QIC-AG Site Dissemination

Reference Guide

# Background

The Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation (QIC-AG) is a national project, funded by the Children’s Bureau, to promote permanence and improve adoption and guardianship preservation and support. The QIC-AG selected eight sites to develop evidence-based models of support and intervention achieve long-term, stable permanency in adoptive and guardianship homes for waiting children as well as for children and families after adoption or guardianship has been finalized.

# Dissemination goals

The following goals guide the national QIC-AG dissemination activities. Over time the goals shift from raising awareness of relevant pre- and post-adoption issues to changing how professionals think about permanence and finally promoting professional use of resources and interventions evaluated by the Center.

**2016 - 2019**

# Target Audience(s)

A target audience includes the people who will receive the materials and messages developed by each site. This audience may grow and change over time, yet the primary goal will remain: identify the people who are likely to consume and use the information you distribute. This list can be modified and should be prioritized. You do not have to reach all of these audiences and you may identify other audiences (such as the media or families in the community). Who you want to reach should directly connect to the goals of your dissemination work – it will also inform the types of products you create, the content, and the way you move information. If you want to share information directly with families and children in the child welfare/adoption systems, please consult with your evaluators to ensure dissemination efforts do not conflict with comparison groups in the evaluation.

This section describes different possible target audience your site might choose, depending on your specific project design. Table 1 is a tracking template you can use to capture specific information about your target audiences.

1. Child Welfare Professionals and Practitioners – People who work directly with children, youth, and their families in the child welfare or adoption field (i.e., case workers, social workers, supervisors). These individuals may be colleagues in your own organization or professionals in state, tribal, county, local government or private child welfare agencies in your community/state.
2. Child Welfare Program Administrators – These are the decision makers working in public, private, and Tribal child welfare and adoption agencies. They make decisions about program administration and influence budgets, training activities, and organization culture.
3. Children, Youth, and Families – Consumers of child welfare and adoption services.
4. Funders **–** Private and public organizations that provide financial support for child welfare and adoption service delivery(i.e., foundations, county, state and federal government agencies).
5. Intermediary Organizations – Professionals who do not do direct service delivery but are valuable resources to practitioners or policymakers in the field of child welfare and adoption. Examples include training and technical assistance providers, Tribal centers, professional associations, advocacy groups, youth groups, and policy organizations.
6. International and Private Domestic Adoption Agency Professionals – Direct service providers who work with families to facilitate private domestic or international adoptions.
7. Professionals outside child welfare who work with children and families– Professional who work directly with children, youth, and families connected to the child welfare and adoption systems, but do not work in the capacity of child welfare. Examples include: doctors, educators, clinicians, mental health providers, and people working in the judicial and juvenile justice systems
8. Researchers/Evaluators – Individuals based in a university, government office, research institute or firm, or think tank who study and/or evaluate child welfare and adoption policy, services, and systems.

**Table 1. Target Audience Development Tool (not required for Site Dissemination Plan)**

| **Audience Type** | **Name/Organization & Contact Info.** | **What They Would do with the Info.** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Child Welfare Professionals and Practitioners** (case workers, etc.) | * John Doe – Supervisor, County Welfare Agency [jdoe@cwa.gov](mailto:jdoe@cwa.gov) | * John needs this information to support his supervision of 12 case workers; he will share the list of local resources and we want him to reference the continuum in his work |
| * Ethel Hernandez – Case worker, Private Agency ABC: [ehernandez@ABC.org](mailto:ehernandez@ABC.org) | * Ethel needs tips on best practices to influence how she does her work; she needs a list of resources and an easy way to remember that permanency starts before placement |
|  |  |  |

# Content & Messages

The content of the materials developed by each site support its ability to achieve the stated dissemination goals. Content builds over time to ultimately provide information that can be used to change the way members of the target audience talk and act.

## Content Areas

People have access to a lot of information. The content, or topical areas, must be relevant to the information needs of the target audience. Good content is valuable, useful, and purposeful to the people to whom the material is targeted.

## Content Development

Materials produced need to use consistent terms and be complementary with one another. The content of materials must be relevant to the target audience in order for the information to be consumed and used. Stories, big numbers, and current news events can frame the content and make it memorable.

Common (or shared) language is an important element of content and messaging. It ensures that terms are being used consistently across all different types of products. The QIC-AG created a glossary is a resource to ensure terms are used consistently.

[Plain language](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/FederalPLGuidelines/index.cfm?CFID=1858115&CFTOKEN=60a31846ea79cb44-335862EF-EC8B-948B-1D3FF44457995617&jsessionid=7FFCFD34F7839B31DCB5F6ABD9DCAEA7.chh) will be used to guide content development. Tips for written materials include:

* 1. Keep sentences short
  2. Use active voice
  3. Use examples, graphs, or pictures to describe complex ideas
  4. Use headers and sub-heading to guide the reader
  5. Think of a specific member of your target audience when drafting content
  6. Be responsive to questions from your target audience
  7. Use bullet points and numbered lists

## Review Process

The review process is important to ensuring messages are consistent across products. Three levels of review are required, so we recommend each site select a dissemination “coordinator” who will be responsible for completing the dissemination activities outlined in the workplan. When planning for the development and submission of products for review by the QIC-AG and Children’s Bureau, consider how much time is needed at each step in the review process.

1. **Internal Local Review –** The site will look for the appropriate use of key messages, terms and concepts identified in this plan and the QIC-AG glossary.
2. **QIC-AG Review –** ONE WEEK MINIMUM. All materials must be submitted for review to Selena Childs, [sbchilds@email.unc.edu](mailto:sbchilds@email.unc.edu), the QIC-AG Dissemination Coordinator, for review. The QIC-AG Dissemination Coordinator will add required disclaimers, acknowledgement, and logos, in compliance with federal guidelines (see Section 5.1). If there are minor typos or grammatical errors, those will be fixed without site approval. If there are any questions about the content, Selena will contact the site Dissemination Coordinator with questions. The QIC-AG will have a minimum of one week to complete the review, and then if Federal Review is required, the Children’s Bureau will need at least one additional week for review.
3. **Federal Review –** ONE WEEK MINIMUMFollowing QIC-AG review,if appropriate for Federal Review,Selena Childs, the QIC-AG Dissemination Coordinator, will submit the site’s materials to the Children’s Bureau for a review and revision process, working as a liaison between the Site and the CB if needed.

## Message Development

Key messages are common, core statements about your site and its work. They should be reflected and repeated in all written and spoken communications. Although information will be packaged in different ways for each audience, key messages will be emphasized in your site’s dissemination materials.

# Products & Activities

The act of producing and posting a report is not effective dissemination. Multiple products and activities are needed to move information effectively to the various members of the target audience. Research indicates that most human services audiences prefer succinct summaries and synthesis of information.[[1]](#footnote-1) Furthermore, marketing research indicates that people need to hear messages in multiple ways, many times before they will act. Therefore, it is useful to think of the products and materials as working together to move your message.

Many products and activities will have the same message and content, customized to address questions posed by the target audience. Authors should consider which type of product is the best fit for the information they want to get across to a specific audience. Furthermore, a suite of products can reach different audiences with similar information. The following section describes the types of materials the site may produce to share content.

The products described in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 may be developed to inform each target audience. Having consistent product types will help your target audience access information. For example, people will come to rely on briefs or fact sheets because they will have common formatting and people will know what to expect from the type of information contained in the product. The types of audiences most receptive to these general products are identified in this section. You can customize this list (adding or deleting product types) or amend them based on existing tools and templates you use in your organization. One thing to note is that if multiple sites are creating similar products (such as fact or tip sheets) the QIC-AG may be better able to support the distribution of those materials. General guidance is provided on which audience types tend to prefer which vehicles for packaging information, but YOU SHOULD ASK! Ask members of your target audience what type of materials they read, where they get that information, and for samples that they like – base your decisions on what you know will reach/speak to people.

## Branding

All products should have a common look and feel. Font, title format, logo placement, and color can all help connect products to each other and “brand” them as part of the project. A project specific logo is not required, but if one exists it should be consistently placed on materials created by the **site** for purposes of public distribution. The QIC-AG logo must be placed on all products produced by each site. The Children’s Bureau (CB) logo may be used, after the review process is complete.

An acknowledgement of the funding source and a disclaimer is required on ALL dissemination products. This will be inserted by QIC-AG as part of the review process described in Section 4.3. Leave adequate space in 1-page document to accommodate this.

## Written products

The products described in this section are examples of products your site might create to package content key messages generated by your site. All written documents should contain contact information or a web address so readers can access additional information.

**One-Page Summary/Brochure** – A glossy 1-page (two pages of text front and back) document that highlights the site and its goals. It should include pictures, significant white space, and color. The purpose of this document is to create awareness of the project and increase the reader’s interest in accessing more information. This is a background document and is appropriate for all target audiences.

**Tip Sheets** – These are succinct, specific, 1-page documents that draw from lessons learned throughout the project and translate them into actionable tips for readers. The purpose of these tips sheets is to influence the perspective or behaviors of the target audience. These are often preferred by practitioners.

**Fact Sheets** – Short, topically focused documents that use bullet points or bolded sentences to make key points, backed up with information about how the site is addressing an issue. Graphs, charts, and pictures can be used to enhance information. The purpose of fact sheets is to create awareness of key issues and drive readers to access more information. Fact sheets may appeal to the media, policymakers, program administrators seeking support for funding, and referenced by intermediaries in their own work.

**FAQs** – Similar to tip sheets and fact sheets, these succinct (1-3 page) documents are topically focused and formatted in response to specific questions, frequently posed by members of the target audience. FAQs can be used to provide background information (e.g., What is the purpose of the project? What is the need for this project?), build demand for more information (e.g., What evidence-supported interventions exist to address this issue? How is this project expected to improve permanence?), or to change the perspective of the target audience (e.g., Why should this project continue? How can the community benefit from the continuation of this work?) and can be targeted to a variety of child welfare professionals, policymakers, or funders.

**Infographic** – A visual representation of information or data intended to present information quickly and clearly. These one-page tools are ideal for creating awareness and building demand for more information related to process, service delivery, or demographic data. Because humans remember pictures more readily than text, they are valued by many audiences including practitioners, administrators, and policymakers and typically reference a source for additional information.

**Articles/Newsletters** – Articles in a newsletter or posted on a blog are a concise write-ups that may either create awareness or provide more information to begin to influence someone’s thinking about an issue. Articles intended to create awareness or build demand for more information may only be 500 words and point the reader to additional, detailed information. Articles intended to influence thinking may be 2000 words. Articles should be written with an understanding of the needs of the specific group of people subscribed to the newsletter.

**Briefs –** A 4-5 page document that is persuasive and intended to change the perspective of the reader. Information should be presented clearly and organized with meaningful headers. Graphics, tables, and pictures are great tools to break up and depict information in the text. Briefs may summarize policy issues or research, and reference a report. Citations are appropriate to include in a brief. Intermediary organizations, funders, administrators and policy audiences are accustomed to the brief format.

**Site Profile –** A 2-page (can be printed one-page front and back) document that is informative and encapsulates the key aspects of the site. Suggest headers include project overview, site overview, project goal(s), permanency continuum focus, target population, intervention(s), and program evaluation and expected results. The primary target audience will be child welfare professionals seeking to learn about the partner sites.

## Presentations

Presentations and talking points are used to share background information, key lessons learned and findings, and persuade an audience. More interactive than a written product, presentations delivered at a conference, meeting or via webinar should contain more graphics and fewer words than written products. Talking points should be consistent with the messages presented in written materials.

**Video**– Videos are a fast-growing means of getting information on-line. In general, videos allow a lot of content to be shared in a short amount of time. They provide a wonderful vehicle for telling a story and personalizing the work. Although videos can be relatively expensive to produce, they can be used in presentations and meetings to quickly provide background and context so the speaker can deliver a more targeted presentation. The purpose is typically to create awareness, but a how-to format can also be used to help people use information. A primary audience for a video is child welfare professionals, including international and private domestic adoption agency professionals, although videos may also be useful to tell the story to a potential funder and show them how the services work.

**Conference Presentations** - Conference presentations do not reach large audiences (typically 30 or so people are in the room), but this audience is motivated to learn, is quite targeted, and there is opportunity for dialogue and questions. Some conferences post all presentations on-line following the event to reach more people. Conference presentations typically have to fit the prescribed duration and type of conference opportunity (panel, workshop, etc.). Presentations should minimize the number of words on a slide and a one-page overview/handout may be prepared to emphasize key take-away messages. The target audience will depend on the conference. Conference presentations in early years of the Center should focus on background information and build in lessons learned over time.

Potential conferences to reach adoption and child welfare professionals include the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC); Adoption Exchange Association bi-annual conference, the National Child Abuse and Neglect conference; and the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE). Conferences.

## Webinars – Webinars are a good way to reach a larger audience with more information than can be contained in a video, but it does not have the benefit of interaction with an audience like a face-to-face presentation. Most webinars are recorded and can be viewed by a broader audience after the live presentation. Another benefit of a webinar is, when recorded, short clips can be extracted to emphasize key points from the presentation. Webinars are most commonly used to educate an audience on a topic and may be most appropriate for child welfare professionals.

## Activities to Share Information

The following activities describes ways in which your site may move information to the target audiences. A key way to move information is through existing professional relationships, networks, and social media channels that already exist.

**Professional Relationships** - Due to the reliance on professional relationships to move and share information within the field of child welfare, each sitewill leverage exiting professional relationships to send materials developed through the project via email. These personal connections can add value to the information shared when there is trust and respect between the sender and the member of the target audience receiving the information. In addition, site leaders can talk with colleagues about the project and what has been learned with the promise of materials to follow. This allows, at the individual level, the potential users of information to consider how the information fits with their professional needs.

**Social Media** –LinkedIn, Twitter, and other social media outlets are good tools to spread materials created by the sites. Key messages can be used to announce events and push materials posted on-line to targeted groups. LinkedIn Groups[[2]](#footnote-2) may include:

* [Adoptee Rights Coalition](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4102268/profile) (110 members)
* [Adoption Professionals](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2579243/profile) (3217 members)
* [American Society for Public Administration](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/41639/profile) (23,101 members)
* [Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1860851/profile) (283 members)
* [Child Welfare, Child Protection and SACWIS Professionals](https://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=133126&trk=anet_ug_hm) (24,012 members)
* [Children's Defense Fund](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/99638/profile) (1913 members)
* [Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1910609/profile) (581 members)
* [Foster Care to Success](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1890673) (991 members)
* [Foster Family-based Treatment Association](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2563946/profile) (FFTA) (4166 members)
* [FOSTER NO MORE - AGING OUT THE SYSTEM](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2293127/profile) (1215 members)
* [Fostering Connections Implementation Working Group](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3000732/profile) (896 members)
* [Knowledge Management in Child Welfare](https://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=1836024&trk=anet_ug_hm&goback=%2Egmp_1836024) (1,167 members)
* [National Association of Social Workers - NASW's Official Group](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/115089/profile) (65,007 members)
* [National Indian Child Welfare Association](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1770287/profile) (NICWA) (1,782 members)
* [Positive Social Work Professionals](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1807616/profile) (19,912 members)
* [Social Work Research and Evaluation Practice Group-International (SWREP-I)](https://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=2201126&trk=anet_ug_hm) (10,792 members)

Twitter is a great tool to spread information. If your agency uses Twitter, you can use Twitter to share brief updates about the project, links to publications, news from the QIC-AG, and relevant local news stories. The goal is to spread information by having other organizations and people retweet information about the project.

**Website** –your project might have a website that serves as a place where the target audience can access additional information created through the project.

**Listserv**—Members of your site team may have access to relevant email listservs which can be outlets for your site’s dissemination products.

# Dissemination Tracking Tool

The dissemination tracking tool (Table 2) should be completed after each site dissemination activity and submitted to your site consultants within two weeks of the activity.

**Table 2. Dissemination Tracking Tool**

| **Date of Dissemination Activity** | **Product Title** | **Target Audience** | **Distribution Outlet (email list, media, website, etc.)** | **Person responsible for distributing to each outlet** |
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1. Macoubrie, J., & Harrison, C. (2013). Human Services Research Dissemination: What Works? OPRE Report # 2013-09, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/litreview.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)