

## Adoption Promotion Program Statewide Meeting Feedback

During the Adoption Promotion Program statewide meeting, participants were asked to recommend improvements for three topic areas: (1) Adoption Services Agreement facilitation and negotiation process, (2) division of services and/or fund sharing between Private/County agencies, and (3) general program improvements. Participants were asked to provide their recommendations individually as well as in small group discussions. We received recommendations/feedback from 74 individuals and 8 small groups. The themes identified in each of the topic areas range from suggestions for more guidance to changes to the funding breakdown. Table 1 provides aggregate information about the themes identified from the individual feedback forms and Table 2 provides the same information about the themes from the small group discussion. A detailed outline of the information gathered from the individual feedback forms and the small group discussions is also presented below.

### Individual Feedback

Table 1: Individual Feedback

Topic Areas	Discussion Points	Frequency
Priority Improvements to the Adoption Service Agreement (ASA) Facilitation and Negotiation Process	• Start negotiation of service agreement early	20
	• Improve negotiation guidance	38
	• Revamp service agreement	17
Priority improvements to the division of services and/or fund sharing	• Clarify division of services and fund sharing	14
	• Clear guidance regarding fund sharing between agencies	7
	• Change percentages/breakdown, clarify	44
Priority General Program Improvements	• Carry funds over year to year	16
	• Expand use of funds	26
	• Clear guidelines on the use of funds	26
	• Focus on outcome/meeting needs	14
	• Encourage collaboration between private and public agencies	10

### ***Priority Improvements to the Adoption Service Agreement (ASA) Facilitation and Negotiation Process***

- ***Improve negotiation guidance (38)***
  - Negotiation of ASA between private and public agencies (III)
  - Contract or MOA between private and public agencies (### ### IIII)
    - Clean up ASA but no formal contract (I)
  - There should be a timeframe/deadline for signing ASA (### ### I)
    - Sign ASA early (II)
    - Complete ASA/contract early (I)
    - Doing ASA, at intake (I)
  - Consistency in negotiations and consistency about who signs ASA (II)
    - Designated negotiator (II)

## **Adoption Promotion Program Statewide Meeting Feedback**

- Timeframe to finalize adoption (I)
  - Don't allow negotiations to delay adoption (I)
- *Start negotiations of the service agreement early (### ### ### I) (20)*
  - Early discussions/before starting adoption process (III)
- *Revamp service agreement (I) (17)*
  - Amend form based on possible change to funding breakdown (###)
  - Revise ASA with ratings for services, more child specific contract/MOA (I)
  - Add the 4 services to ASA (I)
  - Create a focus group to re-evaluate the ASA and breakdown/recommend changes to the ASA (### III)
  - Revisit allocation and contract process (I)

### ***Priority improvements to the division of services and/or fund sharing***

- *Clarify division of services and fund sharing (14)*
  - Add description to "Adoption Services Provided" (I)
  - Define "mandatory" as related to foster care vs adoption (I)
  - Clearer expectation of public and private agencies' roles (I)
  - Clarify placement supervision, it's a concern (IIII)
  - Adoption agency should be required to do post adoption services (I)
    - Post adoption services are required, should not go to specific agencies (I)
  - Clearer definitions of responsibilities for each of the 4 categories (I)
  - Expand 4 criteria (I)
  - Clear guidance of responsibility (I)
  - Consistency in the interpretation of 4 categories(I)
  - Provide consistent information (same state person) (I)
- *Clear guidance regarding fund sharing between agencies (IIII) (7)*
  - State should make the decision on how to split funds between private and public agencies (II)
  - Additional categories on financial sharing agreement beyond the three identified (I)
- *Change percentage/breakdown/clarify (### ### ### ### I) (44)*
  - 50/50 split with equal work (###)
  - Fee-for-service model (III)
  - Break categories into function with different percentages (I)
  - Attach a percentage to each task/checklist of services (I)
  - Allow small increments, i.e. 10% increments (###)
  - Create different age groups (### I)
  - Be outcome based (I)

## Adoption Promotion Program Statewide Meeting Feedback

### Priority General Program Improvements

- *Carry funds from year to year (### ### ###) (16)*
  - o 1-year grace period for expenditure of funds (I)
- *Expand use of funds (### ### ### ### III) (26)*
  - o Use funds for the extended foster care young adults 18-21 (I)
  - o Allow flexibility of fund sharing based on negotiation (I)
- *Clear guidelines on how to spend funds (### ### ###### ### I) (26)*
- *Focus on outcome/meeting the needs of children (I) (14)*
  - o Track progress and incentivize performance (I)
  - o Measure how funds are spent (I)
  - o Review poor placement, even in foster care (I)
  - o Process shouldn't slow down adoption (I)
  - o Improve adoption roles for special needs and older children (I)
  - o Increase reimbursement for extremely difficult to adopt children (III)
    - Ensure that funds are effectively used to get most difficult to adopt children adopted/evidence based (i.e. Daila Henry 3-2-1 model) (I)
  - o Evaluate barriers and service need for children waiting adoption (I)
    - Remove barriers/increase ease of use of NC KIDS (I)
  - o Data needed – accurate number of youth available for adoption (I)
  - o Define “success” for adoption (I)
- *Encourage collaboration between private and public (II) (10)*
  - o 50/50 partnership, DSS has children private have families (I)
  - o NC KIDS and information sharing with all parties (I)
  - o Meeting between DSS and private agency regarding adoption process and breakdown (II)
  - o Face-to-face/annual meetings/more discussions (III)
- *Re-evaluate usefulness of baseline (I) (3)*
  - o No baseline for counties (II)
- *State intervention when there is no agreement between agencies (I) (2)*
  - o Mediation process (I)

### Additional Comments

- Have a pre-adoptive agreement and review every 6 months (I)
- Ongoing in-person training (II)
- Keep private directive of program in fore ground (I)
- Factor in private agencies commitment to implement evidence based practices (I)

## Adoption Promotion Program Statewide Meeting Feedback

- Relax confidentiality on private and other DSS (I)
- Funds in the RFA should be a part of the ASA (I)
- “placing agency” wording confusing, change to “child’s agency” (I)
- Confidentiality (I)
- Private providers should receive funds as per contract (II)
- Identify roles and partnership (I)
- Third party not in contract not receiving a share of reimbursement for recruitment and training (I)
- List serv for Q and A (I)
- Fix form, make check boxes/checklist (I)
- Private concerned about DSS rushing into adoption process or pre-adoption placements that often fail (I)
- There should be 3 meetings, one for each area (I)
- Haven’t experienced any issues until the last 2 years, some agencies refuse to sign agreements “because of the desire for \$0/100 percent” (I)
- Smaller table group, difficult to hear (I)
- Have meeting start at 11:00am, driving 3 hours makes it a long day (I)
- Provide a follow up to all attendees about the results of these feedback sheets (I)
- Provide an action plan on items proposed across multiple tables – i.e. small group work (I)
- Maintain provider/DSS participation at each step. It is very helpful to educate each other (I)
- Great start to continued communication (I)
- Who determines how the money can be spent (I)

### Small Group Discussions

Table 2: Small Group Discussions

Topic Areas	Discussion Points	Frequency
Priority Improvements to the Adoption Service Agreement (ASA) Facilitation and Negotiation Process	• ASA/MOA be completed early/at initial placement	3
	• Clear direction and definitions from state	4
	• Establish timeframe/deadline for ASA to be negotiated and completed	1
	• Establish a focus group to evaluate and redesign process, form, etc	1
	• Child specific contract based on funding	1
Priority improvements to the division of services and/or fund sharing	• Change percentage/breakdown	5
	• Flexibility on use of funds	1
	• No baseline for counties	2
	• Barriers to current information from NC KIDS and information about waiting families	1
	• Clarification of use of funds	2

## Adoption Promotion Program Statewide Meeting Feedback

Priority General Program Improvements	• Evidence based solutions - analyze effectiveness of program using data	4
	• Focus on children waiting placement	5
	• Focus on family recruitment	2
	• Create a focus group	1
	• Complete service agreement before adoption	2
	• Ongoing training	1

### ***Priority Improvements to the Adoption Service Agreement (ASA) Facilitation and Negotiation Process***

- *ASA/MOA be completed at initial placement/early on (3)*
  - Early conversation regarding split (I)
  - Joint responsibilities for services provided/can be negotiated (I)
  - ASA should not slow down permanency (I)
- *Clear direction and definitions from state (4)*
  - ASA leads to conflict, clarify categories (I)
  - Clarification/definition in the “Placement Supervision” section (I)
  - Add categories/definitions under “Adoption Services Provided” (I)
  - Add program service areas for payment to service agreement (I)
- *Establish timeframe/deadline for ASA to be negotiated and completed (I)*
- *Establish a focus group to evaluate and redesign process, form, etc (I)*
- *Child specific contract based on funding (I)*

### ***Priority improvements to the division of services and/or fund sharing***

- *Change percentage/breakdown (5)*
  - 50/50 split (unless negotiated ahead of time) (I)
  - Flat rate based on services (I)
  - Rates structure based on cost of service/fee-for-service (I)
  - Focus on who did the work, not goal of working together focused on adoption (I)
  - Create different age groups (0-5) (I)
- *Flexibility on use of funds (I) 1*
- *No baseline for counties (II) 2*
- *Barriers to current information from NC KIDS and information about waiting families (I) 1*

### ***Priority General Program Improvements***

- *Clarification of use of funds (I) (2)*
  - Training (I)
- *Evidence based solutions - Analyze effectiveness of program using data (4)*
  - Examine whether funds are used to support successful outcome for hard-to-place children (I)

## Adoption Promotion Program Statewide Meeting Feedback

- What is the goal for the number of adoptions to be accomplished for the state? (I)
- Length of time child has been on the Adoption Exchange (I)
- Examine private agency contracts integrity to look at needs (I)
- *Focus on children waiting* (I) **(5)**
  - Finding placement/families for high need children (I)
  - Incentivize families who take high needs children (II)
  - LME partnership to enhance capacity of current families (I)
- *Focus on family recruitment* (I) **(2)**
  - Increase of children in care puts pressure on recruiting foster parents instead of adoptive parents **(I)**
- Focus group **(1)**
- Service agreement before adoption **(2)**
- Ongoing training **(1)**