Family Connection Grant Project
Abstract/Summary

Grantee Name: State of Hawaii Department of Human Services
Grantee City and State: Honolulu, Hawaii
Grant Project Title: Family Connections Hawaii
Family Connection Program Areas: Family-finding and Family Group Decision-Making

Summary of Grant Project

The Hawaii Department of Human Services (DHS) has contracted for family finding and `Ohana Conferencing, the Polynesian model of FGDM, since 1996. EPIC, Inc. has provided these services exclusively, including over 8000 conferences, currently at 1550 conferences per year. This grant proposes to increase family finding and family connections work by providing two enhanced interventions to two new populations of children in two heavily Hawaiian areas. The efficacy of the interventions will be evaluated The Catalyst Group which has a long track record of evaluating Federal grant programs and work with DHS.

The Placement Prevention Intervention will seek to prevent children birth to 17 from entering foster care, and if removed, place them with relatives. Intensified family finding will support an early `Ohana Conference within 24 to 72 hours for children who are assessed by a social worker to be in need of placement but not yet placed and children placed in care due to imminent risk of harm.

The Permanency Intervention will revisit options for children aged 4-14 in long-term foster care without permanent family connections. This intervention will utilize enhanced family finding, family engagement, assessment, `Ohana Conferencing and further team building to develop permanent family connections and on-going support.

Expected outcomes include fewer children entering foster care and more children with permanent emotional and/or legal family connections. Placement Prevention clients will be randomly selected for enhanced intervention (N=120), and two comparison groups will evolve, including clients receiving no special intervention services (330) and clients otherwise referred to services on a standard time frame (N=450). Six and twelve month follow-up data will be analyzed in a (3X2) MANOVA. Permanency Intervention clients will be randomly assigned to intervention (N=120) and comparison (N=120) groups, and six and twelve month follow-up data will be analyzed with baseline data in a (2X3) MANOVA.

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