



ADOPTION RECRUITMENT GUIDELINES



Preparing a child(ren) for adoption recruitment
through the Adoption Exchange:



Before referring a child to the Adoption Exchange for recruitment:

1. Ensure the child understands their team is working in partnership with the Adopt KS Kids team to find them a family, specifically for purposes of adoption.
2. Ensure child's current caregiver(s) understand the goal of adoption recruitment, and are prepared to answer any questions the youth may have about that process and what it means for them.
3. Talk with both the youth and their support system to reach a consensus about which recruitment options are best for the youth. – customercare@adoptkskids.org



Adopt Kansas Kids



Types of recruitment offered by Adopt Kansas Kids



Private Matching

(private profile on adoptkskids.org – only visible with a professional login for purposes of child to family matching)

Public Photo Listing

(public profile on adoptkskids.org – visible to both inquiring adoptive families, as well as professionals)



Extreme Family Finding

(using intensive recruitment efforts, including diligent relative/kinship searches, to achieve and prepare youth for permanency)

Youth Centered Profile

(children 12+ will work with an Adopt KS Kids Child Specialist on the development of their own in-depth profile)



In State Recruitment

(CWCMP will be provided family inquiries from those residing in Kansas)

Out of State Recruitment

(CWCMP will be provided with family inquiries from those residing in both Kansas and out of state)



Preparing a Child for Recruitment through the Adoption Exchange



- **Talk to the child about photolisting recruitment.** Show the child examples of other photolistings and explain how the process works.
- **Explain why/how recruitment is used** and the desired outcomes.
- **Explain to the child some of the desired outcomes, as well as the possible results**, including the absence of identifying an appropriate family, while exploring the child's feelings about these possibilities. Explain the next steps if the right family is or is not identified.
- **Allow older children to participate in the process.** Involve them in developing their own photolisting and inform them that they will have an opportunity to participate in the selection of an adoptive family (if appropriate).
- **Be prepared to respond to a child who says "no"** to recruitment and address all of their concerns. Openness to an adoptive family may take a great deal of courage for a child, especially an older child who has experienced many rejections, and the child may need considerable support to take this step.



**Adopt
Kansas
Kids**

To help children who are reluctant to be recruited for, you might consider the following:

- Share successful adoption stories.
- If the child is uncomfortable with their first name being used, suggest that the child use a pseudonym.
- Ask the child to select the photograph that will be used for the photolisting.
- Talk with children individually or in groups about the possible traits of the adoptive families that they would like to have, such as one or two parents, pets, location of the home.

- Invite the child to imagine what it would be like to have his or her own family. Use this fantasy to correct misperceptions, answer questions, ease fears, and reinforce positive risk-taking and discuss the child's fears.
- Demonstrate confidence in the process and your commitment to see the process through. You might say, "Let's try. I want the best for you." **The key is never to stop recruiting families for children because their fear of rejection or because the caseworker is trying to "protect" the child from hurt. There is little that hurts a child more than not having a family!**



Photo tips

Recruiters say the best way to increase interest in a particular child is to update the photo or add video. For many prospective adopters, the photo is what makes them stop and decide to learn more. **Contact Adopt Kansas Kids to schedule professional photos for your child.**

A child appearance can drastically change over time. Photos should be updated at least once a year to ensure the greatest impact.



Strategies for getting updated photos

If professional photos cannot be obtained right away, AdoptUSKids has developed tips to help amateurs take better photos of children waiting to be adopted.

Below are some ideas for getting up-to-date photos:

- Ask the foster parents to have a photo session with the child or siblings when the kids are in a good mood or having fun. Be sure to provide the foster parents with photo tips and guidelines about what not to include.
- Make sure that caseworkers and recruiters think about getting photos on their visits. When possible, they should discuss it with the children and foster parents to ensure the children are ready and willing. If it doesn't work on one visit, plan it for the next one.
- Have teens do a photo shoot with their foster siblings or friends as photographer. Provide some sample photos and easy guidelines to get the best possible results.