Administration for Children and Families

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Family Connection Grants: Combination Family-finding/Family Group Decision-making Projects
HHS-2012-ACF-ACYF-CF-0271
Application Due Date: 07/20/2012

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Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children & Families

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Notice: On January 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families implemented required electronic application submission via www.Grants.gov for discretionary grant applications. (76 Fed. Reg. 66721-66723, October 27, 2011, New Policies and Procedural Requirements for the Electronic Submission of Discretionary Grant Applications). Please see *Section III.3. Disqualification Factors*, *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission* and *Application Submission Options*, and *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates and Times* for information on electronic application submission and the availability of exemptions allowing applicants to submit applications in paper format.

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is to solicit applications for projects that will demonstrate:

- The effectiveness of integrated programs of intensive Family-finding activities and Family Group Decision-making (FGDM) meetings in supporting connections with family members for the target population of children/youth; and
- How family members will be engaged in building their capacity to meet the needs of children/youth in their care.

Under the provisions of the funding legislation, these grant programs will conduct:

- Intensive Family-Finding activities, which utilize search technology, effective family engagement, and other means to locate biological family members for children/youth in the Child Welfare (CW) system, and once identified, work to establish/re-establish relationships and explore ways to establish a permanent family placement for them; and
- FGDM meetings, which enable families to make decisions and develop plans that nurture children and protect them from abuse and neglect, and when appropriate, address domestic violence issues in a safe manner.

Combination Project activities will support the placement and maintenance of these children/youth in safe, permanent living arrangements with family members, where their well-being needs are met. Family-finding activities will identify maternal and paternal relatives and fictive kin as potential resources to meet a range of permanency needs, including, but not limited to, placement. Effective engagement of these family members, via FGDM meetings and other means, will assist them to build or strengthen relationships with the child or youth, and will empower them to participate in planning and decision-making on behalf of their children. Projects will use the FGDM meeting process to identify services and resources in the community based on family members' needs; develop individualized/family service plans; and assist the child/youth and family members in accessing needed services and supports.

Grant projects funded under this FOA will be developed and implemented through strong collaboration between the grantee; the public CW agency, if the grantee is a private, non-profit organization; and community partners that comprise the service array needed to support families and achieve improved outcomes related to safety, permanency, and well-being for children and youth in the target population. Projects will be designed to:

- Strengthen protective factors as a means to promote social and emotional well-being, and support healthy, positive functioning in children, youth, and families served; and
- Address the impact of trauma on child well-being through inclusion of trauma-informed assessment and treatment services, aimed at facilitating healing and recovery, in individualized/family service plans, as appropriate.

Applicants should note that the authorizing legislation specifies the following:

- Federal share of the total project cost will decline and non-Federal share match levels will increase in the third year of the 3-year grant period, as required by section 427(d) of the Social Security Act. (Grantees must provide at least 25 percent of the total approved cost of the project for the first two years of the project period, and 50 percent of the total approved cost of the project in the third year of the project period.); and
- No more than 50 percent of the non-Federal share may be in kind, as required by section 427(e) of the Social Security Act.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Statutory Authority

The legislative authority is section 427 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 627) as amended by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub.L. 110-351, section 102(a).

Description

For definitions of commonly used words in this FOA, please reference the DEFINITIONS list at the end of *Section I.*

BACKGROUND

Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF)

Within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), ACYF administers national programs for children and youth; works with States, tribes, and local communities to develop services that support and strengthen family life; seeks joint ventures with the private sector to enhance the lives of children and their families; and provides information and other assistance to parents. Many of the programs administered by ACYF focus on children from low-income families; abused and neglected children; children and youth in need of foster care, independent living, adoption, or other child welfare services; preschool children; children with disabilities; runaway and homeless youth; and children from Native American and migrant families.

Ensuring the Well-Being of Vulnerable Children and Families

ACYF is committed to facilitating healing and recovery and promoting the social and emotional well-being of children who have experienced maltreatment, exposure to violence, and/or trauma. This FOA and other discretionary spending this fiscal year are designed to ensure that effective interventions are in place to build skills and capacities that contribute to the healthy, positive, and productive functioning of children and youth into adulthood.

Children who have experienced maltreatment, exposure to violence, and/or trauma are impacted along several domains, each of which must be addressed in order to foster social and emotional well-being and promote healthy, positive functioning:

- **Understanding Experiences**: A fundamental aspect of the human experience is the development of a world view through which one's experiences are understood. Whether that perspective is generally positive or negative impacts how experiences are interpreted and integrated. For example, one is more likely to approach a challenge as a surmountable, temporary obstacle if his or her frame includes a sense that "things will turn out alright." On the contrary, negative experiences can color how future experiences are understood. Ongoing experiences of abuse might lead children to believe they deserve to be maltreated and affect their ability to enter into and stay engaged in safe and healthy relationships. Interventions should seek to address how young people frame what has happened to them in the past and their beliefs about the future.
- **Developmental Tasks**: People grow physically and psychosocially along a fairly predictable course, encountering normal challenges and establishing competencies as they pass from one developmental stage to another. However, adverse events have a marked effect on the trajectory of normal social and emotional development, delaying the growth of certain capacities, and, in many cases, accelerating the maturation of others. Intervention strategies must be attuned to the developmental impact of negative experiences and address related strengths and deficits to ensure children and youth develop along a healthy trajectory.
- **Coping Strategies**: The methods that young people develop to manage challenges both large and small are learned in childhood, honed in adolescence, and practiced in adulthood. Those who have been presented with healthy stressors and opportunities to overcome them with appropriate encouragement and support are more likely to have an array of positive, productive coping strategies available to them as they go through life. For children who grow up in unsafe, unpredictable environments, the coping strategies that may have protected them in that context may not be appropriate for safer, more regulated situations. Interventions should help children and youth transform maladaptive coping methods into healthier, more productive strategies.
- **Protective Factors**: A wealth of research has demonstrated that the presence of certain contextual factors (e.g., supportive relatives, involvement in after-school activities) and characteristics (e.g., self-esteem, relationship skills) can moderate the impacts of past and future negative experiences. These protective factors are fundamental to resilience; building them is integral to successful intervention with children, youth, and families.

The skills and capacities in these areas support children and youth as challenges, risks, and opportunities arise. In particular, each domain impacts the capacity of young people to establish and maintain positive relationships with caring adults and supportive peers. The necessity of these relationships to social and emotional well-being and lifelong success in school, community, and at home cannot be overstated and should be integral to all interventions with vulnerable children and youth. Additionally, building these skills and capacities through the implementation of effective interventions will ready children, youth, and families for positive permanency outcomes.

An important component of promoting social and emotional well-being includes addressing the impact of trauma, which can have a profound effect on the overall functioning of children and youth. ACYF promotes a trauma-informed approach, which involves understanding and responding to the symptoms of chronic interpersonal trauma and traumatic stress across the domains outlined above, as well as the behavioral and mental health sequelae of trauma.

ACYF anticipates a continued focus on social and emotional well-being as a critical component of its overall mission to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children.

The Children's Bureau

Within ACYF, the Children's Bureau (CB) plans, manages, coordinates, and supports child abuse and neglect prevention and child welfare services programs. CB is the agency within the Federal Government that is responsible for assisting CW systems by promoting continuous improvement in the delivery of CW services. CB programs are designed to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of all children, including those in foster care, available for adoption, recently adopted, abused, neglected, dependent, disabled, or homeless, and to prevent the neglect, abuse, and exploitation of children.

The purpose of CB programs is to promote strengthening of the family unit in order to help prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families and encourage reunifying families, when possible, if separation has occurred. State and tribal child welfare systems are designed to deliver direct services that protect children who have suffered maltreatment, who are at risk for maltreatment, or who are under the care and placement responsibility of the State and/or tribe because their families are unable to care for them. These systems also focus on securing permanent legal placement with families, such as reunification, guardianship, and adoption for children and youth who are unable to return home. Information about CB programs can be found at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb

Family Connection Grants Program

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-351) authorizes the Secretary to award competitive, matching grants to State, local, or tribal child welfare agencies and private nonprofit organizations that have experience in working with foster children or children in kinship care arrangements for the purposes of helping children who are in, or are at risk of entering, foster care reconnect with family members. On September 30, 2009, CB awarded a cluster of 24 Family Connection grants, for a 36-month project period, to initiate or expand programs in one, or any combination of, the four program areas identified in the funding legislation: Kinship Navigation, Family-finding, Family Group Decision-Making, and Residential Family Treatment. A listing of the 2009 funded projects is available at:
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/discretionary/2009.htm.

Further, on September 30, 2011, seven projects were funded for a 36-month project period to test the effectiveness of Family Group Decision-making (FGDM) as a family-centered service approach that helps prevent children and youth from entering or re-entering foster care, thereby reducing the time that these children and families are involved with the child welfare system. A listing of the 2011funded projects is available at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/discretionary/2011.htm.

The National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections, a service of CB, disseminates information on Family Connection grant projects, including project abstracts with contact information, and Year 2 Cross-site Evaluation Reports and presentations related to the 2009 Family Connection grantees.

COMBINATION FAMILY-FINDING/FGDM PROGRAMS: Need and Rationale

Extended family members, including fictive kin, are a potential permanency resource for children and youth in foster care or at risk of entering or returning to foster care. Once identified and located, family members need to be engaged in building a relationship with the child/youth and determining whether they can offer a permanent home or another type of permanency resource. Found family members need assistance in understanding the parenting and service needs of the child/youth and in creating a support system to help them to meet those needs. FGDM meetings can be an effective mechanism to engage and empower family members in planning and decision-making to ensure that the ongoing needs of the child/youth for safety, permanency, and well-being will be met.

Integrated Family-finding/FGDM programs have potential to create and sustain new permanency resources for the target population of children and youth in the CW system. Combination Projects will demonstrate whether and how this integrated approach will improve permanency outcomes for these children and youth by:

- Reducing the time that they are involved with the CW system; and
- Meeting their immediate and long-term needs for safety, permanency, and well-being within their

family system.

Combination Project activities will support the placement and maintenance of the target population of children and youth in safe, permanent living arrangements with family members, where their well-being needs are met. Family-finding activities will identify maternal and paternal relatives and fictive kin as potential resources to meet a range of permanency needs, including but not limited to placement. Effective engagement of these family members, via FGDM meetings and other means, will assist them in building or strengthening relationships with the child or youth, and will empower them to participate in planning and decision-making on their behalf.

Children and youth will be engaged in the family-finding process in an age and developmentally appropriate manner. Older children and youth will be involved in identifying family members, participating in FGDM meetings, and making decisions about developing relationships with family members and potential placements.

Projects will use the FGDM process to identify services and resources in the extended family and community based on family members' needs, develop individualized/family service plans, and assist the child/youth and family members in accessing needed services and supports.

Combination Projects will coordinate with existing agency services and will partner with community providers in FGDM meetings to maximize the service array to support found family members in meeting the safety, permanency, and well-being needs of the target population of children/youth. Individualized service planning, facilitated by FGDM meetings, will be family-centered, strengths-based, and culturally-based. Further, planning with family members and service providers will be trauma-informed in order to promote social and emotional well-being of the child/youth by addressing healing and recovery.

Family-finding Programs

Under this FOA, Family-finding is defined as the intensive use of technology and other means to identify, locate, and contact family members; assess their suitability as potential permanency resources for the child or youth; and engage them with the child or youth in a process that can lead to a permanency placement or relationship. For children and youth in foster care, or at risk of entering or returning to foster care, Family-finding activities will aim to identify maternal and paternal relatives and fictive kin as potential resources to meet a range of permanency needs, including, but not limited to, placement.

Children are best brought up in families. Relatives, both maternal and paternal, are a valuable resource for children and youth in foster care, who may offer a permanent placement or relationship for a child in care if contacted and informed of the need. Families are the best experts on what they can offer in terms of placement and supportive resources. When relatives are competently informed and engaged, they can provide insight about persons within the family system who can be relied upon and trusted with the care of children. Child welfare agencies are exploring multiple avenues in an effort to effectively tap into this resource.

The Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process acknowledges the importance of family resources to children who are in, or at risk of entering, foster care by tracking achievement of permanency outcomes that include consideration of relatives and other family connections in ensuring that children have permanency and stability in their living situations and that the continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children. CB has completed two rounds of CFSRs. In many States, practice improvement related to timely achievement of permanency goals was found to be needed, particularly regarding youth in foster care. Further, many States face challenges in efforts to preserve connections between children of all ages in foster care and their extended families, and in making diligent efforts to search for maternal and paternal relatives as potential relative placements.

Information regarding compiled results of the 2001 to 2010 Child and Family Services Reviews is available here: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwmonitoring/results/index.htm

Foster care is meant to be a temporary, not permanent, living arrangement for children and youth until they are returned to their birth family or placed in another permanent family setting. There is a need to design models of Family-finding and engagement to facilitate permanency for all children and youth in foster care. Family connections are potential permanency resources for children of all ages, from infancy to older youth, who are in foster care or at risk of entering or returning to foster care.

In many locales, older children and youth are the focus of family-finding efforts. The CFSRs revealed that long-term foster care or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (OPPLA) were being over-used as plans for youth, as well as large sibling groups containing youth.

Barriers to permanency may be rooted in the belief that older children and youth cannot be placed with family members and achieve successful permanency due to their age. These barriers are reflected in the data reported in the HHS/ACF/ACYF/CB Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). (AFCARS data used here are current as of January 2012.) The percent of children who are discharged from foster care to adoption dramatically decreases as children increase in age. At the end of FY 2010, children waiting for adoption who were age nine and older had been waiting twice as long as children under the age of nine. (There is no Federal definition for a child waiting to be adopted. The definition used here includes children and youth through age 17 who have a goal of adoption and/or whose parents' parental rights have been terminated. It excludes children 16 years old and older whose parents' parental rights have been terminated and who have a goal of adoption.)

Additional analysis of FY 2010 data show that although children nine and older constitute approximately 50 percent of all children in foster care, they comprise only 41 percent of the waiting population and only 26 percent of all adoptions. Additional barriers to permanency include inappropriate placements, poorly selected and improperly trained foster parents, and caseworkers failing to address permanency issues early and often in their work with youth. Placements in group home settings often limit contact with a broad range of caring adults with whom the child or youth could establish and maintain a permanent lifelong connection.

While family-finding efforts for older youth who are close to aging-out of the system may not result in permanent placements with relatives, they can identify family supports that the youth can rely upon after emancipation. Found family members may provide these older youth with resources they would not otherwise have had, e.g., family history, relatives to visit and do activities with; and through relationships with them, youth can develop a better sense of identity.

Placements with relatives often yield a higher level of commitment than non-relative placements. In relative placements, there can be a higher likelihood that siblings will be allowed to continue to have contact with each other, even when adopted by separate families. There is a need to demonstrate and evaluate models which support relatives in processing the implications of various permanency options and in managing open adoption arrangements, while helping children and youth to address their attachment needs and any additional emotional/mental health issues that affect their social and emotional well-being. Relatives need assistance in building supports for the child/youth that assist in healing and recovery through individual therapy, family counseling, or youth permanency support groups with adoption-competent service providers who understand and address trauma-related issues.

In contacting and engaging relatives, some of whom may not yet have connections with the child or youth, it is important to help them be aware of the issues implicit in permanent commitment to a child/youth in foster care. Education and support may be needed for relatives in order for them to support the child or youth in managing new role definition and other issues related to contact with family members.

It is important to recognize that family connections are essential to the well-being of the child, even if a family member cannot be a placement option. Family connections create greater degree of social acceptance and higher self-esteem. Children connected to families are better at coping, less prone to anxiety and depression, and have better overall physical health. The response of family members may be of greater importance than whether they can provide a placement for the child.

Family-finding in terms of relative search has yet to be fully utilized in a consistent manner by the child welfare community. Family-finding initiatives are not necessarily comprehensive and frequently suffer from the lack of consistent, statewide implementation. Family-finding needs to be integrated into the CW agency service model. Seeking family members as a resource early in a child's placement in foster care can reduce the time to permanency as well as the number of placement moves for children. The importance of interviewing available family members for relative names and contact information at critical points along the continuum of CW service delivery is not consistently recognized by staff. Diligent documentation of relatives may be lacking from case management procedures, and technology search mechanisms may not be a part of standard search protocol in locating relatives. Courts and attorneys may need education about Family-finding and engagement activities, and increased understanding of their role in ensuring that these efforts are being carried out at review hearings every 6 months.

Elements of Effective Family-finding Programs

At a minimum, Family-finding programs funded under this FOA will include these elements:

1. Information Gathering;
2. Documentation;
3. Search;
4. Identification;
5. Contact;
6. Assessment;
7. Engagement; and
8. Permanent Family Placement/Relationships.

Information Gathering, Documentation, Search, and Identification

The family-finding process must begin with information gathering and notification of relatives within 30 days after removal of the child (Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub.L. 110-351)), enabling relatives to be involved in the early planning stages. Documentation of family member information and family-finding activities should continue for every child after entering care. For children already in care, annual or semi-annual systematic case reviews each year should explore efforts to locate permanency for each child in care, including family-finding efforts.

Support for family-finding programs and effective utilization of these depends upon the broad child welfare system having an understanding of the value of these timely activities in achieving permanency. Training for all staff, courts, attorneys, foster parents, and related partners on effective interviewing, concurrent planning, understanding permanency, and family-finding philosophy and methods helps ensure success.

The search for family members should not be limited to within the State. Out-of-State family members may be the best potential caregiver or may know someone else to contact. Further, in some States or locales, a significant number of children and youth in foster care, or at risk of entering or returning to foster care, have relatives out of the country. A 2009-funded Family Connection grantee, International Social Service - USA Branch, is exploring the implementation of intensive family-finding services for children who have potential kinship placements outside of the United States. Mechanisms and infrastructure to ensure timely inter-jurisdictional placements between States or with other countries should be put in place to make these types of placements accessible and timely.

Contact, Assessment and Engagement

Early family contacts and engagement of parents and known relatives in family-finding efforts is also important. To facilitate these conversations, some agencies provide a script for staff to use during removal and initial interviews, such as, "Reunification is the goal and we will do everything possible to assist you in successfully reunifying with your child. Should reunification not occur, who in your family could provide a safe and stable long-term home to your child?" Another example of a script can be found in *Six Steps to Find a Family: A Practice Guide to Family Search and Engagement (FSE)*, available at the

National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections.

Efforts to identify and engage family members may be aided and accompanied by case-specific meetings, either through Team Decision Making (TDM), Family Group Conferencing (FGC), or other models of family engagement meetings. The 2009 CB Family Connection grantees are finding that implementing family-finding programs alone may not be sufficient to promote permanency for children without providing meaningful engagement opportunities for families and intensive support for caregivers (James Bell Associates (2011).

An assessment tool(s) should be used to assess the ability of family members to provide a permanent placement or other permanency resource to the child or youth to support their needs for safety, permanency, and well-being. Having a committee to review assessment results and make recommendations can reduce bias and be of assistance to staff. Specific checklists may be helpful tools to assist family members in considering providing a permanent placement for a child or youth and in identifying the range of permanency resources that they may offer for a child or youth.

Permanent Family Placement/Relationships

The dual goals of family-finding are to enhance permanency options and to maintain continuity of relationships, to the optimal degree possible, throughout the life of the child/youth. Permanency options include reunification with biological family, adoption, long-term placement with a relative, or another legal plan such as guardianship. The most important element is "emotional permanency," meaning that a child has a family to belong to, up to age 18 and beyond. If a permanent family living arrangement cannot be achieved, the next goal should be developing permanent connections for the child to age 18 and beyond, including connections to siblings, birth family extended family members, and/or fictive kin or other significant people in the child's life. This will benefit the child through positive relationship(s) and increased self-esteem, as a result of having someone to turn to and rely upon, as a point of consistency as the child matures into young adulthood. If relatives are located who are not able to be a placement resource to a child, visitation and other forms of support to the child should still be explored and supported by the agency.

FY2009 Family Connection Family-finding Grants

In 2009, CB funded four Family Connection Family-finding projects and eight Combination Projects that include Family-finding. The Year 2 Cross-Site Evaluation Report on FY2009 Family Connection Grants identified lessons learned and recommendations for Family Connection Family-finding grant programs. This report is available at the National Resource Center on Permanency and Family Connections.

With regard to start-up and planning, the Report stressed the importance of including stakeholders in planning, and gaining support at the highest levels of the public Child Welfare agency. During early stages of implementation, it was found beneficial to inform and prepare caseworkers and supervisors regarding project activities, and to identify the skills, qualities, and competencies desired in family-finding staff members before hiring. It was also important to provide intensive supervision and support for staff, and that training and supervision be focused on family engagement, mediation, attachment, and grief and loss to help family-finding staff members work through difficult issues with families.

Recommendations around the service model included allowing flexibility in engagement strategies, planning processes, and timelines in order to meet the diverse needs of children and families; and adequate time for relationships to develop and supports to be put in place before placing a child in a relative's home. Lessons learned around working with program partners included finding ways to build mutually beneficial relationships and avoid ownership and power issues, and thinking deliberately about how to influence the change in the agency culture around permanency and kinship care (James Bell Associates, 2011).

Family Group Decision-making Programs

Under this FOA, FGDM is defined as an intervention approach in which family members and relevant service providers are brought together in a meeting or series of meetings to make decisions to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of their children and to develop a plan for services. FGDM refers to one of the various models of this approach. Other models or terms, which are acceptable for projects funded under this FOA, include: Family Team Meetings, Family Group Conferencing, Family Unity Meetings, Family Team Conferences, Family Group Conferences, and Team Decision-Making.

Many CW agencies are already offering FGDM services throughout the continuum of child welfare services. Through the use of FGDM meetings, children and youth can reconnect to family members in ways that will support the family in meeting their needs for safety, permanency, and well-being in the family home. For children and youth in foster care, who are preparing for reunification, or for those who have returned home after foster care, the potential benefit of reconnecting with family members is the development of improved relationships with parents and extended family members, which can help prevent their return to foster care. For these children and youth, as well as for those who have not yet entered foster care, reconnecting with family members may also mean identifying and developing relationships with family members who have not been a part of their lives in the past, especially fathers and paternal relatives. Through FGDM programs, new family connections can be tapped to engage and involve family members as a strategy to strengthen protective factors, reduce risk factors, and enable the child to return to or remain in the home.

The FGDM process will strengthen the development of individualized/family service plans. It will address the impact of trauma on child well-being through inclusion in these plans, as appropriate, trauma-informed assessment and treatment services, which are aimed at facilitating healing and recovery.

Programs Utilizing FGDM Meetings

FGDM models provide a respectful forum for family members to work together to identify needs and potential solutions that will support the safety, permanency, and well-being of their children.

A common component of FGDM models is a framework consisting of the following four main phases: (1) request to hold the FGDM meeting; (2) preparation and planning for the FGDM meeting; (3) family's participation in the actual meeting; and (4) any further planning after the FGDM meeting. Further elements of each phase may vary depending on the complexity of the case. Most of the models utilize a trained facilitator or coordinator.

During the FGDM meeting, participants identify and discuss issues related to the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child/youth, and the strengths and needs of the family. Together, participants identify resource options to assist in the development and implementation of case plans:

- **Formal resources**: service options from child welfare agencies, community-based organizations, and other professional service providers; and
- **Informal resources**: options from family, friends, and any other community members.

Another component of several FGDM models is "private family time," which refers to the time during the meeting in which only family members, without input from the various service providers present, discuss the options available to them. This time can be used to discuss formal and informal resources, make decisions about the use of these resources, and develop a plan that provides for the overall well-being of the child/youth. Some FGDM models use "private family time" with the presence of the case worker and additional services providers, while others do not.

FGDM as a Prevention Approach

The FGDM process is an approach used in preventing child abuse and neglect and assuring the safety of children in the family home. Part of the prevention of child abuse and neglect is the promotion of protective factors, which research has shown is linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect. These protective factors include nurturing and attachment, knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development, parental resilience, social connections, and concrete supports for parents.

Many communities offer FGDM as an approach to work with families who have not come into contact with Child Protective Services, or who have been screened out. These protective factors can be addressed in the FGDM process to help parents who have abused their children or who are at risk of abusing their children to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress. It is important to promote protective factors in the FGDM process as staff may be working with families dealing with stressors that could lead to abuse or neglect, with the potential to undermine the permanency of the child's placement. Focusing on protective factors also helps service providers develop positive relationship with parents, and help parents to be part of the process as they draw on natural support networks within their family and community.

Information about Protective Factors is available from the Child Welfare Information Gateway, a service of CB: http://www.childwelfare.gov/can/factors/protective.cfm.

Using FGDM to Promote Social and Emotional Well-being

The FGDM process facilitates the ability of family members to meet the needs of the children/youth in their care, and builds capacity of the family to sustain permanent placements for these children/youth. Effective individualized service planning, via FGDM meetings, addresses safety and permanency needs, and also supports the social and emotional well-being of children/youth. To meet the needs of children/youth who have experienced maltreatment, exposure to violence, and/or trauma, it is important that the FGDM process engage the family in understanding the need for services to facilitate their healing and recovery, as well as identifying and accessing these services.

Effectiveness of FGDM

In 1990, Oregon was the first State to begin using the FGDM process. Since that time, various counties in at least 20 States have implemented a model of FGDM to engage families in the decision-making process for ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of their children. Many studies have included the various benefits of the FGDM process, including significantly increased likelihood that children would be placed in kin foster homes and be discharged to family or relatives. A recent study found that as a result of family team meetings, children were more likely to be placed in relative foster care, have family-group-type permanency goals in their case plans (e.g., reunify with parents or live with relatives), have shorter stays in care, and be discharged to their parents or kin. (Pennell, Edwards, and Burford, 2010). However, more evaluative research is needed to assess long term outcomes.

Successes in the use of FGDM have been found to result from proper preparation, planning, and facilitation of the meeting, as well as ongoing family engagement during the family's involvement with the agency. In child welfare agencies, the traditional role and responsibility of the professional worker is to assess children's safety and the family's ability to provide children with a safe and stable environment, as well as to develop a case plan for children and their families during a child protective services investigation or while the child or youth is in foster care, or at risk of entering foster care. Families are not always considered integral participants in the case planning stages, but rather they are simply expected to agree with and execute the plan. This can lead to social work practice that is inflexible and seen as uncooperative by families. The traditional approach can also fail to consider or use the larger family system, which can provide a broader network to support the family's well-being, because families, more so than the worker, are familiar with their own needs and informal resource options. The larger family system should include the fathers and/or paternal relatives. Research supports that FGDM is effective in involving paternal relatives in case planning (Jenkins and Kinney, 2009). Focusing on the engagement of fathers and/or paternal relatives helps to develop more comprehensive case plans, and encourages a broader system change in how families are engaged.

FGDM encourages child welfare agency efforts in engaging families in the case planning process. Families that are empowered to actively participate with the child welfare system in matters concerning their children, such as with FGDM meetings, increase their sense of ownership and commitment to case plans, which will more likely result in their follow through with decisions that enhance the lives of their children and themselves. The FGDM experience can also empower families to make decisions that support their children's well-being in the future without the involvement of the child welfare system.

Ensuring safety of all participants during the FGDM process is critical. When domestic violence is present or a potential concern, special precautions, including completing safety and risk assessments prior to meeting, are needed. It is also important to work closely with survivors in the planning, preparation, and implementation of the meeting process. Meetings should include domestic violence advocates whenever domestic violence is identified as warranted and with the consent of the survivor. In addition, when holding the meeting, it may not be appropriate for the survivor and the perpetrator to be present in the same room, in which case, the coordinator can plan for separate meetings. However, if the survivor decides not to follow through with the meeting, she/he should be assured of encountering no penalties from the agency. It is critical that the agency proceeds cautiously, adequately, and sensitively in the preparation and planning prior to the meeting. If safety cannot be assured, a meeting should not be held. The agency should also adequately train staff to work with families where domestic violence issues are present, as well as to collaborate with domestic violence workers, advocates, and agencies when preparing for the FGDM, and during the meeting, if needed. Guidance on how to implement FGDM within the context of domestic violence has been prepared by the Family Violence Prevention Fund and the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group. (See references following.)

CB expects that the demonstration projects funded under this FOA will produce new knowledge that will assist the child welfare field to effectively incorporate FGDM into practice and inform the policy-making process. Effective implementation of an FGDM program could have a positive impact on some of the areas for practice improvement identified by the CFSRs of State child welfare systems. In September 2010, CB concluded the second round of CFSRs, including all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The compiled results of the CFSRs conducted in 32 States during fiscal years 2007 and 2008 revealed a continuing need for knowledge regarding effective practices, such as FGDM meetings, as a means to support improvement in safety planning, child and family involvement in case planning, assessment of needs, and provision of services and supports for children, youth, and parents. State-level data from the 32 States reviewed identified the following:

- Item 17, Assessing and addressing the needs and services of children, parents, and foster parents was rated a strength at a mean rate of 50 percent (low: 29 percent, high: 69 percent); and
- Item 18, Child and family involvement in case planning was rated a strength at a mean rate of 52 percent (low: 27 percent, high: 75 percent).

In examining qualitative themes using case-level data from the CFSR reviews of 32 States in 2007-2008, strategies of the top three performing metro sites related to Item 17 included utilizing "formal team meetings," and those related to Item 18 included using "family-centered and strengths-based approaches (team meetings, mediation)" to build effective working relationships.

("Results of the 2007 and 2008 Child and Family Services Reviews" Retrieved from: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwmonitoring/results/agencies_courts.pdf)

FGDM, with its various models, has been identified as an important strategy in improving practices and outcomes related to engagement and/or planning with family members, especially fathers. In some States, FGDM is mandatory when the child is at risk of being removed from the home. For instance, FGDM is a strategy in working with families with the goal of determining safety plans to enable the child or youth to remain safely with the family instead of entering the foster care system. When children must be removed from the home, FGDM can be used to develop a plan with the family for the temporary care of the child by relatives to prevent foster care placement. Further, many States are also addressing the need for improved practices in assessing needs of families, providing individualized services, stabilizing placements, and preserving family connections through FGDM.

Information about FGDM approaches is available from the Child Welfare Information Gateway, a service of CB: http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/assessment/approaches/family.cfm

FY2009 Family Connection FGDM Grants

In 2009, CB funded a cluster of Family Connection Grants. One of the funded projects focused entirely on FGDM, and five awards were made for combination projects that included FGDM. The Year 2 Cross-Site Evaluation Report on FY 2009 Family Connection Grants identified lessons learned and recommendations for Family Connection projects engaged in FGDM programs.

Factors considered to be key to providing effective FGDM services include effective engagement of family members, staff, and partners; the ability to identify and facilitate targeted services to match specific family needs; strong leadership support and strong collaborative relationships with partners; and skilled and committed staff. Lessons learned include the observation that it is important to find a balance between speedy and meaningful engagement of families. Also, training alone may not be the most effective method of learning the FGDM model. Shadowing a facilitator and participating in an FGDM meeting is effective in learning best practices. Since FGDM is an interdisciplinary process, it is also considered critically important to include program partners in developing models and processes, and to share information on progress, challenges, and successes (James Bell Associates, 2011).

Project Requirements: COMBINATION FAMILY-FINDING/FGDM PROJECTS

Tips for Preparing a Competitive Application

It is essential that applicants read the entire announcement package carefully before preparing an application and include all of the required application forms and attachments. The application must reflect a thorough understanding of and support the purpose and objectives of the applicable legislation. Reviewers expect applicants to understand the goals of the legislation and CB's interest in each topic, and to address and follow all of the evaluation criteria in ways that demonstrate this understanding. Applications that do not clearly address the evaluation criteria or program requirements generally receive very low scores and are rarely funded.

CB's web site (http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb) provides a wide range of information and links to other relevant web sites. Before preparing an application, applicants can learn more about CB's mission and programs by exploring the web site.

NOTE: See *Section IV.2, The Project Description: Outcomes Expected, Approach* and *Evaluation* for additional instructions for applicants.

Project Requirements

Combination Family-finding/FGDM Projects funded under this FOA will implement intensive Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings as a component of a strong system of services to support family connections. Projects must be based on an integrated program service model, which enables children and families to benefit from a continuum of services. The project design will closely integrate intensive Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings. Projects may initiate the use of Family-finding and FGDM with the target population of children and youth or expand, integrate and/or bring to scale existing Family-finding or FGDM programs which serve this population.

Grant projects funded under this FOA will test the effectiveness of the integrated Family-finding/FGDM program as a family-centered service approach aimed at helping children and youth in, or at risk of entering into, the CW system, achieve and sustain permanency with family members. Projects may focus on a specific subpopulation of children in the target population, e.g. tribal children, or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) youth. Children and youth in the target population may be:

- In foster care, with plans for reunification and/or relative placement;
- In formal or informal kinship care placements; or
- Living at home with parents, with CW involvement due to significant risk of their removal.

The families of these children/youth may be served by family support or family preservation programs, may be receiving in-home services, or may have been diverted from the CW system by differential response/alternative response programs. Projects will use FGDM meetings to engage both known and recently located family members in building capacity to meet the needs of the target population of children/youth in order prevent entry or re-entry to foster care or reduce length of stay in foster care.

Children and youth will be engaged in the family-finding process in an age and developmentally appropriate manner. Older children and youth will be involved in identifying family members, participating in FGDM meetings, and making decisions about placement and developing relationships with family members.

Combination Projects will be designed to:

- Strengthen protective factors as a means to promote social and emotional well-being and support healthy, positive functioning in children, youth and families served; and
- Address the impact of trauma on child well-being through inclusion in individualized/family service plans, as appropriate, trauma-informed assessment and treatment services, aimed at facilitating healing and recovery.

Combination Projects will identify service needs and facilitate access to needed services and supports, but will not provide services other than Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings. Projects will assess the suitability of found relatives to provide permanency resources for the child or youth, and conduct individualized service planning around achieving and sustaining permanency for the child or youth with family members. They will facilitate assessments of the needs and assets of the child/youth and family members as needed, and develop plans for addressing these with available services and supports. Assessments will address family history and current functioning that could impact the safety, permanency and well-being of the child or youth. These include family issues related to substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence, as well as history of trauma which the child/youth or family members may have experienced.

Combination Projects will support family members in meeting the well-being needs of the children or youth by facilitating:

- Screening and assessment of children/youth in the domains of child well-being, including intellectual functioning/academic ability, physical development, social and emotional functioning;
- Access to appropriate, evidence-based services to address trauma symptoms, behavioral problems and relational concerns for children and youth;
- Access to parenting training, therapy programs and relational supports for relative caregivers; and
- Access to concrete supports and ancillary services needed for relatives to create and sustain a safe, family living arrangement for the child/youth, with the greatest degree of permanency possible.

Combination Family-finding/FGDM Projects will:

- Serve a defined geographic area and a target population based on characteristics of children/youth and families and anticipated numbers to be served from a current analysis of local data;
- Implement integrated components of Family-finding/FGDM through a family-centered, strengths-oriented, culturally-based, and trauma-informed approach designed to meet the needs of the target population;
- Have the organizational capacity to support effective planning and implementation of the integrated Family-finding/FGDM program within the 36-month project period;
- Expedite safety, permanency and well-being for the target population of children and youth by expanding and building on the natural network of supports within the extended family to strengthen protective factors, reduce risk factors and promote social and emotional well-being;
- Effectively engage and involve family members, and children or youth if appropriate, in Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings;
- Identify and address systemic challenges in developing and implementing an integrated Family-finding/FGDM program for the target population; including necessary supports for participating agency staff to address training and workload issues;
- Maintain the involvement of family members, community organization/partners and other

stakeholders on an ongoing basis in the planning and implementation of the integrated program; and
- Engage in sustainability planning to incorporate integrated program activities in CW agency policies and practice, and otherwise sustain improved Family-finding/FGDM practice at the conclusion of Federal funding.

Family-finding Program Expectations

Family-finding programs will:

- Utilize search technology which is based on a sound assessment of cost-effectiveness or cost/benefit;
- Ensure that Family-finding activities complement concurrent planning efforts to expand the availability of permanent placement options for children/youth and expedite the achievement of permanency;
- Provide sufficient training to casework staff, supervisors, and the legal system to develop a coherent understanding of the role and components of Family-finding in achieving permanency, at each step of the Family-finding process; and
- Replicate effective Family-finding models or develop evidence-informed models, testing them for effectiveness with different populations, in different settings, at various levels of intensity, and with regard to implementation of specific program components, e.g., staff training or follow-up support to permanent placements.

Family-finding programs will be based on a clearly defined model which addresses the following:

- The point at which the proposed Family-finding efforts would begin;
- The number of relatives who would be contacted for each child or youth in or entering care;
- The definition of "biological family members", according to State statutes as appropriate, e.g., the level of certainty that is expected in cases where paternity is not obvious/has not been legally established;
- The plan for complying with State statutes regarding placement of children with relatives;
- The plan for serving children of all ages, including youth;
- How family relationships would be re-established, including the assessment processes which would be utilized in exploring the potential resource of identified relatives; the strategies to be utilized for arranging a meeting/series of meetings, and for providing skilled on-going support to ensure strong relationships; and the process for deciding whether to seek to establish as many relationships as possible or just a few good ones;
- How existing safety issues, including domestic violence and child maltreatment, would be identified and addressed;
- The plan for establishing a permanent family placement, including adoption, open adoption and guardianship; kinship care and kin foster care or other types of placement which would be acceptable options; and strategies to address permanent relationships that have no legal standing, e.g., mentor, big brother/sister, pen pal; and
- The plan for sustaining a permanent placement via needed supports for the family to support ongoing safety, permanency and well-being of the child/youth.

FGDM Program Expectations

FGDM Programs will:

- Be based on an integrated program service model, which enables children and families to benefit from a continuum of services, and is designed to support or improve the degree to which family-centered practice and FGDM are included as a component of the existing system of services to support family connections;
- Ensure FGDM is implemented as a process and way of practice rather than disconnected meetings;
- Effectively engage and involve family members, including fathers and paternal relatives, and children or youth if appropriate, in FGDM meetings and in the planning and development of service plans; address barriers and obstacles to the involvement of family members;

- Develop or enhance a strong plan of collaboration with and commitment from various community organizations, including the building of partnerships with community and faith-based organizations, in order to a) offer an array of services that meet the family's needs; b) identify space for FGDM meetings in agencies in close proximity to where family members reside; and c) adequately address safety needs when working with families where there is a co-occurrence of domestic violence;
- Determine the criteria for referring a case to FGDM, while keeping in mind the unique needs and circumstances of the target population and community;
- Secure the safety of participants during FGDM meetings, especially in the context of domestic violence, including conducting a thorough safety and risk assessment prior to a meeting; using methods to ensure safety of all participants during the meeting;
- Ensure that the agency or collaborating agencies will maintain and respect confidentiality during the planning, preparation, and implementation of meetings.
- Ensure that the FGDM process will identify and address needs and services related to child well-being and family protective factors; will access expertise in program areas including mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence to address service planning issues in these areas that may affect the safety, permanency and well-being of the child/youth; and
- Consider and address how FGDM meetings with youth might differ from meetings with younger children.

Evaluation: COMBINATION FAMILY-FINDING/FGDM PROJECTS

For further information regarding CB expectations of applicants' plans for evaluation activities, refer to *Section Section IV. 2, The Project Description, Outcomes Expected* and *Evaluation.* Reviewers will be assessing applicants' plans based on criteria related to the proposed evaluation plan listed in *Section V., Application Review Information, V.1, Criteria*.

CB expects grantees to engage in a strong, local evaluation in order to build evidence regarding best/promising practices and demonstrate linkages between project activities and improved outcomes at the parent/child/family and system levels. Grantees will also participate fully in the Family Connection cross-site evaluation effort that relates to this FOA.

Using the most rigorous design possible, local evaluations will show whether the integrated Family-finding/FGDM approach improves the connections with family members for the target population of children/youth, and increases the engagement of family members in building their capacity to meet the needs of children/youth in their care. The project evaluation will be designed to determine to what degree project activities strengthen protective factors and address the impact of trauma on child well-being, and whether integrated projects of this type are an effective means to promote social and emotional well-being, and support healthy, positive functioning in children, youth, and families served.

In addition, the evaluation will address systems-level outcomes to show to what degree the integration of Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings contributes to improved outcomes for children and youth in the target population by helping them to reconnect with family members in ways that meet their needs for safety, sustained permanency and improved social and emotional well-being in the family setting.

Guided by a logic model and theory of change for the project, the local evaluation will include both process and outcomes evaluation components. The process evaluation will assess the implementation of the integrated project, as well as the linkages between the collaborative partners that will help ensure that identified needs of children, youth, and family members are met. The outcomes component will use a sufficiently rigorous approach to examine how the integrated approach to Family-finding and FGDM affects key outcomes of interest, including permanency indicators and child and family well-being indicators. In addition, the outcomes evaluation will address key elements of Family-finding program implementation and FGDM program implementation to determine the effectiveness of each practice.

Grantees are required to rigorously evaluate their projects. Rigorous research incorporates the four following criteria (Proctor, et al., 2010):

Credibility: Ensuring what is intended to be evaluated is actually what is being evaluated; making sure that descriptions of the phenomena or experience being studied are accurate and recognizable to others; ensuring that the method used is the most definitive and compelling approach that is available and feasible for the question being addressed. If conclusions about program efficacy are being examined, the study design should include a comparison group (i.e., randomized control trial or quasi-experimental design); see the HomVEE website for standards for study design in estimating program impacts: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/homvee).

Applicability: Generalizability of findings beyond current project (i.e., when findings "fit" into contexts outside the study situation). Ensuring the population being studied represents one or more of the population being served by the program.

Consistency: Consistently following and clearly describing processes and methods, so that someone else could replicate the approach and other studies can confirm what is found.

Neutrality: Producing results that are as objective as possible and acknowledge the bias brought to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the results.

Demonstration grant projects funded by CB are expected to add to the evidence-base of what works in the field of child welfare. In order to determine what works, grantees are expected to devote a substantial amount of resources to the collection of data for evaluation purposes, and the evaluation of the impact of integrated Family-finding/FGDM programs on outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being for children, youth and families being served.

The site-specific evaluation will be designed to provide meaningful feedback to grantees to support improvement throughout the implementation process and to demonstrate potential linkages between project activities and improved outcomes. Grantees will be expected to capture details about their implementation approach, to measure the extent to which the integrated Family-finding/FGDM program is being practiced with fidelity, and to assess the degree to which behaviors, capacities, connections, and/or well-being of participants change, and whether participation in the integrated program results in improved safety and sustained permanency for the children and youth in the target population.

Grant projects will develop knowledge which will help identify where in the service delivery system, with which populations and in which manner the promising practice of integrated Family-finding/FGDM works best. The evaluation design will clearly articulate the approach to test the effectiveness of particular Family-finding and FGDM strategies to determine which work best within the overall program and/or which are most effective with certain families or circumstances.

Given the scarce resources available for child welfare programs and the push to establish cost efficiency measures, programs funded under this FOA are expected to conduct a cost analysis that will provide policymakers with the information they need to make more thoughtful decisions about resource allocation in their communities.

A grantee may choose to partner with an internal or external evaluator for the local evaluation. External evaluators from different types of organizations may be suited to this project, including university professors or university-based teams, independent consultants, or research/consulting firms. The local evaluators, defined as an individual, team, or an organization such as a university or evaluation contractor, must have the staff qualifications and organizational capacity to implement a rigorous evaluation of a project of this type within the project period.

Helpful information on evaluation for program managers may be found in a document titled "Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation", which can be accessed at:
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/other_resrch/pm_guide_eval/index.html

Dissemination

For further information regarding CB expectations of applicants' plans for dissemination, refer to *Section*

IV. 2, The Project Description: Approach, Evaluation, and *Budget and Budget Justification.*

CB expects that information and knowledge generated by these grant projects will be shared with the broad child welfare field, and efforts will be made to integrate project knowledge into policy and practice. Grantees will be expected to disseminate strategically and effectively, so their project information and knowledge is received by key target audiences and used as intended to achieve identified dissemination goals. This will include both individual project dissemination of individual project products and findings and cluster dissemination of cross-cluster products and findings.

Grantees will be expected to work throughout their projects with Federal Project Officers, the CB Training and Technical Assistance Network, and other grantees in the cluster to:

- Finalize individual and cluster-wide dissemination goals and plans;
- Identify and engage with target audiences for dissemination;
- Produce detailed procedures, materials, and other products based on the program evaluation; and
- Develop and disseminate, at appropriate times, summarized/synthesized information about the project.

Collaboration

For further information regarding CB expectations of applicants' plans for collaboration, refer to *Section IV. 2, The Project Description: Approach* and *Evaluation.*

If the grantee lead agency responsible for administering the grant is a non-profit organization, the grantee must demonstrate a strong partnership with the public CW agency(ies) with responsibility for administering the CW program(s) in the targeted geographical area(s). This partnership, as well as those with public, private, community, or faith-based agencies, will be reflected in a project management plan which supports collaboration components and activities, including data sharing, and enables the proposed project to build on any previous accomplishments of the collaboration.

Demonstration Projects

Activities funded under this FOA are demonstration projects. At CB, a demonstration project is one that puts into place and tests new, unique, or distinctive approaches for delivering services to a specific population.

Demonstration projects may test whether a program or service that has proven successful in one location or setting can work in a different context. Demonstration projects may test a theory, idea, or method that reflects a new and different way of thinking about service delivery. Demonstration projects may be designed to address the needs of a very specific group of clients or focus on one service component available to all clients. The scope of these projects may be broad and comprehensive or narrow and targeted to specific populations. A demonstration project must:

- Develop and implement an evidence-informed model with specific components or strategies that are based on theory, research, or evaluation data; or replicate or test the transferability of successfully evaluated program models;
- Determine the effectiveness, costs, and benefits of the model and its components or strategies using a rigorous evaluation approach;
- Disseminate strategically and effectively collaborate with other projects in the grant cluster to establish goals; identify and engage with target audiences; produce detailed procedures, materials, and other products, based on the programs evaluations; and disseminate information about project activities, products and findings; and
- Contribute to the evidence base on strategies, practices, and programs that may be used to guide replication, program improvements, systems change, or testing in other settings.

Working with Other CB Discretionary Grant Projects

CB currently funds approximately 300 discretionary grants projects in over 50 different program areas.

Through their work with a broad spectrum of populations within the child welfare arena, discretionary grantees develop a wealth of knowledge across numerous program areas. Applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize the knowledge being developed by CB discretionary research and demonstration projects, including current Family Connection grant projects, when developing proposals in response to this FOA.

For more information on CB discretionary grant programs, please see:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/index.htm#disc and

http://library.childwelfare.gov/cbgrants/ws/library/docs/cb_grants/GrantHome.

Information on the funded Family Connection grant projects can be found at the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections.

Additional Project Requirements

The applicant's signature on the application constitutes its assurance that it will comply with the requirements stated in *Section IV.2, Additional Assurances and Certifications*.

Use of Funds

Grantees must adhere to the Funding Restrictions as noted in *Section IV.5, Funding Restrictions*.

Non-Supplanting and Augmentation

Grantees may not augment their current federally funded programs from outside sources without specific statutory authority. When Congress makes an appropriation, it establishes an authorized funding level for that program. To permit an agency to operate beyond this level, with funds derived from some other source without specific congressional sanction, would amount to a usurpation of the congressional prerogative. For example, a grantee that is funded under one appropriation may not simply modify their current Federal project or propose to increase their number of participants under a different appropriation.

NOTE: See *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Approach*, for additional instructions for the applicants."

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this FOA, the following alphabetical list of definitions of relevant terms is provided:

Child Well-being: Although the child welfare field has not adopted a uniform definition of child well-being, ACYF conceptualizes overall well-being as encompassing competent and developmentally appropriate functioning across a number of domains. The broad domains include behavioral and emotional functioning, social functioning, cognitive and academic functioning, physical health and development, and mental health. Multiple aspects of functioning may be observed within each of these domains (for example, self regulation skills may be one indicator of behavioral functioning). Further, aspects of competent functioning within a given domain are expected to vary according to the age or developmental status of the child or youth. Child well-being across these domains may be influenced by contextual factors both external and internal to the child, including environmental supports and personal characteristics such as temperament and abilities. These contextual factors (intermediate outcomes) may function as either risk or protective factors for the child.

Family: Biological or adoptive parents, extended family members and other relatives, as well as friends, neighbors and others who may not be related by blood or marriage, but who play an important, positive role in the life of the child/youth and are considered to be part of the family.

Family-centered Practice: Service approaches designed to:

- Strengthen and empower families to protect and nurture their children; safely preserve family relationships and connections, when appropriate; recognize the strong influence social systems have on individual behavior; enhance family autonomy;

- Respect the rights, values, and cultures of families;
- Focus on the entire family rather than selected individuals within a family; and
- Promote protective factors and reduce risk factors for child maltreatment at the individual, family, community, and societal levels.

Family-finding: Intensive use of technology and other means to identify, locate, and contact family members; assess their suitability as potential permanency options for the child or youth, and engage them with the child or youth in a process that can lead to a permanency placement or ongoing and supportive relationship.

Family Group Decision-making (FGDM): An intervention approach in which family members and relevant service providers are brought together in a meeting or series of meetings to make decisions to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of their children and to develop a plan for services. FGDM refers to one of the various models of this approach. Other models or terms, which are acceptable for projects funded under this FOA, include: Family Team Meetings, Family Group Conferencing, Family Unity Meetings, Family Team Conferences, Family Group Conferences, and Team Decision-Making.

Fictive Kin: Persons not related by blood or marriage but who have a strong, positive emotional tie with the child/youth, and play a positive role in the life of the child/youth, such as godparents, neighbors, family friends, school staff, coaches or a member of the tribe.

Kin: Extended family members and other relatives of the child/youth by blood or marriage, as well as fictive kin.

Permanency: A nurturing relationship between a child or youth and a caretaking adult, which builds emotional ties that are sufficient to maintain the continuity of the relationship throughout the child's life. Permanency options encompass a range of living arrangements through reunification with biological family, adoption, long-term placement with a relative, or another legal plan such as guardianship. Family members also support permanency in ways other than caregiver roles, by providing the child/youth with emotional connections that support their well-being.

Protective Factors: Any factors that "act to modify risk, either by directly reducing a disorder or dysfunction or by moderating the relationship among risk factors and problems or disorders, often called buffering effects'" (Lou et al. 2008, 96; Fraser, Richman, and Galinsky 1999).

Relative: A person, other than the child's biological parent, who is related to the child through blood, marriage/civil union/domestic partnership, or adoption (including a step-parent), or a person who is connected to a child or the child's parent by an established positive psychological or emotional relationship.

Risk Factors: Attributes commonly associated with maltreatment. Children in families and environments where these factors exist have a higher probability of experiencing maltreatment.

REFERENCES

Family Finding

Fraser, MW; Richman, JM; Galinksy, MJ (1999). Risk, protection and resilience: Toward a conceptual framework for social work practice. Social work Research. 23(3): 131-143.

James Bell Associates, Inc. (2011, December). Family Connection Discretionary Grants 2009-funded grantees year 2 cross-site evaluation report: Intensive Family-finding Program Area Report. Arlington, VA: Author.

Lou, C; Anthony, EK; Stone, S; Vu, CM; Austin, MJ (2008). Assessing child and youth well-being: Implications for child welfare practice. Journal of Evidence-based Social Work. 5(1/2): 91-133.

Six Steps to Find a Family: A Practice Guide to Family Search and Engagement (FSE) Developed by the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning and the California Permanency for Youth Project.

Additional resources on family finding are available through the CB Clearinghouse, the Child Welfare Information Gateway:

- To search the Gateway website, go to http://www.childwelfare.gov/ and enter key words "family finding" in the website "Search" field at the upper right hand corner of the home page;
- To search the Gateway library, go to Gateway Library Search at http://library.childwelfare.gov/cwig/ws/library/docs/gateway/SimpleSearchForm and enter key words "family finding" in the "Search:" field.

FGDM

Carter, L. S. (2003). Family Team Conferences in Domestic Violence Cases, Guidelines for Practice. Family Violence Prevention Fund and Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group. Produced by Family Violence Prevention Fund, San Francisco, CA.

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Pennell, J., Edwards, M., and Burford, G. (2010). Expedited family group engagement and child permanency. Children and Youth Services Review 32, (1012-1019).

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Estimated Total Funding:	$2,340,006
Expected Number of Awards:	5
Award Ceiling:	$500,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	$400,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	$500,000 Per Budget Period

Length of Project Periods:

36-month project with three 12-month budget periods

Additional Information on Awards:
Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of Federal funds.

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the*Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors.*

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-Federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount will result in the disallowance of Federal funds.

Continuation grant applications will be considered on a non-competitive basis and are subject to the satisfactory progress of the grantee, availability of funds, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Federal Government. Grants will be awarded for one-year budget periods throughout the project.

Please see *Section IV.5 Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of grant funds awarded under this announcement.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Section 427(a) of the Social Security Act identifies eligible applicants as "State, local, or tribal child welfare agencies, and private nonprofit organizations that have experience in working with foster children or children in kinship care arrangements." If the applicant is a private organization, documentation of support from the relevant local or State Child Welfare agency and a description of how the organization plans to coordinate its services and activities with those offered by the relevant local or State Child Welfare agency is required.

Individuals, foreign entities, and sole proprietorship organizations are not eligible to compete for, or receive, awards under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement.

See "Legal Status of Applicant Entity" in *Section IV.2* for documentation required to support eligibility.

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: Yes

Grantees are required to meet a non-Federal share of the project cost, in accordance with **Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub.L. 110-351); Social Security Act section 427(d) & (e); 42 U.S.C. § 627(d) & (e)**

Grantees must provide at least 25 percent of the total approved cost of the project for the first 2 years of the project period, and 50 percent of the total approved cost of the project in the third year of the project period. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF (Federal) share and the non-Federal share. The non-Federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. For example, in the first year of the project period, in order to meet the match requirements, a project requesting $550,000.00 in ACF (Federal) funds must provide a non-Federal share of the approved total project cost of at least $183,333.00, which is 25 percent of total approved project cost of $733,333.00. No more than 50 percent of the non-Federal share may be in-kind. Grantees will be held accountable for commitments of non-Federal resources even if they exceed the amount of the required match. Failure to provide the required amount will result in the disallowance of Federal funds. A lack of supporting documentation at the time of application submission will not exclude the application from competitive review.

Cost-sharing will not be used as a preference and/or evaluation criterion in the review of applications.

Under this FOA, applicants are required to fully identify and document in the grant application the specific costs or contributions proposed to meet a matching or cost sharing requirement, the source of the funding or contribution, and how the valuation was determined.

Grant recipients will be required to meet the matching requirement on an annual basis. In keeping with good business practices, while not required, a recipient should provide required matching in proportion to its expenditure of the Federal share of the total project costs.

If an applicant proposes cost sharing at a level in excess of a cost sharing requirement, and this proposed cost sharing is accepted as part of the approved budget and project, it becomes an award requirement enforceable through the Notice of Award (NOA). Therefore the excess is included in the amount of the total approved budget, and the percentage for the non-federal share in block 17a of the NOA will adjust accordingly.

Matching requirements (including in-kind contributions) of less than $200,000 (up to $199,999) are waived under grants made to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (other than those consolidated under other provisions of 48 U.S.C. 1469) pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a(d). This waiver applies whether the matching required under the grant equals or exceeds $200,000.

III.3. Other

DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Requirements

DUNS Number Requirement

Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number is the nine-digit, or thirteen-digit (DUNS + 4), number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities.

All applicants and subrecipients must have a DUNS number at the time of application in order to be considered for a grant or cooperative agreement. A DUNS number is required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the Government-wide electronic portal, www.Grants.gov. A DUNS number is required for every application for a new award or renewal/continuation of an award, including applications or plans under formula, entitlement, and block grant programs. A DUNS number may be acquired at no cost online at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. To acquire a DUNS number by phone, contact the D&B Government Customer Response Center:

U.S. and U.S Virgin Islands: 1-866-705-5711
Alaska and Puerto Rico: 1-800-234-3867 (Select Option 2, then Option 1)
Monday - Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., CST

The process to request a D-U-N-S Number by telephone will take between 5 and 10 minutes.

Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Requirement

Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is the Federal registrant database and repository into which an entity must provide information required for the conduct of business as a recipient. CCR, managed by the General Services Administration, collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of agency financial assistance missions.

Effective October 1, 2011, HHS required all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, Federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the CCR prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active CCR registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Additionally, all first-tier subaward recipients (i.e., direct subrecipient) must have a DUNS number at the time the subaward is made

CCR registration may be made online at www.ccr.gov or by phone at 1-866-606-8220. CCR registration must be updated annually. CCR registration must be active and maintained with current information at all times during which an organization has an active award or an application under consideration.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to register at the CCR well in advance of the application due date.

APPLICATION DISQUALIFICATION FACTORS

Applications from individuals, foreign entities, or sole proprietorship organizations will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount exceeding the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in *Section II. Award Information,* will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Application Submission Disqualifications

Beginning January 1, 2012, ACF requires electronic submission of applications at www.Grants.gov. Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow these applicants to submit an application in paper format. Information on requesting an exemption from electronic application submission is found in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options.*

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times.* Electronic applications submitted to www.Grants.gov after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Please Note: Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged. Applications that fail the Grants.gov validation check are not transmitted to ACF though they may have been submitted on time.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time-stamp email. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times.* Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper applications received from applicants that have not requested an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission.*

Applications that are disqualified under any of these circumstances will receive written notification by letter or by email.

Read and observe the formatting instructions for application submissions in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

Section IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

CB Operations Center, c/o Lux Consulting Group

8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Electronic Application Submission:
The electronic application submission package is available at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:
For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at the ACF Funding Opportunities Forms webpage at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html. See *Section IV.2.Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):
Available at the Grants.gov Forms Repository website and at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms.

Federal Relay Service:
Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at

1-800-877-8339 (**TTY** - Text Telephone or **ASCII** - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

FORMATTING ACF APPLICATIONS

For All ACF Applications:

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)
The individual(s), named by the applicant/recipient organization, who is authorized to act for the applicant/recipient and to assume the obligations imposed by the Federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant applications or awards.

Each applicant must designate an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). An AOR is named by the applicant, and is authorized to act for the applicant, to assume the obligations imposed by the Federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to the grant application or awards.

AOR Authorization is part of the registration process at www.Grants.gov where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR).

Point of Contact
In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist
Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Follow the instructions provided in the formatting section to ensure that your application can be printed efficiently and consistently for the competitive review.

Observe page limitations.
All applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section. Be sure to print all attachments (components) on paper and count the number of pages before submission. Keep the printed copy as a hard copy of your application for your files.

Application Package Components
Applications must be divided into the sections listed in the table. (The order in which components are submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov or included in a paper application may not be the same as listed in the table.) Page limitations apply to the Project Description document and the Appendices and the following:

- The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.
- The Budget Justification should be no more than 10 single-spaced pages and will not count against page limitations.

Application Package Components	Page Limitations
Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms	No page limitations.
Required Certifications and Assurances	No page limitations.
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.
Project Description	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.
Budget Justification	No more than 10 single-spaced pages and will not count against page limitations.
Proof of Legal Status/Proof of Non-Profit Status	No page limitations.
Appendices	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED VIA www.Grants.gov:

Notice: The Administration for Children and Families has implemented required electronic application submission via *www.Grants.gov*. *Applicants are now required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See Section IV.2. Application Submission Options.*

Electronic applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile. Only applications, which pass the Grants.gov validation check, will be acknowledged.

Please read this section carefully before beginning application submission. It is mandatory to follow the instructions provided in this section to ensure that your application can be printed efficiently and consistently for review.

Copies Required
Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

NOTE: Applications submitted via www.Grants.gov will undergo a validation check. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* and *Section IV.3. Submission Due Dates and Times, Explanation of Due Dates*. The validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. Applications that fail the www.Grants.gov validation check will not be transmitted to ACF. If the application fails the validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will be disqualified.

Signatures
Follow the AOR Authorization and E-Biz POC instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

Required OMB-Approved and Standard Forms (SFs)
www.Grants.gov provides its own protocols for the submission of OMB-approved and Standard Forms (SFs) such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL, Project/Performance Site Location form. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for required OMB-approved Standard Forms and required assurances and certifications.

Application Package Components
Applications must be divided into the sections listed in the table. **It is important that each component is submitted in a separate electronic file.** Page limitations apply to the Project Description document and the Appendices and the following:

- The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.
- The Budget Justification should be no more than 10 single-spaced pages.

Application Package Components	**Page Limitations**
Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms	No page limitations.
Required Certifications and Assurances	No page limitations.
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.
Project Description	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.
Budget Justification	No more than 10 single-spaced pages and will not count against page limitations.
Proof of Legal Status/Proof of Non-Profit Status	No page limitations.
Appendices	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.

The required content of the Project Description and any Appendices, and their page limits, are listed later in this section.

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs), all application materials must be formatted so that they will print out onto 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. **All pages of the application component, i.e., Project Description, Budget Justification, Appendices, must be sequentially numbered.** Applicants should print all attachments on paper and count the number of pages before submitting the application. Applicants should keep a hard copy of the submitted application package for their files. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

All elements of the application submission, with the exception of the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, the Budget Justification, required Assurances and Certifications, and proof of legal status/non-profit status, must be in double-spaced format in 12-point font. The Project Summary/Abstract is required to be one single-spaced page in 12-point font. The Budget Justification may be single-spaced page in 12-point font and should be no more than 10 pages. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

Applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section:

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.Grants.gov.
Limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (example: &,-,*,%,/,#) including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks, within application form fields, and file attachment names. An underscore (_) may be used to separate a file name.

Use only file formats supported by ACF.
It is critical that applicants only submit application components using the supported file formats listed here. Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and

will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

ACF supports the following file formats:

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

Do not encrypt or password protect the electronic application files!
If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they have been encrypted or are password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order to submit an application in paper format. See *Section IV.2.Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application Submission Options*.

Application Package Components	**Page Limitations**
Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms	No page limitations.
Required Certifications and Assurances	No page limitations.
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.
Project Description	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.
Budget Justification	No more than 10 single-spaced pages and will not count against page limitations.
Proof of Legal Status/Proof of Non-Profit Status	No page limitations.
Appendices	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.

Copies Required
Applicants must provide one original and two copies of all application materials when submitting an application in paper format.

Signatures
An original signature of the AOR is required only on the original copy of paper application submissions. A point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified on the SF-424 at item 8f. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR.

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

Applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section.

All application materials must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. **All pages of the paper application submission must be sequentially numbered.** Application materials must be printed on one side only of each page so that they may be easily reproduced. If two-sided pages are submitted, only the "front" page will be used.

All elements of the application submission, with the exception of the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, the Budget Justification, required Assurances and Certifications, and proof of legal status/non-profit status, must be in double-spaced format in 12-point font. The Project Summary/Abstract is required to be one single-spaced page in 12-point font. The Budget Justification may be single-spaced, in 12-point font, and should be no more than 10 pages. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

All copies of a mailed or hand-delivered paper application must be submitted in a single package. A separate package must be submitted for application under a single funding opportunity. The package must be clearly labeled for the specific funding opportunity it is addressing.

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate subsections of the application, including supporting documentation. Use a clip (not a staple) to securely bind the application together. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the Federal government for review. Application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes.

Instructions on the order of assembly for paper application submissions are available under this formatting section.

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications
See *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper application submissions.

Page Limitations for Paper Format Application Submissions
Page limitations do not include OMB-approved Standard Forms (SFs), the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, proof of legal status/non-profit status, required Assurances and Certifications, and the Budget Justification, which should be no more than 10 single-spaced pages.

If an application exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description or the double-spaced page limitation cited for the Appendices, the extra pages will be removed and will not be reviewed. In addition, if an application narrative is single-spaced and/or one-and-a-half spaced (in whole or in part) the total number of these lines will be doubled. This adjustment may result in an increased total number of pages, which will be removed so that the application conforms to the cited double-spaced page limitation.

The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page with 12-point font. Any pages over the one-page limit will be removed.

Page Limitations and Content of The Project Description and Appendices for All Application Formats:

Additional Instructions for Electronic and Paper Applications Under this FOA

Organizing the Application. *Applicants must follow the general instructions above in the section labeled Application Package Components. In addition, applicants must adhere to the following instructions for organizing the Project Description and Appendices sections of the Application Package under this FOA. Note that the page limit for the Budget Justification section is expanded under this FOA.*

Organizing the Project Description and Appendices. *Applicants must address each of the application requirements included in Section IV.2. Applicants must organize their Project Description and Appendices in the following sequence:*

The ***Project Description*** *must include the following items in this order:*

1. *Table of Contents*
2. *Objectives and Need for Assistance*
3. *Approach*
4. *Evaluation*
5. *Organizational Capacity*

The ***Appendices*** *must include the following items in this order:*

1. *Logic Model*
2. *Third-Party Agreements*
3. *Staff and Position Data*
4. *Resumes*
5. *Organizational Charts*
6. *Indirect Cost Rate Letter (if applicable)*

Page limits. *The Project Description and Appendices combined are limited to a total of 100 pages. Under this FOA, the Budget Justification may be expanded to 20 pages.*

Formatting. *Charts, budget tables, Third-Party Agreements, staff and position data, supplemental letters, and documents, applicants must be in 10-point font or larger and may be single spaced.*

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at ACF Funding Opportunities Forms or at the Grants.gov Forms Repository unless specified otherwise.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance **and** **SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)**	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.

SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs **and** **SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs**	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.
Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants	**Submission is voluntary.** Submission may be made with the application by the application due date listed in the *Overview* and *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. Or, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Non-profit private organizations (not including private universities) are encouraged to submit the survey with their applications. Submission of the survey is voluntary. Applicants applying electronically may submit the survey along with the application as part of an appendix or as a separate document. Hard copy submissions should include the survey in a separate envelope.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due prior at the time of application. It may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Applicants must furnish an executed copy of the Certification Regarding Lobbying prior to award.
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of this Certification is required for all applications.

The applicant's signature on the application constitutes its assurance that it will comply with the following requirements:

- *Have the project fully functioning within 90 days following the notification of the award;*
- *Participate in the Family Connection cross-site evaluation and technical assistance contract that relates to this FOA;*
- *Submit all performance indicator data, program, evaluation, and financial reports in a timely manner (see* Section VI.3 Reporting*), in the recommended formats (to be provided). CB prefers and will accept the interim and final reports and attachments on disk or electronically using a standard word processing program; however, projects are required to provide the original and two copies of performance progress and final reports;*
- *Submit an original and two copies of the final program/evaluation report and any program products to CB within 90 days of project end date;*
- *Acknowledge that CB reserves the right to secure and distribute grantee products and materials, including copies of journal articles written by grantees about their grant projects;*
- *Archive data from the program evaluation with the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect within 90 days of the termination of Federal funding for the project. The applicant's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and research participants must be made aware that the data from the project will be archived and made available to other researchers after personal identifiers have been removed. Archiving will involve providing individual respondent data in electronic form and the accompanying documentation, including the codebook, the final report, and copies of the research instruments, as appropriate. A manual describing the guidelines of the Archive, Depositing Data with the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect: A Handbook for Investigators, is available from the Archive directly at the Family Life Development Center, MVR Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853 (phone: (607) 255-7799); from the Archive web site at:* http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu*; or from the Child Welfare Information Gateway web site at:* http://childwelfare.gov; and
- *Include the following notice with all grantee materials, products, publications, news releases, etc.:*

  Funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, Grant #______. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the funders, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This information is in the public domain. Readers are encouraged to copy and share it, but please credit ___________.

Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-Federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information.If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete. It should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing the project description, information that is responsive to each of the requested evaluation criteria must be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

General Expectations and Instructions

ACF is particularly interested in specific project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description

Introduction

Applicants that are required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria. The topics listed in this section provide a broad overview of what the project description should include while the Criteria in *Section V.1.* identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers.

Project Summary/Abstract

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced and limited to one page in length.

Objectives And Need For Assistance

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance, including the nature and scope of the problem, must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated. Supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies or needs assessments should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the funding opportunity announcement.

Outcomes Expected

Identify the outcomes to be derived from the project.

NOTE:

By successfully implementing their proposed projects, grantees under this FOA will demonstrate the impact of integrated programs of intensive Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings in supporting connections with family members for the target population of children/youth, and in engaging family members in building their capacity to meet the needs of children/youth in their care. The evaluation must be designed to determine to what degree project activities strengthen protective factors and address the impact of trauma on child well-being and whether integrated projects of this type are an effective means to promote social and emotional well-being, and support healthy, positive functioning in children, youth, and families served.

Applicants must propose and justify a feasible plan to produce, evaluate and disseminate information on each of the child and family-level outcomes listed below.

- ***Permanency Outcomes*** *which show the extent that participation of families in integrated Family-finding/FGDM programs supports increased permanency and stability for children and youth in their living situations, reducing the time that they are involved with the CW system, and meeting their immediate and long-term needs for safety, permanency, and well-being within their family system; and*
- ***Well-being Outcomes*** *in the following areas that indicate improvement after participation in the integrated, Family-finding/FGDM program:*
    - *Domains of child well-being, including cognitive functioning, behavioral/emotional functioning, physical health and development, social functioning and mental health; and*
    - *Indicators of caregiver well-being, including concrete family needs, social support, parental stress, and physical and mental health.*

In addition, applicants must address ***systems-level outcomes*** *to show to what degree the integration of Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings contributed to improved outcomes for children and families in the target population.*

Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than other approaches. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the outcomes to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

NOTE:

The applicant must present a comprehensive project plan, addressing integrated activities of the proposed Combination Family-finding/FGDM project, as well as activities specifically related to the Family-finding and FGDM components of the project. The plan must be based on a delineated theory of change, which describes why particular intervention methods were selected and provides a justification for proposed program activities (Fraser, Richman, Galinsky & Day 2009). It must summarize the target population(s), the project initiatives and associated interventions, the expected short-term and long-term outcomes of the initiative and interventions, and explain how and why they are expected to address the identified needs of the target population(s). It must include descriptions of any unusual features of the project, such as design or technological innovations; and the details of how these will be accomplished. The applicant must identify reasonable timeframes for implementation and provide a detailed timeline chart and narrative, including major milestones, target dates, and a description of factors that could speed or hinder the implementation and how these would be managed.

The applicant must describe how the proposed plan will either replicate effective, existing Family-finding and FGDM models, or develop evidence-informed models for these practice areas, which are appropriate to meet the purpose and requirements of grant projects under this FOA.

The applicant must clearly document the organizational capacity of the lead agency and/or collaborating partners to support effective planning and implementation of the proposed project, within the 36-month project period. The application must include:

- *A list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution;*
- *Third-Party Agreements or other assurances documenting the understanding of roles and responsibilities in the project and the commitment to carry these out by public CW agencies and other key public or private agencies and organizations, including domestic violence programs, substance abuse treatment, and mental health services; and*
- *If the lead applicant is a private, non-profit organization, the application is required to include:*
    - *Documentation of its partnership on the proposed project with the relevant local or State CW agency, including commitment of the CW agency to carry out identified roles and responsibilities in the project; and*
    - *Description of how the applicant organization plans to coordinate its services and activities with those offered by the relevant local or State CW agency.*

The applicant's plan must clearly identify the specific target population(s) to be addressed, and delineate distinct strategies and considerations, including anticipated challenges, which reflect the characteristics and demographics of these, in order to identify, engage and serve them effectively in the proposed project.

- *Applications must include documentation and discussion of a current assessment of the needs of the target population of children, youth and family members in the geographic area to be served by the grant project; and*
- *Applications must provide data from State and local CW agencies and other sources, as appropriate, to identify the size, characteristics, and needs of the target population(s), including anticipated numbers to be served, and to show how those have informed the development of the*

proposed project.

- *If the applicant proposes to target a specific subpopulation of children and families, e.g. tribal families or families of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) youth, the application must provide justification for this focus, along with a description of specific needs, challenges and considerations for the subpopulation, including cultural and social norms that influence family dynamics, family relationships, and family functioning.*

The applicant's plan must describe the current state of the service delivery system for the target population(s), including the degree to which these children and families can benefit from a continuum of services, and the extent to which Family-finding and FGDM activities are integrated into the existing system of services.

The plan must specify how the proposed project will do the following:

- *Implement integrated components of Family-finding/FGDM through a family-centered, strengths-oriented, culturally-based, and trauma-informed approach, which is designed to meet the needs of the target population;*
- *Expedite safety, permanency, and well-being for the target population of children and youth by expanding and building on the natural network of supports within the extended family to strengthen protective factors, reduce risk factors, and promote social and emotional well-being;*
- *Identify and address systemic challenges in developing and implementing an integrated Family-finding/FGDM program for the target population, including necessary supports for participating agency staff to address training and workload issues;*
- *Effectively engage and support found family members, and involve them and children or youth, if appropriate, in Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings;*
- *Maintain the involvement of family members, community organization/partners and other stakeholders on an ongoing basis in the planning and implementation of the integrated program; and*
- *Engage in sustainability planning to incorporate integrated program activities in CW agency policies and practice, and otherwise sustain improved Family-finding/FGDM practice at the conclusion of Federal funding.*

Applicants must provide a plan to support family members in meeting the well-being needs of the children or youth, including a detailed approach to facilitate:

- *Screening and assessment of children/youth in the domains of child well-being, including intellectual functioning/academic ability, physical development, social and emotional functioning;*
- *Access to appropriate, evidence-based services to address trauma symptoms, behavioral problems and relational concerns for children and youth; and*
- *Access to parenting training, therapy programs and relational supports for relative caregivers.*

In addition the plan must identify challenges and barriers for relatives and family members in creating and sustaining an optimum family living arrangement for the child/youth, with the greatest degree of permanency possible. The plan must present strategies to assist them to overcome these, including facilitating access to concrete supports and needed ancillary services.

Applicants must address the ***Family-finding component*** *of the integrated project by identifying the Family-finding model to be used, justifying the appropriateness of this model for the proposed project, and defining and justifying the following:*

- *The point at which the proposed Family-finding efforts would begin;*
- *The number of relatives who would be contacted for each child or youth in or entering care;*
- *The definition of "biological family members", according to State statutes as appropriate, e.g., the level of certainty that is expected in cases where paternity is not obvious/has not been legally established;*
- *The plan for complying with State statutes regarding placement of children with relatives;*

- *The plan for serving children of all ages, including youth;*
- *How family relationships would be re-established, including the assessment processes which would be utilized in exploring the potential resource of identified relatives; the strategies to be utilized for arranging a meeting/series of meetings, and for providing skilled on-going support to ensure strong relationships; and the process for deciding whether to seek to establish as many relationships as possible or just a few good ones;*
- *How existing safety issues, including domestic violence and child maltreatment, would be identified and addressed;*
- *The plan for establishing a permanent family placement, including adoption, open adoption and guardianship; kinship care and kin foster care or other types of placement which would be acceptable options; and strategies to address permanent relationships that have no legal standing, e.g., mentor, big brother/sister, pen pal; and*
- *The plan for sustaining a permanent placement via needed supports for the family to support ongoing safety, permanency and well-being of the child/youth.*

Applicants must address the ***FGDM component*** *of the integrated project by identifying and describing the FGDM model to be used, justifying the appropriateness of this model for the proposed project, and defining and justifying the following:*

- *The plan to ensure that FGDM is a process and way of practice, rather than disconnected meetings; and to develop or enhance a logical continuum for meetings in systems where multiple models of FGDM exist;*
- *The approach to effectively engage and involve family members, including fathers and paternal relatives and children or youth, if appropriate, in FGDM meetings and in the planning and development of service plans; identify and address barriers and obstacles to the involvement of family members; address considerations regarding how to involve children in an age- and developmentally-appropriate manner, and how meetings with youth might differ from meetings with younger children;*
- *The plan to ensure that the FGDM process will identify and address needs and services related to child well-being and family protective factors; will access expertise in program areas including mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence to address service planning issues in these areas that may affect the safety, permanency and well-being of the child/youth;*
- *The plan to develop or enhance strong collaboration with and commitment from various community organizations, including the building of partnerships with community and faith-based organizations, in order to a) offer an array of services that meet the family's needs; b) identify space for FGDM meetings in agencies in close proximity to where family members reside; and c)ensure that collaborating agencies will maintain and respect confidentiality during the planning, preparation, and implementation of meetings.*
- *The criteria for referring a case to FGDM, while keeping in mind the unique needs and circumstances of the target population and community; and*
- *The plan to secure the safety of participants during FGDM meetings, especially in the context of domestic violence, including conducting a thorough safety and risk assessment prior to a meeting; using methods to ensure safety of all participants during the meeting.*

Use of Funds

Applicants must present documentation of fiscal control and accounting procedures to ensure proper disbursement and accounting of Federal funds. Applicants must describe their commitment to use grant funds for allowable activities only, documenting that funds will only be used for the activities and purposes identified in the FOA. Refer to Section IV.5., Funding Restrictions *for further information.*

Non-Supplanting and Augmentation

Applicants that are current recipients of Federal financial assistance must demonstrate the extent to which *their proposal meets the unique goals and objectives of this FOA. Applicants may not submit application plans to augment their current federally funded programs. When Congress makes an appropriation, it establishes an authorized funding level for that program. To permit an agency to operate beyond this level, with funds derived from some other source without specific congressional sanction, would amount to a usurpation of the congressional prerogative. For example, a grantee that is funded under one appropriation may not simply modify their current Federal project or propose to increase their number of participants under a different appropriation. Applicants need to provide sufficient information as to how program activities are not augmenting existing services*

Evaluation

Provide a narrative addressing how the conduct of the project and its results will be evaluated. In addressing the evaluation of results, state what measures will be used to determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project. Discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved. With respect to the conduct of the project, define the procedures to be employed to determine whether the project is being conducted in a manner consistent with the work plan presented and discuss the impact of the project's various activities that address the project's effectiveness.

NOTE:

The applicant must propose a rigorous evaluation design, which is appropriate to the population, proposed intervention, and potential comparison groups, and is realistic and feasible within the 36-month project period. The applicant's plan must include a detailed description of both process and outcomes evaluation components:

- *The process evaluation must assess the implementation of the integrated project, as well as the linkages between the collaborative partners that will help ensure that identified needs of children, youth and families are met; and*
- *The outcomes component must use a sufficiently rigorous approach to examine how the approaches used in this demonstration project affect key outcomes of interest, including permanency indicators and child and family well-being indicators. If not utilizing a randomized control approach, the applicant must provide an adequate description and justification that the proposed evaluation design is the most rigorous design possible for addressing the questions of interest, and evidence of the equivalence to the intervention group of any comparison groups that will be employed. The preliminary outcome evaluation design must be sufficiently rigorous to provide credible evidence that the effects on key outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being, including relevant child well-being outcomes, can be attributed to the integrated Family-finding/FGDM program.*

The applicant's outcomes evaluation must be designed to show the extent to which the Combination Family-finding/FGDM Project results in:

- *Increased numbers of permanent placements of the target population of children and youth with relatives/kin;*
- *Decreased rate of entry/re-entry into foster care of children/youth in the target population;*
- *Increased engagement of relatives in developing and implementing plans that improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and youth in the target population;*
- *Increased engagement of children and youth, as appropriate, in identifying family members, participating in FGDM meetings, and making decisions about placement and developing relationships with family members;*
- *Increased ability of family members to promote social and emotional well-being and facilitate and sustain safe, stable placements for the children/youth in their care; and*
- *Increased family member knowledge/capacity to meet the needs of the child/youth.*

For the purpose of informing the local evaluation, applicants must propose plans to capture data, including, but not limited to:

- *Demographic and characteristic information on the target population of children/youth and family members;*
- *Service utilization, e.g., the types of legal, health and financial referrals and services that children and found family members received as a result of participation in service planning that was facilitated by FGDM meetings, including client data and numbers of referrals and completed services;*
- *Numbers of placements with relatives/kin resulting from project interventions;*
- *Length of time to permanent placement with found relatives/kin for children and youth served by the project;*
- *Placement stability of children and youth who received project services;*
- *Child welfare outcome data relating to reports of abuse and neglect and foster care episodes for the target population; and*
- *Numbers and types of organizational activities to support integration of Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings for the target population, such as active participation by partners in planning, implementation and evaluation activities, co-location of services, joint training, and shared communication/dissemination mechanisms.*

Applicants must identify and justify:

- *Inclusion of appropriate evaluation measures;*
- *Relevant domains of child well-being to be addressed, including behavioral and emotional functioning, social functioning, cognitive and academic functioning, and physical health and development; and caregiver attributes, behaviors and health/mental health status. (A solid conceptualization of how applicants intend to measure child and caregiver well-being, as well as changes in relevant protective factors associated with the well-being domains, is essential.); and*
- *Means to provide meaningful feedback to grantees to support improvement throughout the implementation process.*

The evaluation design must include:

- *Identification of protective factors and well-being outcomes for children and families, and explanation of how these will be examined; and*
- *Identification of systemic level changes related to integrated Family-finding/FGDM programs, and explanation of how these will be examined.*

The applicant's evaluation must address key elements of Family-finding program implementation and FGDM program implementation to determine the effectiveness of each practice with the target population. In addition, applicants are encouraged to design evaluations to identify and address:

- *Unique factors in finding and engaging families for children/youth of various ages, with various special needs or disabilities, or with various racial/ethnic backgrounds;*
- *Unique factors in finding and engaging non-custodial fathers and paternal family members and non-custodial mothers and maternal family members;*
- *Certain children/circumstances for which family-finding or FGDM is particularly recommended or for which they are not possible, recommended, helpful or safe; and*
- *How staffing models for Family-finding programs, as well as those for FGDM programs, compare in effectiveness in terms of use of varying staffing strategies, e.g., use of case workers to find family members within existing caseloads, as opposed to a dedicated in-house, family-finding units; use of dedicated, non-caseload carrying FGDM facilitators, as opposed to caseworkers assuming facilitation duties in addition to regular duties; contracting out for services; use of student interns, volunteers, etc.*

Applicants must document the staff qualifications and organizational capacity of the local evaluator(s) to implement a rigorous evaluation of a project of this type within the project period, including documentation of experience and expertise related to the following:

- *Understanding of the State and/or local level CW and partner agencies that will be working together to support implementation of the grant project. Local evaluators must demonstrate experience conducting systems-level research and an understanding of how to measure systems change;*
- *Experience conducting research on program fidelity, implementation, and child and family outcomes, including the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative information and data;*
- *Experience working closely with program staff to develop and monitor the data needed, plan and carry out evaluation activities, incorporate feedback into the program, and identify and disseminate findings;*
- *Expertise in evaluation design and methods. Local evaluators must have experience designing and conducting longitudinal research that is aligned with research questions and a program logic model/theory of change. Other important experiences include selecting measures, using existing data systems as a source of evaluation information, and collecting data that are reliable and valid;*
- *Skills in user-friendly, accessible reporting and communication with partners and stakeholders. The local evaluator must be able to communicate with and share information with varied audiences, including program staff, administrators, government agency staff members, and policy makers; and*
- *Ability and willingness to collaborate and coordinate with the Family Connection cross-site evaluation data collection efforts. Local evaluators will work closely with program staff at the local sites to ensure that data needed for the national cross-site evaluation is collected and submitted as required. Local evaluators will serve as a liaison between the grantee and the cross-site evaluation team to ensure timely and accurate data reporting.*

The applicant must include in the evaluation plan a description of how they will:

- *Obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from one or if needed, multiple agencies, including defining the process to be followed and a potential timeline;*
- *Incorporate fidelity measurement into program services as part of the process evaluation; and*
- *Incorporate ongoing evaluation findings into the operation of the program to improve or enhance its effectiveness.*

Applicants must present a plan to conduct a cost analysis. Given the scarce resources available for CW programs and the push to establish cost efficiency measures, programs funded under this FOA are expected to conduct a cost analysis that will provide State, local and tribal policy makers with the information they need to make more thoughtful decisions about resource allocation in their communities. Factors to be considered in this analysis may include, but are not limited to, staff caseloads, supervisor to worker ratios, cost per family or unit of service, training, and consultation costs.

Applicants must document their willingness and ability to provide data relevant to their program and local evaluation at specified points in time, incorporate outcome instruments appropriate to their federally-funded service model, and participate in cross-site evaluation training and technical assistance activities, as part of the Family Connection cross-site evaluation under this FOA.

Applicants must present plans for evaluating the strategic dissemination of project products and findings to determine whether this was effective in meeting dissemination goals related to project implementation and sustainability, and knowledge transfer in their role as demonstration projects.

Geographic Location

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project. Maps or other graphic aids may be attached.

Legal Status of Applicant Entity

Applicants must provide the following documentation of their legal status:

Proof of Non-Profit Status

Non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of 501(c)(3) non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exemption certificate.

Logic Model

Applicants are expected to use a model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a tool that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the linkages among program elements. While there are many versions of the logic model, they generally summarize the logical connections among the needs that are the focus of the project, project goals and objectives, the target population, project inputs (resources), the proposed activities/processes/outputs directed toward the target population, the expected short- and long-term outcomes the initiative is designed to achieve, and the evaluation plan for measuring the extent to which proposed processes and outcomes actually occur.

Project Sustainability Plan

Provide a plan for sustainability that details how the proposed project approach will create project self-sufficiency and help to ensure that the impact of the project will continue after Federal assistance has ended. The applicant may include information on plans to secure additional financial resources.

Organizational Capacity

- Organizational charts
- Contact persons and telephone numbers
- Documentation of experience in the program area
- Any other pertinent information the applicant deems relevant.

Provide a biographical sketch or resume for each key person appointed. Resumes should be no more than two pages in length. Job descriptions for each vacant key position should be included as well. As new key staff are appointed, biographical sketches or resumes will also be required.

Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

Dissemination Plan

Provide a plan for distributing reports and other project outputs to colleagues and to the public. Applicants must provide a description of the method, volume, and timing of distribution.

Third-Party Agreements

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is input on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C. The budget justification is a line-item detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance).

Project budget Standard Forms and the budget justification will not count toward page limitations; however, the justification should be no more than 10 single-spaced pages with fonts of no less than 12-points.

Special Note: *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Pub.L. 112-74), enacted December 23, 2011, limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the Federal Executive Pay scale is $179,700 (http://www.opm.gov/oca/12tables/html/ex.asp). This amount reflects an individual's base salary* ***exclusive*** *of fringe and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties to the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards/subcontracts under a ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a narrative budget justification for each year of the proposed project. The narrative budget justification should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

NOTE:

Applicants must provide a detailed budget for each year of the proposed project, and a narrative budget justification for the 1st year of the project. The narrative budget justification must describe how the categorical costs are derived, and must discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

Applicants must allocate sufficient funds within the 36-month project period, e.g., 15-20 percent of the total project budget, to support the local, site-specific evaluation of their projects and their participation in the Family Connection cross-site evaluation. Funds for evaluation must appear in the budget, and applicants must state the percentage of the total budget that will be allocated to evaluation. Projects are encouraged to set aside sufficient funds for the costs of assessments and instruments needed for screening and measuring well-being outcomes of families, data collection, and dissemination activities, including staff time related to these activities.

Applicants must allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director, the evaluator and key partners, including the local or State CW agency partner if the grantee is a private organization, to travel to Washington, DC to attend the Kick-off Meeting for funded grantees to be held within the first 3 months of the project (first year only); and the 3-day Annual Grantees Meeting, usually held in the spring.

General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both Federal and non-Federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-Federal resources" are all other non-ACF Federal and non-Federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, Federal budget; next column(s), non-Federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

Personnel

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person, provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

Travel

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. (This item does not include costs of consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) $5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Contractual

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than States that are required to use 45 C.F.R. Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. § 403(11), currently set at $100,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc. available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each delegate agency, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions.

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: local travel; insurance; food; medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs; space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description and a justification for each cost under this category.

Indirect Charges

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant Federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, upon notification that an award will be made, it should immediately develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year, in accordance with the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. When an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

Program Income
Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project.

Justification: Describe the nature, source and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

Commitment of Non-Federal Resources
Description: Amounts of non-Federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

Justification: If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item18. "Estimated Funding ($)" on the SF-424.

Note: Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching or cost-sharing requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s) and, for in-kind contributions, a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount will result in the disallowance of Federal funds.

Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer
As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3520, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 11/30/2012. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via www.Grants.gov

- Electronic applications must be submitted to www.Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- A DUNS Number and current registration at the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) are required. DUNS and CCR registration are part of the www.Grants.gov registration process. See "Get Registered" at http://grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.
- ACF will not accept applications via facsimile or email.
- The electronic application can be downloaded from www.Grants.gov.
- It is to an applicant's advantage to submit their applications **at least 24 hours** in advance of the application due date and time in order to correct any failures found during the application validation check.
- Electronic submission at www.Grants.gov is two-step process:
  - Submission by the due date and time; and
  - Application validation check.
- Electronically submitted applications will not pass the validation check at Grants.gov if the AOR does not have a current CCR registration and electronic signature credentials.
- **Read and observe all application submission requirements provided at** http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.

- Observe the formatting requirements and page limitations provided in the *Section IV.2. Formatting ACF Applications* section for electronic applications.
- Carefully read and observe electronic file naming conventions provided in the application submission instructions at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.
- Use only file formats supported by ACF. See *Section IV.2. Formatting ACF Applications.*
- Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at http://www.grants.gov/assets/Organization_Steps_Complete_Registration.pdf.
- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using www.Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at:1-800-518-4726, or by email at support@grants.gov, to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Contact Center is closed on Federal holidays.
- Applicants should retain Grants.gov Contact Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- Applicants that submit their applications electronically should retain a hard copy of their application package.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Contact Center prior to the listed due date and time does not ensure acceptance of your application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

Application Validation at www.Grants.gov

After an applicant submits an application; Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the funding opportunity announcement is still open, and that the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Each time an application is submitted, or re-submitted, via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps, which result in a validated application and are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files to the Internet at www.Grants.gov. To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF stating that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of two reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) to the Internet at www.Grants.gov.

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov, or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* in this announcement.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants will need to request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

Please Note: electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov **may be used only to request an exemption from required application submission.** All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate Agency Contact listed in *Section VII*. of this announcement. Queries submitted to this email address that make requests for any reason other than a request for an exemption will not be acknowledged or answered.

Exemption requests by email to electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov and by postal mail must include:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application, and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The reason must be either the lack of Internet access or connection, or lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

Exemption requests must be ***received by*** ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next Federal business day that follows the weekend or Federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is now required for the submission of paper applications. See "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*"

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.6* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions.

Applications submitted in paper format must show a DUNS Number. A DUNS Number is a nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be acquired at no cost online at http://www.dnb.com. To acquire a DUNS number by phone, contact the D&B Government Customer Response Center: U.S. and U.S Virgin Islands: 1-866-705-5711; Alaska and Puerto Rico: 1-800-234-3867 (Select Option 2, then Option 1).
Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., CST.

As of October 1, 2010, all applicants for Federal grants and cooperative agreements, including those that apply in paper format, are required to have Central Contractor Registration (CCR). CCR registration is also required for organizations that will receive subawards under Federal grants and cooperative agreements. CCR registration may be made online at www.ccr.gov or by phone at 1-866-606-8220.

CCR registration must be updated annually from the date of the initial registration. CCR registration is required to be active throughout the period of award. Lack of CCR registration will prevent ACF from making an award to a recommended applicant.

There is the possibility of heavy traffic at the CCR website on application due dates. Applicants are strongly encouraged to register at the CCR well in advance of the application due date. CCR registration must be active and maintained with current information at all times during which an organization has an active award or an application under consideration.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

IV.3. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications: **07/20/2012**

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.

Please note:

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. **These**

applications will not be acknowledged. Applications that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be transmitted to ACF though they may have been submitted on time.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time-stamp. Only those applications with date and time-stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Mailed Paper Format Applications

The deadline for mailed paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding Federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.6.Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:

- Applications submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

Extensions and/or Waiving Due Date and Receipt Time Requirements

ACF may extend an application due date and receipt time when circumstances make it impossible for applicants to submit their applications on time. These events include natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or when there are widespread disruptions of electrical service, or mail service, or in other rare cases. The determination to extend or waive due date and/or receipt time requirements rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. Agency Contacts*.

Acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to www.Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of the application's submission**.** The date and time-stamp must reflect a submission time on, or before, 11:59 p.m., ET, on the application due date. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that is has passed the validation check.

Each time an application is submitted, or resubmitted, via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time-stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time-stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from www.Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

Acknowledgement from ACF of a paper format (hard copy) application's submission:

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.4. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/.
Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary

Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 6th Floor East, Washington, DC 20447.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

IV.5. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are considered unallowable costs under grants or cooperative agreements awarded under this funding opportunity announcement.

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

IV.6. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*

Submission By Mail

CB Operations Center c/o Lux Consulting Group

8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Hand Delivery

CB Operations Center c/o Lux Consulting Group

8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via http://www.Grants.gov.
For all submissions, see *Section IV.3* for information on due dates and times.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS FOR ASSISTANCE	Maximum Points: 20

In reviewing the objectives and need for assistance, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application demonstrates an understanding of issues relevant to this FOA. (0-4 points)

- The applicant presents a thorough review of the relevant literature and demonstrates a clear understanding of the need for knowledge in the field about a) the effectiveness of Family-finding and FGDM as approaches to assist children/youth in foster care or to prevent entry or re-entry of children/youth into foster care; b) the importance of family connections, and what works in family engagement; and c) considerations in working with families with issues of domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; and
- The applicant identifies and demonstrates a thorough understanding of key issues/challenges faced in achieving and sustaining permanency for children/youth in foster care or at risk or entering or returning to care. The applicant demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the domains of child well-being and the impact of trauma, as well as the role of protective factors as a means to foster well-being and support healthy, positive functioning in the target population of children and youth and their families.

2. The application presents a clear description of the proposed project which is responsive to this FOA. (0-16 points)

- The application presents a clear vision for the proposed project to be developed and implemented. The applicant makes a clear statement of the needs, goals and objectives of the proposed project; and these closely relate to the purposes of this funding announcement. The lessons learned through the proposed project would benefit policy and practice in addressing the needs of the target population;
- The applicant clearly defines and identifies the service area, key socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the target population of children/youth and their families, and anticipated numbers to be served, through presentation of a thorough analysis of current, local data. If the applicant proposes to target a specific subpopulation, e.g. tribal families, or LGBT youth and their families, the applicant clearly identifies the subpopulation and the rationale for targeting it. The estimated number of children/youth and family members to be served by the project is reasonable and appropriate;
- The applicant clearly presents its rationale for how the integrated Family-finding/FGDM approach would improve outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being for the target population of children/youth and their family members. The application describes significant results or benefits that can be expected for children, youth, family members; and
- The applicant describes and justifies how the proposed project will promote effective partnerships between public and private, community and faith-based agencies to better support family members in meeting the permanency and well-being needs of the target population of children and youth.

APPROACH	Maximum Points: 40

In reviewing the approach, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant proposes a sound technical approach for the proposed project. (0-10 points)

- The applicant outlines a clear plan of action, guided by a comprehensive, feasible timeline. The plan describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished, accounts for all functions or activities identified for the Combination Project and its integrated Family-finding and FGDM components, states reasons for taking the proposed approach rather than others, and describes any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement; and

- The applicant presents a well-defined logic model which guides the proposed project. The logic model demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities and intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. This includes a clear articulation of the connection between the needs of the target population, the core components of the service delivery approach, and desired outcomes (i.e., theory of change);

2. The applicant's proposal is strongly responsive to the purposes and requirements of integrated Family-finding/FGDM programs under this FOA. (0-10 points)

- The applicant clearly identifies and describes the Family-finding and FGDM models to be used, and thoroughly justifies the appropriateness of these for the purposes of the project. The proposed plan thoroughly demonstrates how the components of the Family-finding and FGDM models will be integrated with each other and incorporated into the existing system of services;
- The proposed project will provide family-centered, strengths-oriented, trauma-informed and culturally-based services, designed to:
    - Strengthen protective factors as a means to promote social and emotional well-being and support healthy, positive functioning in children, youth and families served; and
    - Address the impact of trauma on child well-being through trauma-informed service delivery, aimed at facilitating healing and recovery;
- There will be a strong relationship between the proposed project activities and improved outcomes for children and youth who are in, or at risk of entering, foster care. The integrated Family-finding/FGDM program is designed to improve permanency outcomes for these children and youth by:
    - Reducing the time that they are involved with the child welfare system; and
    - Meeting their immediate and long-term needs for safety, permanency and well-being within their family system;
- The applicant proposes convincing strategies to effectively engage and involve family members, including fathers and paternal relatives, and children or youth if appropriate, in Family-finding activities and FGDM meetings. If the applicant proposes to target a specific subpopulation, e.g. tribal families, or LGBT youth and their families, the applicant proposes strategies that account for the cultural and social norms that influence family dynamics, family relationships, and family functioning; and
- The applicant demonstrates how it will effectively address the safety needs of children and families when working with families where there is a co-occurrence of domestic violence, including methods used to conduct a thorough safety and risk assessment, methods used to ensure the safety of all participants during the meeting, and a plan to access expertise in domestic violence intervention for both training and on-going implementation of the program;

3. The applicant demonstrates its commitment to use funds for only allowable activities. (0-3 points)

- The applicant's written statement describing its commitment to use funds for only allowable activities is clear and specific. For example, the statement directly includes references of a commitment that funds will only be used for the activities identified in the FOA;
- Applicants which are current recipients of Federal, State, or local financial assistance have clearly described how they will ensure that any awarded funds from this FOA will not be used to supplant or augment any other funding; and
- The applicant presents a sound plan, in compliance with funding restrictions under this FOA, for continuing this project and sustaining improved practice in integrated Family-finding/FGDM programs beyond the period of Federal funding.

4. The application clearly demonstrates how the proposed project will use effective collaboration to support project activities to improve outcomes for the target population. (0-9 points)

- The applicant demonstrates a strong plan of collaboration between the grantee and the CW agency (if the grantee is a private, non-profit organization) and other partners and community organizations in order to plan, implement or expand the proposed integrated Family-finding/FGDM program, including a plan to address issues around confidentiality of child/youth/family information. The applicant fully documents the roles and responsibilities of partners and cooperating entities, and includes, where appropriate, Third-Party Agreements with identified partners;
- The applicant presents a feasible plan to maintain the active involvement of collaborating entities on an ongoing basis in order to identify and address challenges in the planning and operation of the proposed program; and
- The applicant identifies project and system-level challenges and barriers to the implementation or expansion of the proposed integrated Family-finding/FGDM program, and identifies strategies to address these.

5. The applicant proposes a project that would inform the field. (0-8 points)

- The design of the proposed project clearly reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and literature. The applicant clearly documents how the proposed project is innovative; and involves strategies that build on, or are an alternative to, existing strategies; and, if successfully implemented and evaluated, is likely to contribute to the knowledge base around integrated Family-finding/FGDM programs;
- The applicant demonstrates clearly how the proposed project would develop into a model site for other jurisdictions to look to in developing the ability to implement similar programs as an ongoing part of agency functions;
- The project would develop high quality products and provide detailed information on strategies used and outcomes achieved that would support evidence-based/informed practice improvements in the field. The schedule for developing these products is clearly appropriate in scope and budget; and
- The applicant clearly describes the intended audience (e.g., researchers, policymakers, practitioners) for product dissemination, which is clearly appropriate to the goals of the proposed project. The project's products would be very useful to the identified audiences; the plan for disseminating information is clearly appropriate; and the mechanisms and forums that would be used to convey the information and support replication by other interested agencies are clearly appropriate. The proposed dissemination plan is clearly appropriate in scope and budget.

EVALUATION	**Maximum Points: 20**

In reviewing the proposed plan, reviewers will consider the extent to which the evaluation is expected to yield findings which show that the project has achieved its stated objectives, that the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project, and that the applicant is cognizant that results from randomized control studies provide the most compelling evidence of causal links between interventions and outcomes.

Reviewers will consider how well or to what extent:

The applicant proposes a strong evaluation plan. (0-12 points)

- The applicant presents a clear and convincing plan for evaluating the project, which is guided by the project's logic model. The methods of evaluation and evaluation timeline are clearly appropriate to the goals, objectives and context of the project, and are feasible within the 36-month project period. The design will ensure fidelity to the intervention, and will measure achievement of project objectives, the efficiency of the implementation processes, and the impact of the project on outcomes for the target population. The design is appropriate to the target population, proposed interventions, and potential comparison groups;

- The applicant clearly identifies methods of evaluation that include the use of strong measures which are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the program as identified in the project logic model. The evaluation includes clearly defined measures of outcomes, in addition to measures of inputs and outputs. The measures are objective and have strong reliability, validity, and internal consistency. There is a sound plan for securing informed consent and implementing an IRB review;
- The evaluation plan clearly includes an appropriate control or comparison group for determining the influence of the project activities on outcomes. If not utilizing a randomized control approach, the applicant provides a reasonable description and justification that the proposed evaluation design is the most rigorous design possible for addressing the questions of interest. If non-randomized approaches are used, the applicant provides evidence of the equivalence to the intervention group of any comparison groups that will be employed. Preliminary outcome evaluation design is sufficiently rigorous to provide credible evidence that the effects on key outcomes related to safety, permanency, and well-being, including relevant child well-being outcomes, can be attributed to the integrated Family-finding/FGDM program;
- The applicant's evaluation design clearly outlines an appropriate sampling plan that ensures sample sizes sufficient to detect significant effects. The target sample represents the intended recipients of the services to the greatest extent possible given the project's structure and resources;
- The applicant's plan details how the process evaluation will assess the implementation of the integrated project, including program components of Family-finding and FGDM, as well as the linkages between the collaborative partners that will help ensure that identified service needs of children, youth and families are met. The plan is likely to yield substantive and useful information on the level of coordination between the collaborating agencies, as well as the proposed project and other programs with similar systems/services, or that serve the same population; and
- The applicant presents a reasonable plan to evaluate the extent to which strategic dissemination of project products and findings to target audiences was effective (information was received by the intended audiences and used as intended), and to assess the impact of dissemination in supporting project implementation and sustainability and knowledge transfer in their role as a demonstration project.

2. The applicant proposes a strong plan for data collection, analysis and reporting. (0-4 points)

    - The application clearly describes a sound plan for collecting high-quality data on the services provided, the costs of these services, and the outcomes of these services;
    - The applicant provides clear and detailed evidence that commitments have been secured, via a data sharing agreement or other means, to access administrative CW data necessary to allow for a refined identification and assessment of the needs of the target population and to track child welfare outcomes;
    - The applicant provides an appropriate, feasible, and realistic plan for using evaluation findings to produce ongoing documentation of project activities and results. The evaluation plan clearly includes performance feedback and periodic assessment of program progress that can be used to modify the program, as necessary, and serve as a basis for program adjustments; and
    - The application clearly describes a sound plan for conducting a cost analysis of the proposed program, lists the factors that would be considered in this analysis, and describes the plan for comparing the program to other similar programs with respect to these factors.

3. The applicant demonstrates sufficient capacity to conduct a rigorous evaluation. (0-4 points)

    - The applicant either demonstrates clearly that it has the in-house capacity to conduct an objective and rigorous evaluation of the project or presents a sound plan for contracting with a third-party evaluator; and
    - The applicant provides strong documentation that the proposed evaluator has extensive experience with research and/or evaluation of this nature, clearly understands the population of

interest, and demonstrates the necessary independence from the project to assure objectivity.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES — Maximum Points: 15

In reviewing the organizational profiles, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application strongly documents the ability of the applicant and partnering organizations to conduct a project of the type specified under this FOA, within the project period of 36 months. (0-8 points)

- The applicant provides strong evidence of sufficient experience and expertise in the program areas of this announcement; in collaboration with partner organizations; in culturally competent service delivery; and in administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects;
- The proposed project director and key project staff clearly possess sufficient relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities to implement and manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity effectively, as documented, e.g. with resumes;
- The applicant presents a sound management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The plan clearly describes the effective management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants (if appropriate); and
- The applicant documents clearly the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners. These are well defined and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project with respect to the target population.

2. The application clearly demonstrates systemic capacity to effectively implement the proposed project by strongly documenting the commitment of the applicant organization and any partnering organizations, and their staff to provide integrated Family-finding/FGDM services. (0-7 points)

- If the lead applicant is not the CW agency, there is clear documentation, via detailed Letters of Agreement or Third-Party Agreement and any other evidence, of a strong partnership with the relevant CW agency(ies) in the targeted geographical area(s);
- The applicant provides a comprehensive list of community organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. This plan includes, where appropriate, Letters of Commitment and/or Third-Party Agreements from identified partners;
- The applicant provides strong documentation that each participating organization (including partners and/or subcontractors) clearly possesses the organizational capability to fulfill their assigned roles and functions effectively in serving the target populations; and
- The applicant demonstrates that there would be a mutually beneficial relationship between the proposed project and other work by the applicant which is planned, anticipated, or underway with Federal assistance.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION — Maximum Points: 5

In reviewing the budget and budget justification, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application includes a clear, detailed budget for each year of the proposed project, and a clear, comprehensive narrative/justification for the costs outlined for the 1st year of the project. (0-4 points)

- The costs of the proposed project are necessary, reasonable and commensurate with the types and

range of activities and services to be conducted, the number of participants to be served, and the expected goals and objectives;
- Funds which are specified are allowable and will not supplant or augment any other funding;
- The application clearly identifies funds for all required items for the project budget, including travel to attend the Kick-off Meeting and annual Grantees Meeting in Washington, DC; and
- The budget includes a specific, reasonable percentage of funds for the purpose of evaluation, and the applicant clearly demonstrates that there are sufficient funds in the budget for each budget period to support evaluation and data collection activities, and dissemination activities.

2. The applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures would ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this FOA. (0-1 points)

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant that does not have an active CCR registration (www.ccr.gov or 1-866-606-8220).

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets one of the following disqualification criteria as described in *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*:

- Applications that are designated as late according to *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*,
- Applications that are submitted in paper format without prior approval of an exemption from required electronic submission (*Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*), or
- Applications with requests that exceed the award ceiling stated in *Section II. Award Information*.

For those applications that have been disqualified under the initial ACF screening, notice will be provided by postal mail or by email. See *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates* for information on Grants.gov's and ACF's acknowledgment of received applications.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. They are one element in the decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of Federal funds in its award decisions.

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-Federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications that have been deemed as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of such determination by postal mail.

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Applications will be reviewed during the Summer 2012. Funded projects will have a start date no later than September 30, 2012.

VI. Award Administration Information

VI.1. Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-Federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail or email. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in*Section IV.5. Funding Restrictions*.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the uniform administrative requirements and cost principles of 45 C.F.R. Part 74 (Awards And Subawards To Institutions Of Higher Education, Hospitals, Other Nonprofit Organizations, And Commercial Organizations) or 45 C.F.R. Part 92 (Grants And Cooperative Agreements To State, Local, And Tribal Governments). The Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) is available at http://www.gpo.gov.

An application funded with the release of Federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with Federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable Federal regulations.

Prohibition Against Profit

Grantees are subject to the limitations set forth in 45 C.F.R. Part 74, Subpart E-Special Provisions for Awards to Commercial Organizations (45 C.F.R. Part 74.81_Prohibition against profit), which states that, "... no HHS funds may be paid as profit to any recipient even if the recipient is a commercial organization. Profit is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs."

Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations

Grantees are also subject to the requirements of 45 C.F.R. Part 87.1(c), Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which says, "Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from the [Health and Human Services] Department under any Department program may not engage in inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department." Therefore, organizations must take steps to completely separate the presentation of any program with religious content from the presentation of the Federally funded program by time or location *in such a way that it is clear that the two programs are separate and distinct.* If separating the two programs by time but presenting them in the same location, one program must *completely* end before the other program begins.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from Federal, State, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with Federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives Federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS funded activities.

Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, Understanding the Regulations Related to the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative" are available at http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/about/regulations/. Additional information, resources, and tools for faith-based organizations is available through The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships website at http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/index.html and at the Administration for Children & Families: Toolkit for Faith-based and Community Organizations.

Award Term and Condition under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the requirements of Section 106 (g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 7104). For the full text of the award term, go to http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award_term.html. If you are unable to access this link, please contact the Grants Management Contact identified in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement to obtain a copy of the term.

Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. § 8102 et seq.) requires that all organizations receiving grants from any Federal agency agree to maintain a drug-free workplace. By signing the application, the Authorizing Official agrees that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace and will comply with the requirement to notify ACF if an employee is convicted of violating a criminal drug statute. Failure to comply with these requirements may be cause for debarment. Government wide requirements for Drug-Free Workplace for Financial Assistance are found in 2 C.F.R. part 182; HHS implementing regulations are set forth in 2 C.F.R. part 382.400. All recipients of ACF grant funds must comply with the requirements in Subpart B - Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals, 2 C.F.R. part 382.225. The rule is available atRequirements for Drug-Free Workplace.

Debarment and Suspension

HHS regulations published in 2 CFR part 376 implement the governmentwide debarment and suspension system guidance (2 CFR part 180) for HHS' non-procurement programs and activities. "Non-procurement transactions" include, among other things, grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, fellowships, and loans. ACF implements the HHS Debarment and Suspension regulations as a term and condition of award. Grantees may decide the method and frequency by which this determination is made and may check the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) located at https://www.epls.gov/, although checking the EPLS is not required. More information is available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html.

Pro-Children Act

The Pro-Children Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. §§ 7181 through 7184, imposes restrictions on smoking in facilities where federally funded children's services are provided. HHS grants are subject to these requirements only if they meet the Act's specified coverage. The Act specifies that smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children under the age of 18. In addition, smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility or portion of a facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of federally funded health care, day care, or early childhood development, including Head Start services to children under the age of 18. The statutory prohibition also applies if such facilities are constructed, operated, or maintained with Federal funds. The statute does not apply to children's services provided in private residences, facilities funded solely by Medicare or Medicaid funds, portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment, or facilities where WIC coupons are redeemed. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to $1,000 per violation and/or the imposition of an administrative compliance order on the responsible entity.

HHS Grants Policy Statement

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. Appendices to the HHS GPS include a glossary of terms and a list of standard abbreviations for ease of reference. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NoA). The HHS GPS is available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_related.html.

VI.3. Reporting

Grantees under this funding opportunity announcement will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. The frequency of required reporting is listed later in this section. Final reports may be submitted in hard copy to the Grants Management Office Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement. Instructions on submission of reports electronically will be provided with award documents.

Performance Progress Reports (PPR)

ACF grantees are required to submit the SF-PPR Cover Page. ACF Program Offices that utilize reporting forms or formats in addition to, or instead of, the SF-PPR have listed the reporting requirements later in this section.

Grant award documents will inform grantees of the appropriate performance progress report form or format to use. Grantees should consult their award documents to determine the appropriate performance progress report format required under their award. Performance progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the reporting period.

Final program performance reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period. The SF-PPR may be found athttp://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html.

Federal Financial Reports (FFR)

As of February 1, 2011, HHS began the transition from use of the SF-269, Financial Status Report (Short Form or Long Form) to the use of the SF-425 Federal Financial Report for expenditure reporting. SF-269s will no longer be accepted for expenditure reports due after that date. If an SF-269 is submitted, the ACF will return it and require the recipient to complete the SF-425.

The transition strategy is allowing individual HHS Operating Divisions to select--from a limited number of options--the approach that best fits their programs and business process. This transition does not affect completion or submission of the cash reporting to the HHS Division of Payment Management's Payment Management System (PMS). The primary features of this transition for recipients are that OPDIVs that previously required electronic submission of the SF-269 will receive the SF-425 expenditure reports electronically and, until further notice, OPDIVs that have been receiving expenditure reports in hard copy will continue to do so.

All expenditure reports will be due on one of the standard due dates by which cash reporting is required to be submitted to PMS or at the end of a calendar quarter as determined by the Operating Division. As a result, a recipient that receives awards from more than one OPDIV may be subject to more than one approach, but will not be required to change its current means of submission or be subjected to more than eight standard due dates.

Beginning with budget periods which end from January 1 - March 31, 2011, and for all budget periods thereafter, all affected ACF grantees will be required to submit an SF-425 report as frequently as is required in the terms and conditions of their award using due dates for reports to PMS.

For budget periods ending in the months of:	The FFR (SF-425) is due to ACF on:
January 01 through March 31	April 30
April 01 through June 30	July 30
July 01 through September 30	October 30
October 01 through December 31	January 30

Fillable versions of the SF-425 form in Adobe PDF and MS-Excel formats, along with instructions, are available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms, www.forms.gov, and on the ACF Funding Opportunity Website Forms page.

Further instructions will be provided, as necessary, with award terms and conditions that will address specific reporting periods and due dates on an award-by-award basis. Additional information on frequency of reporting is available on the ACF Funding Opportunities website at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/msg_sf425.html.

For planning purposes, ACF reporting periods for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Program Progress Reports: Semi-Annually
Financial Reports: Semi-Annually

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity may be subject to the Transparency Act subaward and executive compensation reporting requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 170. See ACF's **Award Term for Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting Requirement** implementing this requirement and additional award applicability information.

SF-428 Tangible Property Report and SF-429 Real Property Status Report

As of April 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families will begin requiring the use of the SF-428 (Tangible Personal Property Form) as well as the SF-429 (Real Property Status Report).

The SF-428 is a standard form to be used by awarding agencies to collect information related to tangible personal property (equipment and supplies) when required by a Federal financial assistance award. The form consists of the cover sheet (SF-428) and three attachments to be used as required: Annual Report; Final (Award Closeout) Report and a Disposition Request/Report. A Supplemental Sheet, SF-428S, may be used to provide detailed individual item information.

The SF-429 is a standard report to be used by recipients of Federal financial assistance to report real property status (Attachment A) or to request agency instructions on real property (Attachments B, C) that was/will be provided as Government Furnished Property (GFP) or acquired (i.e., purchased or constructed) in whole or in part under a Federal financial assistance award (i.e., grant, cooperative agreement, etc.). This includes real property that was improved using Federal funds and real property that was donated to a Federal project in the form of a match or cost share donation. This report is to be used for awards that establish a Federal Interest on real property.

Beginning with budget periods ending September 30, 2012 and for all budget periods thereafter, all ACF grantees will be required to submit (as applicable) an SF-428 and SF-429 report as frequently as is required in the terms and conditions of their award.

The forms are available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms.

VII. Agency Contacts

Program Office Contact

Cathy Overbagh
ACF, ACYF, Children's Bureau
1250 Maryland Ave SW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20024
Phone: (202) 205-7273
Fax: 202-260-9345
Email: cathy.overbagh@acf.hhs.gov

Office of Grants Management Contact

Daphne Weeden
CB Operations Center c/o Lux Consulting Group
8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: (866) 796-1591
Email: cb@luxcg.com

Federal Relay Service:
Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (**TTY** - Text Telephone or **ASCII** - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the Internet http://www.hhs.gov/.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on the Internet http://www.acf.hhs.gov/.

Administration for Children and Families - ACF Funding Opportunities homepage http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (C.F.D.A.) https://www.cfda.gov/.

Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) http://www.gpo.gov.

United States Code (U.S.C) http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/ .

All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Forms page at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html.

Grants.gov Forms Repository webpage at http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp.

Versions of other Standard Forms (SFs) are available on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Grants Management Forms web site at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/.

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at http://www07.grants.gov/aboutgrants/accessibility_compliance.jsp.

Sign up to receive notification of ACF Funding Opportunities at www.Grants.gov http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp.

Application Checklist

Applicants may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance **and** **SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)**	Referenced in *Section IV.2.* and found at http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/ grants/grants_resources.html and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at http://www.grants.gov/ agencies/ aforms_repository_information.jsp.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times.*
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs **and** **SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs**	Referenced in *Section IV.2.* and found at http:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants/grants_resources.html.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Referenced in *Section IV.2.* of the announcement and found at http:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants/grants_resources.html.	Submission is due with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in *Section IV.2.* and found at http:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants/grants_resources.html. Submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due prior at the time of application. It may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.

Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants	Non-profit private organizations (not including private universities) are encouraged to submit the survey with their applications. Applicants applying electronically, may submit this survey along with the application as part of the appendix or as a separate document. Applicants submitting in paper, please place the completed survey in an envelope labeled "Applicant Survey." Seal the envelope and include it along with the application package. The survey is referenced in Section IV.2. of the announcement. The survey may be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html. The survey will not count in the page limitations.	**Submission is voluntary.** Submission may be made with the application by the application due date listed in the *Overview* and *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times.* Or, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
The Project Description	Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description*. This is the title for the project narrative that describes the applicant's plan for the project.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification* of the announcement.	Submission of the Project Budget is required on the appropriate Standard Form (424A or 424C). The Budget Justification is a separate document that may be no longer than 10 pages and is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.
Table of Contents	Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description*. This is an element of the Project Description and will usually be counted in page limitations listed in *Section IV.2. Formatting Requirements*.	Submission is due as part of the Project Description by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.

Proof of Non-Profit Status	Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description* of the announcement under "Legal Status of Applicant Entity." Proof of non-profit status may be submitted as part of appendices to the application package. It is not considered as part of the project narrative/plan.	Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the due date listed in the *Overview* and *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times.* If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description* of the announcement. It is an element of the Project Description and will be counted in page limitations that are stated in *Section IV.2. Formatting Requirements*.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.
Logic Model	Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description* of the announcement. It is an element of the Project Description and will be counted in page limitations that are stated in *Section IV.2. Formatting Requirements*.	Submission is due with the application package by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.
Project Sustainability Plan	Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Description* of the announcement. It is an element of the Project Description and will be counted in page limitations that are stated in *Section IV.2. Formatting Requirements*.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.
Third-Party Agreements	Referenced in Section IV.2. of the announcement under "Project Description."	If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the Overview and in Section IV.3. If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.
Commitment of Non-Federal Resources	Referenced in *Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification* of the announcement. Proof of the commitment of Non-Federal Resources may be	Submission is due by the application due date found in the Overview and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*.

	included in the appendices to the application package.	

Appendices