Open Arms Challenge

Welcoming Practices & Program Suggestions/Action Items

1. Processes are equitable and inclusive
   a. Every part of adoption process is non-restrictive and looks for good matches rather than reasons to deny
   b. Adoption paperwork (if needed) is concise and does not include questions that look for reasons to deny adoption
   c. Every part of volunteer and foster process, including paperwork, is open and does not look for reasons to deny
   d. Organization uses a hybrid of virtual and in person services to meet the needs of all community members in all neighborhoods
   e. Every part of the adoption process (marketing, counseling, paperwork) is available in multiple languages as needed by your community
   f. Transportation to organization and in-neighborhood services are offered to provide every service (adoption, foster, volunteering, pet care, etc.) to all areas of community

2. Customer success is ensured through customer service
   a. Voicemails and emails are returned promptly and with necessary information
   b. Visitors are welcomed and greeted promptly and directed appropriately
   c. Client-facing staff and marketing are honest and informative about availability and status of animals
   d. Organizations share additional resources if they cannot meet needs of client

3. Marketing is inclusive of all areas of your community
   a. All media is evaluated and used to best reach entire community
   b. Fosters are empowered as adoption ambassadors
   c. Organization uses direct communication to reach entire community (i.e., in-person, phone calls, in-community local businesses, events; meeting community members where they are.)
   d. Different modes of communication are used to reach all community members rather than one-size-fits-all communication approach

4. Organization embraces an open and welcoming culture
   a. Paid and unpaid staff training includes topics like open adoption and client services
   b. Board, leadership, paid and unpaid staff (volunteers) engage in Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and bias awareness training
   c. Organization works with a Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion consultant
   d. Policies are created or updated to become more inclusive (i.e., waived fees and requirements for adoption, volunteering, returning pets to home when appropriate)
   e. Organization commits to the Best Friends Removing Roadblocks Pledge and the organization's policies reflect this commitment
   f. Paid and unpaid staff are acknowledged and rewarded for customer success
5. **Organization creates partnerships with organizations**
   
   a. Organization finds partners in the community and works together to support all community members
   
   b. Programs are held at offsite locations in partnership with community businesses or organizations
   
   c. Paid and unpaid staff are recruited from community being supported through help of partners
   
   d. Community partners are consulted to help make changes

6. **Other – an open and welcoming practice you’re already doing that’s not listed above**
   
   a. Something not on this list that the participating organization is doing or plans to do.