



Child Welfare Information Gateway

PROTECTING CHILDREN ■ STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Post-Legal Adoption Services for Children With Special Needs and Their Families

Challenges and lessons learned

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau



Child Welfare Information Gateway
Children's Bureau/ACYF
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20024
703.385.7565 or 800.394.3366
Email: info@childwelfare.gov
www.childwelfare.gov

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While most adoptions have positive outcomes for the children and their families, many adoptive families need supportive services at some time during the life of the adoption. The typical crisis and transition periods (such as adolescence) that all families face can be especially difficult for adoptive families, because they also must address specific adoption-related issues. Families who adopt children with special needs from the foster care system face additional challenges, often including the children's past experiences of abuse or neglect. While the vast majority of adoptions of children with special needs succeed, research indicates that 10 to 20 percent disrupt before the adoption is finalized, and approximately 3 to 6 percent dissolve after the adoption has been finalized.¹ Children whose adoptions disrupt or dissolve re-enter the foster care system, adding to their already traumatic experiences of separation and loss. To avoid disruption or dissolution, many families need access throughout the life of the adoption to adoption-competent services, supports, and resources designed to promote the family's well-being.

In recognition of this need, and with the goal of expanding and enhancing services to adoptive families of children with special needs, the Children's Bureau has on several occasions established post-legal adoption services as a priority in its annual adoption discretionary grant announcements. Under that priority area in 1998, the Children's Bureau awarded 15 3-year grants to increase permanency and well-being for children with special needs by preventing adoption disruption, dissolution, or out-of-home placement.

With the goal of sharing the knowledge gained, this paper synthesizes the final reports

¹ Freundlich, M., & Wright, L. (2003). *Post-permanency services*. Seattle: Casey Family Programs.

of those 15 projects. Further information about each project, including contact information, can be found in Appendix A. For copies of the full final reports, contact Child Welfare Information Gateway at 800.394.3366 or info@childwelfare.gov.

Overview of Services and Outcomes

The projects funded in this cluster were collaborative efforts, usually involving the public child welfare agency at the State or local level, foster and adoptive parent support groups, private adoption or family service agencies, and, in many cases, the local mental health system. Each of the projects targeted post-legal adoptive families and their children with special needs. Other target populations included:

- Pre-adoptive families
- Single adoptive parents
- Transracial adoptive families
- Kinship families

Families were referred for services by their adoption agencies, by other adoptive families, or self-referred in response to program outreach.

In the absence of a best-practices model for post-adoption services, grantees involved adoptive families of children with special needs and adoption professionals in designing their programs. This was accomplished primarily through focus groups and in-person, telephone, and mailed surveys. The programs

were then designed to meet the needs and fill the service gaps survey participants identified.

Core Services

The projects varied significantly in their approach to serving adoptive families. Most of the programs, however, did provide a basic set of core services.

Parent Support and Educational Groups.

All 15 projects provided or assisted families in developing support or educational groups for adoptive parents. Parents who regularly attended group meetings reported developing a sense of group cohesion that evolved into an informal mentoring network. Participating families reported feeling less isolated, more knowledgeable about adoption-related issues, more empowered, more confident in their ability to parent their children successfully, more committed to working through problems, and more comfortable talking about adoption within their families and with professionals whose services they needed. Grantees reported that these families tended to seek help sooner—before situations reached the point of crisis—than families who did not participate on an ongoing basis.

Children’s Support and Educational Groups.

Ten projects also provided support and educational groups for the adopted children. These groups gave children an opportunity, sometimes their first, to meet and interact with other children who were adopted. Grantees reported that the groups provided a safe environment where children and teens could talk about their issues with others who understood and even shared their concerns. Grantees and adoptive parents also reported that therapeutic groups helped adoptees consider and deal with the losses in their lives and examine

their feelings and behavior in light of their past experiences.

Information and Referral. During the needs assessment phases of these projects, adoptive families identified a critical need for information. All 15 projects provided information and referral services, either directly (through case managers or hot lines) or through resource directories (6 projects), lending libraries (4), websites (6), and newsletters (7). Adoptive families reported these information and referral services helped them locate services and other resources when needed.

Training for Service Providers. Ten projects provided adoption competency training for providers within the professional community (including the health, mental health, education, and justice systems). Grantees developed and delivered local, regional, and even national trainings for hundreds of service providers across the country during the grant period. The focus of these trainings was on helping providers better understand the impacts of abuse and neglect, involvement with the child welfare system, and separation and loss on children who are adopted and their families. Participating providers gained an understanding of adoption issues and reported greater confidence in working with adoptive families of children with special needs.

Additional Services

The following services were provided by smaller numbers of grantees, but they were also reported as being important to the families who received them.

Recreational/Social Activities. Ten of the grantees offered a wide variety of activities such as family picnics, sporting events, rope

challenge courses, and museum visits. These activities provided parents, adoptees, and their siblings opportunities to meet and interact with others like them in informal settings. Families reported this casual contact in relaxed settings was therapeutic, providing opportunities for parent-child attachment and for the formation of informal support networks.

Advocacy. Grantees reported that many adoptive parents needed support in dealing with schools and other community services. Eight projects provided advocacy services, accompanying families to meetings and conferences. During this process they also taught advocacy skills to the parents, who reported feeling better able to advocate for their children on their own after these experiences.

Case Management. Varying levels of case management services were provided by eight projects in conjunction with crisis intervention, counseling, or information and referral services.

Crisis Intervention/Family Preservation.

Crisis intervention or family preservation services were available through eight projects. A variety of approaches were used in delivering these services, including multidisciplinary teams and in-home wraparound services.

Respite or Respite Referral. Eight projects provided respite services for adoptive families. One project sponsored activities such as movie night or a trip to the zoo for children so the parents could have time to themselves. Another organized a summer camp for children.

Services for Families Who Have Adopted Transracially. At least five projects provided services specifically for families who had adopted transracially. These shared a common

goal of strengthening the children's racial and cultural identities and providing assistance with issues related to transracial adoption. The most frequently provided service for these families was support groups. Other programs included matching adoptive families with "buddy" families of the same race as the adopted child; recruiting and training same-race mentors for transracially adopted children; multicultural book reviews and book fairs; workshops on how to choose and use books effectively to help children get in touch with their culture; and multicultural camps for transracially adopted children and their families. Participating families reported these programs to be very beneficial. Many of the relationships formed through these programs continued beyond the life of the grant.

Less Frequently Offered Services. Other services offered by some grantees included:

- Mini-grants (\$1,000 to \$5,000) to adoptive parent groups to develop educational or respite care services for families (6 projects).
- Formal needs assessments of individual families and children to determine the services the families and children needed most (7).
- Individual or family counseling for parents and children (6).
- Mentorship programs for children, or "buddy" programs for adoptive parents to be mentored by more experienced adoptive families (5).

Project Outcomes

Evaluating post-adoption services programs is challenging for a number of reasons. Challenges identified by these grantees and through a review of the literature include:

- It is difficult to demonstrate that outcomes are related to the services provided.
- Clear points in time at which to measure outcomes do not exist.
- There is no consensus within the field about which outcomes and measures to focus on.
- Direct service staff may not have the skills or an interest in conducting rigorous evaluations.
- Locating skilled evaluators with knowledge of adoption can be difficult.
- The total number of families served by post-adoption services programs is typically small.
- Outcomes achieved may be relatively modest and difficult to measure.
- Tangible outcomes, such as prevention of adoption disruption or dissolution, are very difficult to track. It is challenging to prove conclusively that families would have had a negative experience without a program's intervention.
- The diversity of programs makes cross-site evaluations difficult.

In an effort to address these barriers, grantees used a combination of process and outcome evaluation methodologies. Process evaluations looked at such issues as numbers of families and children served, demographics and adoption history of those families and children, types of services provided, and whether adoptive parents improved their parenting skills. Outcome evaluations looked at the results of the services provided as measured by parent and child satisfaction surveys, disruption data, whether the well-being of adopted children improved, and whether communities

were more aware and supportive of adoption. Outcome data were collected through satisfaction surveys, focus groups, and pre- and post-tests. Client information systems were used to collect demographic data.

Outcomes reported by grantees included:

- **Improved parenting skills.** A number of participating families reported being able to care for their children in their homes despite challenging behaviors because of the post-adoption services they received. Those same families reported an overall improvement in their ability to cope with adoption-related issues and an increased use of community resources. They also expressed an increased awareness and understanding of how childhood trauma can affect children's behavior, an increased commitment to working through problem behaviors, and greater confidence in their ability to do so.
- **Improved child functioning.** Some of the projects reported improvements in the children's well-being and behavior. Several grantees reported support groups helped children explore their own issues concerning adoption, understand themselves and their families, develop social skills, and connect with other adopted children. At least two projects reported these groups had the additional benefit of improving children's relationships with their parents. Counseling, support groups, and community resources were cited as helping families work through children's behavioral and emotional problems. Improvements in children's behavior were measured through child assessments, surveys of family functioning, observations by staff, or parents' reports.

- **Increase in adoptions.** One statewide project reported a 72 percent increase in the number of adoptions in the State during the course of the grant. While the passage of ASFA during this period certainly had an impact, it had also been the program's hypothesis that an increase in the availability and accessibility of post-adoption services might result in an increase in the number of finalized adoptions, as families were confident they would have support.
- **Prevention of adoption disruptions.** Three of the five projects that reported disruption data reported that no disruptions had occurred among the families served by the end of the project. One project reported that only one of the families served had experienced a disruption. Another grantee, however, reported that, while eight disruptions had been prevented, nine had occurred. It is difficult to know how to interpret these data, because different families received different sets of services, there were no control groups, grantees offered limited information about sample sizes, and the projects varied so that comparison of populations across projects was not possible.

Many of the outcomes reported by grantees were anecdotal or descriptive in nature. That is not, however, to negate the importance of the data and information provided in the project evaluations, which do demonstrate positive outcomes.

Common Challenges/ Promising Strategies

Grantees experienced a number of common challenges associated with attracting and engaging adoptive families, presenting trainings to community service providers, recruiting and retaining qualified staff and volunteers, and sustaining the programs beyond the grant period. Details of these challenges and the strategies programs used or recommended to overcome them follow.

Engaging Adoptive Families

Grantees faced ongoing challenges engaging adoptive families of children with special needs in services. Families tended not to participate regularly in support groups and activities, but to move in and out as their needs changed. Grantees reported families were more likely to make contact once they were in a state of crisis, seeming to believe that seeking help before that point would be a sign of failure. Several projects also served large geographic areas where extensive travel time (1 to 2 hours each way) was required for many families who wished to participate in groups.

Engagement methods grantees used (many of which were found to improve participation) included:

- **Conducting extensive outreach.** Most projects found it necessary to continue outreach activities throughout the project in order to have sufficient participation, particularly with support groups. Outreach activities included mailings to adoptive parents; public service announcements; information booths at community events; and presen-

tations to adoption staff, parent groups, home study groups, professional conferences, local churches, community centers, and fraternities and sororities.

- **Reducing the travel burden.** To address the hardship of extensive travel for families, at least two programs began meeting with families in their own neighborhoods. One project also recruited local facilitators for neighborhood groups from among the adoptive parents who lived in the community.
- **Offering “perks.”** Families seemed to respond positively to the provision of food at the group meetings, especially when they were held in the evenings after a long day at work. Some projects also provided childcare, usually by scheduling children’s and teens’ group meetings at the same time as the parent group meetings.
- **Offering education.** Several projects offered training sessions and presentations on specific areas of childhood development to ensure that parents left each session feeling they had gained at least one “tool” that would help them in their day-to-day parenting. They found that adoptive families were more willing to seek knowledge than they were to seek help. One project changed from monthly weekday evening meetings of about 2 hours to quarterly day-long Saturday meetings with an educational component for parents and for children.
- **Offering recreation and social activities.** Grantees reported that recreational and social activities provided non-threatening entry points into post-adoption support programs. Families who participated in these services were more likely to seek help

earlier when challenges arose, before the family was in a state of crisis.

- **Supporting families who cannot participate in groups.** Several programs found newsletters and websites were effective in building a community among adoptive families who did not participate in group activities. These tools served as non-threatening ways to address concerns, provide families with education and information in their homes, show them that other families shared their challenges, and help them locate help when needed. One project provided a chat room with regularly scheduled weekly support chats or visits from adoption experts.

Training Providers

While grantees recognized that offering adoption training to community service providers was one of the most effective ways to support adoptive families of children with special needs, doing so was not without its challenges. Providers frequently had difficulty getting time off from work for the training. Staff who had adoption expertise often did not have the time to become trainers. Many providers simply were not interested in or did not recognize the need for adoption-specific training.

Efforts to address these issues included:

- **Being flexible.** Some grantees tried offering training on Saturdays, so providers would not have to miss work. Unfortunately, this did not meet with a great deal of success. In most cases providers were even more reluctant to give up a Saturday than they had been to miss a workday to attend. It was also more difficult to recruit trainers for Saturday sessions. Others tried shorten-

ing the sessions and offering them to professional groups on-site.

- **Offering credit.** Some grantees recommended that future projects investigate getting the classes certified for CEUs as an incentive for providers to participate.
- **Offering compensation.** Another recommendation was to budget funds to make it possible to offer stipends for professionals who work fee-for-service and cannot afford to miss days of work to attend adoption-specific training.

Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Staff

The projects were unable to offer competitive salaries, particularly for Master's-level social workers. As a result, recruitment was difficult and many of the programs experienced extensive staff turnover.

Strategies used to improve staff recruitment and retention included:

- **Offering incentives.** Grantees offered employees flexible work schedules and educational opportunities.
- **Hiring staff with experience.** Hiring staff with adoption experience and a genuine commitment to the field was another strategy that met with limited success.

Retaining staff remained a challenge throughout the life of the grant in a number of cases, resulting in recommendations that future post-adoption programs budget for more competitive salaries.

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers

A number of grantees used volunteers, primarily to serve as mentors for adopted children and youth. While recruitment seemed generally successful, many potential volunteers dropped out between the initial expression of interest and the orientation meeting, or between orientation and the first training session. Barriers grantees noted included the level of commitment required and delays in processing background checks and scheduling training.

Projects developed several strategies for dealing with this:

- **Casting a wide net.** Some of the recruitment methods grantees mentioned included mailings, local radio talk shows, and volunteer fairs.
- **Targeting the right groups.** Several programs began targeting their recruitment efforts to young professionals, college students, and others who may have more time and availability for the commitments.
- **Offering more timely training.** Some grantees provided training in small groups or even individualized sessions so recruits would not have to wait as long.
- **Recruiting for specific children.** Several projects recruited using a list of specific children who needed mentors.

Grantees reported that potential volunteers seemed generally more likely to step forward for a specific child rather than for a program. When responding to the needs of a particular child, prospective volunteers also seemed more willing to wait a reasonable length of time for the screening and training requirements to be met.

Sustaining Programs

Locating ongoing local or State funding for these preventive programs was difficult. Only four projects were able to continue providing direct services once the grants ended.

- In one case, the State child welfare agency recognized the program's excellent work and provided funding to continue the project.
- One project committed to continuing services on a limited basis, using funding from State reimbursement for finalized adoptions and private fundraising events.
- A third project had not received or identified additional funding, but committed to continuing limited services through a volunteer effort.
- A private family services agency that had been a collaborator and a direct service provider in one of the projects decided to continue to provide all post-adoption services that were provided during the project.

The remaining 11 projects were unable to continue their post-adoption services on a formal basis. Grantees were quick to point out, however, that continuation of a project's activities is not the only way to measure its impact on the community. For example, the providers who participated in adoption-competence training ideally retain an increased sensitivity to and comfort level in dealing with the adoption issues that families and their children bring to them. Many of the parent support groups started through these projects continued to meet after funding ended. Resource guides, lending libraries, websites, and newsletters developed with these funds continue to be available to adoptive families, prospective adoptive families, and providers.

Lessons Learned

In addition to strategies that address the specific challenges described above, some strategies were seen by many of the programs to be crucial to their overall success. Their recommendations are summarized below.

Adoptive families need knowledge about service availability.

Grantees noted adoptive families of children with special needs had an easier time dealing with challenges when pre- and post-adoption training had alerted them to the likelihood of difficulties and when they had an existing relationship with a provider of post-adoption support and treatment services. From the first contact with a family, providers should work with parents to help them recognize an impending crisis, understand the importance of seeking help as soon as possible, identify resources, and develop the skills to utilize those resources.

Take time to plan.

Before launching a post-adoption services program, it is important to dedicate staff, resources, and time to community needs assessment, systems planning, and program development. Identifying what families need, what services are available, and whether sufficient numbers of adoption-competent providers exist within the community will help programs identify gaps and create a seamless continuum of appropriate services for adoptive families.

Flexibility is critical.

The service delivery system proposed in grant applications may not address the needs and interests identified by adoptive families and professionals once the project is underway. Projects sometimes need to adjust their methods to meet the needs of the target population. For example, parents served by these projects made it clear that they wanted to be able to select the services most useful to them, rather than receiving a set “menu” of services determined by the grantees. Having choices helped parents feel empowered. Similarly, support groups that were allowed to develop their own unique tone and structure were more successful in retaining participants.

Collaboration is essential.

Often the supports and services that adoptive families of children with special needs are likely to need are already available in their communities. The issue is simply their lack of visibility or accessibility. Collaboration among the public and private service delivery systems that touch the lives of adoptive families—by sharing knowledge, referrals, and resources as necessary to “wrap” appropriate services around individual families—is essential in order to build a solid network of supports and referrals. Collaboration, however, is not without its challenges. One grantee approached this issue by having each participating agency determine its own programmatic involvement and make its own decisions within its area of expertise and interest, in consultation with the other collaborating agencies when needed. This approach worked effectively when all parties were clear on the

goals and objectives of the collaboration and on their respective roles and responsibilities in achieving those goals and objectives. It is important that these be developed, discussed, written down, and signed by all prior to implementation of the project.

Conclusion

The post-legal adoption services programs for adoptive families of children with special needs funded in this grant cluster faced similar challenges in engaging families, recruiting and retaining staff and volunteers, training community service providers, and finding resources to sustain services. In addressing these challenges, grantees felt certain strategies were critical. Taking the time to assess the needs and interests of the specific target population served, and adjusting the services provided to address those needs, was found to be essential. Grantees also learned that adoptive families tend not to seek services until they are in crisis—establishing a relationship with a post-adoption services provider early in the life of the adoption may help families know where and how to seek help when it is needed. Finally, grantees noted that collaboration with other community service providers is essential to help adoptive families find and access the services they may need. Organizations wishing to build or refine post-adoption services in their own communities may find these lessons learned helpful in their own efforts to assist adoptive families and their children with special needs.

Appendix A: Project Information

State	Grantee Information	Collaboration Partners	Target Populations	Primary Goal
Arizona	<p><i>Adoption Network, A Community of Resources (ANCOR)</i></p> <p>Arizona Children's Association P.O. Box 7277 Tucson, AZ 85725</p> <p>Marcie Velen (520) 622-7611 ext. 1331</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives of public and private agencies in catchment area served on ANCOR steering committee People in key positions within key organizations agreed to collaborate, consult, and disseminate information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-legal adoptive families whose children have special needs Service providers for adoption training 	<p>To increase the availability of comprehensive, stability enhancing post-adoption services for adoptive families with special needs children by building on existing resources</p>
California	<p><i>Post-Legal Adoption Services Targeting Single Mothers of Children with Special Needs</i></p> <p>Institute for Black Parenting 1299 East Artesia Boulevard Carson, CA 90746</p> <p>Cynthia Willard (310) 900-0939 ext. 212</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services Room for One More and Black Linkage for Adoptive Children (BLAC), adoptive parent organizations that target African American adoptive families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoptive families, primarily single mothers, and their adopted children ages 6 and older Service providers for adoption training 	<p>To increase and sustain the adoption of African American children</p>
California	<p><i>Post-Legal Adoption Support Program, Family and Friends Adoptive Network (FFAN)</i></p> <p>San Diego Youth and Community Services 3255 Wing Street San Diego, CA 92110</p> <p>Ilene Tibbits (619) 221-8610 ext. 240</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOSAIC: providers and people within the African American community Heartbeat Family Partners: parents and professionals who advocate for families of children with special needs Special Kids in Families Forever (SKIFF): community members working to recruit African American adoptive parents University of San Diego Patient Advocacy: attorneys and child advocates who provide support, information, and school advocacy for parents of children with special needs San Diego Unified School District Ombudsman: provides information to parents on the educational rights of children Multiple additional agencies and community-based organizations 	<p>Adoptive parents of children with special needs, ages 0 to 12, including older children, children of color, and children with physical, mental health, and/or emotional issues</p>	<p>To create a formal system of post-legal adoption services designed to support and strengthen the family</p>

State	Grantee Information	Collaboration Partners	Target Populations	Primary Goal
California	<p><i>Adoptive Family Therapeutic and Educational Resources (AFTER)</i></p> <p>The Kinship Center 115 East Gish Road, Suite 246 San Jose, CA</p> <p>Graham Wright (408) 573-8222</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four county departments of social services • Future Families, Inc. and Kinship Center: special needs adoption agencies • Child Advocates: a court-appointed advocacy group • FAIR: a parent-led adoptive family support group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoptive families and their children with special needs • Service providers for adoption training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen and preserve adoptive families of children with special needs and/or developmental disabilities • To assist foster families with children with special needs to make the transition to adoption
California	<p><i>Partnership for Strengthening Identity</i></p> <p>Pact, An Adoption Alliance 3220 Blume Drive, Suite 289 Richmond, CA 94806</p> <p>Beth Hall & Gail Steinberg (510) 243-9460</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoptive Families of America • Perspectives Press • Multicultural Literature Program, San Francisco University • Local PBS station • Women's Media Alliance 	Adopted children of color and their families nationwide	To help adoptive families and parent groups to strengthen the identity of transracially adopted children
Connecticut	<p><i>The Post-Legal Adoption Services Program</i></p> <p>Department of Children and Families 505 Hudson Street Hartford, CT 06106</p> <p>Dereh McGann (860) 550-6350</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Children and Families • Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents • Casey Family Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- and post-legal adoptive parents and their children with special needs • Service providers for adoption training 	To increase permanency for Connecticut's children by providing intensive support services to families who have adopted children with special needs or families in the process of adopting children with special needs
Connecticut	<p><i>Post-legal Adoption Services Together (PAST)</i></p> <p>The Village for Families and Children, Inc. Adoption Services 43 Woodland Street Suite 140 Hartford, CT 06105</p> <p>Janet L. Jackson (860) 297-0581</p>	<p>A number of statewide collaborations were established, especially with the Statewide Collaboration for Adoption and Foster Care Awareness, a group of agencies and organizations focusing on the issues of adoption and foster care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- and post-legal adoptive families and their children • Service providers for adoption training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support adoptive families and encourage a lifelong relationship with the agency of adoption • To raise awareness, develop skills, and increase expertise among professionals who serve adoptive families

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Massachusetts	<p><i>Pathways to Adoption</i></p> <p>Catholic Charities 439 So. Union Street Heritage Place Lawrence, MA 01843</p> <p>Susan Parker Norton (978) 685-5930 ext. 229</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoptive Families Together (AFT): parent-led organization of support groups • Adoption Crossroads: Catholic Charities-subcontracted statewide post-adoption program • Grandparents as Parents (GAP): a Catholic Charities-sponsored program for kinship caregivers • Early Intervention • Head Start • Private contractors who led parent groups • Massachusetts Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children's Kidsnet Program • Adoption Crossroads: a post-adoption program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- and post-legal adoptive families and their children • Service providers for adoption training 	<p>To provide prevention services to help reduce family stress and therefore reduce disruptions of adoptive placements, ultimately resulting in increased permanency for children</p>
Michigan	<p><i>Adoption Opportunities Grant</i></p> <p>Ennis Center for Children, Inc. 2051 Rosa Park Boulevard Detroit, MI 48216</p> <p>Gary Wend (313) 963-7400</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public child-serving agencies • Foster/Adoptive Parent Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relative adoptive parents • Foster/adoptive parents and their children 	<p>To provide foster and relative adoptive parents with skills needed to access community services, help them gain self-confidence through support groups, and provide direct services with the goal of maintaining family stability</p>
New York	<p><i>Forever Families/Familias Para Siempre Program</i></p> <p>New York Council on Adoptable Children (COAC) 589 8th Avenue, 15th Floor New York, NY 10018</p> <p>Barbara Rincon (212) 714-2788</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYC Administration for Children's Services adoption department and subsidy unit • Existing adoptive parent support groups • Other child-serving agencies 	<p>Families who have adopted children with special needs from the NYC foster care system</p>	<p>To prevent adoption dissolution by providing a non-threatening and caring environment where adoptive families of children with special needs can access support services, develop relationships within the group setting, and enhance their parenting skills</p>

State	Grantee Information	Collaboration Partners	Target Populations	Primary Goal
New York	<p>Post Legal Adoption Network (PLAN) New Alternatives for Children, Inc. 37 West 26th Street New York, N.Y. 10010 Arlene Goldsmith (212) 696-1550</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post Adoption Support subcommittee of the Adoption Action Network • Adoption Clearance Committee • NYC Council on Adoptable Children • Foster and Adoptive Parent Organization • Citizens' Coalition for Children • New Alternatives for Children, Inc. (other programs within the organization) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoptive families of children with special needs • Foster parents seeking to adopt a child with special needs 	<p>To support adoption permanency with a continuum of services that not only help avoid disruption, but also improve the lives of families that have made the commitment to adopt children with challenging medical conditions</p>
Pennsylvania	<p>Pennsylvania Adoption Connection (PAC) Family Service 630 Janet Avenue Lancaster, PA 17601 Jean M. Landis (717) 397-5241</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York County Children and Youth Services • Lancaster County Children and Youth Services • Family Service (private agency) • COBYS Family Service • Bethany Christian Services • Tressler Lutheran Services • Lancaster County Mental Health/Mental Retardation • Lancaster County Child and Adolescent Service System Program • Adoptive parents 	<p>Families who have adopted children with special needs from the State's foster care system</p>	<p>To provide post-legal support services to families who have adopted children with special needs</p>
Pennsylvania	<p>Beyond Adoption: Creating a Community of Support Adoption Center of Delaware Valley 100 Walnut Street, Suite 701 Philadelphia, PA 19102 MariAnne Clarke (215) 735-9410</p>	<p>The Delaware Valley Adoption Council, a local organization comprised of more than 40 adoption agencies</p>	<p>Adoptive families of children with special needs</p>	<p>To strengthen and preserve families who have adopted children with special needs in the Delaware Valley</p>

State	Grantee Information	Collaboration Partners	Target Populations	Primary Goal
Vermont	<p><i>Post-Legal Adoption Services to Strengthen and Preserve Adoptive Families</i></p> <p>Dept. of Social and Rehabilitation Services 103 S. Main Street Waterbury, VT 05671</p> <p>Diane Dexter (802) 241-2142</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of SRS (public child welfare agency) • Casey Family Services • Children's Aid Society • Futures/Northeast Kingdom Mental Health • Adoption Advocates, Inc. • Easter Seals Teaching Family Center • Foster/Adoptive Family Association • Adoptive Parent Support Network • Family Life Services • Lund Family Center • Parent to Parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All adoptive families, regardless of income or method of adoption • Children in State custody who are legally available for adoption and their foster parents • Families who have adopted transracially • Service providers for adoption training 	<p>To respond to needs for preventive, therapeutic, and educational services in order to improve the quality of life for adoptive families, thereby preventing the unnecessary separation of adopted children from their parents</p>
Washington	<p><i>Strengthening Special Needs and Interracial Foster-Adoptive Families: A Service Delivery Program Design for the Lifelong Journey of Adoption</i></p> <p>Catholic Family and Child Service 5301 Tieton Drive, Suite C Yakima, WA 98908</p> <p>Debi Axford (509) 965-7100</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division of Children and Family Services • Casey Family Programs • Eastern Washington University • Catholic Charities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre- and post-legal adoptive families and kinship families in the catchment area • Adoptive families parenting a child with an ethnic heritage not shared by the adoptive family • Service providers for adoption training 	<p>To ensure that adoptive families and kinship families have the foundation they need to thrive throughout the lifelong journey of adoption</p>

Appendix B: Services Provided—by Grantee

	Advocacy	Assessment	Case Management	Counseling/Therapy	Crisis Intervention/Family Preservation	Information and Referral	Mentoring Programs	Mini-grants	Outreach	Recreational/Social Activities	Respite or Respite Referral	Support and Educational Groups (Child)	Support and Educational Groups (Parent)	Training for Service Providers
Adoption Network, A Community of Resources (ANCOR)— <i>Arizona</i>	●					●		●	●		●		●	●
Post-Legal Adoption Services: Targeting Single Mothers— <i>California</i>	●	●	●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Family & Friends Adoptive Network (FFAN)— <i>California</i>		●	●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	
Adoptive Family Therapeutic & Educational Services (AFTER)— <i>California</i>	●	●			●	●			●	●			●	●
Partnership for Strengthening Identity— <i>California</i>							●	●	●	●		●	●	
The Post-Legal Adoption Services Program— <i>Connecticut</i>	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●
Post-Legal Adoption Services Together (PAST)— <i>Connecticut</i>				●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●
Pathways to Adoption— <i>Massachusetts</i>						●	●	●				●	●	●
Adoption Opportunities Grant— <i>Michigan</i>	●	●	●		●	●				●	●	●	●	
Forever Families Program— <i>New York</i>	●		●		●	●		●	●			●	●	
Post-Legal Adoption Network (PLAN)— <i>New York</i>	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●
Pennsylvania Adoption Connection (PAC)— <i>Pennsylvania</i>		●	●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Beyond Adoption: Creating A Community of Support— <i>Pennsylvania</i>						●		●	●				●	●
Post Legal Adoption Services— <i>Vermont</i>	●		●	●	●	●				●		●	●	●
Strengthening Special Needs and Interracial Families— <i>Washington</i>		●				●			●				●	●