

10 Tips for recruiting child welfare professionals

A guide to strengthen the child welfare workforce using online and in-person recruiting

No matter where you are, effective recruitment starts with connection. These ten tips offer simple, actionable ways to reach people where they are—online and in person—and show them why this work matters.

1. Lead with why: Begin each job posting or outreach message by explaining why this work matters. It's not just about filling a role—it's about supporting children and families. Phrases like 'Support families and receive paid training as you grow your career' or 'Competitive pay and excellent benefits to help you succeed' help people see the purpose and benefits of doing this work.

2. Bring it close to home: Say "Serve families in _____ County" or "Join our team in [Tribal nation or community name]." This makes the opportunity feel personal, especially to people already connected to the area.

3. Reflect local values: Every community is unique. Tribal communities may emphasize cultural continuity, respect, and mutual care. In rural areas, speak to values like trust, independence, and belonging. In urban or suburban areas, highlight collaboration, innovation, and growth. Use your community's culture to guide your message. When you can, connect those values to opportunities for professional growth and long-term stability.

4. Be honest about the role: People value honesty. Child welfare work is meaningful but challenging, so be clear about that. Let potential applicants know that support is available. If possible, include images of actual child welfare professionals in your region or community to build trust and connection.

5. Emphasize benefits: If you offer things like mileage reimbursement, tuition support, or paid training, make it known. These benefits can help someone decide if child welfare is the right career path for them.

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6. Ask for referrals: Your best recruiters are often people already connected—current staff, Tribal leaders, school liaisons, or local business owners. Invite them to help spread the word.

7. Use community touchpoints: Go beyond job boards. Post flyers at recreation centers, community buildings, libraries, and grocery stores. Share announcements in bulletins, coffee shops, or even a local radio or TV ad. Go where people already are.

8. Spread the word online: Use a tone that matches your community—friendly, welcoming, and plain-spoken. Link directly to your job post from a social media caption or story. Use your Tribal or county social media pages, staff networks, and trusted local voices—like school partners or respected community members—to help spread the word. Keep the message personal, simple, and shareable.

9. Make it easy to connect: List a contact person or phone number so people can ask questions before applying. Invite people to an info session or offer email sign-ups for future openings. People are more likely to apply when they know who to talk to.

10. Track what works: Ask yourself: "Where did this applicant hear about us?" or "Which flyer or post led to outreach?" Note which messages or benefits resonated most so you can repeat them.

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