STRATEGIES FOR PERMANENCY

Tips and Techniques collected and distributed by the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE)

Strategies for Permanency is a compilation of recruitment resources prepared by professionals and agencies from the Pennsylvania Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network.

The strategies contained within are helpful for those who are working on behalf of children and families in need of permanency. This document can be shared with others and can be accessed on the SWAN Toolkit at www.swantoolkit.org.

pennsylvania
STATEWIDE ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY NETWORK

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TIP/TECHNIQUE #1
How to Use the PAE Coordinator Map in Permanency Work

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

Provide SWAN/IL workers with the PAE Coordinator Map, which is a reference tool used to assist with permanency efforts for waiting children and families. After reviewing the document, you should be able to understand:

HOW TO USE THIS MAP IN YOUR WORK

- What the colors mean
- What the numbers mean
- Who you should contact when you have needs or questions regarding PAE registered children or families with whom you are working.

MATERIALS NEEDED

PAE Coordinator Map (see below, or in full via *Attachment #1: PAE Coordinator Map,* or in the SWAN Toolkit)

ELIGIBILITY

Can be used by any professional working with a child or family registered with PAE or with a child or family who needs to be registered with PAE.

TIME NEEDED

Five minutes to review. Use ongoing in practice as needed.

DIRECTIONS

Review the map embedded in the FAQs below. Use the PAE Coordinator Map in your ongoing practice to help promote efficient communication with the SWAN team who can assist you as you seek to secure permanency for waiting children and families.

FAQS ABOUT THE PAE COORDINATOR MAP

- **What do the colors mean?** PAE coordinators are assigned to work with designated children and youth agencies, and these assignments are represented by the different colors on this map.
- **What do the numbers mean?** Each county has a PAE identification number (represented by the number under the county name). When a child is initially registered with PAE, the child will receive an identification number beginning with the letter "C" followed by the numbers of the custodial county*. For example, a child registered with PAE from Berks County (06)

would have a PAE# beginning in "C06." * Variations may apply in some cases, but this is a general rule of practice.

- **How do I know who to contact when I'm working with a child registered with PAE?** A child's county of custody will determine which PAE coordinator you will contact when you have any questions or needs. For example, for a child in the custody of Cambria County you would contact Katie Juliana, who is a PAE coordinator in the central region and assigned to Cambria County.
- **Which PAE coordinator do I contact if a child's physical placement is different than the custodial county?** Always contact the PAE coordinator assigned to the child's **custodial** county. For example, if a child is *placed* in Butler County but is in the *custody* of Philadelphia County, you would contact Kelly Myers who is the PAE coordinator for Philadelphia.
- **How do I know who to contact when I'm working with a family registered with PAE?** First contact your SWAN regional technical assistant with any questions about your agency's Resource Family Registry.
  - If you want to contact the PAE Family Coordinator specifically, look to the bottom right corner of the map where you will notice Alex Newcomer, who works across the commonwealth on behalf of families registered with the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange.
- **What if I forget who to contact?** If at any time you have questions but you aren't quite sure who to contact, you can always contact any PAE coordinator listed on the map. Coordinators are eager to assist you in the work you are doing to help secure permanency for children.

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) Coordinator Map
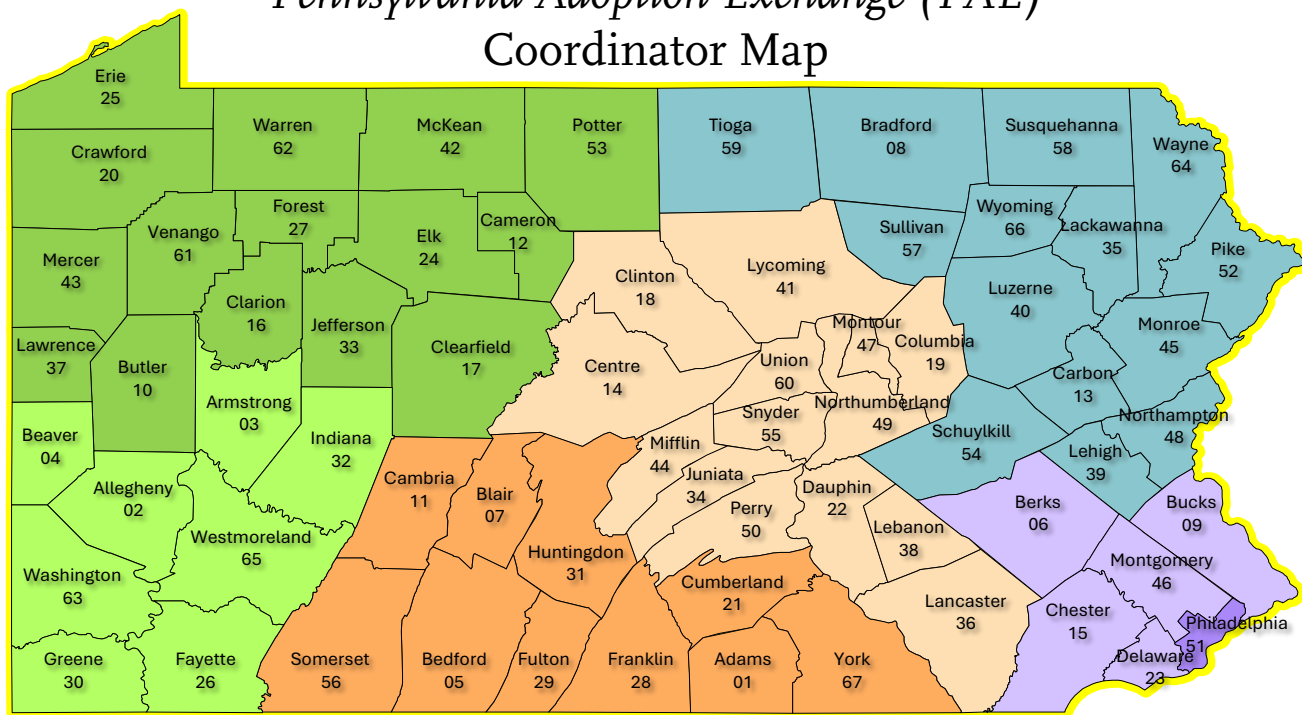
CHILD

Nic Landon	Katie Juliana	Kelly Myers	Sarah Reiss
nlandon@ diakon-swan.org 724.996.7502	kjuliana@ diakon-swan.org 717.901.4355	kmyers@ diakon-swan.org 717.405.6159	sreiss@ diakon-swan.org 717.558.7062
Nikita Lewis	Alfredo Gonzalez	Rachel Paashaus	
nlewis@ diakon-swan.org 724.809.1901	algonzalez@ diakon-swan.org 717.909.6815	rpaashaus@ diakon-swan.org 717.558.7292	

FAMILY

Alex Newcomer
anewcomer@ diakon-swan.org 717.901.0870

5/19/2025

TIP/TECHNIQUE #2
Registering Children with the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

We know from reviewing statistics about PAE that about 75 percent of the children who are active with PAE achieve permanency. We also know that the younger the child is when registered with PAE, the shorter their time is with PAE. Additionally, keeping a child's information accurate and up-to-date increases their potential for matching, and recently updated registrants are viewed more frequently on www.adoptpakids.org.

MATERIALS NEEDED

The *CY130 Child Registration and Update Form* is required. There are two ways to complete this form, and the preferred method is by the county, directly in the SWAN Portal. Those instructions are provided below.

A hard copy of the form can be downloaded from www.adoptpakids.org.

Note: *Always download a new copy to ensure you are using the most current version!*

The information required to place a child on active status includes the demographics section, an alias if Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) has not yet occurred, special needs and behavioral characteristics, a photo and a strength-based narrative. You can glean information for the CY130 by reviewing the child's file, reading their child profile and, most importantly, meeting and talking with the child and primary caregivers.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

All children with a primary or concurrent goal of adoption may be registered with PAE. Mandatory registration applies to children who are legally free for adoption and for whom no Report of Intent to Adopt (RITA) has been filed within 90 calendar days of the date of TPR. Optional registration applies to a child where reunification with their birth family is neither possible nor appropriate, where TPR is being pursued and adoption is planned.

TIME NEEDED

Completing the form should take no more than 30 minutes.

DIRECTIONS

A frequently asked question is: *"Who can complete a CY130?"* The initial CY130 registration form must be signed by the county caseworker; however, the child-specific recruitment (CSR) worker can complete the form and provide it to the child's county caseworker for review and submission.

The county can also complete the form directly in the SWAN Portal. Once in the SWAN Portal, click *"Add CY130"* and follow the prompts. If the child is already in the system, the demographics should auto-populate.

The information needed for the CY130 comes directly from the CSR referral and will auto-populate in the form. There are a few remaining questions that will need to be answered to submit the CY130 beyond those provided in the CSR referral. The county can initially register the child on hold, which will allow the CSR worker to easily update the status to active when the team decides that this is necessary. This avoids the need to fill out all of the characteristics and the narrative to submit the CY130. The county worker can submit the CY130 and place the child on PAE hold by doing the following:

1. List the county worker from the dropdown menu again, if necessary.
2. Indicate that the photo is forthcoming.
3. For the question that says, "Does the child have an adoptive resource?" check "Yes" to register the child on hold. *(This may not be the case since you are referring CSR and the child probably does not have an adoptive resource, but if you checked "No" here, you would need to fill out all the characteristics and the narrative to submit the CY130.)*
4. Indicate a primary or concurrent goal of adoption (whether court-ordered or county established). If neither of the court goals is adoption, change one of the goals in the portal to adoption and add a line in the notes/comments section that indicates that this is the county's plan for the child. That will allow you to submit the CY130. This is allowable as the portal goals do not need to exactly match the court-appointed goals.
5. Fill in special needs as N/A. These can be updated by the CSR worker.

The initial registration with PAE is required of the county because, as the agency that has custody of the child, the registration is an acknowledgment of this service. Once the county submits the initial referral, the CSR worker can access both the referral and the CY130 and update the form appropriately.

If the child has already been PAE-registered, counties do not need to submit a CY130 again. You can check to see if a child has been PAE registered by looking to see if they have a PAE number or looking at the top of their page on the portal to see if any CY130s have previously been submitted. From here, the recruiter can complete the form in the portal and move the child to active status.

Paper copies of the form can be mailed to:		**Faxed to the attention of:**
SWAN	**OR**	PAE Data Analyst at
Attention: PAE Data Analyst		717.236.8510
P.O. Box 959		
Camp Hill, PA 17001-0959		

Note: *CY130s cannot be accepted by email*

CHARACTERISTICS

The CY130 contains 60 characteristics questions, six educational status questions and 16 questions about special needs. It is helpful to print and take the form with you when you review the child's file. The characteristics have multiple sections, and affirmative responses to these sections should be indicated as "yes" if the appropriate professional has indicated they exist for the child. It is important to accurately reflect a child's current characteristics, and this section is not intended to cover past behaviors. These questions are designed to reflect *current* behaviors (occurring within the past 90 to 120 days). Certain characteris-

tics may be potential barriers to family matching (see *Attachment #2: CY130 Critical and Important Characteristics*).

Before indicating a child has a specific characteristic, please confirm the behavior was professionally diagnosed or is a current snapshot of their functioning. For example, do not check "inappropriate sexual behavior" unless the behavior is documented as an ongoing and diagnosed issue. If the child is receiving specific treatment for a diagnosed issue, this should be qualified in the *Additional Information* section of the CY130 form. Some characteristics can be a "deal-breaker" for families, so it's imperative that a child is appropriately labeled when assigning characteristics.

Active Status
Children in need of permanency resources are placed on active status. To be active, a strength-based public narrative and a strength-based private narrative, also known as the *Additional Information* section must be included with the initial registration. (For more information about writing public and private narratives, refer to *Tip/Technique #3* and *#4*.)

A photo or some kind of graphic must also be submitted for children who need a permanent resource. We strongly recommend using only high-quality photographs and taking advantage of our list of volunteer photographers (refer to *Tip/Technique #5* and *#6*).

Hold Status
Children who meet the mandatory registration requirements but already live with a potential permanency resource are placed on a hold status. If you check "Resource Identified" on the CY130 form, it is not necessary to submit characteristics, narrative or a photo of the child.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Getting any part of this process fully accomplished involves multiple internal reviews and steps, so be aware that any changes you submit may not appear immediately. The diagram below helps illustrate the general process. At any time, feel free to reach out to the PAE coordinator for an update regarding where your submission is in the process.

The Journey of the CY130

1) County or affiliate submits CY130, or any part is updated

2) PAE data analyst verifies that the CY130 characteristics, narrative, additional information, and photo are present

3) PAE coordinator works with recruiter and county on any part that needs further attention

4) PAE data analyst supervisor reviews the submitted document(s)

5) OCYF reviews narrative and gives final approval

6) The child is posted or updated on www.adoptpakids.org

TIP/TECHNIQUE #3
How to Write a Strength-Based Narrative

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

The narrative is the part of the CY130 publicly posted on www.adoptpakids.org that helps children and youth achieve permanency. Narratives can be read by anyone, anywhere, at any time. Because of the public nature of this information, narratives should be child/youth-centered, interesting, not misleading, and above all, maintain their dignity. Narratives should evolve alongside the child/youth.

Narratives do not provide full disclosure about a child/youth. More comprehensive information about the child/youth can be found in the Additional Information section of their CY130, which recruiters for the child/youth, PAE coordinators, and SWAN Helpline staff can access.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Internet access, adequate information about the child/youth

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

All children/youth needing permanency are eligible. All children/youth registered with PAE must have a narrative before they are posted to www.adoptpakids.org.

TIME NEEDED

The time needed will vary. As the relationship between the child/youth and worker evolves, the narrative can be refined and expanded.

DIRECTIONS

When asked to write or update a narrative, starting with a blank screen or page is always best. The first narrative should be at least 150 words total. Updates should include at least three or four new/edited sentences. If required by the county or requested by the child/youth, use an appropriate alias. At a minimum, the narrative should be updated yearly.

If age/developmentally appropriate, work with your child/youth to help them create, co-create, or review their narrative. Often, the most engaging narratives are co-created. You can use quotes from the child/youth and from their resource family, teachers, coaches, and supportive adults who work with them. Only use direct quotes. Even if your child/youth doesn't actively want to participate in writing the narrative, they should be aware of what it says and approve of it. Remember, you're creating a public profile of this child/youth.

The tone can be casual; this isn't formal documentation. It needs to be strength-based and easy to read. If you choose to utilize AI, review for accuracy and clarity. AI is a tool, not a replacement.

CAN INCLUDE	DO NOT INCLUDE
Positive personality traits	Physical description
Hobbies and interests	Challenges the youth experiences(d)
Two or three awesome facts	Diagnoses of any kind/support the youth receives
Generic statement about family connections	Types of families the youth/team prefers
Community and cultural connections	Youth's disinterest in permanency
Quotes from the child/youth and important adults	Quotes attributed to the child/youth they did not directly state
Positives about school	Age/school year
Ways they like to blow off steam	Limiting statements
Things that are important to them	Generic statements
Dreams for the future	Statements that identify the youth's location/ placement/level of care
Interest in pets	Specific names of video games
	Boy/girl to describe a teen
	*Gender identity/orientation

* If the child/youth identifies as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, include the gender the child/youth identifies as and be consistent with pronoun use. Their identity can be included ONLY if all of the following are true:

1. The child/youth want the narrative to include this information.
2. The child/youth has thought this through carefully and had conversations with supportive adults regarding the pros and cons of sharing this publicly online.
3. The child/youth is developmentally and emotionally stable enough to make this decision.
4. The child/youth has been directly involved in the wording and is in agreement.

This information should also not be in the first sentence but incorporated into the body of the narrative.

As these preferences can change over time, make updates if necessary. If the child/youth is actively exploring this, consider using a gender-neutral alias and pronouns.

EXAMPLES

There should be a logical structure to your narrative. Address one idea at a time and connect them. Combine ideas for more interesting sentences.

- **NOT:** "He likes sports. He likes football. He likes the Steelers. He likes hot wings. He is not a picky eater."

- "He's a big sports fan, particularly football. He'd love to watch a Steelers game with you, especially if you have chicken wings… the hotter the better!"

Be specific. Don't just say a child/youth likes pizza—almost everyone likes pizza! Include favorite foods only if they are interesting or unique i.e. anchovy and mushroom pizza. Families respond to specifics.

Say something. Does the narrative accurately capture the child/youth you're working with, or could it describe any youth?

Make the first sentence attention-getting.

- **NOT:** "Billy is an active boy..."
- "You won't find Billy laying around or watching TV when he could be outside playing..."

AT THE END

At the end of the narrative, indicate whether parental rights have been terminated. Review and edit!

STUCK OR NEED HELP?

- Talk more with the child/youth and other supportive adults in his or her life
- Talk to your co-workers and supervisors
- Read some of the other narratives on the website to get some ideas and inspiration
- Contact your PAE coordinator

Remember, narratives should evolve with time. At a minimum, it should be updated yearly; however, best practice is to update the narrative multiple times per year (typically with each new CSR referral) to reflect the child/youth's growth, development, best interests, and wishes.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #4

How to Write the Additional Information Section of the CY130

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

While the public narrative is a place for positive and strength-based information about youth, the Additional Information section of the CY130 form is like a private narrative designed to share the next layer of information with approved and home-studied families who express interest and are deciding whether to make a more formal inquiry. When families call the SWAN Helpline, specialists will share the information precisely as it is written, thus empowering families to make more informed decisions and providing youth recruiters an opportunity to communicate waiting youths' needs and desires candidly.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Knowledge of the youth from the records, SWAN Child Profile, interviews with those who know the youth well, and direct communication with the child.

ELIGIBILITY

All youth listed on the www.adoptpakids.org website are required to have both a public narrative and Additional Information. The Additional Information section is needed so the SWAN Helpline can share more private information with inquiring approved families.

TIME NEEDED

Will vary. The public narrative and Additional Information should grow and develop as the youth's engagement with the worker increases.

DIRECTIONS

1. Communicate with the county caseworker and others who may know the child.
2. Research available information about the child.
3. Write the Additional Information section, adhering to the guidelines below. This section should be at least 3-5 sentences.
4. Submit the public narrative and Additional Information as part of the CY130, or submit this information when you want the child's profile to be active on www.adoptpakids.org.

This section should provide the next layer of information to families—not disclose significant concerns or issues—to help them screen themselves out or encourage them to take the next step.

AT THE BEGINNING

As you begin to write the Additional Information, remember this will be read word for word to any family that calls the SWAN Helpline. Keep your tone conversational, and consider what you can share in this section you have not shared in the public narrative. Always start with a strength or positive!

Information typically included in the Additional Information:

+ *General description of behaviors (not diagnoses)*

The Additional Information section can include some information about characteristics or behaviors, but you should avoid disclosing diagnoses or medications. Describe behaviors rather than diagnostic labels. Remember to balance potential challenges with positive illustrations. *"While Charlie is non-verbal, he does a great job communicating via his iPad"*

+ *Ongoing or long-term medical needs*

You can briefly describe the medical care the youth is receiving and will continue to need but do not disclose details of medications or medical procedures.

+ *A youth's LGBTQIA+ identity*

This information should only be included with the youth's permission and if they understand who will receive information about their identity. Consider having the young person write or review the information, and exercise caution when discussing transgender children, as public information should always promote the youth's dignity.

+ *Current support needs*

You can include information about specialized support services the child is receiving (or is likely to need in the future) to address educational, behavioral, or medical challenges. Be factual, objective, respectful, and strength-based.

+ *Information about the type of family being sought and the skills parents should have*

If there are specific limits on types of families, include them with a brief description of why those limits are needed. You can also include the skills or strengths the adoptive family should have. Please note that any restrictions on race or ethnic background for the family being considered may suggest a potential violation of the Multiethnic Placement Act. Consider the preferences of the team/youth versus requirements.

+ *A youth's expressed desire for family-type*

Include this information only if someone thoroughly discussed with the youth the true importance of each family characteristic listed. It's best to list family type characteristics as preferences rather than hard and fast rules unless it is an absolute requirement.

+ *Special education status or Individual Education Plan*

If a child has no specific disability but is behind in school or experiencing challenges, you can include that information. Note progress or success whenever possible. Share positive information about school also!

+ *Performance or challenges in school*

You can share information about a child's individualized education plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan and brief details on its goals, accommodations, or modifications. Educational information in this section might also include participation in special education classes.

+ *Specific disabilities that relate to school, education, or intellectual ability*

Information about intellectual disabilities and developmental delays can be shared factually and briefly if diagnosed by a qualified professional. Do not include IQ scores or test results. You can share the youth's educational setting and academic support.

*Information typically **NOT** included in the Additional Information/private narrative:*

- Negative statements or beliefs about the youth (e.g., *"She's arrogant and rude and will test the patience of any parent"*)
- Identifying information such as last name, school, address, date of birth, specific places the child goes (i.e. workplace or clubs)
- Whether the child identifies as LGBTQIA+ (unless the youth has agreed to include it)
- Reason for entry into care
- Specifics regarding the youth's abuse and neglect history
- Information about the youth's birth family's history of physical or mental illnesses, immigration status, criminal history, or other challenges
- Please note that although we do not believe in sharing information about a birth family's history in the Additional Information section, if youth have a diagnosis related to prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol, that information should be shared as a medical condition rather than as a discussion of the parent's actions or history.
- Information about the youth's criminal or delinquent behavior or juvenile justice involvement;
- Current placement information, placement history, details about the number of placements, or adoption disruptions
- Information about sexualized, self-harming, or similar behaviors
- The child's immigration status
- Anything that does not promote the youth's dignity or jeopardizes their privacy.

EXAMPLES

Inclusive language

Björn wants an active family who will play sports with him.
Better: *Björn is looking for a family who will get him involved in sports and cheer him on at every game!*

Karen has been diagnosed with ADHD, ASD, and PTSD.
Better: *With the help of her team of professionals, Karen is improving her ability to focus and accept direction from adults. She can become anxious when routines are changed, so consistency in her daily schedule is helpful. She benefits from clear expectations and visual schedules.*

Preferences versus Requirements

No younger children in the home
Preference: The team feels Taylor should be the only or youngest child in the home. *or* Taylor would do best in a home with no other children.
Requirement: Taylor requires a lot of time and attention from her caregivers, therefore the team feels she should be the youngest child in the home. *or* Taylor requires a family who has no other children or older children.

Pets in the home
Preference: Beyonce prefers a home without pets, but is open to considering a home with small dogs. *or* Beyonce would ideally not be in a home with pets.
Requirement: Because of a negative interaction in the past, Beyonce cannot be placed in a home with large dogs, however, she is open to all other animals. *or* Due to safety concerns, the team is not considering families with pets.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Be careful that you're not inadvertently saying more than you mean to when describing the ideal home and family for the child.

Cass needs a family where she's the only or youngest child.
Does she need a family where she receives a lot of time and attention?
Could she be with children older than her?

John would do best in a home with male caregivers.
Would a single female family with someone who was willing to be an involved male role model be considered?
Would a single father be considered?

Michelle is looking for an animal-free home.
Because she doesn't like pets? Or has a fear?
Is this a safety issue? What about large animals?
Allergies? What about hypoallergenic animals?

AT THE END

At the end of the Additional Information, indicate the following:
> *For even more information about [child's name], please consider initiating a SWAN Connect inquiry or ask your family worker to contact the youth's recruiter, whose contact information is listed on their www.adoptpakids.org page.*

STUCK OR NEED HELP?

- Talk more with the child and other supportive adults in their life.
- Talk to your co-workers and supervisors.
- Contact your PAE coordinator.

Remember, the Additional Information is a fluid document and process. It should be updated at least annually; however, the best practice is to update this section multiple times yearly (typically with each new CSR referral) to best reflect the child's growth, development, and wishes.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #5
Tips for Taking Great Photographs

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

Hundreds of prospective adoptive families visit the online photo gallery at www.adoptpakids.org every day. Many families report making a connection to a waiting child when they first see a child's photo—through a smile, a grin, bright eyes or that glimpse into their personality.

We want photos you would be proud of; use the same care and attention on photos of your kids that you might use for your own photos posted on social media.

We suggest updating photographs at least every six months. They also can be used in Lifebooks, flyers and other recruitment efforts.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Digital camera or smartphone.

ELIGIBILITY

All children receiving SWAN services. If a child does not yet have TPR, ensure that the county will allow the use of identifying images.

TIME NEEDED

Allow about an hour, plus adequate time for the child to groom and pick out a few favorite items of clothing.

DIRECTIONS

1. Select an appropriate location for the photograph. The easiest and best pictures frequently are outdoors, because there is plenty of light and the child is free to pose in a play area. If you must take the photo indoors, please ensure that the photo doesn't look as if it were taken in an institutional setting (even if it was!). In other words, avoid cinderblock backgrounds or visible institutional clothing.
2. Let the child pick a favorite outfit and be sure they are well-groomed.
3. Be aware of lighting: even outdoors you may need to use your flash to avoid heavy shadows.
4. Consider taking pictures of the child doing a preferred activity or with a special object. Keep in mind that the child should be visible in the photo. For example, if a child loves soccer, rather than taking a picture of her playing soccer, take a picture of her in her soccer uniform or holding a soccer ball.
5. Have a familiar person, such as a social worker or foster parent, present during the photo session to put the child at ease. With a hesitant child, compliments often bring out a beautiful smile.
6. Candid shots are often best. Fight the urge to pose and say "cheese."

7. Get down on the child's level and move several feet closer than seems natural. Head and shoulders should dominate the frame.
8. For children with physical disabilities, include slightly more of the child. Focus on their expression while including a wheelchair or other medical device.
9. Photograph siblings together in the same picture. Children who are photographed and listed together are more likely to be adopted as a sibling group. Let faces dominate! Overlap bodies and squeeze children together to achieve the goal. Keep the children approximately equal distance from the camera to avoid out-of-focus faces.
10. Set aside enough time so that you won't feel rushed. Plan to spend an hour in the photo session.
11. Take multiple horizontal and vertical shots in several locations.
12. Have the child help pick the "best" photos.
13. Always send your PAE coordinator, or upload, the largest size or highest resolution photos in JPEG format (the default for many digital cameras and phones). If possible, send the best three or four photos so they can be rotated over the next few months.

NON-IDENTIFYING PHOTOGRAPHS

1. These often can be obtained by getting closer, so that the child's profile or face isn't in the shot. Having arms, hands, legs and feet in the photo is still possible.
2. Be creative: think about activities that the child is interested in, get them involved in one and get close.
3. It's also possible to use more generic photographs or art that represents the child and their interests (sports equipment, team logos, etc.) but photos that actually have the child in them are preferred.
4. Please avoid submitting photos that have been modified with an emoji, black bar, blurring of the face, or other de-identifying technique. Some positive examples of non-identifying photographs are presented, below:
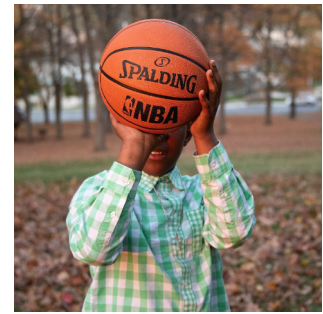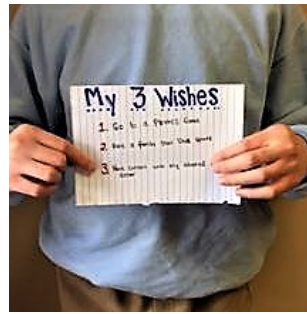
When in doubt, scroll through the photo gallery on www.adoptpakids.org. You can also consult with your PAE coordinator if you need additional ideas.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #6

Scheduling with a Volunteer Photographer

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

SWAN has created a network of volunteer photographers across the state of Pennsylvania who donate their services to provide each child registered with PAE with beautiful photographs for recruitment. These photos can be posted in the Waiting Child listing at www.adoptpakids.org displayed in Lifebooks, or used for any other PAE service requiring a photo. The photos should highlight the child's spirit and personality. All children registered with PAE are eligible for free photos, courtesy of the volunteer photographers.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- You must be able to transport the child to the designated site unless the photographer is coming to the child's location
- Ensure the child has grooming items and favorite clothing items

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

Children who are registered with PAE.

TIME NEEDED

A photo session can take one to two hours.

DIRECTIONS

1. You must be present and involved during the session, whether the photographer is coming to the child's location or the child has been transported to a different location.
2. Access the SWAN Volunteer Photographer List through the *Publications* section of www.diakon-swan.org and contact a volunteer photographer of your choice.
3. When calling or e-mailing the photographers, identify yourself and state that you are inquiring about the SWAN Volunteer Photography Program.
4. Coordinate the photo session with the photographer.
5. Provide the photographer with the child's first name and PAE number before the session and at the session.
   5.1. If you are unsure of the child's PAE number, contact their PAE coordinator.
6. You will need to make sure the following requirements are met for the photo session:
   6.1. The photographer will not be alone with the child at any time or communicate directly with the child before or after the photo session. They will only coordinate involvement with this child through you.
   6.2. The child will be dressed and groomed appropriately for the photo session. The child should **not** wear any clothing that identifies their school or location.

7. Photos displayed online and printed on posters are cropped to a 1:1 ratio (square) so keep this in mind as photos are taken.

8. At the photo session, if the photographer has the capability, they will share the photographs with the child immediately, allowing you and the child to make final choices. We recommend choosing several photos.

9. If the photographer cannot display photographs at the time of the session, they will email at least the top three image choices to you. Work with the child to pick at least one photo from the group (however, more are welcome). Photographs can be candid shots or posed head and shoulder shots showing the child's face. You can also request non-identifying photos.

10. As a recruiter, you have an important role in this process. Feel free to step in and help the child feel comfortable, and, if you feel it's needed, give direction regarding posing and setting up the shoot.

11. Please contact the child's PAE coordinator with any questions. Thank you so much for your participation!

TIP/TECHNIQUE #7

Submitting Recruitment Videos for www.adoptpakids.org

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

PAE can feature recruitment videos for children on the www.adoptpakids.org site. This allows recruiters to take child videos to a new level and helps promote matching efforts for waiting children to an even wider audience. Recruiters can create and edit their own short videos using a variety of mediums (such as Canva, Animoto, Powerpoint converted to MP4 format, or a video editing program) and submit these videos to the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange to be reviewed and embedded on the child's www.adopt-pakids.org page. Waiting families and their caseworkers can access these videos (which were typically presented for matching moments) at any time by visiting the PAE website. As with photos and public narratives, these videos should highlight the child's strengths and capture their spirit and personality. More information about the recruitment video criteria is below.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Video Submission Form, downloaded from the SWAN Toolkit.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

Children who are registered with PAE.

TIME NEEDED

Time to complete the Video Submission Form and upload the video to the PAE ShareFile site. Time may be needed to tweak the video.

DIRECTIONS

Once you have your finished video, review it with the child and their county worker to make sure everyone agrees to post it on www.adoptpakids.org.

Here are the next steps to submit it to your PAE coordinator:

1. Complete the Video Submission Form and send it to PAE@diakon-swan.org, copying the child's PAE coordinator. (To identify the child's PAE coordinator, refer to *Tip/Technique #1* or *Attachment #1*.) A copy of the form is attached to this recipe.
2. Upload the video (in .mp4 format) to the PAE Dropbox (indicated on the Video Submission Form).

The child's PAE coordinator will be in touch with you to discuss any edits that may be needed in the video as well as the next steps for posting the video to www.adoptpakids.org. All videos will be evaluated by multiple PAE coordinators using the Recruitment Video Criteria, attached to this recipe.

RECRUITMENT VIDEO SUBMISSION FORM

Date Submitted: Approximate Length of Video (minutes/seconds):
File Name:
Location of Taping (note if a public facility or other private location):

Child information

Child Name: Date of Birth:
Child Alias:
PAE Number:
Has the child reviewed and approved this video being placed on www.adoptpakids.org? ☐ Yes   ☐ No (child must approve prior to posting)

Worker information

Agency:
Worker Name: Phone:
Worker Email:

County information

County Worker:
Phone: Email:
Is the video a part of the CSR plan?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
County consent is required to post this video on www.adoptpakids.org. Name of County Caseworker providing consent:

Complete the Video Submission Form and send it to the PAE@diakon-swan.org email (also copy the PAE coordinator for the child).

https://www.dropbox.com/request/o25GA8TivyhBoUd4sJib

Recruitment Video Criteria
PAE will review each submitted video using the content and technical areas below to determine approval post on www.adoptpakids.org

Video Content Review

1. Maintains confidentiality: the video uses the child's alias appropriately. Nothing in the video identifies the child's placement or geographical location.

2. Maintains the child's SAFETY at all times: the video's filming avoids any situations that could be harmful physically, mentally or emotionally.

3. Promotes the child's integrity: the video empowers the child's sense of self-worth and dignity.

4. Does not feature other children (without permission): other clearly identifiable children do not appear in the video unless their guardian's permission is expressly granted.

5. Represents the child positively: the video content should be strength-based and highlight the child's unique personality characteristics rather than addressing their special needs or deficits.

6. The child's appearance is appropriate: the child wears appropriate clothing and appears clean and well-kept.

Technical Video Review

7. Sound quality: the video's audio is clear and free from distracting background noises such as wind noise or sounds of other conversations.

8. Image quality: the video's images are in focus and clear for the viewer.

9. Video quality: The video's picture remains steady; the camera does not shake. (Note: consider using a tripod if necessary.)

10. Video length 2-3 minutes: the video is no longer than 3 minutes (slightly less than 2 minutes is acceptable).

11. Correct video format: HD (at least 720) MP4

12. Lighting: the video uses outdoor lighting or was taped indoors with sufficient enough lighting that the video does not appear dark.

13. Background: the video is shot against a clean background with minimal visual distractions.

14. Music: the video avoids trademarked music.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #8
Generating Matches for PAE-registered Children

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

There are three ways matches can be generated, and this tip/technique is designed to help workers recognize which one is the most appropriate at any particular time. The three matching methods are data-analyst generated electronic matches, SWAN Portal user-generated electronic matches and PAE coordinator-generated customized matches.

The data analyst-generated match is typically the first match for the child or family and is used at the opening of a case. SWAN Portal users can expand/enhance the number of matches by generating their own electronic matches at any time. In situations where these have not yielded satisfactory results, or in situations where the match needs to center around specific criteria, a PAE coordinator-generated customized match is also available.

The data analyst and SWAN Portal user-generated matches use the same matching algorithm, further described below. The PAE coordinator-generated customized match is designed to be completely flexible and can consider specific needs of the child, such as the type of family or geographic location desired.

MATERIALS NEEDED

An initial or updated CY130 submitted in the SWAN Portal.

ELIGIBILITY

Children who are registered as active with PAE.

TIME NEEDED

30-60 minutes

DIRECTIONS

1. **Data analyst-generated matches**
   A data analyst-generated match is run automatically by PAE data analysts whenever an initial CY130 is submitted for a child to be active with PAE. It is also run when a child's key behavioral characteristics are updated in their CY130. The results of this match are emailed to the identified child recruiter, family recruiter and the family. (For examples of the cover letters generated, please see *Attachment #5*.) SWAN Portal users can access the match results by clicking the "Matches" button on the *Child Summary* page.

2. **SWAN Portal user-generated matches**
   SWAN Portal users can generate electronic matches for children and families instantly after a child or family has been registered as active with PAE. Users can complete a match at any point

throughout the recruiting process, and users can see results of this match immediately online. For instructions about how to complete this process, please refer to the relevant user guide in the Help section of the SWAN Portal.

Electronic matches, whether data analyst or SWAN Portal user-initiated, are generated using the matching algorithm to match criteria provided on the CY130 and CY131 forms. To better understand the matching process, you can read *Understanding the Matching Algorithm in Portal 2.0*, found in the SWAN Toolkit.

3. **PAE coordinator-generated customized match**
   Contact the child's PAE coordinator via email to request a customized match. Share the child's most pressing needs when identifying a match as well as any requests for a specific type of family. For example, does the child need to stay in a certain geographical area? Is there a certain special need or characteristic that is crucial in matching? Is there a certain type of family that the team is looking for (such as a single mother or a home with no younger children)?

   The PAE coordinators will take a very personalized approach in looking at the child's needs and searching SWAN's Resource Family Registry of waiting families. Please note the PAE coordinator can only filter for information based on the content available in the family's CY131 form. Because the customized match is conducted manually by the PAE coordinator, the results are not instant, and it may take a few days to complete the customized match.

   You will receive the results of the customized match via email. Be sure to follow up promptly with the families' workers to determine if the families could be a possible match for the child. Please also provide the outcomes of the customized match to the PAE coordinator to help maintain the accuracy of the Resource Family Registry.

For the matching process to be as successful as possible, the CY130 child registrations and the CY131 family registrations should always be kept current.

For any additional questions, please contact your child (or family's) PAE coordinator (see *Tip/Technique #1*).

TIP/TECHNIQUE #9

Register for a Professional User Account on adoptUSkids.org

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

Registering as a professional user on www.adoptUSkids.org under the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange provides national exposure to the children and families you work with and provides the use of web-based tools to help facilitate matches and manage cases. Workers can view the profiles of children as copied from www.adoptpakids.org and respond to inquiries about them, find families who are approved to adopt, register families with whom they work and more.

ELIGIBILITY

Must be a professional associated with a licensed adoption agency in Pennsylvania.

TIME NEEDED

5 minutes

DIRECTIONS

Please provide the following information via email to Isabel Madrigal at IMadrigal@diakon-swan.org:

- First and last name
- Professional email address
- Agency Name
- Your professional phone number (extension where applicable)

Once your information is uploaded, you will receive an email from www.adoptUSkids.org indicating you are a registered worker under the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange. The email will contain your user name and password, a link to log in to www.adoptUSkids.org, tips for using the website and guide to searching for matches. You should change your password as soon as you log into the site by clicking on "my profile" in the menu options under your name and follow the prompts.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #10

How to Sign Up For and Effectively Use the SWAN/IL Google Group

SUBMITTED BY

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

The SWAN/IL Google Group is a private forum for Pennsylvania county children and youth agency workers, Independent Living (IL) staff and SWAN affiliate agency workers. The goal of this group is to facilitate and support the work of expediting permanency and providing IL services throughout Pennsylvania. The forum has over 800 participants. This is a great way to share confidential information across the network to seek colleagues' advice, announce upcoming events and share information about children in need of permanency and the families who can care for them.

ELIGIBILITY

Must be an employee of a county children and youth agency, SWAN affiliate agency or IL provider, with a professional email account. Personal emails will not be accepted (i.e. janesmith@**gmail.com**).

TIME NEEDED

10-15 minutes total for the initial signup

DIRECTIONS

Contact the Google Group moderator, Isabel Madrigal, by email at IMadrigal@diakon-swan.org, indicating you would like to join the SWAN/IL Google Group. Provide your name, agency affiliation and professional email address.

- First and last name
- Agency Name
- Professional email address

You will receive an email inviting you to join the group. Follow the instructions provided. Make sure to sign out of your personal Gmail account when accepting the invitation, otherwise you will be unable to sign up. Respond to the email within the timeframe listed. If you do not, the invitation will expire and you will have to contact the moderator for another invitation.

We ask that users adhere to the following tips to ensure a high standard of practice throughout the network:

- **Do not** send identifying client information (e.g., full legal name or address). Instead, use first names, aliases, general locations, etc.
- **Do not** disclose detailed information on children such as diagnoses, medication and reasons for placement.

- **Do not** invite others to join. Membership in this group is monitored due to the confidential nature of the information being shared. Anyone wishing to join this list must be a part of the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network or Independent Living Services and may contact Isabel Madrigal, at IMadrigal@diakon-swan.org.
- **Do** include PAE numbers for children and families when applicable. (See *Tip/Techniques #13* and *#14:* Creating a Child/Family Flyer for additional details about flyers.)
- **Do** vary the days and times you send your flyers.
- **Do** be creative and descriptive in your subject lines.
- **Do** reply individually to emails whenever possible. If you must communicate to the entire group, double-check the recipient line to ensure the email is being sent to the intended audience.
- **Do** provide links and PDF attachments when you send information about permanency, awareness, or matching events, forums, educational trainings and conferences.
- **Do** include multimedia (links, high-quality photos, graphics, videos, etc.)
- **Do** bundle like-items in one email instead of sending each item individually. For example, send multiple child/family flyers in one email with attachments instead of sending each flyer in separate emails.
- **Do** ask general practice questions to gain insight from experienced colleagues.
- **Do** use succinct language when crafting your email subject line. Ask engaging questions (*Do you have a family match for 15-year-old Sarah?*). Provide a registration deadline for your event if applicable. Give a command *(Join us for the 5th Annual Adoption Awareness Event in Pittsburgh!)*. Make an announcement. Avoid language which seems "spammy" (*Click now! Free! Act right away!*).

Questions? Contact any member of your SWAN team for assistance and support.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #11
OCYF-Sponsored Waiting Child Television Segments

PURPOSE

Waiting Child segments are a powerful tool to raise awareness about adopting children in foster care, emphasizing each child's unique personality, talents, and dreams. These segments provide a vital platform for children to connect with potential adoptive families, sharing their stories, hopes, and aspirations to humanize the adoption process. By encouraging compassionate individuals to open their hearts and homes, these initiatives aim to increase the chances of finding loving, stable, and supportive environments for children in need. Moreover, agencies can utilize these segments to showcase their recruitment efforts and promote their work, highlighting the strengths and characteristics of each child. This innovative approach offers a next-level recruitment strategy that goes beyond traditional narratives and flyers, allowing for tapings to be done in-person or virtually, thereby providing flexible options to reach a wider audience.

OCYF's media contract includes subcontracts with five television stations: WHTM in Harrisburg, KDKA in Pittsburgh, WBRE in Wilkes-Barre, WJAC in Johnstown, and WSEE/WICU in Erie. Each station runs waiting child segments, and its reporters participate in unique child interviews that feature the child's interests. Historically, 40 percent of all children featured in a television segment achieve permanency. Families who have never considered adoption before can see a child they may want to adopt.

Example: A 16-year-old who entered care at age three in Philadelphia. His Val's Kids taping was viewed by a family in central Pennsylvania who had never considered adoption. However, once they saw the taping, they pursued and adopted their connection as, "he looked like he belonged in their family." He is now a successful young man, married and raising children of his own.

Children can be featured on multiple stations once per year. We recommend that every child be featured for at least one television segment.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Two forms are needed:

1. *SWAN Authorization for Filming, Photographing, and Release of Materials for Youth Specific Recruitment* form (Attachment #4), which must be signed by the county of custody. The person authorized to sign the release may vary depending on county policy. Please remember that this form should be dated at the time of the signature, as it is good for one year.

2. A station-specific information form will also be required. To obtain the required documentation, please reach out to the PAE Coordinator for the respective TV station

Review the *Tips for Social Workers* handout (Attachment #3), which helps prepare children for public speaking.

For virtual tapings, recruiters need five or more high-quality photos and/or SWAN-approved recruitment video clips. Contact the assigned coordinator for guidance.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

Children who are on active status with PAE and have information posted to www.adoptpakids.org.

For in-person tapings, TV Networks will only conduct tapings in their viewing areas, typically not more than an hour from the station.

TIME NEEDED

Varies based on the shoot location and the child's preferences. The actual recording typically takes an hour. Allow for travel time to and from the location. Please plan to arrive at the location at least 15 minutes prior to the start time.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Before the taping**
   Verify the child's willingness and level of comfort with being recorded for public speaking. We recommend using *Tips for Social Workers* (Attachment #3). Ask the child for suggested activities to do during the shoot. The caseworker may also be interviewed, so please be prepared to be on video (e.g., When the interviewer asks: "What do you like about this child?"). Consider whether other people in the child's life can provide information about the child (e.g., "His teacher said that he...").

   Visit the station's websites to see previous features. Consider sharing these with the children ahead of time.

   - Val's Kids (WHTM)
   - A Little Love (WBRE)
   - Waiting Child (KDKA)
   - Finding Forever (WJAC)
   - A Family For Life (WSEE/WICU)

   Contact a PAE coordinator to schedule the feature:

   Central PA – Val's Kids (WHTM):
   Alfredo Gonzalez, at 717.909.6815 or algonzalez@diakon-swan.org
   Northeast PA – A Little Love (WBRE):
   Sarah Reiss at 717.558.7062 or sreiss@diakon-swan.org
   Western PA – Waiting Child (KDKA):
   Nikita Lewis at 724.809.1901 or nlewis@diakon-swan.org
   Central PA – Finding Forever (WJAC):
   Katie Juliana at 717.901.4355 or kjuliana@diakon-swan.org
   Northwestern PA – A Family For Life (WSEE/WICU):
   Nic Landon at 724.996.7502 or nlandon@diakon-swan.org

   The recruiter verifies with the appropriate PAE coordinator that the child or sibling group is PAE-registered and on active status.

   The recruiter should provide information about the child, such as what he or she enjoys doing, and identify if the child requires special accommodations. Children who are not yet free for adoption must use an alias, using the name currently being used on the www.adoptpakids.org website. Be-

fore the taping, please discuss with the youth the name that will be utilized during the taping.

Provide some possible dates for the feature. The PAE coordinator will confirm the dates and venue with the television station. All details will be forwarded via email to the worker.

2. **Day of the taping**
   Ensure the child looks their best. Try to pick appropriate clothing with the child before the event. Make sure that the clothing does not identify their location (school, community, or placement) or birth name if using an alias. They should be well groomed and dressed to impress/ picture day ready, yet comfortable. Bring a personal care bag for the child. Items could include deodorant, cologne, comb, mirror, moist wipes, hand sanitizer, a bottle of water or drink (especially if the child will be in an athletic venue), tissues, lip balm, hand lotion, mouthwash or disposable toothbrush and a change of clothes, if applicable.

   Allow ample travel time to arrive before the feature and let the child become comfortable in the environment. Consider parking, walking time, bathroom breaks, etc. Use travel time to relieve anxieties and discuss the event with them.

3. **During the taping**
   A PAE coordinator or SWAN representative will be present during the shoot. As the child's recruiter, be prepared to speak and answer questions about them. Please support them and ensure they remain confident and comfortable. We suggest that you also be ready to take photos to document and capture the child's experience. Remember that only information following the public narrative guidelines should be discussed in the taping.

4. **After the taping**
   During the ride home, debrief the child and discuss the day with their current caregivers. The time it takes to air the segment varies; however, you will be notified of the date and time of the child's broadcast. The station will also have the segment available online.

   The station will share the video with PAE, who will upload it to our YouTube channel and embed it on the child's page on www.adoptpakids.org.

   Viewers will be directed to call the SWAN Helpline at 1.800.585.SWAN (7926) to get additional information. The Helpline will provide families approved to adopt with information about the child and the caseworker's contact information. Please remember:

   - You can feature a child on any (or all!) of the five stations listed.
   - The county authorization form completed by the county is good for one year.
   - You can ask any PAE coordinator about opportunities to do a virtual TV taping.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #12
Other Waiting Child Television Segments

PURPOSE

Waiting Child segments are a powerful tool to raise awareness about adopting children in foster care, emphasizing each child's unique personality, talents, and dreams. These segments provide a vital platform for children to connect with potential adoptive families, sharing their stories, hopes, and aspirations to humanize the adoption process. By encouraging compassionate individuals to open their hearts and homes, these initiatives aim to increase the chances of finding loving, stable, and supportive environments for children in need. Moreover, agencies can utilize these segments to showcase their recruitment efforts and promote their work, highlighting the strengths and characteristics of each child. This innovative approach offers a next-level recruitment strategy that goes beyond traditional narratives and flyers, allowing for tapings to be done in-person or virtually, thereby providing flexible options to reach a wider audience.

There are two Waiting Child Segments in Pennsylvania that are not OCYF-sponsored but are still fantastic ways to increase the visibility of waiting children. These segments are *WCAU Wednesday's Child* (in the Philadelphia Region) and *WFMZ Adopt Lehigh Valley Kids* (in the Lehigh Valley Region). These stations run waiting child segments, and their reporters participate in unique child interviews, which feature the child's interests and positive attributes.

The segments are broadcast on television, then posted and archived on the station's website as well. The segments are also posted on the child's page on www.adoptpakids.org.

Children can be recorded more than once, and we recommend that every eligible child has the opportunity to participate in a television segment. It is a wonderful day for the child as well as a great way to move towards permanency. Information about both of these waiting child segments is listed below.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For *Wednesday's Child*: The Adoption Center's Media Recruitment form. The Adoption Center allows the county or recruiter to sign the form before submission. Please be sure to discuss participation with the county.

For *Adopt Lehigh Valley Kids*: The Adopt Lehigh Valley Kids Waiting Child Information form. Written consent from the county is required to participate in tapings and to use identifying images. (Additionally, some counties may desire recruiter, child (if age 18+), and/or custodial parent to consent as well.)

The referrals ask for information about the child's personality, interests and hobbies, special needs, dreams and wishes. This is used to identify the most appropriate setting for the taping (i.e., a dance studio for a child interested in music/dancing, a tour of the baseball stadium for a sports fan, etc.).

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

Children who are on active status with the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) and have information posted to www.adoptpakids.org. The child can have any level of special needs, including children who are non-verbal and/or have significant medical or mobility needs.

Wednesday's Child will feature a child of any age but requires that the child is legally free for adoption child's identifying image can be shown during the taping (an alias can be used, if needed). Tapings typically occur in Philadelphia or within a one-hour radius of the city. Tapings can also be done virtually; however, the Adoption Center asks for a thorough write-up about the child and several high-quality photos and/or video clips to conduct a virtual taping.

Adopt Lehigh Valley Kids desires to feature older children (age 10+) and sibling groups in the foster care system. They will feature children who are legally free or not yet legally free, as long as their identities can be shown on television (aliases can also be used as necessary). The tapings must occur within a one-hour radius of the Lehigh Valley.

TIME NEEDED

The time needed for both of these waiting child segments can vary depending on the activity chosen to feature the child. Tapings generally take one to two hours, but sometimes more time is needed for more involved activities. Travel time will vary depending on location. *Wednesday's Child* tapings typically occur on Wednesdays and *Adopt Lehigh Valley Kids* tapings typically occur on Fridays at 10 am.

DIRECTIONS

Verify the child's willingness and level of comfort with being recorded for public speaking. We recommend using *Tips for Social Workers* (Attachment #3). Ask the child for suggested activities to do during the taping. Many kids will say they love video games, fishing, and sports, but if you can add favorite teams, what they want to be when they grow up, or other talents, the segment will be extra special. Children will shine when they talk about what interests them, and their segment gives them a special experience doing something they love! The caseworker may also be interviewed, so please be prepared to be on video.

Information shared during the interview for the taping must match the guidelines for the public narrative on the www.adoptpakids.org website. In other words, there should be no mention of the child's past placement history, specific special needs, diagnoses, services, medications, behaviors, etc. It is best when recruiters attend this taping with the child to monitor what is being asked and reported during the taping. The videos will appear on the TV station's public website. Maintaining the child's dignity and confidentiality is vital by ensuring the content is strengths-based and highlights their positive and endearing qualities. Tapings that do not match AdoptPAKids guidelines will not be posted on the www.adoptpakids.org website.

Attain a copy of the referral form for the questionnaire.

1. For *Wednesday's Child*: The recruitment form can be completed online at this link: https://form.jotform.com/240804752128050. This form can be completed by the recruiter and a link can be sent to the county for signature before it is submitted to the Adoption Center. Questions can be directed to email the Adoption Center at mediarecruitment@adopt.org. You will be asked to consider other media recruitment activities the Adoption Center can coordinate, including newspaper, online and radio spots.
2. For *Adopt Lehigh Valley Kids*: contact Courtney Farabaugh at The Salvation Army Children's Services at Courtney.Farabaugh@use.salvationarmy.org or 610.821.7706. Complete the form, concentrating on the child's interests and considering any special accommodations, secure the necessary signature(s), and submit the referral form as instructed.

The coordinating agency will contact you to let you know the referral was received and to discuss possible dates when the segment will be recorded. They will also discuss the child's interests and different possible venues for the taping.

Once the taping day arrives, bring the child to the arranged location and bring your camera: kids love having pictures of their special day and they make great additions to Lifebooks. Also consider using one of the SWAN photographers to take photos that day. This should be done before or after the taping so the photographer does not interfere with the filming.

Tips for any waiting child segment taping:
- Remember to check with the child and caregiver before the day of the taping to ensure the child is dressed and groomed appropriately for the taping.
- Allow ample travel time (arrive at least 15 minutes before the taping) for the child to get comfortable in the environment. Use travel time to help the child relieve anxieties about taping.
- Ensure the child is not wearing identifying clothing (name of a local sports team, club, school). If someone from the youth's placement facility is participating in the interview, it is important to be aware of any clothing items or work IDs/lanyards that may reveal the name of the child's placement location.
- Do not use the child's full, legal name at any time during the taping (an alias can be used and should be determined in advance).
- Ensure the child is properly hydrated and fed before, during, and after the segment
- Ask if someone from the coordinating agency will review the script before airing (to ensure no confidential information is released). Ask about when the taping will air and how the segment will be used and accessed.
- During the ride home from the taping, debrief with the child. Inform the current caregivers about the day.
- Don't forget the SWAN/IL Google Group is a great way to spread the word about the television segment.
- Remember that youth can be featured on multiple TV tapings, so consider other TV taping options to be featured in various viewing areas across the state.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #13
Creating a Child Flyer

SUBMITTED BY

Central Region Recruiter's Coalition

PURPOSE

To list best practices for information to include (and avoid) on a child's flyer.

ELIGIBILITY

Children who have an active CSR referral.

TIME NEEDED

10 minutes to review document; 20-30 minutes to create a new flyer.

DIRECTIONS

See the document on the next page.

10

CENTRAL REGION RECRUITERS COALITION RECOMMENDATIONS
CHILD FLYER

1 **NAME, PAE#, PHOTO**
Use alias if needed. Do not distort/stretch photos. Take advantage of volunteer photographers. If photo unavailable, be creative.

2 **DEMOGRAPHICS**
Age/Race/Gender

3 **PERSONALITY & INTERESTS**
Passions, skills, activity level. What makes them special, unique or different? What is it like to spend time with this youth?

4 **GEOGRAPHIC PREFERENCES**
Urban/Suburban/Rural or preference for a particular area?

5 **MAINTAINING CONNECTIONS**
Are there relationships to maintain? Is visitation of any kind occurring?

6 **EDUCATION**
Highlight any strengths. May highlight supports needed.

7 **SPECIFIC NEEDS OF THE YOUTH**
Level of supervision, supportive services needed. Do not include diagnoses.

8 **FAMILY PREFERENCES**
Family composition? Pets? Children? Oldest Child? Only Child? Personality traits?

9 **DATE FLYER WAS LAST UPDATED**
Can help guide what questions the worker might have and if this flyer has already been reviewed.

10 **YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION**
Include phone number and email.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #14

Creating a Family Flyer

SUBMITTED BY

Central Region Recruiter's Coalition

PURPOSE

To list best practices for information to include (and avoid) on a family's flyer.

ELIGIBILITY

Families who have an approved CY131.

TIME NEEDED

10 minutes to review document; 20-30 minutes to create a new flyer.

DIRECTIONS

See the document on the next page.

10

CENTRAL REGION RECRUITERS COALITION RECOMMENDATIONS
FAMILY FLYER

1 NAME, PAE#, FAMILY COMPOSITION
Who is in this family? Include pets! Include ages or birth dates of children.

2 PHOTO
Do not distort/stretch; ensure not blurry etc. Can use photo to represent something about the family. Only include people who live in the home.

3 LOCATION
General information on family location. School district may be helpful for foster care placements.

4 STRENGTHS
Specific strengths. What about the family will help them connect to our youth - grief and loss, other life experiences, career, trainings etc.

5 PERSONALITY & INTERESTS
What makes this family unique? Specific hobbies, interests and activities they do regularly. Religious practices? Openness to other faiths or no faith?

6 EXPERIENCE
This can include adoption/foster/parenting, experience with children in general, specific populations or other care-taking experience.

7 DEMOGRAPHIC PREFERENCES
Age/Race/Gender. If the family is open to LGBTQ+ youth, youth diagnosed with ASD, medical needs etc. include this.

8 INDICATION OF LEVEL OF NEED
What is this family comfortable and confident parenting? Not a list. Avoid generalities like mild/moderate/severe when possible.

9 DATE FLYER WAS LAST UPDATED
Can help guide what questions the worker might have and if this flyer has already been reviewed.

10 YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION
Include phone number and email.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #15

Creating a Waiting Child "At A Glance" Document

SUBMITTED BY

Central Region Recruiter's Coalition

PURPOSE

To list best practices for information to include (and avoid) in a "Waiting Child at a Glance" type of document, which typically lists multiple children the affiliate is recruiting for.

ELIGIBILITY

Children who have an active CSR referral.

TIME NEEDED

10 minutes to review document; 20-30 minutes to create a new child entry.

DIRECTIONS

See the document on the next page.

Waiting Children At A Glance

INCLUDE

Name

Photo

Age

PAE #

Race

Gender

Your contact information

NARRATIVE

Strengths

Personality

Interests

Unique qualities

General education information

Type of family preferred

Parental Rights Terminated?

TOP TIPS

1. Don't need to include everything in the narrative section, just the best highlights

2. Bullet points are easier and quicker to read than a narrative

TIP/TECHNIQUE #16

Creating a Waiting Family "At A Glance" Document

SUBMITTED BY

Central Region Recruiter's Coalition

PURPOSE

To list best practices for information to include (and avoid) in a "Waiting Family at a Glance" type of document, which typically lists multiple families the affiliate is recruiting for.

ELIGIBILITY

Families who have an approved CY131.

TIME NEEDED

10 minutes to review document; 20-30 minutes to create a new family entry.

DIRECTIONS

See the document on the next page.

Waiting Families At A Glance

INCLUDE

Name
Photo
PAE #
Location
Family Composition
Age/Gender/Race Preference
Openness to siblings
Openness to legal risk
Your contact information

NARRATIVE

Strengths
Interests
Family activities
Parenting strengths
Parenting style
Unique qualities
Specific training
Unique openness

TOP TIPS

1. What does the family like to do that children in their preferred age group like to do?

2. Long lists of behaviors that family will/will not accept are difficult to read. Focus on unique things!

TIP/TECHNIQUE #17
What to Share with Families at Matching Events

SUBMITTED BY

Central Region Recruiter's Coalition

PURPOSE

To provide some best practice guidelines regarding what information about a child can and should be shared at Matching Events and during recruitment.

ELIGIBILITY

Any child that has a CSR referral.

TIME NEEDED

15 minutes to review.

DIRECTIONS

See the document on the next two pages.

Matching Event Conversations

The "Matching Event Conversation Stoplight" on the back of this page is designed to be a guide to appropriate conversation topics at matching events. Green indicates these topics are always appropriate. Yellow indicates these topics are sometimes appropriate and require your professional discretion. Red indicates that these topics are never appropriate during the matching event. It is important to remember that though the topic is inappropriate in a public space, it may be appropriate to discuss it at another time through the family worker. These distinctions are made to protect and respect the privacy of our youth.

Tips & Tricks

IF THE CHILD IS PRESENT AT THE EVENT, STAY IN GREEN. IF NOT, SPEND MOST OF YOUR CONVERSATION DISCUSSING GREEN TOPICS.

ORGANIZE YOUR FLYERS BY AGE/AGE OPENNESS.

ENCOURAGE FAMILIES TO BRING THEIR FLYER TO EVENTS, BUT ENSURE THEY KNOW THEY DO NOT HAVE TO LEAVE IT AT EVERY TABLE.

FOCUS ON WHAT WOULD BE A GOOD FIT INSTEAD OF DEALBREAKERS.

IT'S OKAY TO SAY "I WOULD LOVE TO SHARE MORE WITH YOU IN A CONFIDENTIAL SETTING."

ALWAYS USE YOUR PROFESSIONAL DISCRETION TO ENSURE INFORMATION CAN BE SAFELY, SECURELY AND POSITIVELY SHARED.

CAPITAL REGION RECRUITERS' COALITION RECOMMENDATIONS

MATCHING EVENT CONVERSATION STOPLIGHT

	GENERAL	CURRENT FUNCTIONING	EDUCATION	CONNECTIONS	PHYSICAL HEALTH	MENTAL HEALTH	HISTORY	PREFERENCES
Green ALWAYS You can publicly share the information in this row, including at matching events.	• Strengths • Passions • Interests • Hobbies • Positive personality traits • Anything on the flyer • Heroes/role models	• Skills • What is going well in the youth's life • General employment information/interests • General information about goals, future aspirations, career interests	• Strengths • Classroom setting (Life Skills, learning support, etc.) • If the youth has an IEP	• TPR status • If youth have connections that need to be maintained • If/where the youth is in the matching process	• Allergies that may impact placement • If the youth's health is within normal limits • If the youth needs wheelchair accessible home (highlight financial assistance available)	• General positive progress • Positive relationships with therapeutic staff	• Custodial county	• Family composition preferences • Siblings: gender and birth order preferences • If youth can be placed with pets • Geographic location preferences
Yellow SOMETIMES Use your professional discretion to determine whether the information in this row can be shared publicly.	**Must be discussed with youth before sharing:** • Sexual orientation • Gender identity • Pronouns	• Type of placement • Developmental milestones the youth has met • Readiness for placement • General behaviors the youth is working on	• School setting • School performance • Academic challenges • Supports needed • History of truancy	• General location and frequency of current visits • The youth's feelings about adoption • Who the youth wants to stay connected to and how	• Services needed • Medical equipment needed • Skills and training needed to care for the youth	• General services needed • The youth's attitude toward services and providers • Common triggers	• Previous experiences in foster families • What parenting styles have/have not worked well	• The youth's interest level in maintaining future connections with birth family, foster families, etc.
Red NEVER The information in this row is never appropriate to share publicly but can be shared at another time securely and safely.	• Last name • Specific challenges • Negative adjectives	• Details about behaviors of concern • Name and location of current placement • JPO involvement • Criminal Record	• School name or location • Behavioral concerns • Detention/expulsion history • History of alternative placements • Current truancy concerns • Specific IEP information	• Waiting youth and families may not exchange contact information	• Specific diagnoses	• Services the youth is receiving or will need in a home setting • Diagnoses and medication • Psychiatric placement history • Reason the youth is receiving services	• Length of time in care • Why the youth came into care • Abuse history • Psychological history • Specific information about birth family • Disruption information • Name of perpetrators	• The reasons for some of the preferences if this will disclose youth's history • Preferences only held by one team member and not supported by the entire team

TOP TIP: Think about what you can share that is not on the adoptpakids.org website or your flyer (in the green or yellow rows) to ensure families attending events are able to get more information about youth. Provide this information about each of your youth to the person representing your agency at events.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #18

Matching Event Fast Facts

SUBMITTED BY

Central Region Recruiter's Coalition
Updated by the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

To act as a guideline for both child and family recruiters regarding some of the more common types of matching events within Pennsylvania.

ELIGIBILITY

Can be used by any professional working with a child or family registered with PAE or with a child or family who needs to be registered with PAE.

TIME NEEDED

15 minutes to review.

DIRECTIONS

See the document on the next page.

Matching Event Fast Facts

Originally Created by Capital Region Recruiters Coalition

	Traditional Matching Event	Match Party	Reverse Matching Event	Professional Networking	Virtual Events	Statewide Virtual Matching Event	SWAN/IL Statewide
Waiting Youth Present	Maybe	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Summer Only
Approved Families Present	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Agency Display Tables	Represent Youth & Families	No	Represent Families Only	Represent Youth & Families	Specific Youth & Families are presented	Virtual Matching Board: Youth & Families	Represent Youth & Families
Open to the Public	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Time Frame	2-3 hours	4-6 hours	4-6 hours	2-3 hours	1-2 hours	Open to all 1 week	2-3 hours
Activities	Maybe	Facilitated	Facilitated	Maybe	Break Out Room Possible	No	No

Traditional Matching Event: Family workers, youth workers, youth, and families may be invited to attend these events to meet and exchange information. Typically include tables with matching boards where agencies display their youth and/or families.

Match Party: Facilitated, structured activities focused on interactions between families and youth. Generally for older youth and families interested in older youth. Participants are encouraged to actively participate and attend the entirety of the event.

Reverse Matching Event: Focused on youth exploration of family information. Emphasis on family workers and youth exchanging information.

Professional Networking: Focused on youth and family workers exchanging information with each other.
Virtual Events: Typically feature specific youth and families through live or recorded presentations in a virtual platform. Family workers, youth workers, and families may be invited to attend these events.

Statewide Virtual Matching Event: Held once a year by the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network, featuring youth and families in a virtual venue. Focus is family workers, youth workers, and families receiving access to information, gathering information, and making inquiries at their leisure throughout the week of the event.

SWAN/IL Statewide Matching Events: Held during the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network/Independent Living Statewide Meetings in the winter and summer. A waiting child may be featured via an in-person or video presentation at the summer event. However, these events are intended for prospective adoptive families to interact with the county and affiliate workers who work directly with Pennsylvania's waiting children, not with the waiting children themselves.

Disclaimer: *While we have tried to capture the most applicable definition for events across the state, Matching Events vary, so always reach out to the event host to obtain further details.*

TIP/TECHNIQUE #19

Preparing Children for Matching Events

SUBMITTED BY

Central Region Recruiter's Coalition

PURPOSE

To provide some best practice guidelines for child recruiters to ensure that the children they bring to a matching event have the most positive experience possible.

ELIGIBILITY

Children who have an active CSR referral.

TIME NEEDED

15 minutes to review.

DIRECTIONS

See the document on the next two pages.

GUIDE TO PREPARING YOUTH FOR MATCHING EVENTS

Created by the Central Region Recruiters Coalition

BEFORE — SET YOUR EXPECTATIONS

- Youth should participate as much as they can. Workers will be involved as much or as little as the youth needs/wants but will always be nearby.
- Discuss the use of devices and items youth should/should not bring to the event. Leave unnecessary items in the car. Both workers and your youth should avoid device use at the event as much as possible.
- While the event's purpose is to interact with families, it is also important to practice social skills with peers and adults and have a fun day! The youth should not feel pressure to find their forever family at the event.

Conversation Preparation

- Discuss questions families might ask, i.e., hobbies, what you like about school, favorite music/movie/TV/foods? Is there something special or unique about you that you want to share? Practice these conversations.
- Assure youth that they do not have to answer questions that make them uncomfortable or discuss their past. If a conversation gets personal, they should find their worker. Talk about what is NOT appropriate to discuss.
- Discuss what to ask families, i.e., what do you like to do? Favorites? Pets? Sports? Music? TV? *Practice these conversations.*
- Remind youth not to share their contact or social media information with any family member (parents or children).

Getting Ready

- Talk about what to wear. Youth should look like themselves. Clothing doesn't need to be fancy but should be presentable. Note if sneakers, jackets, etc., are recommended.
- Remind the youth about hygiene, especially if this is an area of struggle.
- **PRO TIP:** Enlist the youth's team (RTF staff, foster parents, etc.) to help prepare the youth regarding nerves, hygiene, clothing, if medications are needed, etc. Know the direct contact of the foster family or staff working the day of the event. Consider calling the day before the event to confirm details.

What Will the Day Look Like?

- Discuss what the youth will need to bring. The youth can bring something to do if it's a long car ride. Remind them that this will likely be left in the car.
- What does the event provide? Will there be a meal provided? Snacks? Will the youth need to eat breakfast before the worker picks them up? Be aware of any allergies the youth might have.
- Talk about the logistics of the day. What will the schedule be? How long is the event? What types of activities will be included? Will it be outside? Inside? When will the worker pick them up, and when will the youth get home?

How to Handle Discomfort

- Acknowledge that everyone is nervous! Families are just as anxious as the youth are. Everyone appreciates that they are stepping out of their comfort zone to attend.
- Ensure the youth knows they should find their worker if they feel overwhelmed or uncomfortable. It's okay to step out as long as you step back in.
- Create an appropriate "escape plan" for your youth. Discuss how youth will let the worker know they are upset or uncomfortable and what will help them regulate themselves.

Reminders About the Matching Process

- **PRO TIP:** Ensure youth knows matching is a *process*, which is one of many things their worker is doing to help them find permanency. There is a lot of background work to be done if they make a connection to ensure that a family is a good fit.

DURING — SET YOUR EXPECTATIONS

- Establish a "home base" where your stuff will be. Make sure the youth knows where the worker is or will be. Workers should always know the youth's location.
- Set safety expectations, i.e., do not leave this specific area, ensure you can always see the worker, let the worker know if you leave to go to the bathroom, etc. Ensure youth know where the bathrooms and any other important areas are. Expectations will be different for every event and every youth.
- Identify a second person the youth can go to if they need anything. This could be a co-worker, someone running the event, or another worker they know.

Encourage and Engage with Youth

- Remind youth to participate and engage with other youth and families attending.
- Be positive and encourage youth throughout the event! Notice and acknowledge positive behavior.
- Touch base with youth throughout the event. Look for telling body language and process with your youth if needed.

What Information Can You Share with Families?

- Remember, youth are at the event and may overhear anything you say. Keep the information provided to the family general and surface level.
- The worker can always share the type of information on the PAE website and expand on their interests, passions, etc. This is NOT the time for full disclosure.
- Have your card available for families to provide to their workers if they want more information about the youth.
- For more information, reference the matching event stoplight.

AFTER — DISCUSS THE EVENT

- What activities did the youth like best? Was there anything the youth didn't like or that made them uncomfortable? Was there a family youth remember meeting? What was it they liked? If the worker receives information about families, consider allowing the youth to look through it.
- Note what the youth did well. Workers should identify at least one thing. Be specific. What impressed or surprised the worker? Did the youth support someone else or try something new? Did they use good manners?
- Remind youth that matching is a process. If the youth asks for an update, a generic response can be that the worker is always working hard to find the right family for them.

- Be prepared to manage the youth's expectations about connections they made with families. There are many steps to take before moving forward; a youth may be interested in a family that is not interested in them. Discuss with the youth's team the best way to explain this to the youth. Be intentional about what you share regarding the process with your youth.

Update the Youth's Team

- Send a group email to the team about how the event went for the youth and any updates regarding family interest. Be sure to inform the team of the things your youth did well!

MORE PRO TIPS:

- The car ride is a good time to have conversations!

- Bring water and snacks for the car ride.

- Add extra time to travel and get the youth; things don't always go as planned! At a table event, allow half an hour to set up before the event.

- If an agency has a youth AND a table at an event, consider having a second team member who can assist.

- Preparing the youth is important and is an ongoing conversation. Reminders are important, as youth may forget what has been discussed once they get to the event.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #20

Preparing Families for Matching Events

SUBMITTED BY

Central Region Recruiter's Coalition

PURPOSE

To provide best practice guidelines and ideas that can be reviewed with and by family workers and also shared with families before attending a matching event where waiting children will be present.

ELIGIBILITY

Families who are attending Matching Events where waiting children are present

TIME NEEDED

20-30 minutes.

DIRECTIONS

See the document on the next page.

Tips & Tricks

FOR FAMILIES ATTENDING MATCHING EVENTS

Capital Region Recruiters Coalition

1 Relax. Be yourself. Smile!
Friendliness goes a long way.

2 Introduce yourself to youth and workers.
Take the initiative to start the conversation. If you need assistance or want someone to help begin a conversation with a youth, ask one of the workers in the room.

3 Think of this as a conversation, not an interview.
Engage youth as a niece/nephew you don't see often. Be prepared to talk about yourself. Use your flyer as a tool!

4 Find something you have in common: interests, hobbies, etc.
Feel free to bring a joke, riddle book, deck of cards, or something to help you break the ice. Ask how the youth got there, their trip, day, etc. **Bonus:** wear something that represents you, i.e., a jersey of your favorite team, movie, or character.

5 Come back if a worker is busy the first time you approach them.
The worker for the youth you're interested in may not be there. If appropriate, take the youth's flyer and leave your own with the name/PAE# of the youth. Have your worker contact the youth's worker.

6 Not all matching events have youth present.
Those that do generally have youth ten years old and older participating.

7 Be patient. The youth are nervous too!
If they don't make eye contact or give short answers, this doesn't mean they aren't interested in conversing. This is difficult!

8 Don't make promises.
Don't talk about placement in your home or say things like, *"it sounds like we're a good fit"* to a youth.

9 Keep the conversation light.
Don't discuss too much about the child's history or your own personal history. Workers may not provide much history about their youth in a public setting.

10 Don't take photos or exchange contact information.
Please ensure your youth don't exchange contact information or social media accounts.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #21
Career Matching

SUBMITTED BY

Leonette Boiarski, LCSW, ACSW, Madison Adoption Associates

PURPOSE

To locate permanency resources for a child by connecting with local professionals in their chosen future career field, introducing the child and posting flyers at workplaces or gatherings.

ELIGIBILITY

Children who are on active status with the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) and have information on www.adoptpakids.org.

TIME NEEDED

Prep Time – can vary
Outreach Time – can vary
Follow-up Time – can vary

DIRECTIONS

1. Ask the child about their future career interest. Don't discourage the child if you believe the goal is beyond them; instead, gently probe and ask questions like: "So what do you think the requirements are for that?" or "What would be your first steps?"
2. Take a photo of the child with someone in the local community who is in that career, while that person is doing or wearing something representative of their work. Include the photo in the child's flyer.
3. Generate a list of relevant places to post or share the flyer, and arrange presentations before the child's identified professional group.
4. Post the child's flyer at that group's workplace or place flyers in the company's pay envelopes.
5. Give a copy of the final presentation to the child and the county caseworker.

Example: *A child wants to be a firefighter. Contact the community fire company where the child attends school and get a volunteer to take a photo with the child; the volunteer should wear their gear, and the child might also wear a firefighter helmet or sit on a fire truck. Establish a relationship with community firefighters at the photoshoot and brainstorm with them locations to place flyers or places to reach firefighters with a face-to-face presentation.*

TIP/TECHNIQUE #22
The Wants and Needs in a Family Form

SUBMITTED BY

Penny Stiles, Open Door International

PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Wants and Needs in a Family* form is to find out what a child wants in an adoptive family or permanent connection. The form also helps potential waiting families. The form should be completed with the child so they can highlight what is most important to them when choosing the best family.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Ample time to truly discuss and capture the child's wishes on the *Wants and Needs* form
- *Wants and Needs* form (included on the next page)
- Pen or pencil
- Extra paper

ELIGIBILITY

All children with an active unit of CSR are eligible.

TIME NEEDED

Varies, and activity may be spread over multiple visits.

DIRECTIONS

Verify the child's willingness and comfort level about searching for an adoptive family (a unit of SWAN Child Preparation is very helpful).

Support the child and ensure that they are confident and comfortable with answering the questions. Never lead the child into responding a certain way. This is a chance for them to be candid and open about what they are looking for and to explain their reasoning behind the "Wants and Needs."

Print a copy of the *Wants and Needs in a Family* form and schedule a time to meet with the child to discuss it. Review and discuss the difference between needs, wants and doesn't want, and be prepared to discuss why they placed something in a particular category. Try to capture the explanation on the form. Have extra paper ready or a recorder to capture what the child is saying.

Realize that as the child ages and matures, their responses may change. This is a fluid document that can be revisited and revised at any point in the CSR process.

WANTS AND NEEDS IN A FAMILY

WHAT	NEEDS (PREFERS)	WANTS (OK WITH)	DOESN'T WANT (NOT OK AT ALL)	EXPLAIN
Parents				
Race/ethnicity				
Language				
Children				
Religion				
Neighborhood				
Pets				
School				
Activities				
House				
Bedroom				
Food				
Work schedule				
Other:				
Other:				
Other:				

TIP/TECHNIQUE #23
Electronic Display

SUBMITTED BY

Diakon Child, Family and Community Ministries, Topton
Updated by the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange

PURPOSE

The purpose of the electronic display is to maximize a child's exposure to potential waiting families. The electronic display should be created with the child so they can showcase what is important to them while displaying photos of their choosing. You may run an existing waiting child segment or create your own with the child. Historically, 40 percent of all children who are featured in a television segment achieve permanency. Families who may have never considered adoption before can see a child and easily learn more about them.

The electronic display can be used at matching events in conjunction with display boards, flyers and other materials about the child. The display can be viewed on a tablet or laptop computer set up at the event.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- The county of custody must approve the use of a child's image being displayed publically. This authorization will vary depending on county policy.
- Review the handout *Tips for Social Workers (Attachment #3)* which helps prepare children for public speaking.
- Multiple copies of the final version to give to prospective families.

ELIGIBILITY

All children with an active unit of CSR are eligible for an electronic display. County approval must be obtained for a child to be displayed.

TIME NEEDED

Varies based on the media used: PowerPoint, Aminoto, photos, tablet or TV recordings. Prep time generally takes one to two hours, and the display generally runs during the entire matching event, which can be from two to four hours.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Before Designing the Display**
   Verify the child's willingness and comfort level about being recorded or photographed for a public display. We recommend using *Tips for Social Workers (Attachment #3)*. Ask the child for suggested activities to do during the video and photoshoot.

   If the child has a goal of adoption, the caseworker should verify the child or sibling group is registered and on active status with the appropriate PAE coordinator.

Review older photos of the child and discuss the personal meaning behind some of them to help develop the story.

2. **Designing the Display**

Make sure the child looks their best. Try to pick appropriate clothing before the video or photoshoot. To capture different perspectives, personality traits, likes and dislikes, try to develop these over a series of days and during a series of events if time permits.

Tip: Bring a personal care bag for the child that includes things like deodorant, cologne, a comb, a mirror, moist wipes, hand sanitizer, a bottle of water or drink (especially if the child will be in an athletic venue), tissues, lip balm, hand lotion, mouthwash or a disposable toothbrush and a change of clothes, if applicable. If you are traveling for a video or photoshoot, allow ample time to arrive before the shoot so the child can get comfortable in the environment. Use travel time to relieve anxieties and discuss the event with the child. Consider contacting the Volunteer photographers in your area to see if they are willing to take a video of a child. (For details, refer back to *Tip/ Technique #6*).

3. **Finalizing the Display**

After the video or photoshoot, ensure that the child approves the selected photos.

Create and edit the video, slide show or PowerPoint with the child at the helm as much as possible. Transfer the information onto a tablet, USB drive or laptop that will be set up and transported to matching events, parties and adoption awareness events. Show the presentation in a continuous loop either individually or as a part of a group of children for whom you are recruiting. Consider submitting the video to PAE to be posted on www.adoptpakids.org for the child. (Refer back to *Tip/ Technique #7* for information about recruitment videos.)

If the child has participated in a waiting child taping with a local news station, offer to play it and have multiple copies on hand to share with interested families. (Refer back to *Tip/Techniques #12* and *#13* for more information about how to arrange a TV segment.)

TIP/TECHNIQUE #24
Allow Children to Review Family Flyers

SUBMITTED BY

Matthew Steiner, Wesley Spectrum Services

PURPOSE

As professionals, the process of sharing family flyers can make the matching process more real and empower our children to be more engaged. Additionally, the process of sharing family flyers can neutralize some of the power differentials between waiting families and waiting children by increasing the child's control of the matching process. Waiting children know we make flyers about them, so when they realize that waiting families also have flyers, this becomes an opportunity for the child to have one shared experience with a waiting family.

Depending on a child's development and level of (or readiness for) engagement in the CSR process, you can share flyers of "waiting families" from matching events with the child. This activity can be approached in several different ways. You can bring a large stack of flyers that are not sorted, or you can pre-sort the flyers for a more focused and controlled activity. Having too many flyers can be overwhelming for some children, while having a small number of flyers might be very discouraging for others. Ask for feedback from the child and his or her team to determine whether you should try this activity and determine how to go about delivering it.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Family flyers, various colored highlighters, scissors, blank paper and tape or glue.

ELIGIBILITY

All children with an active unit of CSR are eligible for this activity.

TIME NEEDED

Varies depending on the number of flyers and the child's readiness

DIRECTIONS

1. Obtain permission from the child and give them a head's up before bringing the flyers to your session.
2. Get materials ready beforehand and become familiar with the flyers.
3. Choose one flyer to review with the child first. This lets you explain how the flyers are formatted, why certain information is or is not on the flyers, etc. Some children may need more assistance throughout the process of exploring the flyers than other children.
4. Explain the purpose of this activity. You can say that it is to make the process "more real" for them and to get them more involved. You may also explain that it will give them a better idea of what types of families are considering adoption.
5. Encourage the child to highlight what they do and do not like in the flyers. Ask them to sort the flyers into different piles (e.g., yes, no, maybe). Allow the child to cut out photos of families from

the flyers that represent how they envision their potential pre-adoptive family. With some cutting and pasting, the child could even create their own flyer of an ideal adoptive family with bits and pieces from various flyers.

Sorted/Controlled Version: You can sort flyers by location or by whether or not they appear close to a potential match for your child.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #25
Matching Moments

PURPOSE

Matching Moments Presentations are an opportunity to spotlight a child in need of permanency at SWAN/IL Quarterly or Statewide meetings or network matching events. The audience for most Matching Moments is primarily professionals from within SWAN, however adoptive families may also be present. Audience size can range from 50-200 people. Presentations should be engaging and highlight the child's strengths; multi-media formats are encouraged. Presentations by the workers on behalf of the child are appropriate. (Children who have a strong desire to provide an in-person Matching Moment are still able to do so). Matching Moments are a recruitment Tip/Technique listed in the CSR benchmarks.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Review the document *Tips for Social Workers* (*Attachment #3*) which helps prepare children for public speaking. This document provides talking points for public speaking and should be reviewed in advance.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

Children registered on active status with PAE and posted to www.adoptpakids.org are eligible for a Matching Moment. County approval must be obtained.

TIME NEEDED

Presentations should be developed with the child. Preparation can take from one to three hours, depending on the style of presentation chosen. Your PAE coordinator will be happy to assist and advise. Presentations have a specific amount of time (usually 2-5 minutes) and should include the child's PAE number and contact information for the recruiter.

Allow adequate travel time to and from the event if you are bringing a child.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Before the Matching Moment**
    Matching Moments are also a great way to get to know your child and share their qualities. If a child will attend and conduct their own presentation, verify their willingness and comfort level with public speaking. Refer to *Tips for Social Workers* (Attachment #3) for specific and detailed information on preparing the child for the event. Remember, empower the child to create their own presentation! Focus on their strengths and what makes them unique.

    If you are presenting on behalf of the child, we highly recommend a PowerPoint, video or similar format to engage the audience. Be creative. Effective presentations often include flattering, high-quality photos of the children and short videos highlighting their interests (such as crafts, sports, music, etc). Refer to back to Tip/Technique #7 to see the criteria for videos.
    Make sure the child's team (including the county worker and the IL worker) are aware of the presentation, as they may want to be present to support the child. The host agency of the event will confirm the date and time and other presentation details.

2. **Day of the Matching Moment**

   If a child is presenting their own material, make sure they look their best! Allow ample travel time before the matching moment and for the child to get comfortable in the environment. Use travel time to relieve anxieties and discuss the event with the child. Check-in with the host agency upon your arrival. If you are presenting a child at one of the SWAN/IL Quarterly meetings, make sure you bring enough child flyers to place on the participant tables on the day of the presentation. Refer to *Attachment 3, Tips for Social Workers*.

3. **During the Matching Moment**

   Be prepared to introduce the presentation. If it's an in-person presentation, support the child and ensure they remain confident and comfortable. If you are presenting in the child's absence, be familiar with the information.

4. **After the Matching Moment**

   During the ride home, acknowledge the strengths of the presentation and debrief with the child. Always encourage the effort put forth, even if they just showed up; this is difficult for professionals, let alone children! Thank you notes and small gift cards are always a nice touch for a child who presented. Discuss the day with their current caregivers before leaving.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #26
Thinking Outside the Box with Recruitment Videos

SUBMITTED BY

Robin Kline, Crawford County CYS and Sherri Crowl, Child to Family Connections

PURPOSE

Use community resources to create a more interesting and creative video that can be used for recruitment efforts. For example, we worked with a local college and partnered with students to create a recruitment video. This allowed the students to be creative and hone their craft while also helping to promote the permanency needs of a waiting child. The activity can be beneficial for children with disabilities, highlighting their abilities rather than any deficits.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Cooperation of all appropriate team members, signed consents, technical skills and patience!

ELIGIBILITY

All children with an active unit of CSR are eligible for this activity.

TIME NEEDED

Varies, but the overall process may take many weeks or even months to capture the child's personality.

DIRECTIONS

1. Consult with the child's treatment team (placement facility; resource family; nurse; therapist; psychiatrist; court-appointed special advocate [CASA] or guardian ad litem; CSR worker) to ensure their support for your idea.
2. Think through confidentiality; people in the community will be working with you and the child on this project. Children and Youth Services (CYS) should advise you about any permission/consent forms that will be needed.
3. Think about resources in your community: for example, contact a local college photography or graphic arts department chair.
4. Work with the identified resource about expectations: use of the first name only (or alias, if one exists) and specific information you do want to be included, such as the child's PAE number, date of birth, recruiter contact info, etc.
5. Involve the child as much as possible in the video: What kind of music, colors and effects might be used? How will the finished video keep viewers' attention and draw interest towards the child?
6. Schedule multiple filming sessions, doing a variety of tasks that illustrate the strengths and personality of the child. Try to include scenes in different settings.
7. Be prepared for a fairly long editing process: Viewing the raw footage, picking out start and stop points, ordering the clips, the music, the volume—all need to be balanced. Fight the urge to include too much; it's better to keep it shorter and more interesting than too long.
8. Work with the PAE coordinator to get the video shared, noting where and when it will air.
9. Ensure the link is posted www.adoptpakids.org.
10. Be prepared for requests from other children who will want the same thing!

TIP/TECHNIQUE #27
Picture ME

SUBMITTED BY

Amanda Deisroth, Catholic Social Services

PURPOSE

Picture ME is an opportunity for a child to gain a new view of themselves. Selected images can highlight their favorite celebrities, athletes, musicians or activities by putting their own face in the action! This activity goes far beyond the idea of a "selfie."

Completed fun photos can be used throughout recruitment. Photos can help families visualize a child's interests in a different light. Photos can also be used in a child's Lifebook or simply as special memories.

You should always use professional discretion and encourage the child to make appropriate decisions when selecting photo backgrounds.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Digital camera, computer or tablet and access to free creative internet websites such as `www.faceinhole.com`, `www.facetinks.com`, `www.funphotobox.com`, `www.newspaperme.com`, `www.befunky.com`, and `www.photofunia.com`.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

All children with an active unit of CSR are eligible for this activity.

TIME NEEDED

Take time to prepare the child and get ideas from them. You may need up to an hour to prepare for the actual activity. Be sure to also account for time to recap once the activity is completed.

DIRECTIONS

1. To prepare, gather all needed supplies and schedule time with the child in an environment or setting that is comfortable for them.
2. To begin, explain that photos gathered will be used in several ways: in Lifebooks, shared with interested families during recruitment and other ways they choose.
3. Ask the child about their favorite things. These things can include favorite activities, interests, cartoons, movie characters, musicians, etc.
4. Take a variety of photos of the child—including ones where they are smiling, being silly, making faces, etc. Review the photos, and decide with the child which photos to use.
5. Once photos are selected, visit websites such as `www.faceinhole.com` to select silly "face in a hole" child-friendly backgrounds. Consider the child's favorite activities and interests when selecting backgrounds. Save the photos for later printing and use.
6. Take some time to recap this fun activity with the child. Ask what they liked about the project. Let them know they will get printed copies of the photos during the next visit.
7. Create flyers with photos or photo collages for recruitment purposes.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #28
Airplane Activity

SUBMITTED BY

Abi Aswegen, The Bair Foundation

PURPOSE

This activity helps identify supports and people important in the child's life. Note that this activity, or a similar one, may have been done in a Child Preparation unit. It is best practice to consult with the worker providing that service.

MATERIALS NEEDED

The airplane seating diagram, below.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

All children with an active unit of CSR are eligible for this activity. Age range should be a developmental age of eight years and older.

TIME NEEDED

Varies.

DIRECTIONS

1. Tell the child they can travel to a remote island with only one airplane full of people (50 passengers, in this literal interpretation); however, they will be stranded there for the rest of their lives with only these people.
2. Ask them to consider the airplane seating diagram below and write the names of people who they would take with them to the deserted island. Encourage them to share details about why they picked each person.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #29
Game of Life

SUBMITTED BY

Abi Aswegen, The Bair Foundation

PURPOSE

This activity helps identify supports and people important in the child's life and can be done early on in sessions and visits. Note that this activity, or a similar one, may have been done in a Child Preparation unit. It is best practice to consult with the worker providing that service.

MATERIALS NEEDED

The board game *Game of Life* and paper for notes.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

All children with an active unit CSR are eligible for this activity. The age range should be a developmental age of eight years old and up.

TIME NEEDED

Varies.

DIRECTIONS

1. Bring the *Game of Life* to the session and begin playing it with the child.
2. As you play, talk to the child about what they would like their life to look like. When each player has to decide if they are going to college or beginning to work, ask questions about the child's long-term goals about college or professional careers (this could be helpful when creating a flyer for matching events).
3. When each player "gets married," ask questions about the kind of parent(s) they would feel most comfortable with and what their hopes are for a family in the future. Specifically, ask the child a series of questions about their preferences in parents, including race, marital status, sexual orientation, religious preference, etc.
4. When each player in the game buys a house, ask the child to describe their preferences about where they would like to live (a city or the country, in an apartment or condo, in a house, etc.).
5. When each player begins having or adopting children, ask how many children they would prefer in their potential permanent placement. Be sure to ask not only about the number of other children in the home but the ages (older or younger than the child you are meeting with), race, adopted or biological, etc.
6. As the child acquires "Life" tokens, ask them to create a "bucket list" of experiences they want to have in their lives. Are there specific places they want to travel, for example, or accomplishments they want to achieve? Again, this information would be helpful when creating a flyer for matching events.
7. Towards the end of the game, begin asking questions about who they want to still be in contact with later on in their lives. Ask about the relationships they feel are significant and could be

lifelong. Encourage them to talk about people from their past they would like to reconnect with or those currently in their lives they hope to still be in contact with (friends, family members, foster families, etc.). This may help you discover new resources to contact. This is a very non-threatening approach to a lot of questions about CSR that can be a lot of fun, and help children open up more about their hopes for the future and the connections that are important to them.

TIP/TECHNIQUE #30
Future Graduation Invitations

SUBMITTED BY

Abi Aswegen, The Bair Foundation

PURPOSE

This activity helps identify supports and people important in the child's life and can be done early on in sessions and visits. Note that this activity, or a similar one, may have been done in a Child Preparation unit. It is best practice to consult with the worker providing that service.

MATERIALS NEEDED

The invitation list, next page.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

All children with an active unit of CSR are eligible for this activity.

TIME NEEDED

Varies.

DIRECTIONS

1. To help your child identify additional positive supports from their past and present, encourage them to plan their ideal graduation party using the invitation list on the next page.
2. Feel free to be creative; find cute "Class of ___" clipart for the page. Then, help them make a list of people they want to invite: peers, family members, community members, people from school, etc. This may help trigger thoughts about additional people they've forgotten to mention before.
3. Include these pages in the Discovery Book or Lifebook.

FUTURE GRADUATION INVITATION IDEAL GUEST LIST

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____
24. _____
25. _____

TIP/TECHNIQUE #31
Jenga Support Tower

SUBMITTED BY

Abi Aswegen, The Bair Foundation

PURPOSE

This activity helps identify supports and people important in the child's life and can be done early on in sessions and visits. Note that this activity, or a similar one, may have been done in a SWAN Child Preparation unit. It is best practice to consult with the worker providing that service.

MATERIALS NEEDED

A set of *Jenga* blocks.

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

All children with an active unit of CSR are eligible for this activity.

TIME NEEDED

Varies.

DIRECTIONS

1. Bring a set of *Jenga* blocks with you to the session and build the tower.
2. Tell the child that each block represents a supportive person or connection in life. When a person has lots of positive supportive connections, it is like the initial *Jenga* tower. It is fairly stable. Things can happen to the tower (a fan can be turned on, someone can bump the table it is sitting on, etc.), but it won't tip over. Likewise, when a person has a large support system, they can withstand problems and crises that arise fairly well. They are more likely to be stable.
3. However, as you begin playing the game of *Jenga*, holes begin appearing in the tower and it is much more likely to fall over when the slightest thing changes (for example, if it is bumped or a fan is turned on). Likewise, if someone moves to a new community or is placed in foster care and does not know how to contact their family members, they are much more likely to struggle to survive the challenges that life throws at them. *(This can be a very helpful visual for children to understand the importance of having supportive resources in their lives; particularly for teenagers resistant to services.)* Use this as a way to address the grief and loss the child feels at being so isolated from the people they would consider supportive contacts and how vulnerable it can make someone feel when they have no one to call or rely on.
4. Continue to play *Jenga*, and every time the child removes a block from the tower, ask them to identify one person (past or present) who was a positive support or connection for them, who was there for them when they needed someone most, who helped them feel less like they were falling apart, etc. Take notes of any new names that come up in this conversation, and ask questions about new resources they identify (such as, *"Do you know what city they live in?"* or *"Is there someone in your family who may know how to contact this person?"*)

TIP/TECHNIQUE #32
Unpacking the "No" with Resource Families

SUBMITTED BY

Heidi Storey and Alia Husmann, Jewish Family Service of Greater Harrisburg, Inc.

PURPOSE

Have you ever received an inquiry from a prospective family interested in fostering who need in-depth training on waiting children and youth in the child welfare system? Have you worked with families eager to adopt but found yourself regularly explaining that children/youth who have not experienced trauma are rare in the child welfare system? Could the families you work with benefit from enhanced pre-service training on "Who the Children Are"? Have you collaborated with a family whose preferences needed adjustment to better match the needs of waiting youth?

This online training series offers a valuable opportunity to explore the "Unpacking the No" modules. The series provides insights into how agencies can implement these tools to align family preferences more effectively with the needs of children/youth in care, improving family matching and outcomes for waiting children/youth.

MATERIALS NEEDED

The online video series:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLB9CVvSsEVCZxwuG6r58Ghrx0O6QarBE9

ELIGIBILITY OR AGE RANGE

This activity can be used with all matching resource families.

TIME NEEDED

Family workers can provide this resource to their waiting families to watch. The total time for the families to review the video series is about two hours. The family workers can then talk with the families to process this as part of the Family Profile or Family Matching Unit process (this time may vary).

DIRECTIONS

This four-module training was prepared by three SWAN affiliates (Jewish Family Service of Greater Harrisburg, Inc., Institute for Human Resources and Services, and Families United Network).

The training overviews:
- who the waiting children/youth are;
- is accessible to everyone, including new/prospective families who may not understand child welfare terms;
- was designed to be helpful to both agency workers and approved families throughout Pennsylvania;
- explains to families what your role is as their agency partner;

- provide concrete next steps (see module four) for families to widen their age range and gain comfort with parenting neurodiverse youth and sibling groups;
- includes a transfer of learning (TOL) form as a starting point for your family to have a conversation with you about what they learned;
- Free and available to all on the JFS YouTube channel, link above

Attachments

5/19/2025

Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) Coordinator Map

Counties:

Pike 52, Wayne 64, Monroe 45, Lackawanna 35, Northampton 48, Bucks 09, Montgomery 46, Philadelphia 51, Delaware 23, Susquehanna 58, Wyoming 66, Luzerne 40, Carbon 13, Lehigh 39, Chester 15, Bradford 08, Sullivan 57, Columbia 19, Montour 47, Northumberland 49, Schuylkill 54, Berks 06, Lancaster 36, Lebanon 38, Tioga 59, Lycoming 41, Union 60, Snyder 55, Dauphin 22, York 67, Potter 53, Clinton 18, Centre 14, Mifflin 44, Juniata 34, Perry 50, Cumberland 21, Adams 01, Cameron 12, Clearfield 17, Huntingdon 31, Franklin 28, McKean 42, Elk 24, Blair 07, Fulton 29, Bedford 05, Warren 62, Forest 27, Jefferson 33, Indiana 32, Cambria 11, Somerset 56, Clarion 16, Armstrong 03, Westmoreland 65, Fayette 26, Venango 61, Butler 10, Allegheny 02, Erie 25, Crawford 20, Mercer 43, Lawrence 37, Beaver 04, Washington 63, Greene 30

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CHILD

#	County	PAEC	#	County	PAEC
1	Adams	Katie Juliana	35	Lackawanna	Sarah Reiss
2	Allegheny	Nikita Lewis	36	Lancaster	Alfredo Gonzalez
3	Armstrong	Nikita Lewis	37	Lawrence	Nic Landon
4	Beaver	Nikita Lewis	38	Lebanon	Alfredo Gonzalez
5	Bedford	Katie Juliana	39	Lehigh	Sarah Reiss
6	Berks	Rachel Paashaus	40	Luzerne	Sarah Reiss
7	Blair	Katie Juliana	41	Lycoming	Alfredo Gonzalez
8	Bradford	Sarah Reiss	42	McKean	Nic Landon
9	Bucks	Rachel Paashaus	43	Mercer	Nic Landon
10	Butler	Nic Landon	44	Mifflin	Alfredo Gonzalez
11	Cambria	Katie Juliana	45	Monroe	Sarah Reiss
12	Cameron	Nic Landon	46	Montgomery	Rachel Paashaus
13	Carbon	Sarah Reiss	47	Montour	Alfredo Gonzalez
14	Centre	Alfredo Gonzalez	48	Northampton	Sarah Reiss
15	Chester	Rachel Paashaus	49	Northumberland	Alfredo Gonzalez
16	Clarion	Nic Landon	50	Perry	Alfredo Gonzalez
17	Clearfield	Nic Landon	51	Philadelphia	Kelly Myers
18	Clinton	Alfredo Gonzalez	52	Pike	Sarah Reiss
19	Columbia	Alfredo Gonzalez	53	Potter	Nic Landon
20	Crawford	Nic Landon	54	Schuylkill	Sarah Reiss
21	Cumberland	Katie Juliana	55	Snyder	Alfredo Gonzalez
22	Dauphin	Alfredo Gonzalez	56	Somerset	Katie Juliana
23	Delaware	Rachel Paashaus	57	Sullivan	Sarah Reiss
24	Elk	Nic Landon	58	Susquehanna	Sarah Reiss
25	Erie	Nic Landon	59	Tioga	Sarah Reiss
26	Fayette	Nikita Lewis	60	Union	Alfredo Gonzalez
27	Forest	Nic Landon	61	Venango	Nic Landon
28	Franklin	Katie Juliana	62	Warren	Nic Landon
29	Fulton	Katie Juliana	63	Washington	Nikita Lewis
30	Greene	Nikita Lewis	64	Wayne	Sarah Reiss
31	Huntingdon	Katie Juliana	65	Westmoreland	Nikita Lewis
32	Indiana	Nikita Lewis	66	Wyoming	Sarah Reiss
33	Jefferson	Nic Landon	67	York	Katie Juliana
34	Juniata	Alfredo Gonzalez			

Statewide PAE Family Coordinator: Alex Newcomer

CY130 **Critical** and *Important* Characteristics

HEALTH

1. Does the child have significant health issues?
2. Does the child have allergies or asthma? (may require treatment)
3. *Is the child hyperactive? (may require treatment)*
4. Does the child have speech problems? (may require treatment)
5. Does the child have hearing problems? (may require treatment)
6. Is the child legally deaf?
7. Does the child have vision problems? (may require treatment)
8. *Is the child legally blind?*
9. *Does the child have dental problems? (may require treatment)*
10. Does the child have orthopedic problems? (special shoes, braces, etc.)
11. Does the child have seizures?
12. Does the child have other health concerns?

EDUCATION

13. Is the child a high achiever in school?
14. Does the child achieve at grade level in regular classes?
15. Does the child achieve below grade level in regular classes?
16. Is the child in special education classes?
17. Does the child have a learning disability?
18. Does the child need classes for the emotionally or behaviorally handicapped?
19. Does the child need tutoring in one or more subjects?
20. *Does the child have serious behavior problems in school?*

CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIORS

21. Is the child generally quiet and shy?
22. Is the child generally outgoing and noisy?
23. Does the child have emotional issues that require therapy?
24. Does the child tend to reject father figures?
25. Does the child tend to reject mother figures?
26. Does the child have difficulty relating to others and relating to other children?
27. Does the child frequently wet the bed?
28. Does the child frequently soil him/herself?
29. **Does the child masturbate frequently or openly?**
30. Does the child have poor social skills?
31. *Does the child have a problem with lying?*
32. *Does the child have a problem with stealing?*
33. *Does the child frequently start physical fights with other children?*
34. **Does the child abuse animals?**
35. Is the child destructive with clothing, toys, etc.?
36. *Does the child use foul or bad language?*
37. Does the child have frequent temper tantrums?
38. Does the child have difficulty accepting and obeying rules?
39. **Does the child exhibit inappropriate sexual behavior?**
40. **Does the child have a history of running away?**
41. **Does the child have a history of playing with matches, setting fires?**

CONNECTIONS AND HISTORY

42. *Does the child have strong ties to their birth family?*
43. Does the child have strong ties to their foster family?
44. Is continued contact with siblings desirable?
45. Does the child have a previous adoption disruption?
46. *Was the child sexually abused?*
47. Was the child physically abused?
48. *Was the child exposed to promiscuous sexual behavior?*
49. Was the child conceived by rape?
50. Was the child conceived as a result of prostitution?
51. Are one or both parents addicted to alcohol?
52. Are one or both parents dependent on substances other than alcohol?
53. Do one or both parents have a criminal record?
54. Are one or both parents intellectually disabled?
55. *Do one or both parents have a mental illness?*
56. Does the agency lack information about one or both parents?

CONTACT WITH BIRTH FAMILY

57. Is the child in contact with birth parents?
58. Is the child in contact with siblings?
59. *Is the child in contact with their extended birth family?*
60. Is the child in contact with their former foster family?

TIPS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS
Preparing Children for Public Speaking

A child's voice is the most important and powerful recruitment tool

CASEWORKER PREPARATION

Consider this about your role:

1. Do you believe all children deserve a family?
2. Do you believe all children can find a family?
3. Do you believe all approved adoptive families are prepared to accept older children?
4. Do you believe a particular child will be difficult to place?

Whether you are new to recruiting families for children or a seasoned veteran, you should assess your own feelings about finding permanent families for children. Be honest with yourself about what you think and believe. Your attitudes and beliefs are conveyed in subtle ways to a system-savvy child.

1. Good adoption casework requires you to be strength-based. Case records contain all of a child's deficits. Family recruitment for older children requires that you know the deficits but also see the strengths. Communicate with other important people in a child's life, such as caseworkers, caregivers, therapists, etc. This will give you better insight into their current circumstances and help you to engage the child.
   a. Reframe the deficits and make it your goal to see the real child.
   b. Children are products of their environment, and a new environment can result in you seeing the real child.
   c. Most adoptive parents know our kids have challenges and see that as a part of the package.
   d. When reading a child profile, ask yourself what is missing. What are you not seeing that will better offer a strength-based picture of this child?
   e. We apply labels to children, and they help explain the challenges a child faces. Remember that anyone's goal in life is to overcome negative labels. Michael Jordan was labeled in high school as a bad basketball player, but he overcame that label. Our children have that potential, too. Sometimes the label has a "strength" counterpart.
   f. Finding a child's first strength will lead you to other strengths.
   g. Know that you will be challenged at times and that this is expected.

SELECTING THE YOUTH

1. Not every child is an appropriate choice to speak publicly or attend a matching event. No one should be forced to attend. You and your agency must decide who should attend based on their personality and needs.
2. For each child you consider, ask these questions:
   a. Is the child ready for a family?
   b. Do they understand adoption?
   c. Have they been through the adoption process?
   d. Does the child understand the word family?
   e. Do they want to belong to a family?
3. Assess each child and discuss the idea with them to help you determine if they are interested and comfortable with participating.

4. Some children are enthusiastic about attending. Others feel too vulnerable and don't want to face what they may interpret as rejection if no one seems interested in them. Others have attended matching events in the past and are reluctant to try again.
5. If one tells you: "I don't want to attend," talk with them about those feelings.
   a. Why are they reluctant?
   b. Is this their first matching event?
   c. Would more discussion about what will happen make the child more comfortable?
6. Sometimes, letting a child know this is a chance to meet other children who are also waiting to be adopted may encourage participation.
7. Describe the event to the child and explain what they should expect. You never know what a child might imagine about the event.

YOUTH PREPARATION

1. Make sure all who attend have a good time and meet other children, as well as prospective adoptive families. Let them know exactly what to expect.
2. Be honest. Answer any questions to the best of your ability. Find the answers to the questions you can't immediately respond to. Explain to them that this is one of the many ways you are trying to find a family for them. Reinforce the idea that adoption is a process, and it does not happen that day. The event is an opportunity for everyone to learn more about them and about adoption.
3. Listen to their concerns. Use reflective listening to respond to their concerns, fears, anxieties and general questions. Let them know you will be there throughout the event to offer support and assistance.
4. Talk to the child about the room set up, who will be there and the different roles of those who will attend. Show a video or pictures of where the event will take place. All of these activities will help prepare the child and reduce the anxiety of the unknown.
5. Role-play the event. Explain the side benefits of attending, such as becoming more comfortable with public speaking or helping other children find a family.
6. Discuss what they plan to wear. Encourage them to get a good night's rest, ready their clothing ahead of time and eat a healthy meal before the event.
7. Assess the level of support the child's current caregiver can provide. Can they support the child's decision to attend and reduce their anxiety? Share information about the event with the caretaker and request they support the child's participation.
8. Also ask for the caregiver's support before the event. Suggest they take the child for a haircut or style, encourage a good night's rest, prepare or select a healthy meal before the event, help them choose clothing that reflects the child's personal style and confidence. Listen to the child's excitement or fears about the event.
9. An adoption event is a good opportunity to enhance your own relationship with the child. Explore some of the feelings they have about being adopted. Spend time before and after the event discussing the experience with them.
10. Offer realistic expectations. Children need to understand that matches don't happen instantaneously. Explain the adoption process and timelines:
    a. How families become approved,
    b. How communication occurs between the child and family caseworkers, and
    c. How a family is selected.
11. Listed below are some suggested topics of discussion. Encourage the child to pick several to discuss, either through a presentation, question and answer or interview format:
    a. What games do you like to play?
    b. What are your favorite toys, video games, movies, books, television shows or music?
    c. What is your favorite thing to do outdoors?
    d. What job would you like to have as an adult?

- e. What is your best subject in school? Least favorite subject? What do you like and dislike about it?
- f. Who is your favorite teacher? Why?
- g. What do you like to eat?
- h. What chores do you help with around the house?
- i. What accomplishments are you most proud of?
- j. What are your talents or skills?
- k. What sports do you enjoy playing or watching?
- l. What activities do you participate in at school or where you live (choirs, plays, clubs, Scouts, etc.)?
- m. What do you do when you are with your friends?
- n. If you could have one wish, what would that be?
- o. What would a person learn about you by looking at your room?
- p. What do you do during breaks from school?
- q. What holidays do you like to celebrate? What do you do?
- r. What school trips or vacations have you gone on and especially enjoyed?
- s. If you could visit any place on Earth, where would you go? Why?
- t. What does adoption mean to you?
- u. Why would you like to be adopted?
- v. What do you want your adoptive family to be like?
12. Offer several options to the child about the day. Would they like to present themselves independently? With you? In a question and answer format? Do they want to be present while you talk about them? Be sure to encourage them to clarify anything you do not get exactly right.
13. Prepare a script and practice the presentation with the child. Try not to rely on a PowerPoint presentation but rather on the child's interests. Maybe they could demonstrate a special talent like martial arts, or dress up and act out what they want to be when they grow up, like a news anchor. Be creative!

AT THE EVENT

1. Arrive early to give the child time to adjust to the location.
2. Walk with them around the room or facility and explain who is present and what their roles are at the event.
3. You should have visual contact with the child at all times throughout the event because you are their lifeline.

MEETING THE FAMILIES

1. Make the most of the event. Families will want to learn more about the child.
2. Families will be interested in where the child is living and how they are doing in school.
3. This is your chance to meet interested families and talk with them about the children who attend, as well as others on your caseload.

AFTER THE EVENT

1. You can make a big difference in how the child experiences and reacts to an adoption event. The experience does not end when it is over. Processing feelings will go a long way toward making them comfortable and minimizing their anxiety. Remember they feel vulnerable and took a risk just by attending.

2. Encourage them to talk about their experiences at the event. Let them tell you what they liked and disliked. Understand that quiet time may be necessary to absorb and reflect on what took place. When it feels appropriate ask them easy questions:
   a. Did you meet any other children?
   b. How was this experience for you?
   c. Which activities did you like best?
3. Or consider asking them scaling questions, such as:
4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how much fun was this; how scary was this; how was the food; how do you think you did?
5. Your role is to *listen* and let the child direct the discussion. If the event was troubling for them, what you learn from this discussion should be conveyed to the caregiver.
6. When you are asked if any family was interested, reiterate it is unlikely adoption will result immediately. Families often take time to talk about their wish to adopt and the child they have met. You can also share that several families expressed interest, but it is a process before an adoptive family can be selected.
7. If appropriate, encourage the child to talk about the experience with the foster parents, therapist, foster siblings and anyone else they feel close to. Processing it with other people often relieves tension or anxiety.
8. Make them more comfortable by sharing news about the event with the foster parents, residential treatment worker or group home worker and therapist. Tell them how the child reacted and responded to you when the event was over. Tell them how the day went. Regardless of how the child reacted to the event, help the caretaker understand how this experience could impact them—both positively or negatively—for several weeks to come.
9. When events are planned sensitively and children are well prepared and talk with their social workers afterward, they typically enjoy the experience. Particularly with older children, participation in their own recruitment efforts gives them a sense of mastery over their future. As one enthusiastic social worker said, "In a perfect world, we would not need adoption parties." The reality is that nearly 130,000 children around the country are yearning for permanent families. Attending these events increases their chances dramatically.

AUTHORIZATION FOR FILMING, PHOTOGRAPHING, AND RELEASE OF MATERIALS FOR CHILD SPECIFIC RECRUITMENT

STATEWIDE ADOPTION AND PERMENENCY NETWORK

VAL'S KIDS • KDKA's WAITING CHILD SEGMENT • A LITTLE LOVE SPONSORSHIP

WJAC's FINDING FOREVER • WSEE/WICU WAITING CHILD

I/We, _____ of _____

Hereby grant authorization to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS), Red House

Communications Inc., WHTM/Channel 27 News, WBRE/Channel 28 News, KDKA/Channel 2 News,

Sinclair Television of Fresno, LLC dba WJAC-TV, and/or Lilly Broadcasting WSEE/WICU to film and

photograph _____ who is a minor in the custody

of _____ for the sole purpose of Child Specific

Recruitment and/or raising adoption awareness in the Commonwealth.

This authorization will be used to grant permission to DHS, Red House Communications Inc.,

WHTM/Channel 27 News, WBRE/Channel 28 News, KDKA/Channel 2 News, Sinclair Television of Fresno,

LLC dba WJAC-TV, and/or Lilly Broadcasting WSEE/WICU to utilize and distribute the film and

photographs to appropriate individuals and agencies identified as serving children who are waiting for

permanency, including via broadcast television and approved websites. No other use is intended nor

authorized.

I/We hereby acknowledge that we understand the terms of this authorization and consent to the release

of the confidential information and materials as described above.

NAME: (Print) _____

SIGNATURE: _____ (Date) _____

updated 3/6/2025

Child Caseworker Letter

[Current Date]
[County Caseworker Name]
[County Agency Name]
[Custody County Agency Primary Address]

Dear [Name of County Caseworker]

The Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) suggests the following match referral.

[Name of Child(ren)]
[Child(ren) PAE #]
[Family Name]
[Family PAE #]

As a result of a Child Registration/Update Form (CY130) submitted to PAE, a potential match was generated for the child(ren) on your caseload with the identified family listed above. Enclosed please find a brief description of the family.

Family-to-child matches are based on the family's preferences for demographics and characteristics. The demographics of the child's age, gender and race and number of siblings must be in the acceptable family preferences to be matched with a family.

To enhance the matching process, PAE, in conjunction with the SWAN Helpline, may provide approved adoptive families with more in-depth information about children registered; information not posted to www.adoptpakids.org. You may provide this additional detail to PAE by contacting me. This information will become part of the child's CY130 record and the SWAN Helpline will share it with approved families upon their request. If the family continues to be interested, after learning more about the child(ren), SWAN Helpline will email you about contacting the family.

This match has also been sent to the family's caseworker, listed below, who may also initiate contact on the family's behalf.

[Family Caseworker Name]
[Affiliate or County Agency Name]
[Affiliate or County Agency Primary Address]
[Caseworker Phone Number]
[Caseworker E-mail Address]

Finally, families are registered and updated with PAE on a daily basis. You will be notified by letter upon generation of any potential matches.

Please contact me at, [Coordinator phone & email] if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
[PAE Coordinator of Child's County]
PAE Coordinator
Ph: [PAE Coordinator Phone]
Enclosures

Family Caseworker Letter

[Current Date]

[Family Caseworker Name]
[Affiliate or County Agency Name]
[Affiliate or County Agency Primary Address]

Dear [Name of Family Caseworker]

The Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) suggests the following match referral.

[Name of Family]
[PAE Number]

[Child Name]
[Child PAE #]
[DHS #]

As a result of a Resource Family Applicant Registration/Update Form (CY131) submitted to PAE a potential match was generated for the family on your caseload with the identified child(ren) listed above. Enclosed please find a brief description of the child(ren).

Family-to-child matches are based on the family's preferences for demographics and characteristics. The demographics of the child's age, gender and race and number of siblings must be in the acceptable family preferences to be matched with a family.

To better facilitate a successful match for this family, PAE, in conjunction with the SWAN Helpline, may provide approved adoptive families with more in-depth information about registered children. This additional information may not be included in the information posted to www.adoptpakids.org. Upon the family's request, the SWAN Helpline will share this information with approved adoptive families. If a family continues to be interested, after learning more about the child(ren), the SWAN Helpline will email the child's county caseworker about contacting the family.

We encourage you to review the full list of children with this family and have them contact the SWAN Helpline at 1.800.585.SWAN (7926) for more information about any of the children.

This match has also been sent to the family and the child's caseworker, listed below, who may also initiate contact on the child's behalf.

[Child Caseworker Name]
[County Agency Name]
[County Agency Primary Address]
[Caseworker Phone Number]
[Caseworker E-mail Address]

Finally, children are registered and updated with PAE on a daily basis. You will be notified by letter upon generation of any potential matches for this family.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of Pennsylvania's waiting families and children.

Sincerely,

[PAE Coordinator assigned to RFR]

PAE Coordinator
Ph: [PAE Coordinator assigned to RFR Phone]
Enclosures

Family Letter

[Current Date]

[Family Name]
[Family Address]

Dear [Name of Family]

Re: Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) - Potential Adoption Match

The Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) suggests the following match referral.

Your Resource Family Applicant Registration/Update Form (CY131) recently submitted to PAE, has resulted in potential adoptive matches for your family. A general description of the child(ren) is enclosed with this letter.

PAE's goal is to make the best possible match based on child demographics and characteristics and family child demographic and characteristic preferences.

Children are registered and updated with PAE on a daily basis. You will be notified by letter upon generation of any potential matches for your family. Please know you may have your caseworker request PAE to run additional potential child matches for your family at any time. PAE can be reached at 1.800.227.0225. Your caseworker has been notified of the enclosed potential matches.

If you would like additional information about these and other children registered with PAE, please contact the SWAN Helpline at 1.800.585.SWAN (7926). If you are interested in pursuing any of these matching referrals, contact your caseworker so your family profile may be forwarded to the child's caseworker for their consideration. County children and youth agencies with custody make final placement decisions.

Thank you for your interest in Pennsylvania's waiting children.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bornman
1.800.585.7926
SWAN Helpline Lead Coordinator

Enclosure(s)