

Adoptive Family Support Network

(FY2021 Appropriation Act - Public Act 166 of 2020)

March 1, 2021

Sec. 559. (1) *From the funds appropriated in part 1 for adoption support services, the department shall allocate \$250,000.00 to the Adoptive Family Support Network by December 1 of the current fiscal year to operate and expand its adoptive parent mentor program to provide a listening ear, knowledgeable guidance, and community connections to adoptive parents and children who were adopted in this state or another state.*

(2) *The Adoptive Family Support Network shall submit to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on the department budget, the senate and house fiscal agencies, the senate and house policy offices, and the state budget office by March 1 of the current fiscal year a report on the program described in subsection (1), including, but not limited to, the number of cases served and the number of cases in which the program prevented an out-of-home placement.*



Adoptive Family Support Network

PARENT TO PARENT

Parent to Parent (P2P) provides a listening ear, knowledgeable guidance and community connections to any adoptive family living in Michigan at no charge. Services are provided through trained staff and volunteer parent leaders, located throughout Michigan and offering a wide variety of personal adoption experience.

WHEN SHOULD YOU REACH OUT?

Contact us anytime 24/7 you have a question or want to connect, such as:

PEER SUPPORT Is there an adoptive parent leader or a support group near my county?

REFERRALS Can you help me find a therapist or other specialists with experience in adoptive issues?

RESOURCES Are there supports available in my community for my adoptive family? I would like to request a resource from AFSN's lending library.

ADVOCACY How do I obtain the help my child needs in school? I want to attend a P2P leadership training.

BEHAVIOR What can I do when my child is exhibiting difficult behaviors (mood swings, temper, disobedience, etc.)?

GRIEF & LOSS How can I navigate this difficult time for myself and my child?

IDENTITY How do I answer my child's questions about his/her identity at different stages or ages?

COMMUNITY CONNECTION How do I get more information about upcoming fun events and trainings for my family?



For more information, visit dabsj.org and search "P2P".



This report is being submitted in fulfillment of the legislative directive in Public Act 166 of 2020, Sec. 559.

AFSN & PARENT TO PARENT MENTORING

Through your support, AFSN has expanded services statewide with the Parent to Parent (P2P) mentor program since 2014. To date, AFSN has trained 96 volunteer adoptive, kinship and guardianship parent mentors to provide peer support in their communities throughout Michigan. The P2P program was serving more than 3,500 adoptive, kinship and guardianship families annually when DA Blodgett – St. Johns was forced to close AFSN and their parent mentor program as a result of being vetoed as part of 2019 PA 67. This was a devastating loss without warning to the adoption community, and during the COVID-19 pandemic when support was more vital than ever before. Funding for AFSN's parent mentor program was restored as part of FY 2020 and FY 2021 PA 166, Sec. 559, and we have been working tirelessly since Dec. 1, 2020 to rebuild connections to the vital resources and support for adoptive, kinship, foster, and guardianship families.

"Kiddos that are adopted out of foster care deserve all the support they can get, and so often the families are left with kids that have extraordinary needs and very little access to resources. AFSN has been a valuable resource for me and other adoptive families, connecting us with resources, training, and maybe most importantly support." - Adoptive parent, supported by P2P

P2P has a specialized focus on supporting adoptive families with children who may be impacted by the trauma from early childhood abuse and neglect. AFSN provides peer mentoring, support groups, education and advocacy to create a community that supports the lifelong wellbeing of adoptive families. The P2P Program's goal remains to be limiting out of home placements (residential treatment), disrupted adoptive placements and dissolved adoptions; supporting children to continue their healing at home.

In 2018 AFSN and P2P gained accreditation through the National Council on Accreditation (COA) for Counseling, Support and Education Services. This accreditation signifies that an organization or program, such as AFSN, is effectively managing its resources and providing the best possible services to all of its stakeholders. The program's staff and 96 volunteer parent mentors are located throughout Michigan and are well connected to resources in their communities. This promotes their ability to support, coach and advocate for the services families need.

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In the first 90 days (Dec. 1, 2020 - Feb. 28, 2021) AFSN Successfully Provided:

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION THROUGH P2P

1. Phone (Warmline) – Non crisis line for information, referral and support available by:
 - A. Calling 855-MICH-P2P
 - B. Emailing AFSN@dabsj.org
 - C. Direct Messaging via AFSN Facebook Page
2. Website – Parent to Parent on dabsj.org which included the development and monitoring of:
 - A. Statewide Support Group Registry – 68 groups searchable by county
 - B. Lending Library- 581 mixed media resources available, 61 mailed since 12/1/2020
 - C. Updated community events calendar
3. Social Media with AFSN
 - A. Facebook Page – 4,184 page followers
 - B. Private Facebook Support Groups – 5 groups & 3,074 members
4. Assistance connecting families to appropriate community resources – 153
5. Assistance connecting families to trained parent mentors in their community – 61
6. Lending Library – 581 mixed media resources available, 61 resources mailed
7. Client Satisfaction Survey Distribution via online and in PDF by mail

FAMILY SUPPORT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH P2P

1. Monthly group events for adoptive/guardianship/kinship parents and children
 - A. Online Book Club – 8 meetings w/ 51 parents from 15 counties
 - B. Support group – 7 groups, currently virtual with plans for returning in person
2. Training, recruitment and retention events for new or previously trained volunteer adoption/kinship/guardianship parent mentors –
 - A. Virtual Event- Kick-off event in December to re-engage and educate them on supports available to them through the P2P program.
3. Technical assistance toward upcoming events:
 - A. Single parent retreat - families from 7 counties
 - B. Family tubing event – Lansing area
 - C. Virtual adoptive/kinship/guardianship fathers group – statewide
 - D. FASD parent education group – statewide
4. Participation of AFSN staff on boards, coalitions and training. Examples include:
 - A. MDHHS Foster/Adoptive/Kinship/Guardianship Coalition
 - B. MDHHS Adoption Oversight Committee & Post Adoption Sub-Committee
 - C. MDHHS Kinship Caregiver Coalition member & Chair of Policy Sub-Committee
 - D. Together For The Children (TFTC) - Train the Trainer, 12 hour evidence based training for foster, adoptive, kinship and guardianship families.
5. Develop & distribute client satisfaction survey to adoptive, kinship, guardian families.
 - A. Quarter 1 Survey- Available in PDF & secure electronic format – 92 responses

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In the first 90 days (Dec. 1, 2020 – Feb. 28, 2021), Indicators of P2P Success include:

CLIENT SATISFACTION & PREVENTION OF OUT OF HOME PLACEMENT THROUGH P2P

1. 100% reported all adopted children under 18 remained living in their home while receiving support from AFSN.
2. 99% strongly agreed or agreed that AFSN staff is knowledgeable about community based resources and support for adoptive families.
3. 100% reported feeling more able to access support and resources for their family since connecting with AFSN.
4. 99% reported feeling that staff are sensitive to the needs of their family.
5. 100% reported feeling that AFSN staff treated their family with dignity and was respectful of their culture and background.

“I was having a rough time, especially with my youngest, they listened. I didn't ask for advice and they didn't tell me what I should be doing. I so appreciated that! I know what I SHOULD be doing, but I am exhausted and needed a safe place to vent so I could get back to a place where I had the energy to do those things that they have taught me in the past.”
- Adoptive parent supported by the P2P program in last 90 days

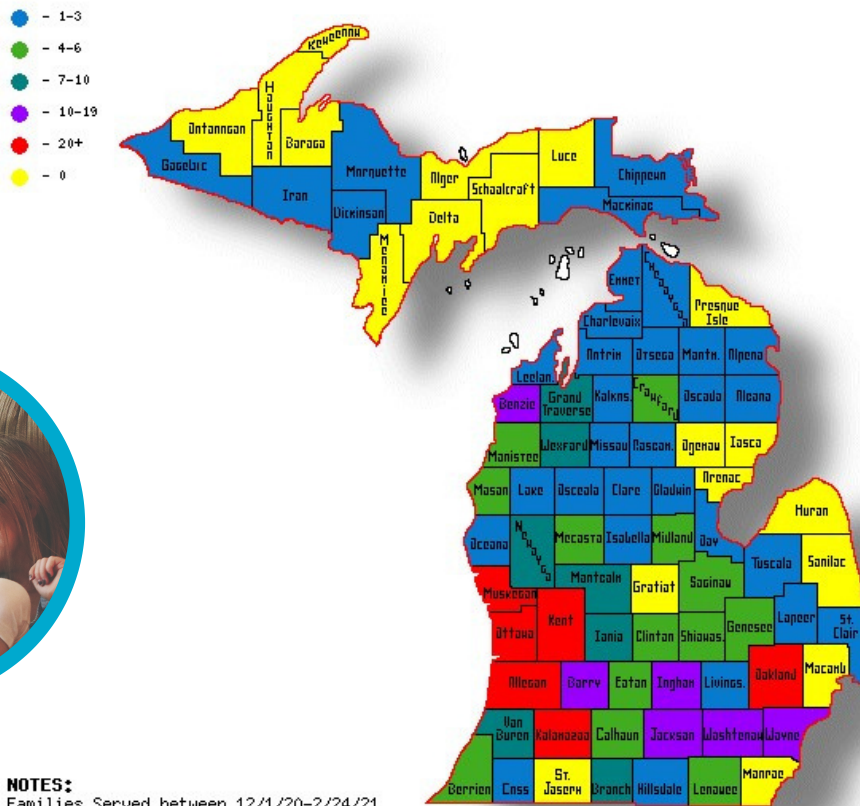
TOP REASONS FAMILIES CONTACTED THE P2P PROGRAM

1. Seeking Support or Connection to Similar Families
2. Lending Library Resource Request
3. Assistance with Child's Challenging Behaviors
4. Seeking a Parent Mentor

ADOPTIVE, KINSHIP AND GUARDIANSHIP FAMILIES SERVED BY P2P

1. 597 unduplicated Michigan families from 64 counties
 - A. 63% adopted from child welfare
 - B. 15% kinship and guardianship families
2. 926 individual contacts (averaging a total of 2 hours of direct service per family)
 - A. Numbers do not include additional support received inside social media groups without direct contact with an AFSN staff member.

Unduplicated Adoptive/Kinship/Guardianship Families Served By AFSN



NOTES:
Families Served between 12/1/20-2/24/21

