.3%	24	0.8%
White	3,636	89.2%	3,441	88.7%	3,185	88.7%	2,891	87.6%	2,649	86.5%
TOTAL Children Served ²	4,074		3,878		3,589		3,301		3,064	
Hispanic Origin or Latino	979	24.0%	1,007	26.0%	913	25.4%	830	25.1%	747	24.4%

NOTES: ¹All child counts are distinct and unduplicated. The percentage of children in each race group is calculated on the distinct count of children served during each Federal Fiscal Year. ²One child may identify as more than one race; therefore, the sum of percentages will not equal 100%.

Strategies for timely search for prospective adoptive parents has continued as defined in the Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan.

- In FFY 2024, the average time to adoption was 23 months by foster care kin, and 27 months by foster care non-kin. There were 320 adoptions from foster care, 165 (52%) involving adoptions to kin and 155 (48%) involving adoptions to non-kin. Additionally, there were 22 relative adoptions by kin through in-home cases, bringing the total number of adoptions to 342.
- Utah continues to work with Wendy’s Wonderful Kids (WWK) to recruit adoptive families for children in foster care. The table below lists the number of children WWK served during SFY 2020-2024 and since inception in 2005.

Wendy's Wonderful Kids			
SFY	Children Served ¹	Children Matched	Children Adopted
2020	193	31	24
2021	209	58	31
2022	287	49	18
2023	146	43	18
2024	183	45	19
Since Inception ²	553	561 ³	192 ⁴

NOTES: ¹ Each SFY's Children Served number includes all children served during that year. Some children are served in more than one SFY and appear in each year's count. ²The Children Served Since Inception number represents the total number of children served since WWK's Utah inception in 2005 and are not duplicated. ³ The Children Matched Since Inception number includes the total number of matches across all children, which can include more than one match process per child. ⁴The Children Adopted Since Inception number includes all children adopted since WWK's Utah inception in 2005.

Changes to the Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan

The following changes have been made to the Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan.

- DCFS Priorities, Kinship Care: Additions have been made to the list of persons given preferential consideration as kin, including guardian and adult sibling.
- Foster Care Placement Recruitment, Training, and Retention, Recruitment Efforts: Care Communities were added to support recruitment and retention efforts,
 - One way UFC addresses recruitment is by engaging with the public through a network of community volunteers and Care Communities team members. Volunteers and Care Communities team members are members of the public who are trained to have a basic understanding of working with children who have experienced trauma. Volunteers and Care Communities team members learn about the need for foster homes and help UFC bring its message to their communities. The training helps to de-stigmatize and dispel long-standing myths about foster care and the children who experience it.

- Strategies to Support Kinship Placements, DCFS First Impression: DCFS Family Action Meetings (FAM) replaced DCFS First Impression. See further description of FAM in the APSR goals and objectives.
- Strategies to Support Kinship Placements, Foster Parent and Kinship Caregivers Advisory Board: In May 2025, the Kinship Caregiver Advisory Board merged with Utah's Child Welfare Improvement Council.
- Strategies to Support Kinship Placements, DCFS Virtual Town Halls: Town hall listening sessions shifted to primarily be held in-person, with some virtual offerings, to ensure attendance opportunities for all interested parties.
- Strategies for Training Staff to Work with Diverse Communities: A UFC Engagement Specialist has replaced a Diversity Specialist and now focuses efforts on outreach to all Utah communities.