



**Voice of the
Customer**

Arnold Valdez

DEPELCHIN CHILDREN'S CENTER

Arnold Lee Valdez is the Interim Regional Director of Child Welfare and Residential Treatment Services (formerly the Program Manager for Statewide Recruitment and Training) at DePelchin Children's Center in Houston, Texas. Since its founding in 1892, the agency's approach to caring for children integrates prevention, foster care, adoption and post-adoption programs to improve the mental health and physical well-being of children who are at risk of entering or are in the State's child welfare system. DePelchin has worked with Binti since April 2018, using the Licensing module to more efficiently recruit families, process applications, and handle the family licensing process. We sat down with Arnold to better understand Binti's impact on their agency and the children and families they serve.

Before Binti, what were some of the main challenges with regards to the licensing process that stand out to you?

- **Time to assess a potential family:** Before, the main focus was to see whether all the paperwork had been turned in. It's one thing to have what you need. It's another thing to actually look at the documentation and see if it's actually a good fit. Before, it was way later in the game before we knew whether a potential family was a good fit or not. This was also challenging because by the time we realized that a family had not been a good fit, they were much more invested in the process, and it was a more difficult conversation to have with them.
- **Understanding where in the process (and why) a family may have dropped off,** which made it difficult to resolve any challenges they may have been having. This also made it challenging for us to grow as an agency and to recruit more foster families, since we had very little awareness of which areas we needed to focus on and what some of the challenges were.
- **General challenge of time and resources put into licensing and recruitment.** There was the challenge of tracking hard copies of papers: we used to ask parents for files again that we may have already, and on the other side of this, when people hand you paper, they're really concerned about where it is. Honestly, 15% of our time was spent handling calls from applicants about this.

And how has Binti helped solve some of these challenges?

Binti has helped us to solve all of the challenges I mentioned: more easily assessing the quality of parents, understanding where our agency needs to focus in terms of recruitment and licensing, and general efficiencies. To speak to some of those points:

- **Organized dashboard:** I can look at the dashboard, look at where we need to push, which counties we need to focus on, at what stage they've dropped off the process, which helps us know where to go. One thing we learned through the process of using Binti- we actually sent out an email saying "We haven't seen you do much in the past few weeks", etc.- if people don't respond, we can just close them out and not worry about it, which helps us to narrow down who will actually go through the process.
- **Assess a candidate based on quality.** When people are not a match, we can let them know as soon as we know. The longer you wait, the longer people are invested in the process, and it saves us time and resources. What Binti helps us do is to be able to know whether they're going to be successful. With Binti we can look early on at key specific indicators that will allow us to tell them early on whether they are good candidates for adoption or not, which helps to frame our messaging.
- **Easing the family applicant side.** Now, because the process is better for them, they can actually recommend their friends to be foster parents. So that also increases the number of families that apply. People also feel way better about uploading documents and completing forms online- they can actually see that something has been received and therefore don't feel the need to call and follow-up continuously about whether a certain form has been received. And Binti ensures that we actually do have those forms on file!
- **Eliminating bias.** Another positive impact that might not be so obvious: The software also helps quieter but caring families be licensed, who otherwise would have slipped through the cracks. Now, we have everyone's information, and everybody is presented on the dashboard in the same way, which eliminates bias. We don't even have to remember someone by voice/face in order to take care of processing.

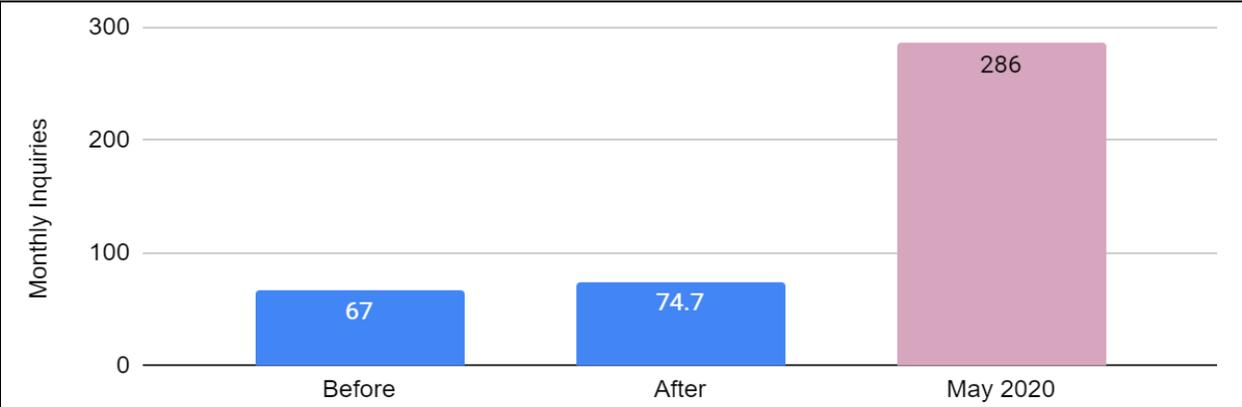
Before we started, it was taking a year to complete the licensing process for a family.

Now it's taking 80 days. Sometimes families do drag their feet for good reasons, so it's sometimes hard to get an average, but generally you can see what a difference it makes. **We are so excited to continue working with Binti!**

By the Numbers: Impact Metrics using Binti for Foster Family Recruitment and Licensing at DePelchin

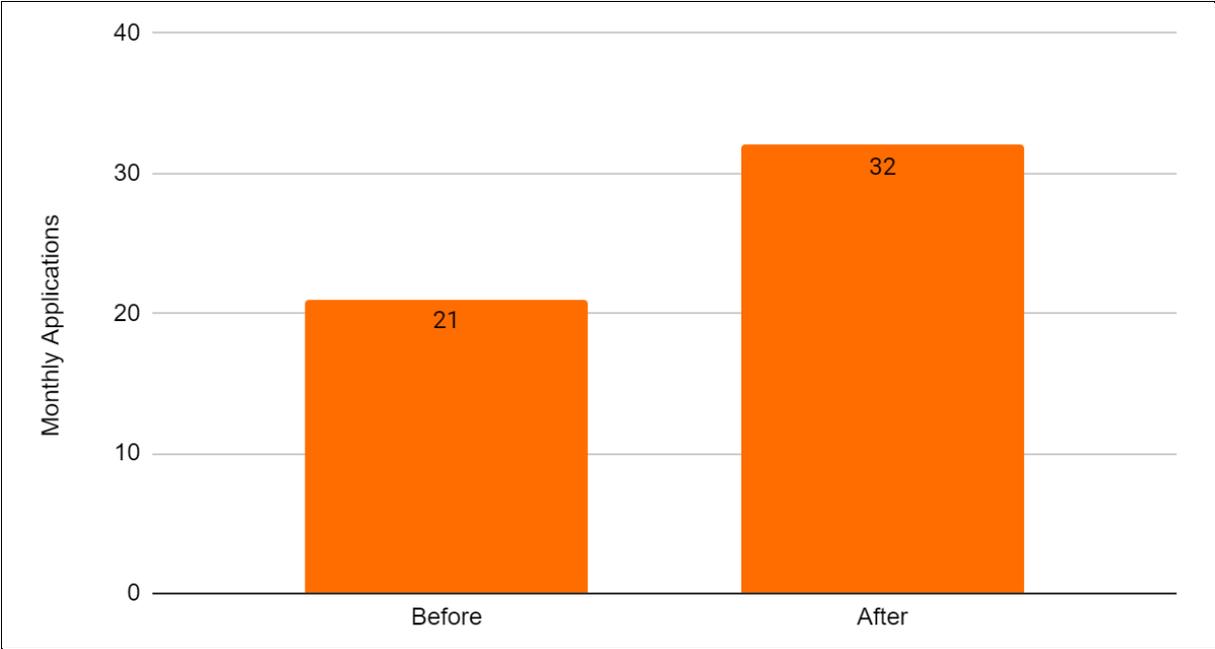
Data gathered October 2020. All “before” and “after” data is measured as the year before using Binti (before) vs. the first year of data using Binti (after)- any other timeframe is specified (i.e. “May 2020”)

Average Monthly Initial Inquiries (from potential foster families)



Note: Even through the COVID-19 pandemic, DePelchin’s online recruitment and licensing process allowed them to continue engaging with prospective families- data from the single month of May 2020 indicating this

Average Monthly Applications (families beginning the licensing process)



Average Monthly Approvals (number of families approved/licensed by DePelchin)

