



Kariñu

Cohort 6, Funding Period 2014–2019

Grantee Overview

Guam's Project LAUNCH, known as Kariñu, which means *loving our children*, is part of Guam's Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS). The ECCS is supported by the Guam Early Learning Council (GELC), making the initiative an island-wide, cross-agency collaborative that provides leadership to build and integrate systems; improve the coordination and alignment of programs/services and workforce development; leverage resources; and collect, share, and use early childhood-related data. Kariñu is committed to providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services and resources to families in support of their well-being. Children and families being served by Kariñu in Guam are diverse in background and preferred language, including Chamorro, Chuukese, Pohnpeian, Yapese, Palauan, Korean, and Tagalog.

Project Milestones

All [Project LAUNCH](#) grantees implement five core promotion and prevention strategies intended to increase access to high-quality prevention and wellness promotion services for children and their families. In Guam, Kariñu implements these five strategies through the following activities:

- **Screening and Assessment:** Kariñu screens the socio-emotional and behavioral development of young children ages birth to 5 years using [the Ages & Stages Questionnaire®, Third Edition](#) (ASQ-3™), [Ages & Stages Questionnaire®: Social-Emotional, Second Edition](#) (ASQ:SE-2™) and [Social-Emotional Assessment/Evaluation Management \(SEAM™\)](#) Family Profile. Mothers, fathers and caregivers with children ages newborn to 3 months are screened using the [Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale \(EPDS\)](#). Since the start of Project LAUNCH in Guam, more than 480 ASQ-3™ and ASQ-SE screenings have been completed by social workers and home visitors at the Southern and Northern Regional Community Health Centers, during home visits, and at the Kariñu office centrally located in Hagatña and in the same building as Guam's Children Protective Services. Screenings result in referrals to programs/agencies that can provide services in the needed area, including clinical services, Project Bisita I Familia (Guam's Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program), Child Protective Services, early intervention, special education, audiology services, and medical social services.
- **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation:** In partnership with the Guam Department of Education Head Start program, Kariñu and two early childhood mental health consultants use screenings and case staffing to determine need and level of services for each child. This may include consultation in the classroom or childcare settings where consultation is provided by two early childhood mental health clinicians.

- **Integrating Behavioral Health into Primary Care:** Kariñu is co-located with primary care services within the southern and northern regional community health centers to build strong collaboration between behavioral health and primary care settings. Kariñu staff currently conduct screenings in the community health centers' medical exam rooms on days when pediatric and obstetrics/gynecology visits are scheduled; more than 250 children have been screened in these two clinics since July 2015. As of September 2017, screenings are also conducted during operating hours of the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. Co-location within the community health centers facilitates the access of children and families to Kariñu services, and physicians and nurses actively refer their patients using the Universal Referral Form. It also allows children who first enter Kariñu's doors to be referred to primary care providers and other services available through the Department of Health and Social Services, including WIC, Medicaid, Child Protective Services, and Project Bisita I Familia.
- **Enhancing Home Visiting:** Kariñu supports parents and caregivers of children ages birth to 5 years through the [Parents as Teachers](#) (PAT) Home Visiting program and the [CSEFEL Pyramid Model](#). Kariñu continues to strengthen its collaboration and coordination of services with other early childhood partners for cross referrals and provision of home-based services. Social workers and home visitors, along with staff from Kariñu, Project Bisita I Familia, child protective services, and the Micronesian Resources Center One Stop Shop trained in PAT, are working together to develop coordinated, family-centered plans. Their goal is to improve coordination of services for staff and to reduce the number of approaches for families to navigate when curricula are introduced in their homes. Home visitors are oriented to the cultural values of the different communities and the expected behaviors for demonstrating respect of families when visiting.
- **Family Strengthening:** As Kariñu staff work to support families, they have hosted opportunities for parents and caregivers to come together, share with one another, and learn. These events include Parent Cafés, designed to promote the *Strengthening Families* five protective factors: parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of child development, and social and emotional competence of children. Parent Cafés are held at the Lagu Resource Center—a youth center conveniently located in one of the most populated villages in northern Guam—or other venues that are comfortable and welcoming, supporting an atmosphere where families are able to relax and feel that the environment is safe to share their personal stories. Also invited to participate are families involved with other early childhood programs, such as Project Bisita I Familia and I'Famagu'on-ta. Kariñu also hosts peer family support groups in central Guam. Topics discussed include training for caregivers on challenging behaviors and how families can handle stress in their personal lives. Whenever possible, childcare is provided to support parents' and caregivers' participation and engagement. Kariñu also conducts quarterly playdate sessions at PlayPort with children and their parents to reinforce other activities and home visitations. Finally, Kariñu has contracted the Micronesia Resource Center One Stop Shop, a local nonprofit organization, to conduct community-based family strengthening activities based of the CSEFEL Pyramid Model. Staff from this NGO are representative of Guam's diverse ethnic and cultural groups—some speak Chuukese as well as Pohnpeian—and are a great resource to families who do not speak English.



Systems Integration

Project LAUNCH is intended to improve coordination and collaboration across systems that serve young children and their families. Kariñu is part of Guam’s ECCS, a collaboration of various Government of Guam and nongovernmental agencies. With advisory guidance from GELC, serving as Guam’s Young Child Wellness Council, this collaboration seeks to build and integrate systems to be more streamlined, efficient, and responsive; improve the coordination and alignment of early childhood programs to coordinate and strengthen comprehensive services for all children across the island; strengthen cross-agency workforce development; leverage resources; and collect, share, and use Guam’s early childhood-related data.

Products of this collaboration include the development and adoption of a Universal Referral Form that is accepted and used across programs and agencies to facilitate services to families and use of the same developmental screening tools by early childhood partners.

This grantee profile is a product of the National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, under funding provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Cooperative Agreement 5U79SM061516-02. The views, opinions, and content of this grantee profile do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), SAMHSA, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention is operated by American Institutes for Research (AIR) in collaboration with the Center for School Mental Health, ZERO TO THREE, Community Science, FHI 360, National Indian Child Welfare Association, National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association, National Latino Behavioral Health Association, National Leadership Council on African American Behavioral Health, and the Council of State Governments.
