

Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) Grantee Overview

All Nations Rise (ANR)

Geographic Area: Statewide Indigenous-Native American Communities

Focus Population: Indigenous-Native American Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: All Nations Rise continues to develop Indigenous FFN Networks throughout Minnesota through community outreach, tribal media and marketing. ANR provides FFN caregivers with supports such as mini-grants, resources and training opportunities; identifies and supports needs of FFN caregivers through focus groups, surveys and events; and identifies and supports FFN caregivers who are interested in becoming a legal non-licensed (LNL) provider or licensed provider. Additionally, ANR continues to establish statewide partnerships to support FFN caregivers that provide culturally relevant learning, health/safety, child development and age-appropriate educational activities. ANR has expanded their geographic area to support eleven Tribes to include Tribal Urban communities.

Amhurst H. Wilder Foundation African American Babies Coalition (AABC)

Geographic Area: Metro, Nobles and Redwood counties and Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, White Earth Tribal Communities

Focus Population: All Races

Activities to Support FFN Providers: AABC developed and facilitated a culturally relevant crisis prevention and intervention training curriculum, phase I of Moving beyond Crisis. Phase II will focus on infant, child, and maternal mental health topics to prepare FFN trainers and professionals to effectively support mental health needs of FFN caregivers, parents, and children. Phase II of the Moving beyond Crisis training will also be a “train the trainer” model, meaning AABC will provide this training to professionals who work with FFN caregivers. AABC will engage in outreach through existing connections in Worthington, Redwood Falls, Leech Lake, and Mille Lacs/ White Earth to expand the reach of their FFN training.

Aviellah Curriculum & Consulting

Geographic Area: Metro and Chisago and Goodhue counties

Focus Population: Caregivers of Black children

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Aviellah will provide coaching to FFN caregivers using a uniquely designed curriculum named Bulbinella (a drought resistant South African succulent plant that flourishes even in dry, rocky ground) to support Black children in child care settings. Aviellah has established a foundation offering Bulbinella programming in the Twin Cities Metro area. Moving forward they will expand to counties in Minnesota with fewer FFN resources. Compared to the Twin Cities Metro area, there are fewer numbers of Black children residing in these counties, however this smaller population has a significant need for this information as it’s rarely offered. The Bulbinella

project will facilitate communities of support and learning (Learning Cohorts) that align with the needs of FFN caregivers caring for Black children. This will occur in part by offering a series of ten weekly sessions focused on relevant child development topics, with each session embedding ideas that are specific to nurturing Black children.

Change Inc.

Geographic Area: Metro and Nobles and Rice counties

Focus Population: Latinx and New American Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Change Inc. is a grassroots coalition working to reduce health disparities among Minnesota’s Latinx and Spanish communities in the Twin Cities and to increase access to early child care services for Latinx and Spanish families who may not otherwise have the necessary resources or who may be reticent to engage in formal systems. Change Inc.’s work includes increased training and support for caregivers in the areas of play/learning and mental health as well as increased outreach to Latinx and Spanish communities in greater MN. The program coordinator, navigators, trainers, and mental health professionals are Latinx and Spanish speaking. Navigators have lived experience as FFN caregivers. Trainings will be provided in virtual, hybrid and in-person formats in Spanish. Materials will also be provided in Spanish whenever possible.

Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES)

Geographic Area: Metro and Blue Earth and Mower counties

Focus Population: Latino

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Outreach will continue and expand successful engagement and partnership with Latino FFN caregivers, building on the organization’s existing network of FFN caregivers to support high-quality care and education that supports early learning, healthy development, and improves school readiness for Latino children. Many in the community are not eligible to become legal non-licensed providers given immigration status and barriers related to access. CLUES will offer customized referrals to workforce training and small business development, as well as additional internal programs to support FFN caregiver goals. Expanding services in Greater MN will address child care gaps in communities that are especially underserved and CLUES will continue to increase the number and diversity of skilled childcare caregivers in Minnesota.

Families First of Minnesota

Geographic Area: 28 counties in Southern MN

Focus Population: Hispanic, Somali and Middle Eastern Immigrant and Refugee Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Families First is focusing on culturally appropriate outreach to educate, develop relationships, and support caregivers. The agency will work internally to learn language access availability and how to access these connections. Another area of support is to provide access to transportation allowing caregivers to utilize resources. Learning opportunities include providing CPR training and resources to ensure health and safety, and education about the importance of pre-kindergarten screenings and needs prior to entering school. Outreach will support caregiver networks and encourage legal non-licensed (LNL) or licensed care, and events, either in person or virtually, will provide the opportunity for caregivers to share more about the families they work with, their challenges or successes, and supports needed. Proper documentation and follow-up will allow

Families First and partner agencies to see trends and identify areas that need to grow capacity of all types of child care including FFN and LNL.

Fond du Lac (FDL) Tribal College

Geographic Area: Fond du Lac Community

Focus Population: Indigenous-Ojibwe

Activities to Support FFN Providers: FDL will focus on prospective child care providers who are able to use the Ojibwe language. They are most often young persons who have studied in high school or college language programs. Training them as Ojibwe immersion child care providers early in their careers will lead to many years of child care services and language and culture revitalization. These immersion caregivers will focus on children at an optimal age for learning and take advantage of the multiplier effect in which one caregiver can serve successive cohorts of children. The project goal is to revitalize the Ojibwe language and culture for a new generation by increasing the number of Ojibwe-speaking FFNs with cultural knowledge and experience caring for young children.

Growing Up Healthy (GUH)

Geographic Area: Rice County

Focus Population: Latine and Somali Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: GUH is maintaining and growing the current FFN caregiver network in Rice County. Home visits and community events will facilitate identification of additional FFN caregivers. GUH's culturally relevant community outreach is performed by a bilingual, diverse navigator staff. This highly personable team is well-positioned to engage with FFNs who do not feel comfortable with government agencies. Authentic connections are made through door knocking, home visiting, and neighborhood gatherings. Resources and trainings are translated and/or described to non-English speaking FFNs. Through direct interaction, navigators promote access to early learning and healthy activities. They make connections to mental health consultations with bilingual facilitators. To more fully support FFNs, navigators lean into strong working relationships with other local community-based organizations in Rice County like Somali Community Resettlement Services. GUH documents the barriers and challenges FFN caregivers face when trying to register as legal non-licensed and raises those issues with partners at the local and state level to advocate for system improvements.

Hmong Early Childhood Coalition (HECC)

Geographic Area: Metro areas

Focus Population: Hmong Community

Activities to Support FFN Providers: HECC's mission is to empower Hmong families to seek opportunities to ensure Hmong children have access to quality early childhood education. Through their work with the Hmong community, it is evident that Hmong families do not normally access services such as early childhood programs for their children. There is an urgency to connect with Hmong FFN caregivers to ensure that Hmong children have access to quality early childhood education that also highlights the cultural values of the families. HECC has also created materials in both Hmong and English that consist of images and experiences that reflect the community of children and FFN caregivers. Much of the work HECC does is around building trust within the community. HECC will connect with family members that play the role of caregiver and share educational information to

support and encourage them to become a licensed or legal non-licensed provider. HECC will be hosting quarterly cohorts, with the goal of having at least 15 participants per cohort and completing five cohorts of FFN caregivers, reaching a total of 75 participants. Each cohort will consist of five training sessions with a focus on topics around child development and health and well-being of children.

Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership (CAPLP)

Geographic Area: Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin counties

Focus Population: Latino, Somali, and Arabic Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: CAPLP's goals are to create trusting relationships with New American and Latino caregivers across the geographic service area; to use strengths-based tools to support caregivers in their learning journey; to promote children's healthy physical, social/emotional, and cognitive development; to connect FFN caregivers to services and resources; and to advocate for the inclusion of FFN caregivers within Minnesota's network of early care and learning. To accomplish these goals, the organization will engage two bilingual FFN Navigators with their identified community partners and existing FFN networks. CAPLP will utilize available marketing resources to reach new caregivers and new communities within the region. They will assess caregiver needs through surveys and learning community gatherings. Based on expressed needs, CAPLP will provide programming that includes a combination of home visiting, small group learning/training, and connecting to resources and services.

La Red Latina de Educación Temprana (Latino FFN Childcare Providers Network)

Geographic Area: Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina, Richfield and Carver, Dakota, Blue Earth, McCleod counties

Focus Population: Latino

Activities to Support FFN Providers: La Red's model uses strengths of the Latino community to elevate lived experience and address inequities. They have built many partnerships with organizations and governmental entities to bring resources to FFN. La Red will implement funding to pilot a new Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate program and continue to carry out three primary components of La Red's model. This includes building credibility and expansion of the network and model, child care provider trainings and advocacy for policy and systems change. Latino children are most often cared for by FFNs. The need for FFN support from the Minnesota child care system is now recognized, because care that is culturally based is challenging to find. La Red trainings and support for FFNs goes beyond early childhood required trainings. La Red's approach uses asset-based strategies to support and build capacity with the community. La Red leaders constantly attend training on immigrant and refugee health, conflict resolution, violence prevention, thanatology and grief, healing and movement, use of traditional Mexican medicine, among others.

MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action Partnership (CAP)

Geographic Area: Becker, Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Otter Tail, Todd, Wadena counties

Focus Population: Spanish and Tribal Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: MAHUBE-OTWA plans to identify, recruit, and provide needed supports/services to FFN's. They aim to increase the cultural diversity of child care providers by providing relationship-based, culturally relevant services focused on Spanish/bilingual/community of color/Tribal FFN's in the Long Prairie, Mahnomen, Park Rapids and Pelican Rapids areas. The organization will increase the number of registered legally non-licensed (LNL) providers in the community as well as connect, educate, and provide ongoing support to FFN caregivers interested in registering as a LNL. MAHUBE-OTWA provides technical assistance to complete registration forms, access training, complete background checks, and help establish a quality and culturally responsive learning environment. Their work creates a consistent, coordinated network of support of FFN caregivers and conducts outreach to early childhood partners, community partners and agencies serving young children and families to connect FFN caregivers and children's families to appropriate community resources that support economic and developmental needs. MAHUBE-OTWA understands historical trauma and fear of working with public/governmental organizations may impact the willingness and comfort of engaging in support services.

Milestones

Geographic Area: 6W: Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac Qui Parle, Swift, Yellow Medicine counties
7W: Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, Wright counties

Focus Population: African American, Latinx, Somali-Sudanese Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Milestones works in close, true collaboration with agencies, independent contractors, and staff that are representative of and from their community of color. Milestones is supporting FFN providers by subcontracting with current partners, Promise Neighborhood (Black) and Central Minnesota Community Empowerment Organization (Somali). These agencies have committed staff time to outreach and support and work with Milestones to carry out this work within their communities. This includes working together to determine how proposed services will work best within their communities as well as to develop additional supports based on community need and ability to meet that need. Milestones has the opportunity to expand and do outreach to new partners throughout Region 7W to support the scope of services to FFN caregivers in other communities. As the need arises, Milestones will hire additional independent contractors who are representative of their communities to reach FNN caregivers and to provide culturally appropriate, relationship-based services to meet project deliverables.

Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board (YCB)

Geographic Area: Hennepin, Ramsey, Sherburne, Washington counties

Focus Population: Somali, Immigrant and Refugee, and New American Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: YCB goals and objectives are to leverage existing partnerships and resources to benefit the needs of the FFN community in Minneapolis. They offer personalized training and coaching based on the individual needs of the caregiver/children and continually work to make sure all efforts are through the lens of equity and trauma-informed care. The organization strives to increase outreach to caregivers throughout Minneapolis, and to support them in finding the training and resources they need and desire. YCB will work with community organizations to collaborate in providing services to FFN caregivers/families. By using the tools of Help Me Connect and Bridge to Benefits to support these efforts, YCB can inform and connect caregivers and families to an array of resources. Through data collection and evaluation process, they can help provide information to

support the sustainability of the program. YCB has partnerships with LaCreche Early Learning Centers, Joyce Preschool, Northside Child Development Center, and The Family Partnership with navigators at each site, and plan to include a navigator working in the Cedar-Riverside community who holds weekly play and learn groups for caregivers and children.

Northland Foundation

Geographic Area: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Lake, Itasca, Koochiching, St. Louis counties and Bois Fort, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Leech Lake (District I), Mille Lacs (District II) Tribal Communities

Focus Population: All Races

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Northland Foundation is a public charity serving northeastern Minnesota, encompassing seven counties and five Tribal Nations. Current partners include county government, Tribal Head Start, public schools, a public library, and family-serving nonprofits. Northland will also continue working with two technical assistance/training partners: Child Care Aware Minnesota Northeast and the Center for Inclusive Child Care, as well as collaborating with county/Tribal child care licensors serving northeastern Minnesota. Northland Foundation and partners have extensive experience in implementing efforts to reach underserved populations. Their plan will maximize resources and tap strengths of partners who bring a wealth of expertise to this initiative. Northland Foundation believes this coordinated effort will result in sustainable approaches and relationships that will benefit FFN caregivers and the young children and families they serve for years to come

Pine Technical and Community College (PTCC)

Geographic Area: Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Pine, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Isanti, Chisago counties

Focus Population: All Races

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Pine Technical and Community College (PTCC) and Child Care Aware of Minnesota Northeast will leverage current partnerships including but not limited to: early childhood family education programs, Head Start, interagency early intervention committees, Minnesota initiative foundations, county licensors, WIC programs, and local Minnesota family investment programs and workforce centers as well as engage in partnership with Lakes and Pines Community Action Partnership Head Start. Additionally, PTCC will leverage current outreach activities in local communities, utilizing Wayfinder and Empower to Educate advisors to identify and reach those not yet identified as FFN caregivers. FFN work activities have included grant reimbursements for training, professional development training and learning materials, health and safety kits, data collection and contact management of FFN caregivers.

Restoration For All, Inc (REFA)

Geographic Area: Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey counties

Focus Population: African Immigrant and Refugee Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: REFA has a history of convening and supporting FFN caregivers who are immigrants and refugees to make them and their work more visible. They support these communities by actively involving them in activities that will increase their knowledge, expertise, and sense of self-efficacy so they can better attend to the psychological and social development of the young children in their care, thereby improving the quality of care and the outcomes for the children and families. The

goal of this project is to equip, inform, educate, and support current/potential FFN caregivers to increase the quality of care they provide to young children and families in the communities REFA serves, and create sustainable solutions and responses using a cultural and holistic approach.

Sikkoo Mandoo Community-Minnesota (SMCM)

Geographic Area: Minneapolis, St Paul Oromo Communities

Focus Population: Oromo Community

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Children and parents from the Oromo community are facing barriers in the United States. Many face racism and discrimination and have become disengaged from mainstream systems. Due to a lack of culturally specific childcare providers from the Oromo community, many community members rely on family, friends, neighbors, and other community members to care for their children. SMCM will provide FFN caregivers and families with information about high-quality, community based early care, learning programs, financial assistance (including the childcare assistance and early learning scholarship and enrollment opportunities). The organization will also support FFN caregivers and children's families with in-home learning kits and host play and learn activities. This project will increase the cultural diversity of early care and education child care providers in the state, through directly engaging Black, African Immigrant and Refugee community members to become FFN caregivers. SMCM will continue to conduct formal and informal project assessments for continuous quality improvement. SMCM has a solid volunteer donor base and are working to secure additional resources from diverse funding streams to support this work.

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc (TVOC)

Geographic Area: Beltrami, Clearwater, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, Roseau counties

Focus Population: All communities needing assistance with an extra effort in the Somali, Russian Orthodox, Lao Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: TVOC is a statewide provider of Migrant Head Start services and operates a variety of state and federal programs. Staff represent the varied cultures and communities served, and the organization believes that well-rounded staffing is critical to providing relevant services. The northwest region has experienced an increase in families settling into communities from other cultures and ethnicities. Through their work, TVOC has learned that the Somali Community prefers child care centers or having their children cared for by family members. Licensed family child care is only used as a last resort. The Russian Orthodox and Lao communities do not typically use licensed child care services either; FFN care is primarily used within those communities. Support to FFN caregivers is essential to supporting employment, training and improving the quality of life for the community, particularly English as a second language and ethnic and cultural communities. To ensure children have developmentally appropriate learning opportunities, TVOC will provide resources and materials to caregivers. Kits will include items caregivers need to deliver a healthy and safe environment and provide school readiness activities. An additional resource will be a quarterly newsletter that will have specific information about health, safety, developmentally appropriate practices and school readiness. The newsletters will be translated to multiple languages for caregivers.

United Community Action Partnership (UCAP)

Geographic Area: Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lincoln, Lyon, McCloud, Meeker, Redwood, Renville counties

Focus Population: Somali, East African, Hmong, Karen, Latine, Tribal Communities

Activities to Support FFN Providers: Many of the nine counties in this rural service area have a high level of FFN caregivers that have resettled there for jobs. UCAP will actively recruit FFN caregivers to engage in surveys, listening sessions and conversations with cultural navigators and child care specialists and encourage them to participate in support services. Through the collaboration with child care specialists and cultural navigators, UCAP will offer supports individualized to each FFN caregiver's needs, while encouraging the goal of becoming a legal non-licensed provider. There will also be technical support to understand the community resources available to them and their families. When engaged in mentoring activities, the early childhood specialist and cultural navigators will practice reflective communication. All these activities will be tracked and analyzed for participation numbers, resources given, community in-kind and support, and gaps that emerge.