



OhioKAN

Virginia: Post-Adoption Program

Research Summary

Title of Program: Post-Adoption Support Services (Virginia)

Years it Operated: 2000-present

Number of Families Served: 3,900 Virginia families have utilized post-adoption services over the past 15 years at United Methodist Family Services (UMFS).³

Cost of Program: The Adoptive Family Preservation program through UMFS has an annual budget of \$1.1 Million in federal and state funds. In 2013, \$500,000 was allocated to expand post-adoption services with a regional target on the Piedmont and Western regions of Virginia.³ The 2013 funds were used to train adoption competent professionals and to strengthen support services for adoptive families in those geographical areas.²

Funding Source: Post-Adoption Services are funded through the Virginia Department of Social Services.⁴

Description of the Program: Child Welfare Services within Virginia are administered by individual counties under supervision from the state.⁷ Since 2013, post-adoption services have been included in the state framework for the Virginia Department of Social Services.⁴ Contracted agencies carry out the statewide provision to make post-adoption services accessible for adoptive families in Virginia.⁴ Types of post-adoption services outlined by the state are: adoptive parent support groups, children/youth support groups, online support groups, children's camps, social events, heritage activities, therapy/counseling, respite care, birth family search/reunion, and educational trainings/resources.⁴ Post-Adoption Services provider contracts for 2018-2019 have been granted to Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia, The Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.), Children's Home Society of Virginia, DePaul Community Resources, and United Methodist Family Services (UMFS).⁶

In addition to the contracted agencies, there is a statewide Adoption Family Preservation Program (AFP) that is funded through the Virginia Department of Social Services; it is implemented by UMFS statewide through their 10 agency locations.³ AFP through UMFS is free for all adopted children and their families as long as they reside in Virginia.³ Services offered through AFP include information and referral, parenting classes, educational trainings, adoption competent counseling, attachment therapy, crisis intervention, school based services, care coordination, and advocacy.³ Important to note: AFP, hires and trains adoptive parents to serve as Adoptive Parent Liaisons (APLs) who provide peer support services to families.²

One contractor for 2018-2019 post-adoption support services is The Children’s Home Society of Virginia. The Children’s Home Society of Virginia serves families and children in the Fredericksburg and Richmond regions of Virginia.¹ Four major program components comprise the post-adoption services available there:

1. Adoptive parents are eligible to receive intensive parent coaching in partnership with clinical social workers whose training focused on trauma and attachment. Families can receive weekly sessions in person and over the phone.¹
2. Families receive comprehensive support services including I&R to adoption competent service providers, specialized parent trainings on trauma and attachment, networking activities with other adoptive families, and case advocacy.¹
3. Adopted children ages 6 to 18 are invited to participate in Kid’s Club, held eight times per year, during school breaks and holidays as planned respite for parents. Social workers lead children’s recreational and therapeutic activities for a day-long event at the agency.¹
4. Adoptive parents have the opportunity to network with other families through formalized meet-ups and social gatherings planned by the agency.¹

Who benefits from the Program? Adoptive families and children living within the regions served by each agency are eligible to participate in post-adoption service programs across the state.⁴

What services/benefits do they receive? Families are eligible to receive post-adoption support services including: support groups, educational trainings, counseling and therapy, camps, heritage activities, Respite care, and access to information and community resources.⁴ Adult adoptees in Virginia have access to birth family search and reunion tools through the state.⁴

How do they receive the benefits/services? Adoptive families and children receive services through contracted human services agencies serving Virginia.

Where are the services provided? Location of services is dependent on the local contracted agencies’ protocol. Intensive services can be provided in the home and at the local agency as well as other various community locations.⁴

Sources:

1. Children’s Home Society of Virginia Post-Adoption Services (2019): <https://chsva.org/post-adoption-program/program-overview/>
2. Donaldson Adoption Institute: Profiles of Publicly Funded Post-Adoption Services: <https://www.adoptioninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Supporting-and-Preserving-Families.pdf>
3. UMFS Adoptive Family Preservation Program (2019): <https://www.umfs.org/services/foster-care-adopt/adoption-services/>
4. VDSS Post-Adoption Services Brief (2013): http://dss.virginia.gov/files/division/dfs/ap/intro_page/manuals/07-2013/section_4_post-adoption_services.pdf
5. VDSS Post Adoption Pamphlet: https://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/dfs/ap/intro_page/pos/post-adoption-pamphlet.pdf
6. VDSS Post Adoption Services Contractor List 2018: http://dss.virginia.gov/files/division/dfs/ap/intro_page/pos/Post_Adoption_Services_Contractor_List_2018-2019.pdf
7. Child Welfare Information Gateway: State vs. County Administration, 2018: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/services/>