

2012 Family Connection Discretionary Grants:  
Combination Family Finding/Family Group Decision Making

**Project Abstract/ Summary**

**Grantee Name:** The Children's Home, Inc.

**Grantee City and State:** Tampa, Florida

**Grant Project Title:** *CHI CW/TANF Kinship Interdisciplinary Navigation  
Technologically-Advanced Model (KIN-Tech)*

**Summary of Grant Project:**

In the largest community-based care area in Florida, The Children's Home, Inc. (CHI) has leveraged substantial resources from community partners in Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties to design an innovative program to improve the ability of kinship caregivers to identify and access the services and supports necessary to meet their own needs and facilitate the safety, permanence, and well-being of the children—in or at risk of entering foster care—in their care. Building on the successes of CHI kinship programs in both counties serving 2,530 kinship families in the past seven years, approximately 70 percent of program participants which are private, voluntary kinship placements, a five year evaluation report, stakeholder meetings, focus groups, and partnership surveys and interviews found that caregivers experience challenges with technology inhibiting access to information and program enrollment and additional challenges working with multiple systems of care to meet their dynamic family needs. The KIN-Tech Project and its partners will meet these urgent needs by implementing several innovative program features, including One-e-App (one-stop, web-based innovation for resources and collateral coordination), Peer-to-Peer Navigation (peer-led, emotional support focused system navigation), and Interdisciplinary Team (coordinated team meetings with invested experts). The key partners include, Dr. Kerry Littlewood of East Carolina University, Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) ACCESS program, Eckerd Community Alternatives, Juvenile Welfare Board, The Children's Services Council of Pinellas County, Tampa Metropolitan YMCA, the Children's Board of Hillsborough County and others. This program will serve 1,000 kinship caregivers in Pinellas and 500 in Hillsborough, regardless of their involvement with child welfare or other systems of care. KIN-Tech will test the theory of change through a rigorous two-phase Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) including a thorough implementation and outcome evaluation. In addition to the \$1,160,070 community partners have dedicated, including \$1,136,050 in cash match, CHI requests \$750,000 from DHHS to administer the KIN-Tech Project. The RCT will show the effectiveness of Kin-Tech program features in helping kinship caregivers identify and access appropriate and meaningful services to achieve and sustain permanency and how a collaborative approach of social service programs in KIN-Tech, with a special emphasis on child welfare and TANF programs, improves outcomes related to safety, permanence and well-being for children and families.

**For more information, contact:**

Larry Cooper, LCSW, Project Director

Phone number: 813-901-3423

E-mail address: Lcooper@childrenshome.org