Using New Federal Funding Opportunities to Develop Effective Kinship Navigator Programs

Eastern Region

December 6, 2018
Housekeeping

- To hear the presentation
  - Listen through your computer speakers
  - Or call in on your phone
  - (631) 992-3221, Access Code: 589-127-167

- Q&A/Discussion
  - You can type your questions at any time in the “chat” box.
  - We will respond to them at the end of the presentation.

- PowerPoint slides and a recording of the webinar will be available on the Generations United website later this week.

- Registrants will also receive an email with a link to the recording this week.
Generations United’s National Center on Grandfamilies

Generations United’s mission is to improve the lives of children, youth, and older adults through intergenerational collaboration, public policies and programs.

Since 1998, Generations United’s National Center on Grandfamilies:
- Guided by GrAND Voices – a network of caregiver advocates
- Advocacy on Capitol Hill
- Leads an advisory group of organizations, caregivers and youth that sets the national agenda
- Provides technical assistance to states and other providers
- Raises awareness through media outreach, weekly communications and events
- Provides information and resources at www.gu.org and www.grandfamilies.org

June 12-14, 2019 Biennial Conference in Portland, OR – see https://guconference.org/
Casey Family Programs

Thank you for your partnership

Casey Family Programs
Speakers

- **Ana Beltran**, Special Advisor, National Center on Grandfamilies, Generations United

- **Jaia Peterson Lent**, Deputy Executive Director, Generations United

- **Gerard Wallace, Esq.**, Director, NYS Kinship Navigator

- **Dolores Bryant**, Director of Operations, Kinship, Clinical & Training, The Children’s Home Society of New Jersey
Children Thrive in Grandfamilies

Percent of Children in Foster Care Being Raised by Relatives

- 2008: 24%
- 2017: 33%

9% Increase

Source: www.gu.org
Children in Grandfamilies

7.7 million
Number of children who live with a relative who is the head of the household

2.6 million
Number of children who are being raised by a relative or close family friend and do not have a parent living in the household

139,017
Number of children being raised by relatives in the child welfare system
For every
1 child in
foster care
with
relatives
there are
19
children
being
raised by
grand-
parents
or other
relatives
outside
of the
foster care
system. 74
History of Federal Funding for Kinship Navigator Programs

- Fostering Connections and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections)

- Family Connection Grants - competitive grant opportunities

- Funded 2 rounds in 2009 and 2012 of 3-year grants with state matching requirements
Requirements under Federal Law for Kinship Navigator Programs

- Must be coordinated with other State or local agencies that promote service coordination or provide information and referral, including 2–1–1 or 3–1–1 where available

- Must be planned and operated in consultation with kinship caregivers, organizations representing them, youth raised by kinship caregivers, relevant government agencies and community-based or faith-based organizations

- Must establish information and referral systems that link (via toll-free access) kinship caregivers, kinship support group facilitators, and kinship service providers:
  - to each other
  - eligibility and enrollment information for Federal, State, and local benefits
  - relevant training to assist kinship caregivers
  - relevant legal assistance and help obtaining legal services
Requirements under Federal Law for Kinship Navigator Programs cont’d

- Must provide outreach to kinship care families, including by a kinship care website, other guides or outreach materials.

- Must promote partnerships between public and private agencies, including schools, community based or faith-based organizations, and relevant government agencies.

- May also establish and support a kinship care ombudsman with authority to intervene and help kinship caregivers access services; and support any other activities designed to assist kinship caregivers in obtaining benefits and services.

42 U.S.C. § 627
Section 427 (a)(1) of Social Security Act
Cross-site Evaluation Highlights

According to the evaluation of the 2009 grantees, positive outcomes for those receiving kinship navigator services included:

- **Safety**: Relative caregivers receiving navigator services achieved identified safety goals for their families.

- **Permanency**: Children in the care of relative caregivers receiving navigation services had higher rates of permanency through legal guardianship and reunification with parents.

- **Well-being**: results showed that kinship navigator programs were successful at ameliorating the needs of grandfamilies.
Current Federal Funding for Kinship Navigators

Three Opportunities:

- 2018 $20 million appropriation
- 2019 $20 million appropriation
- Family First Prevention Services Act
2018 and 2019 Kinship Navigator Appropriations

- **2018 funds:**
  - 46 States, 8 tribes, and 2 territories applied and received funds
  - Did not apply: Delaware, Chickasaw Nation, Idaho, Maine, South Dakota
  - Penobscot Nation among tribal recipients is located in Maine

- **2019 funds:** Expected to be similar process
  - May be used to develop, enhance and/or evaluate kinship navigator programs
  - Do not have to meet the federal kinship navigator requirements during the project period, as long as the programs are designed to ultimately fulfill these requirements
  - Programs will be required to meet all of the kinship navigator federal requirements to qualify for the Family First Act ongoing federal reimbursement
Family First Act – Kinship Navigator Programs

- As of **October 1, 2018**, states and some tribes can receive federal reimbursement for up to 50% of their expenditures to provide kinship navigator programs that meet **evidence-based requirements** of promising, supported or well-supported practices.

- Children not required to meet Title IV-E income eligibility requirements and are not required to meet definition of candidate for foster care.
Family First Evidence-Based Requirements for Navigators

- Points to Evidence-Based Standards for prevention programs (Section 471(e)(4)(C) of the Social Security Act)

- Must be promising, supported, or well-supported

- Qualifying evidence-based programs will be identified by evidence-based clearinghouse.

- Federal clearinghouse is separate from California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse with different criteria
Family First Evidence-Based Requirements for Navigators

- Program Instruction released Nov. 30, 2018 (ACYF-CB-PI-18-11)

- Title IV-E agency has discretion to determine scope of population: inside or outside foster care system, legal relationship etc.

- Statute does not define kinship caregiver so may include tribal kin, extended family or other “fictive kin” caring for children.

- Not required to operate in all counties or locations in state/tribe but encouraged to implement as broadly as possible.
Family First Evidence-Based Requirements for Navigators

- Initial list of programs under consideration included two kinship navigator programs
  - Children’s Home Network Inc., Kinship Interdisciplinary Navigation Technologically-Advanced Model (KIN-Tech), Florida
  - Children’s Home Society of New Jersey, Kinship Navigator Model

- Approval of qualifying programs expected in Spring 2019.

- Additional programs will be added on a rolling basis.

- Awaiting additional information on process and criteria for systematic review to come in Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse Procedures Handbook.
Family First Evidence-Based Requirements for Navigators

- Particular consideration given to programs:
  - Recommended by state and local government administrators
  - Rated by the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse
  - Evaluated by Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstrations
  - Recipient of Family Connection Discretionary Grant
  - Recommendation solicited from federal partners
Evidence-Based Standards

- All Evidence-Based Programs:
  - Book or manual
  - No evidence of harm
  - Overall weight of studies show benefit

Promising:
- Used some form of control group such as untreated, wait listed, or placebo group
- Superior to comparison group on at least one outcome
- At least one study rated “moderate” or “high” on study design and execution
Evidence-Based Standards cont’d

**Supported:**
- Rigorous random-controlled trial OR rigorous quasi-experimental research design
- Superior to comparison
- Independent review
- Carried out in usual care or practice setting
- At least one study carried out in that setting rated “moderate” or “high” on study design and execution
- Sustained effect **6 months** beyond treatment on at least one outcome

**Well-Supported:**
- Rigorous random-controlled trial OR rigorous quasi-experimental research design
- Superior to comparison
- Independent review
- Carried out in usual care or practice setting
- At least two studies carried out in that setting, with non-overlapping analytic samples, rated “moderate” or “high” on study design and execution.
- At least one of those studies shows sustained effect **12 months** beyond treatment
Evidence-Based Standards cont’d

- **Target Population:**
  - Law specifically names measured improvements in child and parent outcomes. Kinship caregiver outcomes are not named.
  - Program instruction references “adult (parent and kin caregiver) well-being.

- **Measuring Outcomes for Kinship Navigators:**
  - Outcomes include those related to prevention service (mental health, substance use prevention and treatment and in-home services) such as: child safety, child permanency, child well-being and adult (parent and kin caregiver) well being.
  - Target outcomes for kinship navigators may also include: access to, referral to, and satisfaction with services and programs.

- Programs with implementation training, staff support or fidelity monitoring tools/resources will be prioritized.
Program Models
Existing Kinship Navigator Programs – Lessons Learned

- A variety of programs around the country
- At least 70 we know of – list at www.grandfamilies.org/Resources/Kinship-Navigator-Programs
- Generally better not to house the Kinship Navigator at the child welfare agency –
  - Trust issues
  - Limited reach
- Combination of peer to peer and professionals is important
- Not just a phone line
Strategies

- Can build on existing opportunities—consult GrandFacts State Fact Sheets for states, tribes and counties with existing programs
- Work with programs that serve grandfamilies
- Schools of Social Work are good sources for assistance in evaluating programs
- Individualize data reports from providers for accountability
New York State Kinship Navigator
System of Care

www.nysnavigator.org

Help Line
877-454-6463

Statewide Kinship Navigator (direct and indirect services)
- Serving 62 Counties since 2006
- Information, Referral, Education, Advocacy, and Assistance
- Rochester, Saranac Lake, Albany (state capital, to engage policy makers)
- Services align closely with original Fostering Connections Act
- Website has extensive legal fact sheets and guides

22 County Kinship Programs (direct services)
- Information, Referrals, Support Groups, Case Management
2012-15 Fostering Connections Kinship Navigator Project - Evaluated both indirect and direct services

Collaboration Between Kinship Navigator, five local departments of social services (LDSS’s), and four local kinship programs serving five counties

Services
- All routine services provided by Kinship Navigator and local programs
- Coordination of intakes and tracking of caregivers
- Training for LDSS’s
- Education for caregivers
- “Kinship Corps” peer mentors/advocates

Primary Success
- 600% increase referrals from LDSS’s via Permission to Contact collaboration
- Increase in caregivers served and services provided

Evaluation Design: Wait Listed – Underperformed – Insufficient Participants in Wait Listed Cohort
NYS Kinship Navigator
System of Care

2018 Federal Appropriation Funded Kinship Navigator evaluation project ($637,194) - Evaluating both indirect and direct services

Collaboration Between Kinship Navigator, local departments of social services, and six county kinship programs

**Kinship Navigator “Virtual” Assistance Statewide (all counties)**
- Coordination of intakes and tracking of caregivers
- Financial Stability: virtual case management help with Child-Only and other benefits
- Legal Permanency: virtual assistance in petitioning for custody/guardianship

**Six Local County Programs**
- Financial Stability: case management help with Child-Only
- Legal Permanency: assistance in petitioning for custody/guardianship
- Peer to Peer Support Groups, Mentors, and Advocates

**Evaluation Design:** Randomized Control or Quasi Experimental
NYS Kinship Navigator
System of Care

“I couldn’t have gotten through this without your advice and your incredible website. My nephew is safe now.” – Aunt of 7 year old boy in Herkimer County (assisted by KN with legal permanency/custody petition).

Photo: September 2018 Award Ceremony at Luncheon Celebrating Kinship Care Month in Albany.

LR: Caregivers Maria Lemons, Susan Kopcha, Cynthia Fountain, Doris Williams, and attorney Susan Antos, (Empire Justice Center), Co-Directors of the Kinship Navigator Gerard Wallace and Rae Glaser.
NYS Kinship Navigator
System of Care

Gerard Wallace, Esq.
Director, NYS Kinship Navigator
Public Service Professor
U. at Albany, School of Social Welfare
gwallace@albany.edu
www.nysnavigator.org
www.gerardwallace.org
Cell 845-594-6398
Kinship Navigator Program

- The overarching goal of the Kinship Navigator Program is to partner with Kinship Caregivers who are raising non-biological children to help them provide a stable and permanent home environment and keep them out of the child welfare system.

- The program provides resources and linkages to services and supports that will enrich the lives of children residing in households headed by grandparents, other relatives, or friends.

- The Children’s Home Society Kinship Navigator services 7 counties in central New Jersey.
Background

The Kinship Navigator Program was implemented in **January 2000**, to help caregivers “navigate” their way through government programs and to find local support and resources.

In New Jersey there are **180,227 children** living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives (U.S. 2010 Census).

Across the United States, almost **7.8 million children** are living in homes where grandparents or other relatives are the householders (U.S. 2010 Census).

These family members are called **Kinship Caregivers**.
Wrap Around Services

- Assists Kinship Caregivers with essential services or items which may not be available through existing programs.

- Caregivers Contact the Kinship Navigator Program by calling 1-800-396-4518 or by calling 2-1-1

- Provides a $500 (per family/year) stipend to pay for necessities (including but not limited to):
  - School Supplies
  - Clothing/Linen
  - Hygiene Products
  - Furniture
  - Extra Curricular Activities
  - Senior Year Expenses
Caregiver Relationship to Child

- Grandparent: 73.3%
- Aunt/Uncle: 20.2%
- Cousin: 2.0%
- Sibling: 0.9%
- KLG: 3.4%
- Great Aunt/Uncle: 0.2%
Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG)

Services Provided:

- KLG is a form of legal custody granted to caregivers who have been caring for non-biological children for 12 months or more.
- KNP Assists caregivers in petitioning the court to appoint him/her as the legal guardian of a non-biological child residing in his/her home when the child’s parents are unable to care for the child.
- Parental rights are not terminated; visitation can be included in the KLG order.
- Agency completes home-study, background checks, parent locators and notification to biological parents.
- Agency submits petition to the court on behalf of the caregiver.
- If a kin family meets the income requirement of 150% of the FPL, they may be eligible for a monthly subsidy of $250 per child
Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG)

- KLG is legal guardianship for caregivers who have been taking care of their relative children for 12 months or more.

- Kin who apply must have a criminal history, child abuse and DV check for all adults in the home over age 18; a home safety checklist and evaluation is done; the kin child is personally interviewed and records are checked.

- Biological parents must be notified of the pending KLG hearing and have a right to object; their rights are not terminated.

- The Judge makes the final determination for KLG; the agency makes a recommendation only.

- If a kin family meets the income requirement of 150% of the FPL, they are eligible for a monthly subsidy of $250 per child.
Top 10 Needs of Families

- Having money to buy necessities and pay bills
- Paying for the special needs of my child
- Information about where to get help
- Getting furniture, clothing, toys
- Getting a mentor (big brother/sister) for my child
- Exploring future educational options for my child
- Expanding my education, skills and interests
- Traveling/vacationing with my child
- Getting a job
- Getting counseling for my child
What Have We Learned?

• Poverty is a major issue for many kin families, leaving them no cushion when anything happens; they often cycle in and out of crisis.

• Services to kinship children are lacking in the ‘informal’ kinship network: there is a need for support groups for kin children who are dealing with trauma and loss of parents, separation from siblings, abusive, incarcerated or substance using parents.

• Kinship parents are experiencing loss, also—they are out of sync with their age group, they are experiencing role shift, loss of their biological children (to death, drugs, prison, abandonment).

• Kinship parents have conflicted feelings about their adult children: grief, anger, guilt. Sometimes they have to choose the safety of the grandchild or relative child over their biological child, or sibling.
Contact Information

Dolores Bryant
Director of Operations, Kinship, Clinical & Training
The Children’s Home Society of New Jersey
dbryant@chsofnj.org
609-695-6274, ext. 171
Evaluation
Steps in Evaluation Planning for Families First Opportunities

1. Build Relationships
2. Understand Context
3. Select Model, Customize and Pilot Test
   A. KNM Evaluator Components for KN Fostering Connections CB Demonstration Projects
   B. Research to Practice Example 1. Children’s Home Network KNP
   C. Research to Practice Example 2. United Ways of CA-2-1-1-CA-iFoster Kinship Navigator Collaborative Project
4. Plan for Outcomes
   A. Child Welfare Outcomes
   B. Research to Practice Example 3: Kinship Sleep
5. Additional information
Select Model, Customize and Test

Lessons Learned from Four Kinship Navigator Demonstration Projects

- Evaluators in the 2012 Fostering Connections (Littlewood & Rosenthal) led conceptual work during the three year demonstration project.

- Developed assessment of theoretical and applied components of the kinship navigator programs.

- Identified essential and additional components to create a model intended to be tested throughout the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act.
2012 Evaluator Kinship Navigator Model

Essential Organizational Components

- Understand information and resource needs
- Build community partnerships
- System Coordination
- Create data sharing agreements

These have been identified as essential for organizations to build into their practice to support the implementation of a kinship navigator program.
2012 Evaluator Kinship Navigator Model
Essential Direct Service Components

These components are identified as essential direct service components, or those elements of the program which kinship navigators will perform as part of their basic duties.

- Modify and Update community resources and gaps in services and systems
- Provide referrals or assist caregivers with self-referral
- Provide education to caregivers about available resources
- Recruit participants
- Conduct intake and needs assessment
- Engage and build relationship with kinship families
### 2012 Evaluator Kinship Navigator Model

#### Additional Components

These are the service components that can be customizable to meet the unique needs of the kinship families in your own community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Components</th>
<th>Service Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a crisis plan</td>
<td>Offer services to specialized populations (i.e., immigrants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate data across systems</td>
<td>Provide advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide education on policy and legislation</td>
<td>Engage youth and promote leadership development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct follow up with clients</td>
<td>Provide parenting education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use public and private data sharing and integration to serve families</td>
<td>Use technology innovations and online portals and e-applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide peer-to-peer support through support group, peer navigators, and/or grandparent ambassadors</td>
<td>Offer case planning and management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contact Information

Kerry Littlewood, Ph.D, MSW
President
AAJ Research & Evaluation
aajresearch@gmail.com
727-771-3766
Additional Resources
www.grandfamilies.org

A collaboration of the
ABA Center on Children and the Law
Generations United
Casey Family Programs
Specific Links on www.grandfamilies.org


- Summary of kinship navigator programs and relevant resources, including a chart of 70 such programs at [www.grandfamilies.org/Topics/Kinship-Navigator-Programs/Kinship-Navigator-Programs-Summary-Analysis](http://www.grandfamilies.org/Topics/Kinship-Navigator-Programs/Kinship-Navigator-Programs-Summary-Analysis)

- State specific fact sheets at [www.grandfamilies.org/State-Fact-Sheets](http://www.grandfamilies.org/State-Fact-Sheets)

Questions

Ana Beltran, JD
Special Advisor
Generations United
abeltran@gu.org
(425) 659-3500

Jaia Lent, MSW, LGSW
Deputy Executive Director
Generations United
jlent@gu.org
(202) 777-0115