

Title IV-B Kinship Navigator Funding
The Problem and Proposed Solutions for Re-Authorization
June 2022

The Problem: Title IV-B funding was originally intended to be time limited to allow states and localities to establish, evaluate and ultimately receive approval by the IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse to pull down Title IV-E funding. However, only one program (Ohio) has been approved as evidence-based to date and it only works with kinship foster families. This has compelled Congress to provide additional IV-B funds to help navigators meet the exceptionally high bar to obtain approval from the Clearinghouse.

Some jurisdictions are doing a great job of establishing and evaluating their programs, and may ultimately be approved by the Clearinghouse (NV, OH, FL, NJ examples).

Other jurisdictions, however, may never receive approval nor are they intending to do so. Accordingly, the IV-B moneys allocated to them have no real purpose because they are not seeking to become promising, supported or evidence-based programs.

Moreover, even for jurisdictions that seek to ultimately be approved, local Title IV-E agencies will never be fully trusted by the community because they can also remove their children. As a result, kinship caregivers avoid going to navigators for help. (VA and DC examples). This makes an agency-run navigator unable to fulfil its mission.

The Solution:

- State and local Title IV-E agencies must contract to provide the kinship navigator services with a community partner that regularly works with and is trusted by the kinship community in that jurisdiction. To the extent no such community partner already exists, a majority of the state or local agency's kinship navigator front-line staff must be current or former kinship caregivers or a someone who was raised in a kinship family.
- Each navigator must track the number of kinship caregivers served and the type of services each caregiver received, for example:
 - Information and Referral to other service providers (which ones and for what services)
 - Educational programs (subject matter, attendance and number of programs)
 - Support groups (number of participants and number of groups held)
 - Assistance with basic needs (*e.g.*, amount expended and for what purpose—*e.g.* rent, food, transportation)
 - Assistance with completing benefits applications (number assisted with respect to identified program)
 - Providing legal services—(*e.g.*, custody, denial of benefits fair hearings)
 - Moneys spent by the navigator on each of the above categories of services (*e.g.*, *via* direct funding, payment to staff, payment to contractors)