

Children's Home Society of New Jersey Receives \$1.5 Million for Enhanced Services to Grandfamilies

Trenton, NJ (October 24, 2011) -- The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHS of NJ), a not-for-profit agency that provides critical services to at-risk children throughout New Jersey and parts of eastern Pennsylvania, has been awarded a three-year *Family Connection Grant* by the U.S. Department of Health and Social Services, Administration for Children and Families. CHS of NJ is one of only seven organizations in the nation selected to receive this grant. The \$1.5 million grant will be used to enhance services and programs supporting grandparents and other relatives who are raising their kin children in Mercer County. The New Jersey Department of Children and Families will partner with CHS of NJ through a matching grant under its *Kinship Navigator Program* (a program developed to provide individuals caring for a relative's child a wide range of support services) which has distinguished New Jersey for its innovative outreach to kin.

"Our communities are seeing more and more grandparents and extended family members taking charge of raising their kin children and youth. Programs being developed at CHS of NJ are designed to uniquely meet their needs. The fact is these kin may be older, and sometimes they have health issues. Often, they are living on fixed pensions or limited income. Rearing children is much more difficult for them. These caregivers are looking for resources and deserve extra help," said Donna Pressma, President and CEO of The Children's Home Society of New Jersey.

Currently, CHS of NJ serves kin families in Mercer County through two successful programs. Its Trenton/Mercer County Grandfamily Success Center (funded by The Nicholson Foundation) offers support, counseling, and activities for relatives raising kin and the children in their care. At the Center, "grands" meet others and share knowledge and success stories. Kinship Navigator services provide linkages to services that can help grandfamilies find and secure the assistance they need. Through this new grant, CHS of NJ will bring these two programs under the same roof and further expand kinship services. The new programming will emphasize strengthening family support and participation through the inclusion of additional extended family members and community helpers who can come together to contribute to the successful rearing of the children.

CHS of NJ Director Dolores Bryant notes, "Recognizing that the definition of family often includes extended family members is critical in matching services to the needs of at-risk children in our communities. It is not a one-size-fits-all solution, but providing the right resources, education and support will make a difference. It is the practice of CHS of NJ to know the communities we serve and we seek to offer kin caregivers the resources that will have the most meaningful impact."

###

About The Children's Home Society of New Jersey

The Children's Home Society of New Jersey is a nonprofit child and family serving agency whose mission is to save children's lives and build healthy families. Founded in 1894, the agency protects abused or neglected infants and at-risk children by insuring stable, permanent, and loving homes for each and every child it serves. All services are confidential and most are free. For more information, visit The Children's Home Society of New Jersey website at chsofnj.org.