

PREPARING FOR MEDIA RECRUITMENT & PUBLICITY

PREPARING THE CHILD

- Make sure the child is ready for a family and able to handle this type of exposure.
- If the child is resistant to this opportunity, further preparation should be done before scheduling any publicity efforts.
- Explain to the child why media recruitment is used. Focus on the need to find families for the many children in his or her situation and the importance of these efforts in educating the public about adoption.
- Role-playing and/or actually videotaping the child is a great warm-up for the television recruitment program “Wednesday’s Child” and for other recruitment campaigns. Discuss with the child how he or she will participate in this experience. Make believe you are the interviewer and ask the child some of the questions listed below. View the tape or other media with him or her and share your ideas. Assure the child that you will be accompanying him or her to the actual taping (if this is the case). If there are any questions which should not be asked of the child, inform the MARE contact in advance of any taping.

Sample “Wednesday’s Child” child interview questions:

- How old are you?
- Do you know what we’re doing here today/Do you know what “Wednesday’s Child” is?
- How would you describe yourself?
- Do you like school? What’s your favorite subject?
- What is your favorite thing to eat?
- What do you like to do for fun?
- What kind of family would you like?
- What would you do to help out within a family?
- How many years have you been in foster/state care?*
- Have you moved around a lot?*

Sample “Wednesday’s Child” spokesperson interview questions:

- How would you describe this child?
 - What type of needs does this child have?
 - What type of family are you looking for? What strengths should they possess?
 - Tell me about this child’s background. †
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- Share samples of previous publicity efforts for similar-aged children and discuss the various steps involved.

* These questions would only be asked of older children.

† The response to this question should be in very general terms; do not cite specific trauma in the child’s past.



- Explore his or her reaction to the publicity: feelings of caretakers; comments by classmates, friends, neighbors; possible responses by the public or lack of responses; and other efforts to find a family.
- Let the child know there are no guarantees of finding the right family with any recruitment effort, but that it's important to take advantage of every recruitment opportunity.

PREPARING THE CARETAKERS

- Explain why media recruitment is used.
- Caretakers, teachers and other important people in the child's life should be supportive of the child's involvement and assist in any way they can. (The caretakers' cooperation will have a bearing on the child's experience.)
- Explore the reaction of relatives, friends, neighbors and acquaintances of the caretakers.
- Prepare caretakers for emotional reactions of the child, both positive and negative.
- Prepare caretakers for the process that will be followed in proceeding with any newly-recruited families.
- Prepare the classroom teacher for the upcoming publicity and alert the caretaker to the teacher's awareness.
- Decide whether previous caretakers (including the biological family) should be involved in the preparation process before the publicity appears.

FOLLOW-UP

- See the child immediately after the publicity appears.
- Draw out any feelings the child may be experiencing and help the child work through those feelings.
- Discuss the results of the publicity effort (again, emphasizing general results of the publicity as well as specific results.)
- Explore the child's reactions to any specific candidates as appropriate.
- Give the child continued hope for finding a family if a particular publicity effort does not yield a potential family. Let the child know you will continue actively recruiting until the right family is identified.