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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**The Stuart Foundation grants \$150,000 to SPIN USA, Inc. to expand its child welfare training programs.**

Carlisle, MA - SPIN USA, the national institute for strength-based training and practice in the US, announced today a twelve-month award from the Stuart Foundation to train California child welfare workers and their supervisors to work collaboratively with parents suspected of abuse or neglect to keep children safe. The Stuart Foundation grant will allow SPINUSA to expand its current facilitation training programs in California and to provide leadership training to strengthen the Child Welfare Services Redesign effort in two lead counties: San Luis Obispo and Stanislaus.

Through this grant, SPIN will train facilitators in three additional counties to provide them with essential skills to successfully lead and mediate emotionally charged and often-adversarial team decision making meetings where parents, community members and child welfare workers meet together to decide where at risk children should live. Developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as part of its *Family to Family* initiative, team decision making meetings are rooted in the belief that public child welfare agencies

can do their job better when they partner with communities in support of children, youth and families. Instead of relying solely on the case worker and other professionals, these meetings convene a team, including the child, the family and the larger community to collaborate in child placement decisions. SPIN will train facilitators in Contra Costa, Orange and Monterey counties, in addition to its current sites in Stanislaus, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo and San Mateo counties.

“SPIN provides the missing link for our county, connecting the vision for the child welfare system reform and our capacity to fully engage staff in implementing family and community centered initiatives. SPIN training will enhance the interactive strengths among our staff and the families we serve.” according to Mari Solis, Manager CWS Staff Development and Redesign Initiatives of San Luis Obispo county.

“ We are thrilled with this resounding vote of confidence in our organization’s work,” says Jane P. Nestel-Patt, President and CEO of SPIN USA “There is nothing more rewarding then to be able to expand the impact of our programs.”

SPIN USA provides training programs for parents, teachers, social workers and their managers to more effectively care for children. The training is based on a strength-focused analysis of one’s own work or family interactions, captured on videotape, to transform relational and organizational dynamics. In the child welfare arena, the outcome is effective, results-driven child welfare services that truly help at risk children to thrive.

SPIN USA, a 501(c)(3) organization incorporated in 2000 and headquartered in Carlisle, MA, is supported by contracts with social services agencies, foundation grants, and individual contributions. The organization is part of an international network of national SPIN training centers in the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.

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