

Family Connection Grant Project Abstract/Summary

Grantee Name: Minnesota Kinship Caregivers Association

Grantee City and State: St. Paul, MN

Grant Project Title: *Kinship Navigator Project*

Family Connection Program Area: Kinship Navigator

Summary of Grant Project

MKCA's Kinship Navigator Project supports relatives caring for children at-risk of entering the formal child welfare system throughout Minnesota. Census data show that there are 17,682 grandparents in Minnesota who are raising their grandchildren.

The overarching goals of the project are to enhance the *stability* (safety and permanency) and *well-being* of children at risk of formal non-relative placement by supporting kinship care and (when possible) family reunification. Our key system objective is to strengthen and expand the network of services and supports available for Minnesota's kinship caregivers. Our family objectives are to:

1. Increase the number of formal and informal kinship caregivers and children participating in services that enhance child well-being or improve family stability.
2. Connect more caregivers and children to services that preserve family connections and increase the likelihood of permanency.
3. Provide one-to-one support and mentoring to caregivers and children who are at serious risk of abuse, neglect or out-of-home placement.
4. Increase the number of kinship caregiver-led families seeking permanent status through reunification, transfer of legal custody, guardianship, or adoption.
5. Increase the frequency (and quality) of contact with children's biological parents
6. Improve participating children's school attendance and performance.
7. Reduce participating children's engagement in risky behaviors.

Key services offered through the project will include: information and referral, support groups, one-to-one navigator services, and training for caregivers and professionals. We will pair new relative caregivers with experienced caregiver mentors who can provide suggestions for resources and offer personal support and encouragement.

A core component of the project is the enrichment of MKCA's existing relationships with a statewide network of Relatives As Parents (RAP) programs. By contracting with RAPs to serve regions of the state, the project will serve relative caregivers in the communities where they live and refer caregivers to resources near their homes.

For more information, contact:

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