

National One Church One Child Program Best Practices

One Church One Child offers a unique approach to addressing long-standing problems or gaps in service delivery in recruitment of families in the African American Community. Time and experience have provided opportunity to assess the processes, evaluate the tools, technology and techniques used in service delivery and ascertain approaches that are most successful.

While there are full-service programs operating in some states, the primary goal of One Church One Child programs is to recruit families for African American adoption and foster care. In reaching the goal successfully, there are particular principals and practices that have been determined to be more effective approaches. This best practice model is developed to show case best practices that have been tested over time by programs across the country and are deemed to be successful and methodologically sound steps that have common application for One Church One Child programs. The model looks at key components of a well developed One Church One Child program.

Although, One Church One Child programs may vary to some degree based on structure and system design, there are identified fundamental components that programs operating from a position of best practice will have incorporated in their design and operation. This best practice model looks at One Church One Child Program structure, partnership and service delivery.

One Church One Child Programs with good structure:

- A. Have a board of directors comprised of a majority of African American clergy that serve as governing board members for the program.
- B. Develop and maintain requirements and expectations for board membership, staff and volunteers.
- C. Provide on-going development training to members of their governing body, staff and volunteers.
- D. Engage in strategic planning to review goals and guide overall operational functioning.

- E. Develop operational guidelines in accordance with federal, state and local, laws, regulations, policies, procedures and practices that govern delivery of child welfare services.
- F. Incorporate annual program evaluation outcomes to enhance programmatic planning and decision-making.
- G. Develop multiple funding sources to support and enhance service delivery.
- H. Have technology to accurately, track, collect, analyze and report statistics and information on families, clients and volunteers.
- I. Work in partnership with state and local social service departments and agencies to recruit potential foster/adoptive families.
- J. Develop an annual report of the programs activities, including program statistical and financial data.
- K. Those OCOC programs that are full-service agencies are State licensed agencies and offer an array of foster care and adoption services including, but not limited to, recruitment, parent preparation and training, home studies, placement, and post placement services.

Partnership between Church and State or Local Agencies and Organizations:

The partnership of faith-based One Church One Child was originally recognized as a church and state relationship, but in some states, privatization has also forged more and greater partnerships with local agencies and organizations. The One Church One Child programs:

- A. Convene local advisory committees to aid and assist in community outreach and support efforts.
- B. Utilize local volunteers as trained presenters in churches in the local community.

- C. Identify, recruit, and train local church representatives to serve as liaisons for the recruitment of potential foster/adoptive families in the local church.
- D. Work in partnership and collaboration with other public and private child welfare agencies and organizations.
- E. Engage the services of university and college interns and local volunteers.
- F. Use all methods and mediums to maintain on-going contact to communicate and interact with staff, families, partners, agencies, governing bodies and the public at large.

In Service Delivery One Church One Child Programs:

- A. Develop and maintain a current directory of the Churches.
- B. Target all churches for recruitment of families.
- C. Encourage churches to organize and/or engage ministries to support adoptive/foster families.
- D. Recognize and acknowledge covenant partnerships with churches that actively support OCOC efforts.
- E. Work in partnership with state and local social services departments and agencies to recruit potential foster/adoptive families and to facilitate the completion and processing of home studies and the placement of children.
- F. Employ a multiplicity of strategies to recruit families in the local communities, including but not limited to church presentations, community presentations and displays at local community events.
- G. Utilize up-to-date photographs that reflect positive images of waiting children.

- H. Provide displays and information classes on adoption at state and local religious conferences, conventions, convocations, and congresses.
- I. Develop marketing resources with strong promotional materials.
- J. Initiate and maintain proactive relations with the local and statewide media.
- K. Provide consistent follow-up, contact, communications and interactions with families served.
- L. Support and provide child placements that are culturally sensitive.
- M. Recognize religious and community leaders and other individuals annually for their contributions to OCOC efforts.