

2012 Family Connection Discretionary Grants:  
Kinship Navigator

**Project Abstract/ Summary**

**Grantee Name:** Arizona's Children Association

**Grantee City and State:** Tucson, Arizona

**Grant Project Title:** *Arizona Kinship Navigator*

**Summary of Grant Project**

The Arizona Kinship Navigator Program, AzKN, will be a program of Arizona's Children Association in partnerships with the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), Administration for Children Youth and Families (ACYF), and DES Family Assistance Administration (FAA). The program's target population will include a minimum of 3,000 grandparents or other relatives, as well as the children they are raising who cannot be raised by their biological parents who reside in Maricopa, Pima, Pinal and Cochise counties.

Children are placed in kinship homes for a variety of reasons including abuse, neglect, abandonment, incarceration, AIDS, drugs, homelessness, chronic illness etc. These children have special needs as they have typically experienced many significant losses and can find it very challenging to trust adults. Being able to remain in relative families helps reduce the impact of these challenges; however these families need support and assistance in order to provide stable, permanent homes for the children in their care. The grandparents and other relative caregivers who have taken responsibility to meet the primary needs of these children are strong, loving examples of what commitment to family means. However, they frequently experience anxiety, frustration, and an inability to access resources to meet their children's needs. Often they are on low or fixed incomes and are not financially prepared to support children. In addition, they need legal assistance in obtaining custody or guardianship to ensure the safety of their children. Being willing to step up and keep the family together, they need updated parenting information and assistance on how to access and navigate the many services needed to help their family. Legal, financial, and emotional supports are the services kinship caregivers repeatedly tell us they want and need to help stabilize their families.

AzKN will contribute to the increased safety, permanency and well being of youth in kinship care by providing services to both formal and informal caregivers by achieving the following five objectives:

1. Ensure kinship families have access to benefits which they are eligible;
2. Provide linkage to needed legal services;
3. Navigate existing community support systems;
4. Strengthen kinship families involved with child welfare system;
5. Enhance other community-based and government responses for kinship families.

The evaluation includes a rigorous outcome evaluation designed to assess the impact of the Kinship Navigation Program on the long-term outcomes of permanency, safety, and well-being of youth in kinship care. Intermediate outcomes that will be examined include services/supports provided to participants; changes in participant engagement with the system; and participant service utilization.

**For more information, contact:**

Name, Title: Julie Treinen, Program Director

Phone number: 520-343-4476 ext: 102

E-mail address: [jtreinen@arizonaschildren.org](mailto:jtreinen@arizonaschildren.org)

Website: AZKN.org – not yet operational