

“Thank You” Community Bulletin Board

One noteworthy benefit from hosting our Recruitment and Retention Workshops is the bounty of marketing techniques, tricks-of-the-trade and just simply nifty ideas suggested by participants from around the country.

This “nifty” was offered by Ms. Cooie Grey-Levin of Youth and Family Programs in Chico, California. It's simple of design, inexpensive to produce and maintain, flexible and such a great marketing idea.

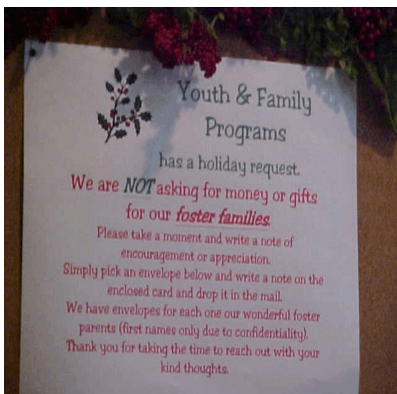
The project involves creating a bulletin board display, decorated for the season/holiday—in this instance the board was decorated for the Christmas Season—and posting on the board a series of brief narrative vignettes about several of your program's foster families, a brief message that describes the project and explains “what to do,” blank note cards and pre-addressed and with postage envelopes and, then, having the board hosted by a shop, coffee house or any community/ market place where *Jane and John Q* gather.

The project: to get John and/or Jane Q citizen to write a brief *thank you note* to the community's foster families for caring for the community's children.

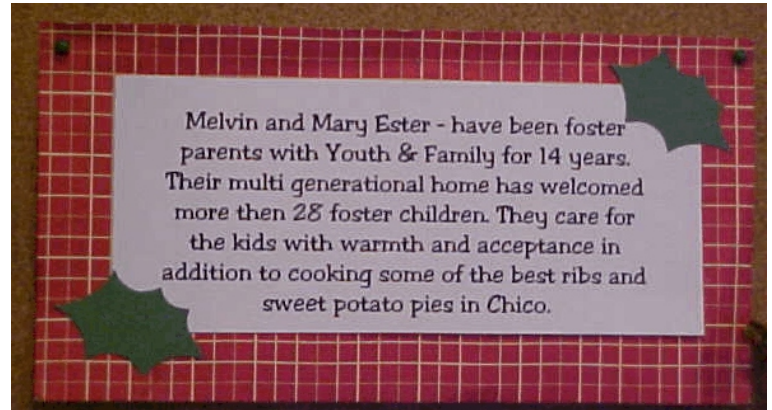
The board: any style would do—Cooie used a standard cork-faced, framed bulletin board garlanded for Christmas (you change the decorations with the holiday or month or season).



The message: the posted message reads: *Youth & Family Programs has a holiday request: We are NOT asking for money or gifts for our foster families. Please take a moment and write a note of encouragement or appreciation. Simply pick an envelope below and write a note on the enclosed card and drop it in the mail. We have envelopes for each one of our wonderful foster parents (first names only due to confidentiality). Thank you for taking the time to reach out with your kind thoughts.*



Vignettes: For example:



Placement: This board was hosted by a local coffee shop but the project is suitable for any venue where folk gather: shops, markets, the library, professional office waiting rooms ... whatever.



The process: The envelopes are all pre-addressed to the agency—the agency then forwards the notes (naturally any kooks are weeded-out but Cooie mentioned that all the notes received have been positive); the foster parents first names only are used—the vignettes use first names and bear no specific identifying or address info. Maintenance requires visits to replenish the envelopes and check for board wear and tear and that's it.

The project did receive a nice write-up in the local newspaper—the agency responded with an appropriate thank you both for the article and for the hosting coffee house (nothing promotes business community support like free advertizing). Limitless opportunity: multiple boards, Father's Day, Mother's Day, Christmas, easily a project for agency volunteers, lots of good press potential, inexpensive, clever, creative, ... wish I had thought of it. Thanks to Youth & Family Programs for sharing. .

American Foster Care Resources, Inc.
POB 271, King George, VA 22485
540-775-7410 TEL 540-775-3271 FAX

afcr@afcr.com
<http://www.afcr.com>
<http://www.fostercarenetwork.com>