

HOSTING A FOSTER & ADOPTION FOSTER CARE FAIR



Project **1.27**

Fostering and Adopting in Faith

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Hosting a Foster and Adoption Fair at your local church can increase the number of prospective parents interested in certifying their homes for foster or adoption. The more parents that are interested, the greater the potential to decrease the number of children in the child welfare system waiting for permanency. Below are some suggested steps to take when organizing such an event for your church or local agency. Please reach out to Project 1.27 to discuss further considerations when planning your event.

GET APPROVAL FROM CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Ensure that your church leadership will approve not only the hosting of the fair, but the selected date and time your team chooses.

ENGAGE LIKE-MINDED CHURCH MEMBERS

Form a team of others in your church interested in this area to help with planning and organization of the fair. It will also help to have friendly, knowledgeable staff available to answer questions and provide information during the event.

GATHER AND SHARE FACTS AND INFORMATION ABOUT FOSTER CARE

How many children are in foster care or legally free for adoption in your area? What are some agencies in your area that foster families may be able to work with? How many children in your area enter placement each month? There is a need for permanency for all children, and children are available for adoption across all ages and demographics.

DEVELOP A SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Consider how you might divide the time during the event. Perhaps you could have opportunities for mingling, presentations, hearing information on the local need for children, and an information session on the process and timelines.

REACH OUT TO CPAS AND COUNTY AGENCIES TO ATTEND EVENT

Ask your local child welfare and placement agencies to attend your event. Having a representative is valuable to families who have questions about the certification process and requirements, and this will help them choose the agency that is right for them.

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BRING IN A SPEAKER OR PARENT PANELIST

Consider having a speaker experienced in foster care come present to your audience, such as a current or former foster parent. This first-hand experience is valuable to other parents wanting an honest account of what it is like to serve in the child welfare system, and a great resource for support and answering questions.

PROVIDE SNACKS, TREATS, AND/OR ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

Adding elements such as protein snacks, special treats, or games will help keep the little ones busy and make it a family friendly environment. If your church has the resources to do so, consider offering childcare during the fair.