2012 Family Connection Discretionary Grants: Child Welfare/TANF
Collaboration in Kinship Navigation Programs

Project Abstract/ Summary

Grantee Name: **North Oklahoma County Mental Health Center (NorthCare)**
Grantee City and State: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Grant Project Title: *Family KINnections*

Family KINnections will provide comprehensive care coordination to kinship foster families in Oklahoma County. North Oklahoma County Mental Health Center (NorthCare) will serve as the project lead in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. This project will have an extensive evaluation component through an external evaluator. This evaluation will be conducted by research faculty from the Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (CCAN) at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

NorthCare has been a leading provider of behavioral health services to adults, children, and families in Oklahoma City for over 30 years. Family KINnections will expand NorthCare's Systems of Care approach to providing wraparound services to a vulnerable population – kinship foster families in Oklahoma County. NorthCare will receive referrals for this project from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. NorthCare's Community Resource Specialists will offer support to these families by utilizing research tools and scales to help the families identify their needs and determine what services they should obtain to maintain a stable placement for the children in their care. The Community Recourse Specialist will then provide education to the families on community resources and connect the kinship foster family with these resources. The Community Resources Specialist will also help facilitate the obtaining of these services and follow-up with the family to ensure the kinship foster families are able to maintain the placements of the children in their home.

It is anticipated that a minimum of 250 families and 500 children in Oklahoma County will be served each year of this project. The two primary goals of the project are: 1) To implement kinship navigation as a mean to increase the stability and permanency of kinship foster placement; 2) Promote effective partnerships among public and private agencies to ensure kinship foster families and the community are better served. It is expected that through this project there will be a decrease in the number of children who experience disrupted kinship foster placements and an increase in the number of community resources utilized to meet the needs of kinship foster families. The long term impact of this project is intended to extend beyond the kinship foster family as healthier families contribute to a healthier community.

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