

It's All Relative

Supporting Kinship Connections



Webinar Discussion Guide

Curious about how other jurisdictions encourage kinship care placements? Interested in sparking dialogue in your agency about improving kinship support? Gather your team to watch the recorded 2018 National Foster Care Month webinar, “It’s All Relative: Supporting Kinship Connections,” to hear about innovative kinship programs in Ohio and Colorado. Use this discussion guide to lead your team to integrate strategies into practice for immediate improvements and to identify models you can adapt for long-term change.

Get Ready



Before viewing the webinar, prepare your team to learn by sharing kinship care research from links in the Resources You Can Use section. Ask for group members to compare their experiences with kinship care to the research. As a group, identify the benefits and challenges of kinship care for children, for families, for the

agency, and for each team member.

“Where removal is necessary, we think the evidence is clear that kinship care should always be the first choice.” – David Kelly, Children’s Bureau

Gather New Ideas

As you watch the webinar, help your team gather ideas by asking members to make notes. What are similar challenges? What examples of solutions, interventions, or strategies can you try? What matches the research findings? What gives you hope?

- ▶ Pause after the polling questions during the Richland County, OH, Children Services presentation to discuss with your team:
 - How is our jurisdiction similar to others in our use of a formal kinship care program or methods to integrate kinship options into placements when needed?
 - What resources or community partnerships are we using to support kinship programs or placements? What additional resources or partnerships might be helpful?
 - Does our jurisdiction sufficiently address the needs of kin?
- ▶ Pause after the polling questions during the Colorado Department of Human Resources presentation to discuss with your team:
 - In what ways are we similar to Colorado?
 - How are we different?



“We don’t have it figured out completely, but we feel we’re on the right track and our results are starting to show that.” – Jeannie Berzinskis, Colorado Department of Human Resources

Set Your Trajectory



involved?

Integrate Strategies Into Practice

After viewing, ask the team to use the notes to debrief and plan in three stages. Allow 1 minute for individual thought at each stage, then group discussion.

- ▶ Step 1: What was most relevant? What strategies or ideas stood out to you?
- ▶ Step 2: Why is this important? Do these collective ideas lead us to a hypothesis?
- ▶ Step 3: What action makes sense? What could we adapt? Who needs to be

Select from these questions to guide the conversation toward action:

- ▶ How is our jurisdiction similar/different?
- ▶ What gives you the greatest hope for kinship care in our jurisdiction?
- ▶ What did you see the states model that helped them garner support for their strategies?
- ▶ What strategies, data, or interventions resonated with you?
- ▶ What did you learn that you can use to improve practice immediately, without additional resources or authority?
- ▶ What resources can we adapt to improve practice?
- ▶ What data can we use to move the conversation forward?
- ▶ Who can contribute to achieving our purpose and must be included?
- ▶ What shared beliefs, values, and attitudes does our agency have about kinship care?
- ▶ What policies and practices in our agency create barriers for kinship caregivers?
- ▶ What policies and practices in our agency support kinship caregivers?
- ▶ What does our agency expect, track, and reward related to kinship care?
- ▶ What messages does that send about what the agency considers important?
- ▶ What messages do we currently send about relative caregivers?
- ▶ What do we need to change to shape our messages differently?
- ▶ What do we need to develop our workforce in supporting relative caregivers?
- ▶ What changes do we foresee in funding to support kinship care?

“I was able to convince our Board to continue the [Kinship Navigator] Program despite our funding loss. . . .when you see some of the numbers you’ll understand why they said, ‘absolutely, we have to do it.’” – Tim Harless, Richland County Children Services

Resources You Can Use

Colorado Kinship Supports Needs Assessment

<http://www.coloradochildrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Kinship-Needs-Assmt-11.4.13.docx>

Colorado Department of Human Resources (2013)

Designed to help agency staff work with kinship caregivers to identify and prioritize the family's initial and ongoing needs.

It's All Relative: Supporting Kinship Care Discussion Guides and Video Series

<https://capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/focus-areas/foster-care-permanency/kinship-care-series/>

Capacity Building Center for States (2018)

Illustrates the complex dynamics of family relationships and caregiver support needs through real-life stories of kinship caregivers. The discussion guides, designed to be used with the videos in this series, are tailored to support different audiences. The discussion guides include flexible menus of reflective activities and questions for individual coaching or to promote collaborative discussions. Templates for setting goals and planning action provide a pathway to move learning into practice.

National Foster Care Month 2018 – It's All Relative: Supporting Kinship Connections Resources for Child Welfare Professionals

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/resources/cwprofessionals/>

Child Welfare Information Gateway (2018)

Links to information for child welfare workers on how to locate, recruit, and build the capacity of kinship caregivers who may be a placement option; apply evidence-based practice models other agencies are using with kin; and improve daily caseworker visits and overall engagement.

Practice Manual for ProtectOHIO Kinship Intervention

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/PFOF/PDF/ProtectOHIO-Kinship-Intervention-Manual.stm>

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (2011)

Summarizes the main components of the ProtectOHIO kinship intervention, a Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration project. The Manual provides the basis of training for kinship staff in demonstration counties.

Resources for Relative and Kinship Caregivers

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/outofhome/kinship/resourcesforcaregivers/>

Child Welfare Information Gateway (n.d.)

Links to guides, handbooks, and information about legal, financial, and other issues common to kinship families and guidance on changing family dynamics and establishing permanency.