

FOCUS

Finding Our Children Unconditional Supports



The FOCUS Program is a collaboration between the Department of Children's Services, Harmony Adoptions, and provider agencies across the state. FOCUS serves children statewide in the foster care system that are in full guardianship and are in need of a forever family. These children are often more challenging to place due to their length of time in custody, a history of multiple home or residential placements, and their emotional and behavioral needs. FOCUS works to identify long-term support persons for a child and to build a team of support around each child while completing concurrent planning towards permanency.

FOCUS cases are provided with any of the following services depending on the needs of the child and the action steps agreed upon in the Child and Family Team Meeting:

- Conduct Archeological Dig
- Continue Search and Engagement as needed
- Assist with adding support members to the Child and Family Team
- Update Eco-Map and Genogram as needed
- Continue participation in Child and Family Team Meetings to review and update FOCUS Individual Action Plan
- Engagement and consultation with the adoptive family to continue growth, problem solving and referrals to services
- Provide modeling/coaching/mentoring to the

DCS or provider staff regarding the tasks involved in FOCUS

- Individualized recruitment
- Conducting PATH training and/or home study completion

Some cases are identified as Intense Recruitment and the FOCUS Regional Case Coordinator takes the leadership role with a higher level of teaming provided in an effort to increase permanency and to foster larger support networks for our children. FOCUS staff complete an intensive archeological dig process which includes: interviews with the child, agency, DCS staff, family members, and other significant adults in the child's life; a comprehensive case file review; follow-up with all potential contacts and creation of a genogram. The follow-up includes locating the identified individuals through internet searches, certified letters, cold calls and home visits. This team of both professionals and informal supports meets weekly to outline action steps and discuss progress and barriers.

The main goal of the FOCUS program is permanency. Concentrated efforts designed to identify families and achieve this goal are carried out through a variety of activities, such as:

- "In My Own Words" children videos
- "In Our Own Words" family videos
- Parentachild.org website
- Community presentations to promote adoption awareness

