



Dave Thomas
Foundation
for Adoption®

Forever Families for Children in Foster Care

Child-Focused Recruitment

Wendy's Wonderful Kids



Johnathan



"My recruiter, John...
first adult that I...
— Johnathan, adopted at 13

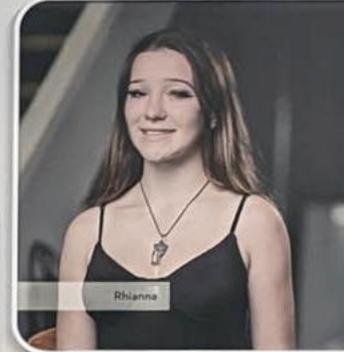


Kenya

...ty to spend a lot of time with
his family tree and finding us.
...ver grateful. If it wasn't for her,
...el could have gone anywhere."
— Erin, adopted Nathaniel at 13



Eric and Nathaniel



Rhianna



Mission

Dramatically increase the number of adoptions of children waiting in North America's foster care systems.

Vision

Every child will have a permanent home and a loving family.

We believe

every child is **ADOPTABLE.**



In North America ...

430,000+
CHILDREN

are in
foster care

140,000+
CHILDREN

are waiting to
be adopted

20,000+
CHILDREN

age out of care
every year without
a family





Everyday, more than 50 youth age out of foster care without a family.

Impact of Aging Out of Foster Care

Without the support and safety net of a permanent family*:

- **1 in 5** youth will be homeless after age 18
- Only **50%** will be employed at age 24
- Less than **3%** will earn a college degree
- **70%** of former female foster youth will be pregnant by age 21
- **1 in 4** youth will experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), equal to or higher than U.S. military veterans

**Source: Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, Cost Avoidance: The Business Case for Investing In Youth Aging Out of Foster Care, 2013*





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THIS MODEL IS UP TO

3x

MORE EFFECTIVE*

at serving children who have
been in foster care the longest

*Source: *The Impact of Child-Focused Recruitment on Foster Care Adoption: A Five-Year Evaluation of Wendy's Wonderful Kids*, Child Trends, Washington, D.C. (2011)





Recruitment in Child Welfare

Typical Recruitment

- News segment: “Monica, age 12, is waiting for someone to step forward and adopt her; watch her story.”
- “Visit this website to read about and see pictures of youth available for adoption.”
- Latinx festival attendees: “Can we tell you about Latinx children in foster care to see if you would be interested in adopting one of them?”

Child-Focused Recruitment

- “Johnny’s friend Ben’s family already feels like family to him.”
- “Suzy remembers an aunt but hasn’t been in contact with her since they moved years ago.”
- “Amy has developed a strong relationship with her art teacher.”

These connections in the child’s life often aren’t aware they are in foster care or that adopting them would be an option.





Last year, nearly 20,000 aged out of foster care without a permanent family

Focus Population

Children ages 9 and older (or younger and one of the below)

- Sibling groups
- Children with special needs
- Children opposed to adoption
- Children in long-term foster care
- Children without an identified adoptive resource



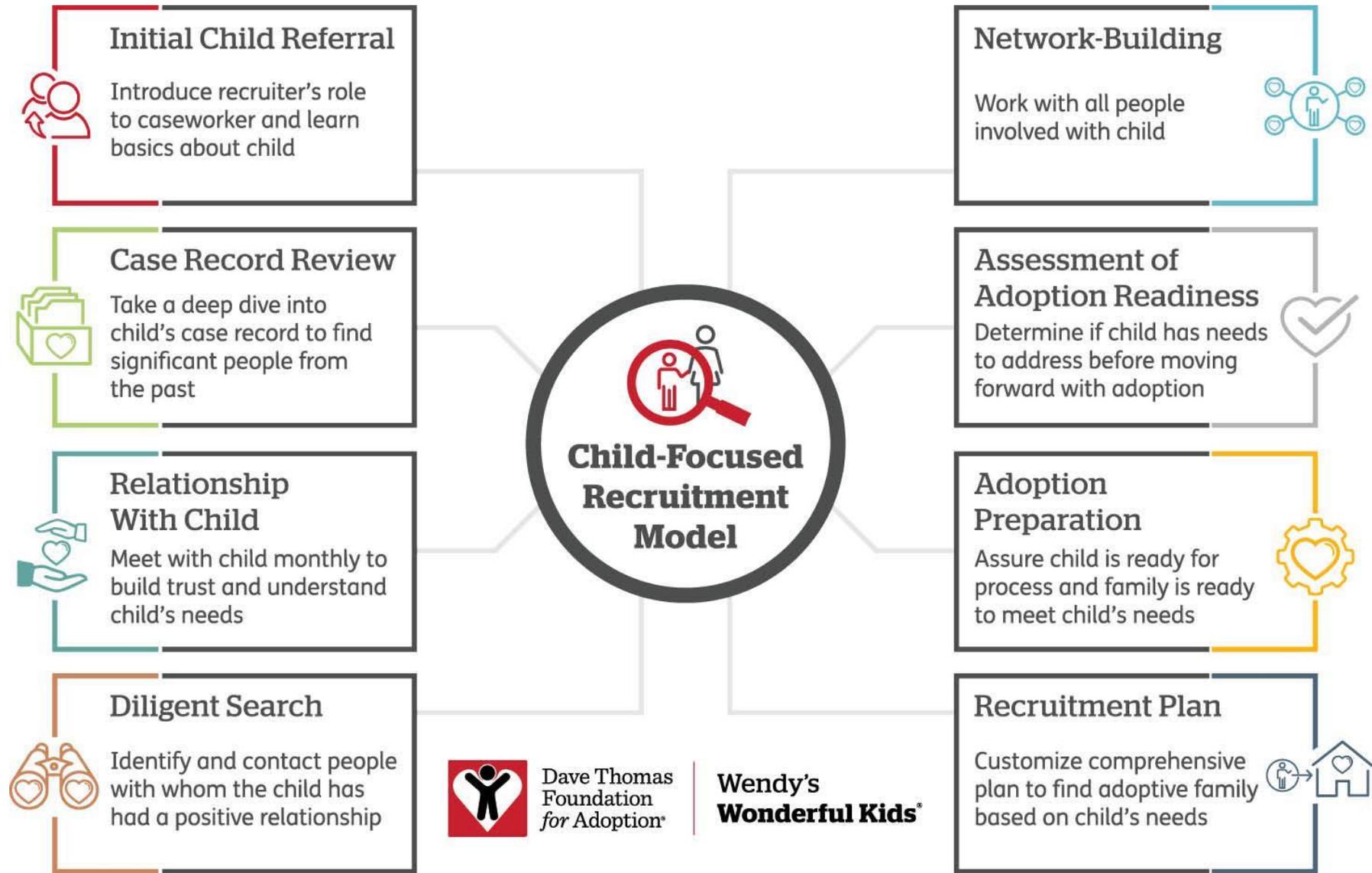
Youth Served

“

I don't want
to be adopted.

”





Caseworker's Role

- Make referrals
- Allow access to files
- Gather child's Team

- Assist in recruitment
- Permit monthly contact
- Allow diligent search

- Review recruitment plan
- Encourage legal permanency





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THANK YOU!



davethomasfoundation.org