



REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP GRANTS ROUND 5

2018–2021

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA, DAKOTAS REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROJECT

LEAD AGENCY: Volunteers of America, Dakotas

GEOGRAPHIC AREA: South Dakota

LOCATION: Sioux Falls, SD

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REGION: Region 8

PROGRAM FUNDING: \$1,897,489

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT SERVED: SD District SD At Large

BRIEF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Volunteers of America, Dakotas (VOAD) New Start Residential Program and its primary partner, the South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection are addressing the need for formal coordination mechanisms among family-serving agencies to respond to the rising rate of children in out-of-home placements due to parental substance abuse. South Dakota's limited resources and lack of capacity for addressing these needs compound the problem of parental substance abuse and its effect on child well-being. VOAD's New Start Program is one of only two residential treatment facilities in the state where mothers live with their children during recovery. The project is located in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and will serve families from across the entire state.

South Dakota is in the midst of a methamphetamine epidemic, while at the same time experiencing a growing opioid problem. These circumstances have led to a significant increase in the number of child abuse and neglect cases. In the Sioux Falls area, the Division of Child Protection placed 255 children in state custody due to substance abuse in FY18. Nearly half (45 percent) of these cases were related to methamphetamine, and an additional 16 percent were related to other illicit drugs (opioids, marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy, etc.). The RPG project will provide treatment and other services and supports to families experiencing these challenges.

TARGET POPULATION AND PROJECTED NUMBERS SERVED

The RPG project will serve pregnant, parenting, and postpartum women whose children have been removed or are at-risk of being removed from their custody due to substance use. The program will serve 48 mothers and 93 children annually, for a 3-year total served of 132 mothers and 255 children.

MAJOR PROGRAM GOALS

GOAL 1: Improve and formalize coordination between VOAD, Child Protective Services, Second Judicial Circuit Court Services, the Department of Corrections, and other key stakeholders.

GOAL 2: Enhance New Start to include services to address risk for out-of-home placement due to mother's substance abuse.

GOAL 3: Conduct a comprehensive evaluation through a contract with independent evaluator NPC Research.

MAJOR PROGRAM SERVICES

- **Case Management and Case Conferencing**
- **Parenting/Family Strengthening**
 - Nurturing Parenting Program (including Families in Substance Abuse Treatment & Recovery and Parents and their Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers)
- **Engagement/Involvement of Fathers**
 - White Bison—Fathers of Tradition
- **Mental Health and Trauma Services for Adults**
 - Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment Recovery Life Skills Program
- **Substance Use Disorder Treatment for Adults**
 - A Woman’s Way through the Twelve Steps
 - Criminal and Addictive Thinking
 - Matrix Model
 - Matrix Model Culturally Adapted for American Indians/Alaska Natives
 - Hazelden’s Relapse Prevention Program
 - White Bison—Mothers of Tradition
 - Hazelden’s Personal Recovery Plan
 - Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy
 - Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model
 - Aftercare/Continuing Care/Recovery Community Support Services (follow-up services to mothers, children, and families post-discharge)
- **Specialized Outreach, Engagement, and Retention**
 - Motivational Interviewing
- **Children’s Screening and Assessment**
 - Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC-17)
 - Ages and Stages Questionnaire
 - Traumatic Events Screening Inventory for Children
 - Infant/Toddler Sensory Profile
 - Medical Evaluation

- **Adult/Family Screening and Assessment**
 - Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory
 - Parenting Stress Index
 - Addiction Severity Index—Lite
 - Abbreviated PTSD Checklist (civilian)
 - Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale
- **Children’s Services**
 - Mental Health Counseling
 - Incredible Years–Small Group Dinosaur
- **Cross-Systems/Interagency Collaboration**
- **Other Program Strategies**
 - Telehealth

PARTNER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- **Child Welfare**
 - South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Child Protection
- **Courts**
 - Second Judicial Circuit Court Services
 - Adult Criminal Drug Court
- **Substance Use Disorder Treatment**
 - Division of Behavioral Health
- **Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement/Legal and Related Organizations**
 - State Department of Corrections (including state probation and prisons)
- **Evaluation/Data Collection, Training**
 - Evaluator/Data Collection and Analysis—NPC Research

EVALUATION DESIGN

Outcome Study Design: Quasi-Experimental Study

Volunteers of America-Dakotas’ (VOAD’s) local evaluation has three components: an impact study, a process study, and a collaboration study. The grantee is also participating in the RPG cross-site evaluation studies of family and child outcomes, program implementation, and collaboration among RPG grantees and partners.

Impact Study Design

VOAD will examine the impact of their RPG services using a quasi-experimental design. Members of the program group are mothers who meet American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria for VOAD's residential substance use treatment services, reside at the facility with one or more children ages 0 to 8, and have a child(ren) in or at-risk of out-home-placement due to substance use. Program group mothers and residing children will receive VOAD's usual residential substance use treatment services plus enhancements including the Nurturing Parenting Program, the Integrated Dual Disorders Treatment Recovery Life Skills Program, Incredible Years–Small Group Dinosaur, mental health treatment and play therapy for the children, cultural activities, and aftercare services. Residential services will last about 4 months, and aftercare services will be offered for 3 months following discharge from residential services. In addition, family members not residing at VOAD (other children and fathers) will be offered screening, assessment, and case management services via telehealth technology. There will be two comparison groups. Members of comparison group 1 will receive residential substance use treatment services at a different, nearby facility that provides similar residential and aftercare services for adults, but children will not reside at the facility, and members will not be offered the parenting or child enhancements. Members of comparison group 2 will be identified through VOAD's waitlist and may or may not receive substance use treatment services elsewhere in the community. The impact study will include approximately 100 mothers in the program group, and 100 mothers in comparison group 1; the expected number of comparison group 2 mothers is still being determined. The grantee will examine impacts in the following domains: permanency, safety, child well-being, adult well-being, family functioning, and recovery.

Data sources include administrative data and information collected by data collectors using standardized instruments. Grantee staff will conduct data collection with standardized instruments for both the program and comparison groups. Data will be collected four times for each family in the treatment group and comparison group: (1) when families begin services (baseline), (2) at 6 weeks following entry, (3) when families exit services, and (4) 3 months following discharge from residential treatment. Data will be collected two times for families on the waitlist: (1) when families join the waitlist (baseline) and (2) when families exit the waitlist and begin residential treatment, typically 6 weeks after baseline.

Process Study Design

In the process study, the grantee will examine the extent to which implementation occurred according to the original plan, reasons for deviations from plans, the number and characteristics of participants, type and dosage of services participants received, implementation barriers encountered and solutions to the barriers that were developed, and implementation lessons learned. Data sources will include direct observation, document review, focus groups with participants, interviews with program partners and service providers, and monthly conference calls between the evaluator and grantee project team.

Partnership Study Design

In the partnership study, the grantee will examine the quality and quantity of collaborative relationships across agencies. The study will measure the number of memoranda of understandings (MOUs) and data sharing agreements established, degree of agreement between partners on program goals and outcomes, and number and perceived utility of meetings among

partners. Data sources will include observations of partnership meetings, interviews with partners, and document reviews.

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

New Start will establish and/or update program policies and procedures, update and/or develop forms, and train staff to embed the RPG project into New Start's ongoing practices. Within the first 45 days of the project, project partners will meet to review partner agreements and develop a seamless system for collaborative care, including the development of accountability mechanisms, data collection and evaluation agreements, and processes for communication and coordination.

The key organizations whose support will be required in order to sustain the RPG project are the Division of Child Protection, Department of Corrections, Second Judicial Circuit Court Services and Division of Behavioral Health. VOAD has current, long-standing relationships with these entities, and throughout the duration of the grant project, the managing director of Behavioral Health and RPG project director will be responsible for managing these relationships. This includes ensuring ongoing communication and sharing of project outcomes and results to demonstrate the positive impact of the program and encourage sustained involvement of these partners after the project period has ended.

VOAD's RPG project and all its partners will meet quarterly to review program outcomes and identify activities and strategies that have led to improved outcomes and that partners should sustain after the project period has ended, as well as discuss potential strategies for sustainability. The project's robust partnerships allow for several opportunities to diversify funding sources, an important factor in sustainability. New Start has sustained core services through state contracts and Medicaid. The agency continually pursues partnerships with additional payer sources to sustain services. Some services provided through this project—including a portion of those delivered by the addictions counselor, family coaches, mental health and Look Up and Hope coordinator and child psychologist—will be offered as a match from VOAD; thus, these services will be able to be sustained beyond the period of federal funding.

VOAD has an internal development department and an active Board of Directors, which includes a specific fundraising committee. The Board of Directors is committed to sustaining and expanding behavioral health programs such as New Start, and has identified behavioral health as one of the agency's top growth priorities. VOAD also has an internal grant team dedicated to continually researching and preparing applications for local, state, and federal funding to sustain programming.

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