

## FAMILY FINDING

**Every child deserves a safe and permanent family.** Family Finding was developed by internationally recognized permanency expert Kevin Campbell. This innovative program works to ensure children in foster care are connected into a lifelong family. Family Finding uses a combination of techniques and technology to locate relatives and other adults who can meet the social, emotional, and physical needs of children in foster care. Family Finders are skilled professionals with extensive training. They dedicate an average of four months per case focused on intensive search, discovery, and engagement. Their goal is to build a team of committed and capable adults who can meet the child's most unmet needs, unconditionally.

### Program Highlights:

- *An average of 70 family members and other important people identified for each child.*
- *Permanent placement with family whenever possible.*
- *Children learn their family story and develop a sense of self-history and identity.*
- *Children have a higher probability of permanence and well-being now and into adulthood.*

## FAMILY FINDING: North Carolina and Nationwide

There are over 400,000 children living in America's foster care system, many of whom are isolated from family connections. These children are at risk of aging out of foster care and suffering poor adult health and social outcomes. Family Finding has demonstrated success in many locations across the country in strengthening children's support networks. A growing body of research led by Child Trends is demonstrating that Family Finding can strengthen these networks. Child Trends' recent report examined two sites, one that implemented family finding with children "new to out-of-home care" (Approach A) and another that implemented family finding for children who have been "lingering" in foster care (Approach B). In both cases Family Finding was successful in increasing connections.

### Number of Family Connections

	Approach A	Approach B
One or more connections made through Family Finding	91%	87%
Average number of family members or other supportive connections		
At Baseline (before FF begins)	6	7
Discovered (through FF activities)	22	35

<sup>1</sup> Graph data from Child Trends Research Brief, October 2011

Children's Home Society's pilot project in North Carolina has shown that Family Finding can increase the number of relatives and other adults who can provide an ongoing relationship or commitment to adoption.

### Family Finding Pilot Program Results

Children Served Since July 2008	88
Average Number of Known Relatives/Resources at Referral	8
Average Number of Current Connections at Referral	3
Average Relatives/Resources Discovered during Family Finding	59
Percentage of Cases with Relatives/Resources Committing to Ongoing Relationships	86%
Percentage of Cases with Relatives/Resources Committing to Adoption or Guardianship	52%

**Family Finding provides strategies for involving supportive adults in developing and carrying out a plan for helping children achieve emotional and legal permanency.**

For more information, contact  
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Children's Home Society  
OF NORTH CAROLINA

## **FAMILY FINDING:**

### **Partnering with Children's Home Society**

Children's Home Society (CHS) recognizes the importance of partnerships as we grow Family Finding throughout North Carolina. It is our commitment to provide our County partners with ongoing communication related to program implementation and case outcomes.

#### **As a partner in the Family Finding process, you can expect the following:**

- A dedicated, professionally trained Family Finder to provide services in your community
- For the Family Finder to carry a case load of 5-6 cases and assure the integrity of the Family Finding model.
- Family Finding services (in fidelity to the model) will include the following steps: Discovery, Engagement, Planning, Decision Making, Evaluation, and Follow-up on Supports
- Initial contact with the referring DSS social worker within two (2) business days of the initial referral
- Regular and ongoing contact with the referring DSS social worker including participation in meetings as necessary.
- CHS Family Finder will provide the referring DSS social worker with monthly progress notes
- CHS Family Finder will complete a Closing Report within seven (7) business days of concluding Family Finding services and this report will be provided to the DSS social worker to become part of the youth's case record. This report will have information on maternal and paternal family members and will document a diligent effort of engagement.

#### **We will send you a quarterly report showing how our efforts are measuring up to the following Program Outcome Benchmarks:**

- 75% of the children/youth completing Family Finding will have a minimum of five (5) ongoing connections identified.
- 40% of the children/youth completing Family Finding will have one (1) identified option for permanency.

## **Testimonials**

*"Pitt County has been awed with the way Children's Home Society moved forward with forming a partnership with our county to implement Family Finding. CHS staff are exceptionally knowledgeable about their services and their expertise went a long way in harnessing staff buy-in to the Family Finding effort. CHS staff support has made all the difference in a smooth and successful implementation."*

-Margaret Dixon, Pitt County DSS

*"Wake County Human Services was part of the Family Finding initiative that was funded by a Duke Endowment Grant in 2008 thru 2011. We were delighted by the number of relatives we engaged for older foster youth who committed to being long term supports or even placements. When CHS received a grant to continue Family Finding in North Carolina, we were impressed with the enthusiasm, experience and responsiveness of the staff they brought on to implement the program. We are excited and pleased to be partnering with CHS to continue providing family finding services to improve permanency outcomes for our Wake County youth in foster care."*

-Warren Ludwig and Jean Hagen-Johnson, Wake County DSS

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*Every child deserves a permanent, safe, and loving family.*