

**Practice Matters:
A Conversation between DFCS and CPA's Part I**

Retention Discussion

During our April CPA Practice Matters Conversation you all discussed low and no cost retention ideas and the challenges and strengths of your foster home retention programs. Below is a summary of those discussions:

No Cost Retention Ideas:

1. Acknowledgment/praise /Encouragement
2. Mentors for Foster Parents
3. Staff support/on –call 24/7
4. Birthday/Thank you cards praise
5. Support/access to case manager
6. Respite care
7. Say “thank you”
8. Daycare services (trainings)
9. Foster parent swap (cribs car seats)
10. Foster/adopt advisory board
11. Good customer services
12. Weekly email of support/update (news letter)
13. Effective Communication
14. Praises/ego stroke
15. Disseminate info
16. Availability
17. Training
18. Positive Environment
19. Implementing their input and ideas
20. Involve foster parents in recruitment
21. Keep promises
22. Being personable
23. Being available
24. Offering choices and including them in the process
25. Donated items which can be used for give always
26. Support groups possibility be geographic location for foster parents

Low Cost Retention Ideas

1. Paid Respite (Beyond DFCS allotment)
2. Appreciation events/activities
3. Bonus (financial)
4. Certificates (siblings) (teens) (partnership parenting BF)
5. Gift cards
6. Inquiry – 7 Day
7. Availability
8. Clothing allowance

9. Advance per diem
10. Providing Car seat- clothing, personal items duffle bag
11. Foster family/child of the month restaurant reward
12. 24 hour support (clinical)
13. Initial visits in 5 days-24 hours-72 hours
14. Foster ware for parents
15. Training solicit topics
16. Try to find community sponsorships, goods, services
17. In person support-
18. Management/supervisor involved in care meetings
19. Refreshments during meetings
20. Foster parent of the year award
21. Tickets to local events
22. Welcome committee for new parents and new placement
23. Create community and fun with events together
24. Share community resources/inform

Identified Retention Challenges

1. So many players(i.e., DFCS,CM, CCFA providers)
2. Different ideologies of expectations
3. Burn out
4. Bad matching-drop out after 1st placement
5. FP withhold information
6. Lack of communication
7. Lack of resources/support
8. Minimum standards and changes which foster parents may find hard
9. SHINES challenges which delay payment
10. Finding money to do what's is needed ex, small agencies verse large agency resources) availability of resources
11. Matching worker to family
12. Matching Child to family
13. Lack of training
14. Respectful/non partner DFCS

Identified Retention Strengths

1. Making good choices (front end) (screen in and out)
2. Respecting /valuing family treat as professionals
3. Have right persons/right time
4. Engagement/be consistent
5. Providing tools/Resources
6. IMPACT
7. Ongoing trainings
8. Foster ware party \$50.00 after approved
9. Support that includes: staff with special skills including nurses
10. On call with MRG on call back up
11. Phone call checks

12. Transportation
13. In home support (visits frequent)
14. Some support that functions as training
15. Aggressive referral/program
16. Coffee hours
17. Staff Training to be more respectful and supportive to foster parents
18. More activities being offered to foster parents
19. Improving working relationships between staff and foster parents
20. Training foster parent better on their roles and expectations
21. Agency incentives referrals for new families which include a placement