

**Family Connection Grant Project
Abstract/Summary**

Grantee Name: YMCA of San Diego County, YMCA Youth & Family Services

Grantee City and State: San Diego, CA

Grant Project Title: *YMCA Kinship Navigator Program*

Family Connection Program Area: Kinship Navigator

Summary of Grant Project

San Diego County is home to a large kinship population, larger than the kinship population in 20 states, but has few established support systems for informal caregivers or caregivers not actively involved with Child Welfare Services. The YMCA Kinship Navigator Program will enhance services to kinship families, increasing placement stability and preventing children's entry or reentry into the foster care system. Kinship Navigators will connect families to support services, support the development of collaborative kinship networks in each region and connect kinship efforts countywide. The YMCA is the ideal candidate to lead a Kinship Navigator demonstration project of local, regional and national significance due to its existing kinship services, staff expertise, administrative structure and presence in the community. The YMCA has well-established partnerships with Casey Family Programs (a national organization working to eliminate the need for foster care) and the County of San Diego's Child Welfare Services, who will support implementation.

The YMCA anticipates serving 240 caregivers and 720 children per year through a regionalized service delivery model. As a demonstration project, the YMCA will work with independent evaluator Harder+Company Community Research to assess the program's effectiveness and potential for replication. The evaluation design attempts to minimize selection effects by using a random assignment strategy in which the roll-out of the Kinship Navigator program is staggered across regions within San Diego County. A process evaluation will assess implementation while an outcome evaluation will examine how the project affects key outcomes of interest, including access to and use of services, placement permanency and re-entry into the foster care system. This demonstration project is designed to determine how increased knowledge of available support services, as well as assistance in accessing these services, impacts safety, permanency and well-being for kinship families.

For more information, contact:

Mike Osoff, Project Director

(619) 281-8313

mosoff@ymca.org