



**Regional Partnership Grants to Increase the Well-Being of, and to Improve the Permanency Outcomes for, Children Affected by Substance Abuse
2012 Five-Year Grants Program Description**

Substance abuse among families harms caretakers and the children who live with them. When mothers, fathers, or other caretakers struggle with addiction, children can experience unresponsive, neglectful, or abusive care from those responsible for their nurture. This in turn can interfere with children's physical, social, and emotional development and well-being. Substance abuse is a prominent cause of family involvement in the child welfare system. An important challenge facing both child welfare and substance abuse treatment fields is to take a comprehensive view of families' situations and to understand the contributions of various disorders and challenging life experiences leading to child maltreatment.

While substance abuse treatment is often effective in assisting clients to achieve abstinence and recovery, quality treatment programs and recovery support services designed for parents involved with the child welfare system are not widely available in many communities. Historically, a number of issues have contributed to the fragmentation of child welfare services and substance abuse treatment. Too often, the provision of child welfare services and substance abuse treatment is uncoordinated due to the difficulty of identifying, engaging, and retaining parents/caretakers in substance abuse treatment. Perspectives and policies differ between child welfare workers and substance abuse treatment providers, and many areas lack appropriate and comprehensive family-centered treatment services for families involved in both the child welfare and substance abuse treatment systems. Where treatment services are available, they do not always strategically target the well-being and functioning of children.

The President signed the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Pub. L. 112-34) into law on September 30, 2011. This act includes a targeted grants program (section 437(f) of the Social Security Act), which directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to reserve a specified portion for Regional Partnership Grants, designed to improve the well-being of children affected by parental substance abuse. In October 2007 the Children's Bureau within the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) funded 53 Regional Partnership Grants (RPG) to support interagency collaborations and the integration of programs, services, and activities designed to increase the well-being, improve the permanency, and enhance the safety of children who are in, or at risk of, out-of-home placements as a result of a parent or caregiver's substance abuse. Since that first round of RPG funding, Federal leaders and policymakers have intensified their focus on evidence-based and evidence-informed practices in budgeting and program decisions. In addition, scientific findings continue to emerge about the long-term neurological, behavioral, relational, and other impacts of maltreatment on children. In response, a second RPG funding opportunity required applicants to propose the use of evidence-based practices and do more to attend to children's behavioral, emotional, and social functioning, one component of which is addressing the impact of trauma and its effect on the overall functioning of children and youth.

On September 28, 2012, CB/ACYF awarded new 5-year RPG grants to 17 partnerships in 15 states. CB/ACYF also funded 2-year extension grants to 8 of the regional partnership grants funded in 2007. The

partnerships will implement varied interventions, such as family drug courts, comprehensive substance abuse treatment, or in-home parenting and child safety support for families. Grantees will:

- Use evidence-based or evidence informed programs or strategies that are also trauma-informed to provide services to the target populations they select
- Address child well-being along with the more traditional goals of safety and permanency as part of their selected strategy or program
- Conduct an evaluation sufficiently rigorous to contribute to the evidence base on service delivery and outcomes associated with their chosen interventions
- Participate in the national cross-site evaluation, and collect and report performance and evaluation measures to increase the knowledge that can be gained from the RPG program

2012 RPG 5-year Grantees	City and State
Alternative Opportunities, Inc.	Springfield, MO
Center Point, Inc.	San Rafael, CA
Child & Family Tennessee	Knoxville, TN
Children's Research Triangle	Chicago, IL
Commonwealth of Massachusetts	Boston, MA
Department for Community-Based Services	Frankfort, KY
Families and Children Together	Bangor, ME
Georgia State University Research Foundation, Inc.	Atlanta, GA
Health Federation of Philadelphia, Inc.	Philadelphia, PA
Judicial Branch, State of Iowa	Des Moines, IA
Northwest Iowa Mental Health Center	Spencer, IA
Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	Oklahoma City, OK
Rockingham Memorial Hospital	Harrisonburg, VA
State of Nevada Division of Child and Family Services	Carson City, NV
Summit County Children's Services	Akron, OH
Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services	Nashville, TN
The Center for Children and Families	Billings, MT

THE RPG NATIONAL CROSS-SITE EVALUATION AND EVALUATION-RELATED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Children's Bureau has funded Mathematica Policy Research to conduct a 5-year evaluation of the new 5-year grantees that will 1) review proposed RPG programs, evidence-based practices, and evaluation designs; 2) provide evaluation-related technical assistance to strengthen grantee's local evaluations and support their participation in the national cross-site evaluation; 3) collect performance measures from grantees and report to Congress on their progress; and 4) conduct a cross-site evaluation to provide information on the effectiveness of RPG programs. Mathematica is partnering with Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc., and consultants from the National Implementation Research Network at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, the University of Chicago, and the University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research, with expertise in implementation research, child welfare, and the intersection of substance abuse and child welfare, respectively.

RPG PROGRAMMATIC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In addition to the national evaluation the reauthorization language requires technical assistance to be provided to grantees to support implementation and operation of their programs. The Center for Children and Family Futures of Irvine, CA with subcontractor ICF International, was awarded the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) contract. The NCSACW, funded by an

intra-agency agreement between the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF)/Children's Bureau and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)/Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, is providing programmatic technical assistance to the RPGs on a variety of topics, including collaborative practice and policy, program sustainability, trauma-informed services, evidence-based and evidence-informed services to children, treatment and recovery support services, and family-centered substance abuse intervention and treatment practices for women and families.

RPG CROSS SITE CONTACT INFORMATION

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