Family Connection Grant Project
Abstract/Summary

Grantee Name: International Social Service-USA Branch
Grantee City and State: Baltimore, MD
Grant Project Title: Expanding Options for Permanency: International Family Finding for US Children in the New Jersey Foster Care System
Family Connection Program Area: Family-finding

Summary of Grant Project:

In 2006 only 14.5% of children in out-of-home care in the state of New Jersey were living with relatives (CWLA: New Jersey’s Children 2009). This is significantly less than the national average of approximately 25% (http://www.gu.org/documents/A)/Time_for_Reform). The proposed pilot project, Expanding Options for Permanency: International Family Finding for US Children in the New Jersey Foster Care System, will address this deficit by developing and implementing intensive family finding services for all children who have potential kinship placements outside of the United States.

ISS-USA in cooperation with the Department of Children and Families of the State of New Jersey and Rutgers University is requesting $450,000 per year to develop a standard protocol for identifying children who may have potential family placement overseas, refer these children to ISS-USA, undertake intensive family finding efforts, evaluate potential family for their ability to provide a safe and permanent home and provide post-placement follow-up for those cases that result in a permanent placement. The project will also determine what, if any, barriers exist that prevent U.S. Citizen children in the American Foster Care system from being placed with family outside of the country. Additionally, the project will develop a standard training curriculum for both social service and legal providers on how to access this system and an appropriate evaluative tool for determining the effectiveness of this training. Finally, this pilot project will produce the only quantitative data available on how many children in the New Jersey foster care system have been placed with, or have potential placement with family, outside of the United States.

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