

2011 Family Connection Discretionary Grants:
Using Family Group Decision-making to
Build Protective Factors for Children and Families

Project Abstract/ Summary

Grantee Name: YMCA Youth & Family Services
Grantee City and State: San Diego, CA
Grant Project Title: *YMCA Families United*

Summary of Grant Project

YMCA Families United will serve families with children at risk of entering or re-entering the child welfare system, specifically those who have a voluntary case open with Child Welfare Services in San Diego County and who need ongoing assistance to achieve permanency, safety, and well-being. Families will be referred directly from the County of San Diego and will be given the opportunity to participate in a Family Group Conference. This facilitated meeting, or series of meetings, helps a family create a plan to stabilize their child's placement and to engage in needed support systems.

Participation in this process produces significant benefits for children, youth, families, and kin, as families are respectfully engaged in resolving family issues and are empowered to make decisions about the best ways to raise their children safely and effectively. Benefits also include increased access to informal and formal resources, improved communication among family members and enhanced accountability within the family structure.

Objectives:

- 75% of families who participate in YMCA Families United will demonstrate a strengthened capacity to protect and provide for their children via an increase in possession of protective factors
- 75% of children whose families participate in YMCA Families United will exit the foster care system via reunification or placement with kin
- 75% of children whose families participate in YMCA Families United will avoid entry into the foster care system

The YMCA anticipates serving 120 families per year through a regionalized service delivery model. Key partners will guide the program through implementation and include; Child Welfare Services and Casey Family Programs. 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.

For more information, contact:

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