Family Connection Grant Project
Abstract/Summary

Grantee Name: The Children’s Home Society of New Jersey
Grantee City and State: Trenton, New Jersey
Grant Project Title: Kinship Cares
Family Connection Program Area: Kinship Navigator

Summary of Grant Project

Our Kinship Cares Program assures more New Jersey kin raising relatives’ children will be able to do so in a permanent, safe and nurturing way, preventing abuse, and avoiding kinship children becoming part of the state foster care system because of family disruption. Overwhelmed kin caregivers who cannot get enough community and emotional support services to parent may ask the state to take their kin children into placement.

1. To expand our 7 year old Navigator program with 6 new ombudsmen who will offer 2 test counties (Mercer and Ocean Counties) more intensive services and support/parent education groups while the control group receives regular Kinship Navigator services. The ombudsmen would work more intensively to provide families with assessment, service planning and hands-on connection to community resources.

2. To create kin support groups at existing Family Success Centers, agencies and churches where the ombudsmen, with community staff, will develop and lead groups, using a modified Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) Kinship Pride curriculum. Groups will be ongoing and created with kin input. Collaborating partners identified are Mercer: 2 churches and 2 centers; Ocean: 1 center, 1 church and 1 United Way.

3. To develop a comprehensive profile defining who is being served and what are their priority needs for the purpose of improving outcomes of Kinship Navigator services. The profile report will be based on interviews/focus groups/surveys of caregivers and service providers.

4. To rigorously evaluate the enhanced program services against a control group; outcomes will include decreased stress of caregivers, prevention of abuse/neglect, use and knowledge of resources, increase in parenting knowledge and effectiveness. The findings will be presented to Children’s Bureau, State of NJ with suggested design modification to improve existing Navigator program, and at a CWLA National Conference.

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