

New York State Citizens' Coalition for Children, Inc.

Meeting Children's Needs in Transracial & Transcultural Adoptive & Foster Families"

*A project supported by Grant #90-CO-0794
from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

CCC Parent Group Grants 1997-1998

We are happy to report on the outcomes of the parent group grant projects for 1997-98. The objectives were: 1) to offer opportunities for transracial/transcultural families to develop connections with families of the same race, culture, or ethnicity as their adopted or foster children, and 2) to increase the knowledge of race and culture of parents and children in transracial and transcultural adoptive and foster families. The following is a brief summary of the activities and outcomes made possible by the CCC grants:

Adoption Resource Network, Inc. (ARNI), Rochester

CCC's \$1,000 grant to ARNI generated \$5,805 in grants and donations from other sources and \$32,025 in In-Kind donations of goods and services.

- Two Zena Oglesby workshops, one in Batavia, entitled "Building Families for Our Future," on successful recruitment and retention of adoptive and foster families and issues of cultural competency, primarily for area professionals. The other was in Rochester at an African American church, on children's self-esteem and retaining ties to their birth cultures.
- "Family Friends," a mentoring program to help children find their fit in their families and their communities. The Family Friends program is now chaired by a transracially adopted adult.
- "Transculturally Adopted Adults Panel," attended by 68 individuals. "Public Forum on Racism," featuring three leaders from Rochester speaking on institutional racism.
- "Perspectives on Adoption" annual conference, attended by nearly 500 people, with plenary address and three workshops by Joseph Crumbley, a nationally-respected leader on issues of transracial/transcultural adoption.
- "Family Friends Sledding Party," for families interested in maintaining cultural connections for their children. At least 719 individuals who participated in the activities were direct beneficiaries of the grant. Twenty-three adoptive families expressed an interest, in writing, in participating in the Family Friends program, and eight families joined ARNI as a result of the programs supported by the grant.

Adoptive Families of Older Children, Inc., NYC Metro Area

CCC grant was \$800. Funding from other sources totaled \$1,319, and In-Kind donations of goods and services were \$4,450.

- Held two public meetings, a forum, and a workshop to sensitize and educate parents and prospective adoptive parents to issues of transracial/transcultural families. Resulted in expanded membership, new resources for families, and availability of useful publications, e.g. hair care, Latino history, magazines.
- From AFOC's report: "Exploring transracial issues, and the resulting growth of our group concerning these issues, provided the encouragement and support for two member-families [transracial families] to look up extended birth families of their adoptive children, and thereby make their birth culture and additional family support available to these children."
- Increased support to transracially adopted children through dissemination of the publication, "Foster Care Youth United," and adding two concerts of the music of their children's birth culture, in addition to the monthly social events and annual amusement park outing.
- Produced and widely-distributed to agencies a brochure describing their group and the support services they provide, resulting in a request for the group to help recruit new families and the development of new resources and contacts.

Camp Mu Ji Gae, Inc.

Our grant was for \$200. Money from other sources was \$485 and In-Kind donations totaled \$2,760.

- Special program of workshops for transracially adopted Asian adolescents and their parents, facilitated by Korean MSW and transracially adopted Korean adult.
- Program for adoptees born in Korean to chat online with age peers in Korea in real time, to learn more about Korean culture and day to day experiences as well as to increase contact with native Koreans.

International Adoptive Families (IAF), Albany Area

CCC's grant for \$1,000 was added to \$3,440 of In-Kind donations and \$100 from other sources.

- Workshop entitled, "Raising a Child of a Different Ethnic Heritage," attended by adoptive parents and mental health professionals
- Development of a mentor/pen pal program between adopted Korean children and adult adoptee members of A.K.A, a national support group for transracially adopted Koreans
- A professionally-designed and directed member survey and study to learn more about methods families use to support the cultural identity of their children
- Developed a photographic exhibit of IAF families.

- Developed a directory of local resources * Organized two activities for adoptive families to develop contacts and friendships with Korean families, and numerous social and cultural events were held to nurture on-going connections.

Latin America Parents Association (LAPA)

CCC's grant was for \$200; In-Kind donations for the project amounted to \$775.

- Research for and publication of a special edition of the LAPA newsletter, ¿Que Tal? which included a directory of Latino events in the New York Metro Area and articles on culture and self-esteem.

Foster & Adoptive Parents Association of Oneida Co., Inc.

CCC grant was \$1,000. Parent group contributed \$7,404 in In-Kind donations and \$301 from other sources.

- Conducted two surveys of membership to learn the level of racial/cultural awareness of those parenting transracially or transculturally and interest in participating in transracial/transcultural programs (level of interest and participation increased from 3% at the beginning of the project to 41% towards the end)
- Planned and hosted meetings with transracially adopted adults
- Social events for transracial and transcultural foster and adoptive families to meet, interact, and develop support networks
- Developed transracial/transcultural family support group and information network.
- Local minority church conducted services and provided support for interracial adoptive and foster families
- Significantly raised awareness of and sensitivity to the existence and importance of issues specific to transracial/transcultural families.

Foster Parent Advisory Council of Suffolk Co., Inc. (F-PAC)

F-PAC's project totaled \$6,755, including \$1,000 CCC grant, \$2,080 from other sources, and \$3,675 in donated goods and services.

- Developed "Friendship Circle" for transracial/transcultural adoptive and foster families and community people of same race/cultural as adopted and foster children.
- Held numerous family social events and activities to develop contacts and friendships and support network of transracially/transculturally adopted and fostered children.
- Lunch and party to introduce young adoptees and foster children to Black male role models in the community; event directed by pastor of the Black church that became partner to parent group.
- Several adult meetings on issues of "steerage" in the school system (led to F-PAC members speaking at various school board meetings), influences of media on race relationships, and police procedures and minority issues, .
- Helped sponsor P.B.A. book on child abuse in Suffolk County and services available to

families in crisis. * Received donation from Hispanic Culture and Bi-Lingual Education Association in honor of F-PAC's multicultural work.

- Successfully advocated for additional multicultural training for prospective adoptive and foster families through the local public agency, Suffolk County Office of Children and Family Services.

Parents of Dunbar, Inc., Syracuse

CCC grant to Parents of Dunbar was \$1,000; In-Kind donations were \$6,030, and \$228 was from other sources.

- Developed mentoring program for African Americans to team up with and serve as resources to transracial adoptive families. As a team, participated in workshops and seminars, attended church together, cultural festivities and family ceremonies, such as weddings, funerals, holiday celebrations, and served as Godparents.
- Developed outreach flyers to inform community of the parent support group and the mentoring program.
- Held two parent education seminars: "Discipline Practices within African American Families" and "How to Cope and Help with Mental Handicaps," for foster and adoptive parents of children with special needs.
- Set up a library resource room for families.
- Became incorporated with the help of CCC grant.

Congratulations to All Grantees!