



OVERVIEW

The National Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation (QIC-AG) is a five-year project working with eight sites that will implement evidence-based interventions or develop and test promising practices which if proven effective can be replicated or adapted in other child welfare jurisdictions. Effective interventions are expected to achieve long-term, stable permanence in adoptive and guardianship homes for waiting children as well as children and families after adoption or guardianship has been finalized.

SITE OVERVIEW

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) is the lead agency for the QIC-AG project in Wisconsin. With the exception of Milwaukee, Wisconsin has a state-supervised county administered child welfare system, with child welfare services delivered through a network that includes counties, private agencies, and tribal nations. Post-permanency services are delivered by Post Adoption Resource Centers throughout the state. The Wisconsin QIC-AG project will develop and implement the Adoption and Guardianship Enhanced Support (AGES) program, providing post-permanency supports to adoptive parents and guardians.

PROJECT GOAL

The overall goal of the QIC-AG Wisconsin project is to understand if families who participate in the AGES program are better able to manage family stress, to develop an increased capacity for post-permanency stability, and to achieve improved well-being. Through this project, the QIC-AG will determine whether the enhanced response to emerging needs of adoptive and guardianship families is effective in increasing the capacity of adoptive parents and guardians to address the needs of their children and equipping parents and guardians to better manage family stress. The project aims to serve all families who have adopted or assumed guardianship of children in the targeted region of the state (i.e., the 17 counties and three sovereign tribal nations in the Northeastern Region). This target population includes children adopted through the public child welfare system as well as children adopted through tribal customary adoptions, private domestic adoptions, or international adoptions.

PERMANENCY CONTINUUM INTERVAL: INDICATED

The QIC-AG Wisconsin project will implement the AGES program in the Indicated Interval of the QIC-AG Permanency Continuum Framework. Families in this interval

reach out for help because of the emergence or escalation of challenging issues or behaviors. These emerging issues might be triggered by a change in family dynamics resulting from the child's age or developmental stage such as entering the teen years, a change in family functioning, or a parent's diminished commitment to permanence. Supports provided to families in this interval are designed to reduce family stress, stabilize the placement, and increase the family's skills in managing challenging behaviors.

TARGET POPULATION

The Wisconsin QIC-AG project is focusing on the 17 counties and three sovereign tribal nations in the Northeastern Region and targeting children who have a finalized adoption or guardianship and whose family has requested services from DCF, a Post Adoption Resource Center (PARC), or the Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center (FCARC), or has requested an increase in subsidy rate because of increased child need.

INTERVENTION

The AGES intervention is being developed and tested by the Wisconsin QIC-AG team. AGES is based on similar programs serving post-adoption and guardianship families in Pennsylvania (<http://www.adoptpakids.org/CaseAdvocacy.aspx>) and North Carolina (<http://www.cssp.org/reform/child-welfare/youth-thrive/ei-profiles/Child-Wellbeing-Profile-2-27.pdf>). AGES is also informed by adoptive and guardianship families in Wisconsin who expressed that they would welcome help with the chal-

lenges they face parenting children who have histories of significant trauma and abuse. The AGES program recognizes that families formed through adoption and guardianship have unique challenges and needs that require a family-specific individualized approach. In comparison with the current services provided by PARC and FCARC, AGES will offer families individualized assessment of emerging needs and their strengths, identification of family-specific goals, personalized assistance with navigation of pre-existing resources and services, and targeted advocacy in the areas as requested by the family. The AGES' team of professionals will work with families to build supportive relationships by offering personalized skill-building and educational materials.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND EXPECTED RESULTS

Wisconsin will participate in an evaluation specific to the AGES intervention. Since the AGES intervention is being developed as part of the QIC-AG initiative, the evaluation will focus on testing the components of the intervention, and the short-term outcomes listed below.

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Short-term outcomes, unique to this site include the following:

- » Decrease in child behavioral problems
- » Increased proportion of caregivers who feel equipped to address the needs of the children in their home
- » Increased levels of social support
- » increased caregiver commitment



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MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the QIC-AG visit www.qic-ag.org and

- » search our Intervention and Program Catalog
- » download information about the Permanency Continuum Framework
- » explore details about the eight Partner Sites

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