

Valuing and Supporting Kin Caregivers: A Training for Child Welfare Agencies

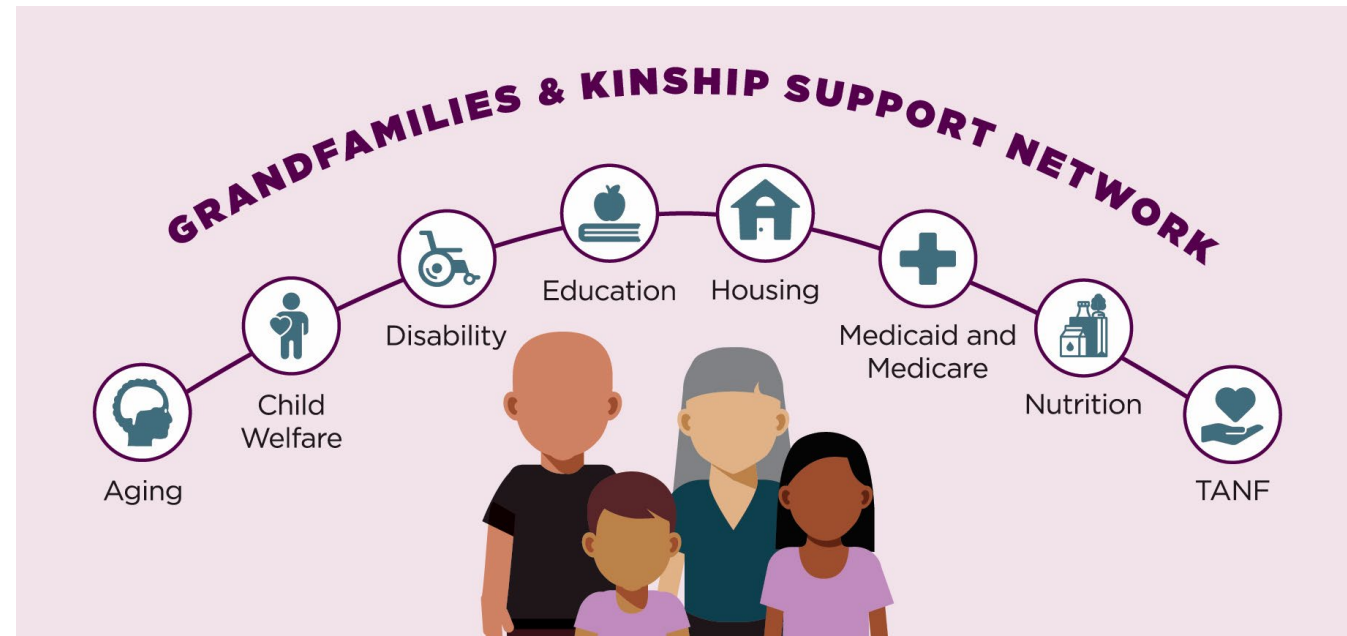
Train the Trainers Webinar
April 15, 2025

- Welcome, we will begin at the top of the hour
- Please type in the **chat** box - your name, state, tribe (if applicable), and role
- Type questions in the **chat** box at any point during our time together
- **We will provide a separate meeting link for a 30-minute Q&A with panelists starting in 90 minutes, at 3:30 ET**
- By the end the week, all participants will receive a link to the slides, the recording, and the fillable template

GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP SUPPORT NETWORK

A National Technical Assistance Center

- Since 2021, Generations United, in cooperation with the US Administration for Community Living, has operated the first-ever federally funded technical assistance center on kinship/grandfamilies
- Purpose is to provide technical assistance to the array of state, territorial, and tribal government agencies and organizations so they can better serve the families by working across systems and maximizing resources



How We Help



Learning Collaboratives and Information Dissemination

The Network hosts [webinars](#) and facilitates learning collaboratives.



Individual Assistance

We respond to [individual requests for help](#) from government agencies, kinship navigators, and community-based nonprofits.



A Centralized Hub

The Network is elevating exemplary kinship/grandfamily practices and programs from around the country on its accessible website, www.GKSNetwork.org.

The First-Ever National Technical Assistance Center for those who Serve Kinship/Grandfamilies

We help government agencies and nonprofits in states, tribes, and territories work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries to improve supports and services for families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children.



Welcome our Presenters



Lynn Urvina

Washington GRAND Voice
& retired Kinship Navigator



Robyn Wind

GRAND Voice Coordinator



Ana Beltran

Director, Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network

Poll 1 – Tell Us About Your Role

Tell us about your role that brought you to this train the trainers webinar? Please select one.

- Child welfare leadership
- Child welfare licensing staff
- Child welfare training staff
- Other child welfare staff
- Kin caregiver
- Other lived expert
- Kinship navigator or other kinship service provider

Valuing and Supporting Kin Caregivers

A Training for Child Welfare Agencies

Welcome!

What We're Covering Today

- Benefits of Kinship Care
- How We Got Here
- Children in Kinship/Grandfamilies
- Financial Support for Kin
- Supporting Kin Through Foster Care Licensing
- The Value of Child Welfare Agencies in Supporting Kin
- Additional Resources

Key Takeaways

- **Children thrive with relatives** – especially when they receive the support they need.
- **Empowering families with information and resources is essential to:**
 - Help them make the best decisions for the child.
 - Ensure they can access the right support.

Poll 2 – Benefits of Kinship Care

What are some of the benefits of kinship care that you've seen for the children?
Select all that apply.

- Better connection to siblings
- Less trauma
- Feel like they belong
- Feel connected to their culture
- Are in a more stable placement - less likely to need to be moved to another home
- Seems permanent - often go back to parents or go into guardianship or adoption with kin
- All of the above
- None of the above

[← Events](#) [← Past Events](#)

Webinar on Family Dynamics in Kinship Families: Implications for Services and Programs with Dr. Joseph Crumbley

September 20, 2022



[View webinar recording](#)

[Download the presentation](#)

The Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network hosted a webinar on September 20, 2022, led by world-renowned kinship expert Dr. Joseph Crumbley, provided a framework describing the unique family dynamics of kinship families. Learn how to use this framework when engaging

Challenges	Solutions
Myths and assumptions, e.g., “the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree”	Work towards a culture shift Trainings
Unexpected responsibility of caring for additional children	Provide supports and concrete goods to meet unexpected needs
Access to accurate information Fear and mistrust of “systems”	Train kin staff Provide written materials
Unique barriers to foster care approval	Kin-specific standards!

Benefits of Kin-Specific Licensing

- ✓ Staff save administrative time and effort that can be used for other priorities and supports
- ✓ No need to obtain waivers for non-safety licensing standards
- ✓ Easier Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Process
- ✓ 100% equitable support for kin caregivers with placement
- ✓ No more unsupported placements
- ✓ More kin placements
- ✓ More kin guardianship

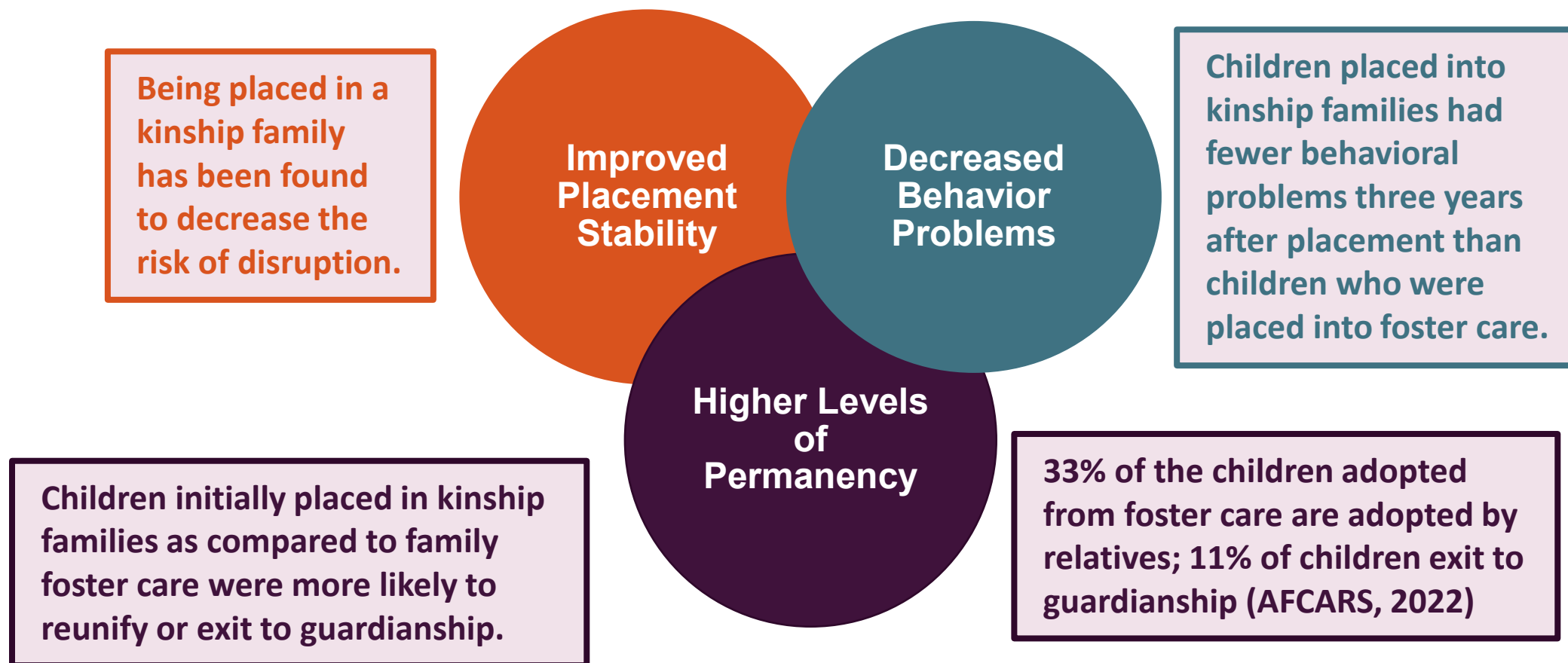
How We Got Here



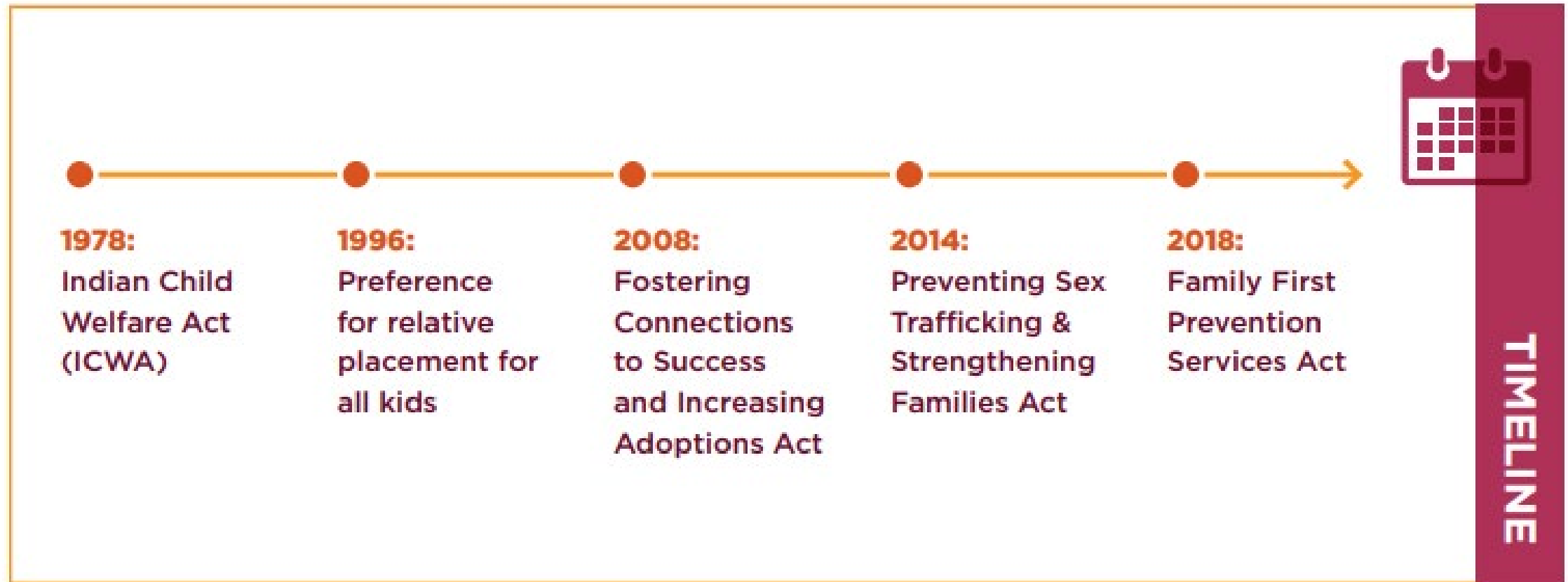
Kinship Strengths: Children Thrive



Kinship Families Improve Outcomes For Children



Decades of Federal Law Affirming the Importance of Kinship Care





Known as "child-only" cases...the largest group is children being raised by grandparents or other relatives because their parents are in jail, are on drugs or have lost custody as a result of abuse or neglect."

**Washington Post [article](#) from 1999–
Referring to “Country Club Grandmothers”**

“lost generation”

Boston Globe - 2001





Is kinship care better than traditional foster care? **Or worse?**

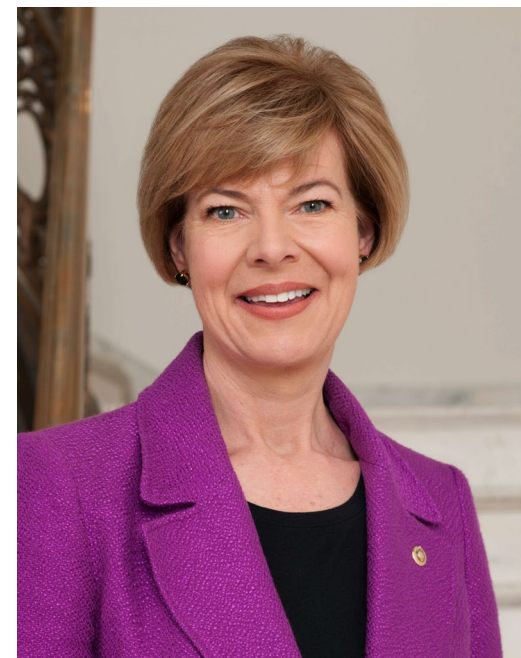
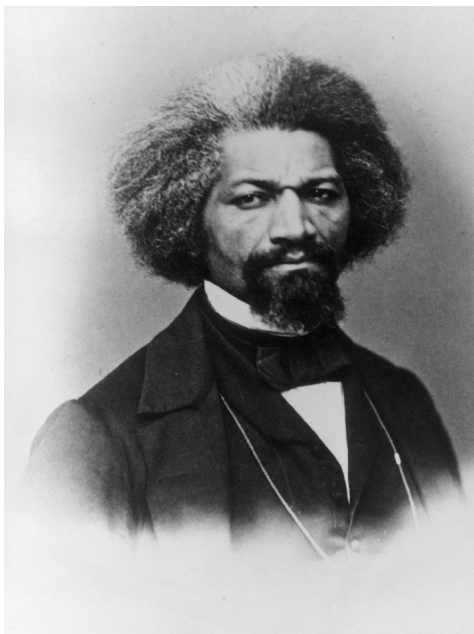
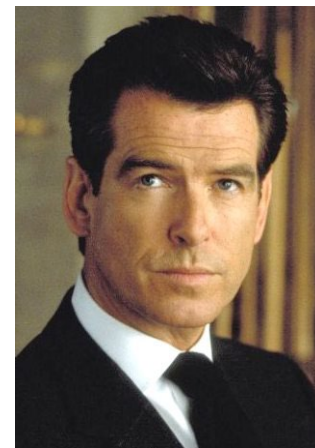
National Public Radio - 2001



“

Any – emotional gaps, spiritual gaps – my [grandparents] filled them. So, I didn't skip a beat. I was never short on the love of a mother and father though it came from an earlier generation of family.”

Jamie Foxx



5 GRANDRALLIES – 2003 - 2017



“

Initially, my three grandchildren were scattered in various states. It was my husband and I's goal to get all of our grandchildren together...We accomplished that. I think the joy for me was when I would go into their rooms at night and they were all sleeping peacefully and they were safe.”

GRAND Voice Sarah Smalls to NBC News, 2021

“When Black children are raised by relatives, resources are hard to find”

Public Support

Harris National Poll

90% of Americans agree that child welfare agencies:

- should identify extended family members to take in children before resorting to foster care with somebody the child doesn't already know
- should provide extended family members with similar supports and resources as provided to other foster parents

Ashley

Ashley is 7 years old. She and her 3 siblings are no longer able to live with their parents.

All four children were removed from their home and placed in the custody of the state.

Ashley enjoys playing with doll houses and is artistic. She especially loves painting!

Two days after she's removed from her parents' home, Ashley celebrates her 8th birthday.



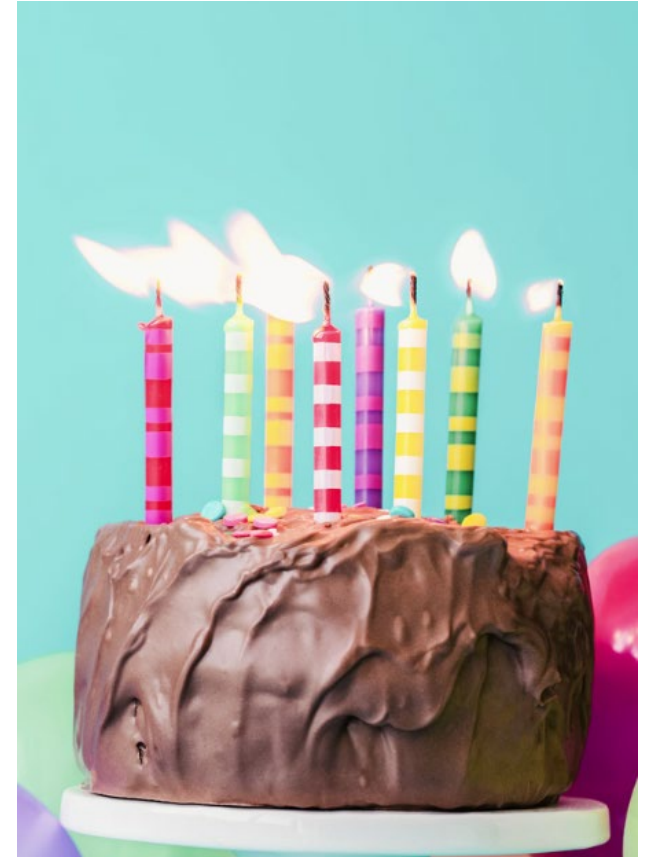
Home 1 - Birthday

Ashley is placed in a non-kin foster home. She is placed with one of her sisters, but her other two siblings go to a foster home across town.

On the morning of her birthday, Ashley's foster mom has a birthday breakfast of donuts waiting, the same special breakfast the foster family eats for all the children's birthdays. The whole family sings happy birthday.

There are three presents for Ashley, which her foster mom went out and shopped for late the night before, hoping Ashley would like them.

Ashley's foster mom reached out to the caseworker to arrange a visit with her two siblings. After school, they drive 45 minutes to meet at a supervised visit location. Ashley's foster mom picks up a cake and all four children are together briefly while Ashley blows out her candles.



Home 2 - Birthday



Ashley and her three siblings are placed with their maternal aunt, Tonya.

The aunt knows that Ashley's favorite breakfast food is pancakes and has them ready for her before school. She also sings happy birthday, but it's the special family version of happy birthday that Ashley's mom usually sings to her.

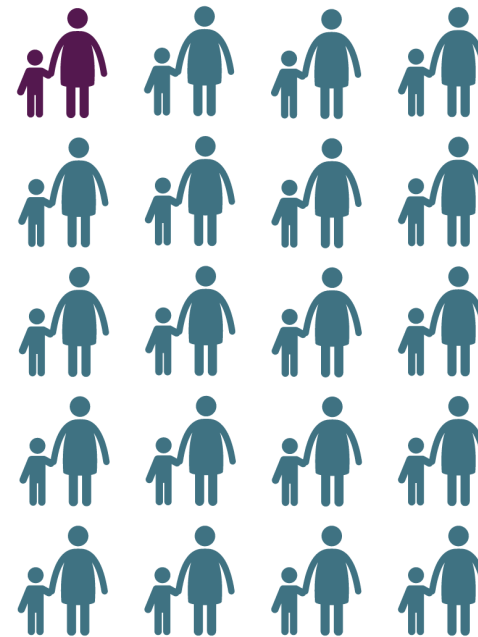
Ashley's aunt tells Ashley about the day she was born; she pulls out photos from when Ashley was a baby, recalling how her eyes and lips favor her mom.

Tonya knows her niece loves to paint and even has two paintings she made last school year hung up on the fridge. Tonya told the caseworker that Ashley is interested in painting, and the caseworker was able to bring over art supplies from the agency's gift closet.

After school, some of Ashley's cousins and grandparents come over to see her. They celebrate with a cookout where the siblings and cousins all have a chance to play and be together.

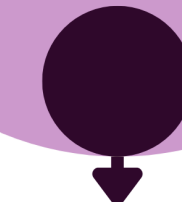
Children in Kinship/Grandfamilies

For every **1 child** being raised by kin in foster care, there are **19 children** being raised by kin outside of foster care



**about
2.4 million**

children are being raised by a relative or close family friend, with no parent living in the household



123,294

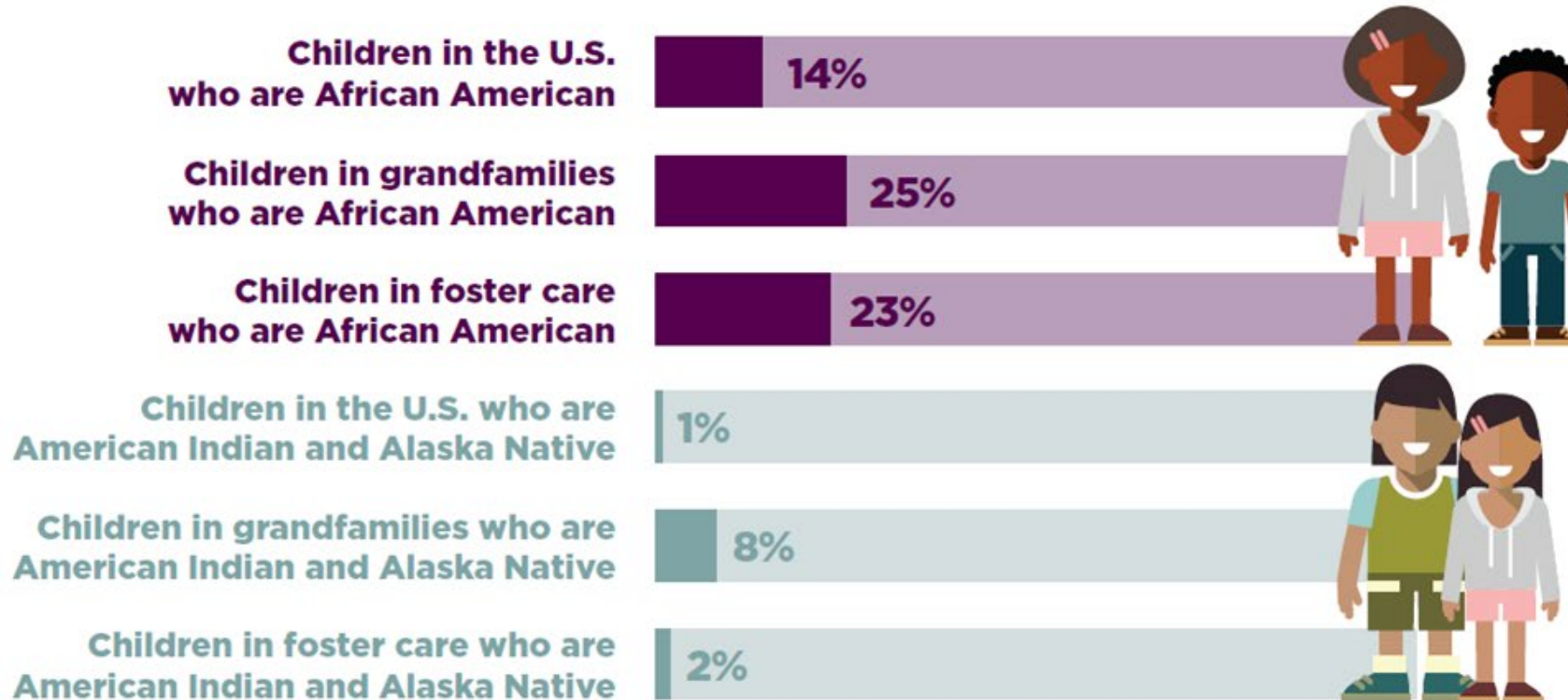
children in foster care are being raised by relatives

**generations
united**
Because we're stronger together®

**GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP
SUPPORT NETWORK**
A National Technical Assistance Center

See: www.gksnetwork.org/resources/grandfamilies-kinship-families-strengths-challenges/ and www.gksnetwork.org/kinship-data/

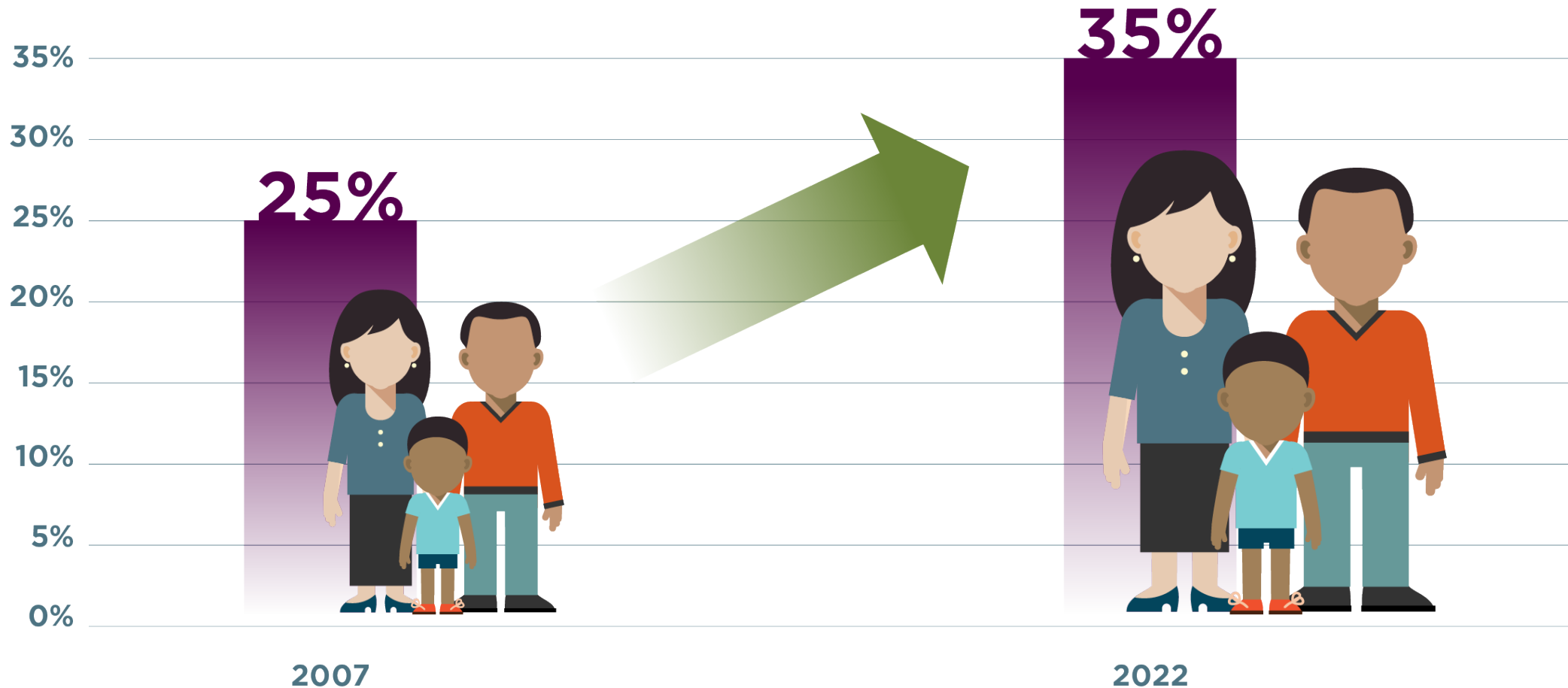
Racial Overrepresentation in Grandfamilies



Latino, Asian, and white children are not overrepresented in grandfamilies without parents in the home – they are either equally or more likely to live in parent-headed homes.

However, Latino, Asian, and Black children are more likely to live in multigenerational households than white children.

Percentage of Children in Foster Care Being Raised by Relatives



This data does not distinguish between children in licensed/approved foster homes and those who are in unlicensed homes. The majority of these children are in unlicensed/unsupported homes.

Why Unlicensed/Unsupported?

- Federal rule required foster home licensing standards to be **the same** for relatives and non-relatives
- Agencies could make **case-by-case** exceptions for non-safety standards
- Nationally, **most** kin caregivers were unlicensed; they had placement of children but **no financial support or less financial support than non-kin foster homes**
- **Prevented kin placement** in some places
- “Case-by-case” requirement for waivers meant **more time and higher caseloads**
- Ultimately, agencies couldn’t implement fully supported kin-specific approval without an update to the federal rule

Financial Support for Kin

Voices of Children Contest 2024

Entry of Merit Ages 8-12

I LOVE YOU grandma



Kay'licia

Age-11

National – Support Comparison

Outside the Foster Care System or Outside Licensed Kinship Foster Care Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) “Child-Only” Grants	Licensed Kinship Foster Care Foster Care Maintenance Payments	Guardianship Assistance and Adoption Assistance for Eligible Children Exiting Foster Care
One Child \$ 328 /month average Must apply for Medicaid separately or Automatic Medicaid with a TANF child-only grant	One Child \$ 915 /month average Automatic Medicaid	One Child Up to \$ 915 /month average Automatic Medicaid
Two Children \$ 447 /month average Must apply for Medicaid separately or Automatic Medicaid with a TANF child-only grant	Two Children \$ 1830 /month average Automatic Medicaid	Two Children Up to \$ 1830 /month average Automatic Medicaid
Three Children \$ 555 /month average Must apply for Medicaid separately or Automatic Medicaid with a TANF child-only grant	Three Children \$ 2745 /month average Automatic Medicaid	Three Children Up to \$ 2745 /month average Automatic Medicaid

Source: Child Trends using public data sources

TANF Resources

FACT SHEET

Grand Resources:

A Fact Sheet for Grandparent and Relative Caregivers to Help Access Support through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program

Introduction

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is often the only financial support available for grandfamilies like yours—families in which children are being raised by extended family members, like grandparents, and close family friends.

TANF may provide you and your grandfamily with support in several ways:

- Monthly cash to help meet the needs of your grandfamily or to meet the needs of just the children you're raising
- short-term help to meet a need like buying a crib or paying a utility bill
- a pathway to access other important supports, like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/food stamps and Medicaid

TANF is a federal program, so it's available in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. However, it varies dramatically from state to state. States have a lot of flexibility to decide who is eligible and how much support to provide. States can even call TANF by different names. For these reasons, this fact sheet answers questions from caregivers like you in general terms that apply no matter where you live. This fact sheet also has a chart that has contact information so you can get information about the specific TANF program in your state.

Questions and Answers That Apply No Matter Where You Live



Photo by Pedra R.

support payments or a public benefit like Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Because most children have limited income, most relative caregivers can receive a child-only grant on behalf of the children in their care.

Child-only grants are usually smaller than family grants. Although they may not be enough to meet all the needs of the children you're raising, they can be a big help. The average grant is about \$8 per day for one child. This is the national average, so some states pay more and some pay less. All states, however, pay only slightly more for any additional children in the grandfamily.¹ In other words, the children you raise would not each get \$8 (on average) per day to meet their needs; only the first child would get the full amount.

Family grants

The second type of TANF grant you may be eligible for is a



POLICY BRIEF



Improving Grandfamilies' Access to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Ana Beltran, Special Advisor, Generations United's National Center on Grandfamilies

One of the four primary purposes of TANF is “to provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.”¹

In 1996, Congress explicitly envisioned Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) as a critical support for “kinship families” or “grandfamilies” -- families in which children are being raised by kin who are extended family members and close family friends. Almost two decades later, kin continue to rely on TANF as often the only source of financial support for helping them keep the families they raise together and out of the formal foster care system. Although TANF policy explicitly states that children cared for by relatives can receive TANF assistance, many kin families do not access it to meet the needs of children they are unexpectedly raising. Only about 12 percent of kinship families receive any TANF assistance, even though the majority of children being raised by kin live in poverty and qualify for the program.²

Many kinship families do not access either type of TANF grants -- family grants and child-only grants -- in large part because the actual framework of TANF was not designed with them in mind. Despite the fact that one of TANF's stated purposes is to help kinship families, federal TANF rules for family grants were developed for young, low-income single mothers with no or minimal financial assets. To encourage them not to become dependent on assistance, TANF grants are intentionally kept low, only provided for a limited time, and made dependent on employment or work activities.³

However, unlike children living with at least one parent, the majority of children in kinship families have a caregiver who is age 50 and older, and many caregivers are also

ward and raise children they did not plan to raise. These older caregivers should not be forced to return to work or stop saving for retirement.

As with family grants, the federal framework also causes barriers for relatives accessing child-only grants. Even though child-only grants generally do not have time limits or work requirements, other barriers exist that prevent kinship families from accessing this support. A significant obstacle, for example, is caused by the federal requirement that relatives assign the collection of child support to the state. Many caregivers are fearful that absent parents may retaliate against them if they have the state pursue the parents for child support.

Despite these barriers caused by the TANF framework, the federal law also affords states a great deal of flexibility to make exceptions and create policies and practices that better serve kinship families. For example, states can exempt caregivers from all work requirements and time limits; exempt retirement savings from consideration, much as they do savings to buy a first home; and implement a good cause exception for assigning child support to the state.

This brief highlights states and counties that improve access for kinship families by making these types of exceptions and by creating other policies, practices, and programs that address the challenges the existing TANF framework poses. The May 2012 Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count report, *Stepping Up For Kids*, urges states

Poll 3 – Foster Care Maintenance Payments

What do foster care maintenance payments pay for? (Check all that apply.)

- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter
- Childcare/education
- Transportation
- Everything else – toothbrush/toothpaste, hair cuts, piano lessons, sports, video games, school supplies
- Pay caregivers for their time and effort
- All of the above



The term “foster care maintenance payments” means payments to cover the cost of (and the cost of providing) food, clothing, shelter, daily supervision, school supplies, a child’s personal incidentals, liability insurance with respect to a child, reasonable travel to the child’s home for visitation, and reasonable travel for the child to remain in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement.”

42 USC 675(4)

The Cost of Raising a Child: \$233,610



Not including
the annual cost
of college!

\$45,370
Private

\$20,090
Public

**Includes room
and board.*



\$233,610

Where does the money go?

18%
Food

29%
Housing

15%
Transportation

9%
Health Care

6%
Clothing

16%
Child Care
& Education

7%
Misc.

Annual Housing Cost
per Child

Urban
\$3,900

VS

Rural
\$2,400

Annual Food Costs by Age



Cost by Region



*U.S. average for middle-income, married-couple families. Total costs are from birth through age 17.
Source: Expenditures on Children by Families, 2015.
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. Misc. Pub. No. 1528-2015.

January 2017
Revised March 2017
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

See: www.washingtonpost.com/business/interactive/2022/cost-raising-child-calculator/

Additional Benefits for Kinship Families Exiting Foster Care

- ✓ Pathway to ongoing Guardianship Assistance Payments (GAP) – must be caring for the kin child and licensed for 6 months prior to exiting foster care
- ✓ Pathway to Adoption Assistance - only available to children who have been in foster care - although unlike GAP, the relative doesn't have to be licensed as a foster parent
- ✓ College/Tuition Assistance if age out of foster care
- ✓ Considered “independent” for purposes of additional college financial aid if in foster care any time after age 13

Additional Considerations for Children Who Are Adopted by Their Kin

- ✓ Benefits Available to Children who have been adopted privately or from foster care:
 - ✓ Veterans Benefits
 - ✓ Social Security Based on Caregiver (not just birth parent)
- ✓ Not “independent” for purposes of college financial aid – adoptive parents income considered (unless adopted from foster care after age 13)

Supporting Kin Through Foster Care Licensing



Key Steps to Creating a Kin-First Culture

1. **Lead with a kin-first philosophy**
2. **Develop written policies and protocols that reflect equity for children with kin and recognize their unique circumstances**
3. **Identify and engage kin for children at every step**
4. **Create a sense of urgency for making the first placement a kin placement**
5. **Make licensing kin a priority**
6. **Support permanent families for children**
7. **Create a strong community network to support kin families**

Step 5 – Make Licensing Kin a Priority

As of November 27, 2023, there is an amended rule giving title IV-E agencies the option to have a kin-specific licensing or approval process that recognizes the unique strengths and needs of kin caregivers.

The rule requires title IV-E agencies to ensure that licensed or approved kin foster family homes receive the same foster care maintenance payments as non-kin foster homes.

What the Rule Says

- Encourages title IV-E agencies to establish kin-specific standards limited to long-standing federal law that requires title IV-E agencies to:
 - Conduct **criminal and child abuse background checks** under the federal Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. 42 U.S.C. § 671(a)(20)
 - Align their standards “**reasonably in accord** with recommended standards of national organizations... which shall permit the use of the reasonable and prudent parenting standard” 42 U.S.C. § 671 (a)(10)(A)
- Federal law has long required that title IV-E agencies create and maintain their own foster care standards, and this new rule does nothing to change that state, territorial, and tribal flexibility

Focus on federal requirements

Serve as “recommended standards of national organizations”

Developed with input from:

- ✓ **100+ Kin Caregivers**
- ✓ **45 Title IV-E Agencies**
- ✓ **Other Subject Matter Experts**

Kin-Specific Foster Home Approval

Recommended
Standards
of National
Organizations



ABA AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
Center on Children
and the Law

A SECOND CHANCE
Kinship Care

**CHILDREN'S
RIGHTS**

**generations
united**
Because we're stronger together®

**GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP
SUPPORT NETWORK**
A National Technical Assistance Center

nara National Association for
Regulatory Administration

**child welfare
playbook**

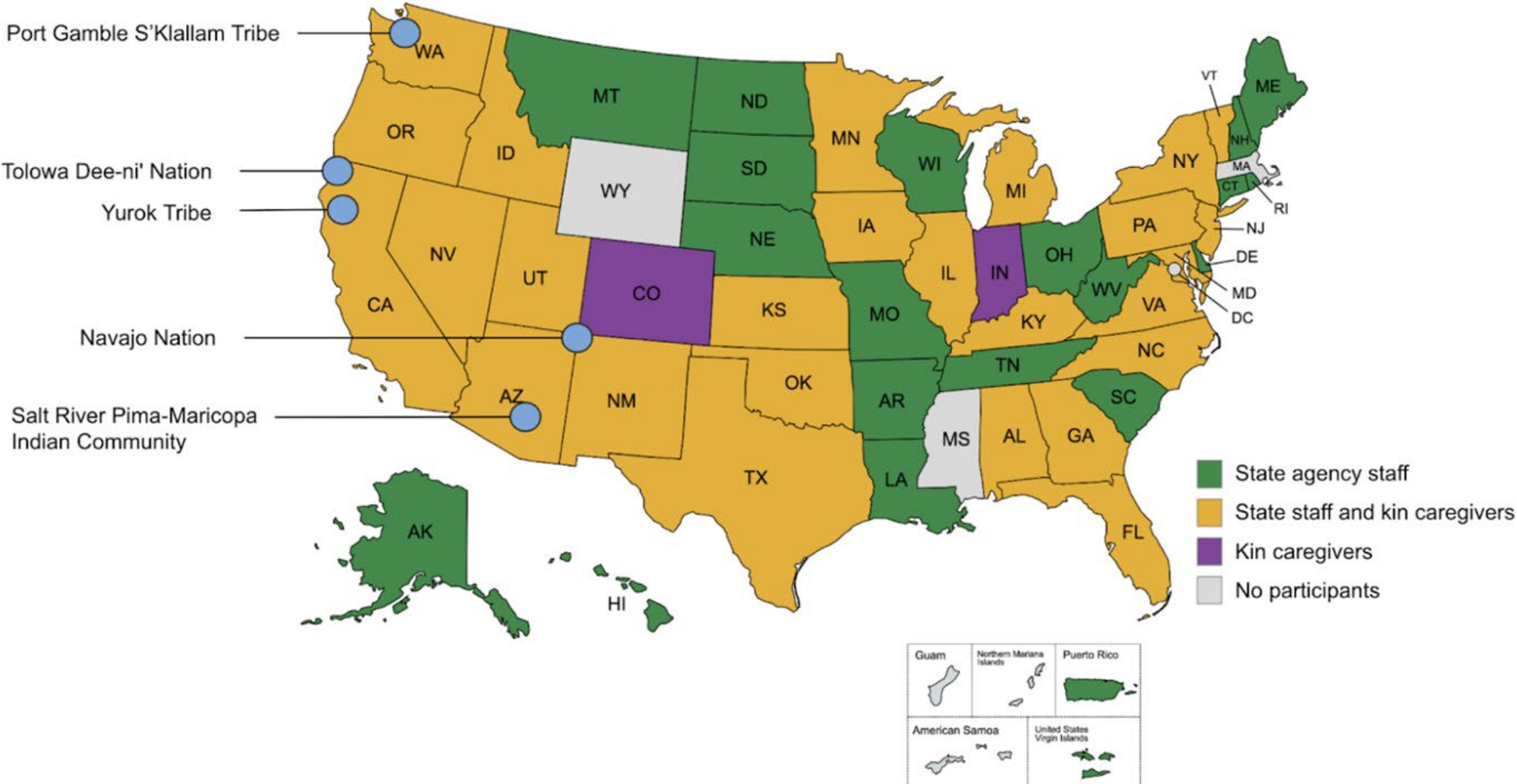
think of us

Kin-Specific Foster Home Approval: National Nonprofit Partners

- A Second Chance, Inc.
- American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law
- Children's Rights
- Generations United and its Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center

- National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA)
- National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA)
- New America's Resource Family Working Group
- Think of Us

Co-Design of Standards



Kin-Specific Standards & Tools

1. Required background checks
2. Kin caregiver assessment

Goal: 100% approval on same day as placement with kin

The standards include implementation guidance and example template forms

Federal Law: Background Checks

For each kin caregiver you seek to approve:

- ☐ Send fingerprints to the FBI
- ☐ Check the child abuse and neglect registry of any state where that caregiver lived in the last 5 years

For each adult living in the kin caregiver's home*:

- ☐ Check the child abuse and neglect registry of any state where that adult lived in the last 5 years

[42 USC 671\(a\)\(20\)](#)

*CAPTA or Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act may require you to fingerprint

Kin Standards: Background Checks

For each kin caregiver you seek to approve:

- ☐ Send fingerprints to the FBI
- ☐ Check the child abuse and neglect registry of any state where that caregiver lived in the last 5 years
- ☐ Check sex offender registry
- ☐ Conduct name-based in-state background check

For each adult living in the kin caregiver's home*:

- ☐ Check the child abuse and neglect registry of any state where that adult lived in the last 5 years
- ☐ Check sex offender registry
- ☐ Conduct name-based in-state background check

*CAPTA or Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act may require you to fingerprint

Federal Barrier Crimes

Permanently disqualifying:

- ☐ felony conviction for child abuse or neglect
- ☐ felony conviction for spousal abuse
- ☐ felony conviction for a crime against children (including child pornography)
- ☐ felony conviction involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide, but not including other physical assault or battery

Disqualifying if felony conviction in the last 5 years:

- ☐ physical assault
- ☐ battery
- ☐ a drug-related offense

42 USC 671(a)(20)

Kin-Specific Licensing Progress and Documents

For purposes of this document:

“Approved” indicates that the Children’s Bureau approved the jurisdiction’s plan.

“Submitted” indicates that a jurisdiction has submitted a plan to the Children’s Bureau.

“Committed to Implement” indicates that a jurisdiction has decided to implement kin-specific licensing and is in the process of making an implementation plan.

“Interested” indicates that a jurisdiction is exploring kin-specific licensing.

- Approved
- Submitted
- Committed to implement
- Interested
- No response



Value of the Child Welfare Agency in Supporting Kin



Child Protection & Foster Care

- You are needed! Some children and families need your protection and support.
- Families should be provided with their options in a balanced way.
- The families are their own best experts.
- The goal is to license/approve more kin as foster parents by making that pathway more accessible – and to stop placing children in unlicensed/unapproved homes that do not receive foster care maintenance payments.

Safe enough to place, but not safe enough to support is over!

Situation

- Parent is severely mentally ill, and the child welfare agency knows it
- Agency finds an aunt willing to care for child
- They don't provide options to the aunt; instead, they tell her to go to court and get legal custody – unilaterally assuming that it's the family's best interest
- Parent no longer talks to her sister – she thinks of her as an enemy who went to court and proved to the court that she was unfit to parent

If approved/licensed as foster parent

- Sister caregiver and child would be financially and otherwise supported
- Wouldn't have to sue sister and prove her "unfit" – sister vs. sister in court
- Parent would have access to case management, a plan, and more of a chance to reunify with the child

Situation

- The police are called to a family's home and arrest the parents.
- The child welfare agency comes to the home to remove the child. Grandma was called by the parents and is already there.
- The agency doesn't provide options to Grandma. They say you can take the child or we will take her and put her with a licensed foster parent.
- Grandma takes her, raises her with love and care, but struggles with money to meet the child's needs.
- Parents consent to adoption, and grandma adopts. She has to find a private attorney. It depletes her retirement savings. Because she is now the parent, she can't get TANF child-only for the child. So, no ongoing financial support.

If approved/licensed as foster parent

- The parents, child, and grandma would have been supported with services and foster care maintenance payments.
- Services for the child would have been facilitated by a case worker.
- Attempts would have been made to reunify the child with her parents.
- If adoption was agreed upon, Grandma would have had legal help and the child would typically get adoption assistance until adulthood.

Family comment

“We don’t want to be in foster care forever.”

Response

- The child and you will not be in foster care forever. We have time frames that we have to follow.
- We will try to help the parent reunify with the child.
- If that’s not possible, you will typically have a path to exit foster care, with the child, to supported adoption or supported guardianship.
- Neither adoption assistance nor guardianship assistance is available unless the child has been in foster care.

Family comment

“I don’t need to be paid to take care of family.”

Response

- You aren’t being paid.
- You are being supported to help meet the needs of the child you unexpectedly agreed to raise.
- Review the uses of foster care maintenance payments.
- Affirm the costs of raising a child.
- We value you – we want to support you!

Kinship Caregiving Options

Considerations for Caregivers

December 2021



Purpose

This publication—

- ▶ helps kinship families and the professionals who assist them compare caregiving options.
- ▶ provides a broad, national overview about the choices and considerations to help caregivers make informed decisions about the pathways to pursue.

How caregiving options look at the state, tribal, territorial, and local levels differ. Kin caregivers should consider this an informational resource and consult local kinship navigator programs, attorneys or legal professionals, caseworkers, and other available professionals. Ultimately, kin caregivers and their families must choose the caregiving option that best meets their needs.

For information on programs and state and national data on children in kinship families, see www.grandfamilies.org/State-Fact-Sheets.

About 2.6 million children are being cared for by kin—both blood relatives and people with a significant connection to the family (sometimes referred to as “fictive kin”)—without parents present in the home. Of these children, approximately 137,000 are being cared for by kin in the legal custody of the child welfare system. Although this number represents almost one-third (34%) of all children in foster care, most children cared for by kin are not in child welfare system custody and therefore do not get the same level of support as those inside the system.



Family and close family friends stepping up to raise children is not new. Kinship care is a traditional practice among families in most cultures and has evolved into a leading form of foster care.

Kinship Care Benefits

Research repeatedly shows that, compared to placement in non-kin settings, placement with kin:

- ▶ reduces a child's trauma of removal from their parents, and
- ▶ reduces their chance of being moved to other homes.

Children with kin are more likely to:

- ▶ have better behavioral health outcomes,
- ▶ stay connected to siblings,
- ▶ keep their cultural identity and community connections, and
- ▶ exit foster care to a permanent family if they cannot return to their parents.



To present options to families in a balanced way, consider using this [tool](#).

Adoption and Guardianship for Children in Kinship Foster Care: Comparison Charts

National and state comparison charts

Each chart includes information on:

- Rights and Responsibilities
- Financial and Legal Assistance
- Public Benefits
- Health Insurance
- Federal and State Tax Credits
- Caregiver Successor Planning and Death Benefits for Children
- College and Independent Living

CHART Adoption and Guardianship for Children in Kinship Foster Care: National Comparison Chart

This chart is designed to help kinship foster parents compare adoption and guardianship as two options that you and the children in your care can pursue to exit foster care and create permanent families. It provides a broad, national overview of these legal pathways. Adoption and guardianship laws are developed and implemented at the state, tribal and local levels, so the details of these legal relationships differ in important ways. You should review those differences when deciding which option to pursue. You can get initial information about your specific state's laws at www.grandfamilies.org/Search-Laws.



While this chart is directed at kinship foster parents, it is also intended as a tool to help child welfare and other case workers assist kinship foster parents. Birth parents and older children may also find it helpful to review as part of their decision-making.

Generations United welcomes jurisdictions to either share the chart as is or tailor it to your own specific laws and policies. A related brief on *Adoption and Guardianship for Children in Kinship Foster Care* is available at www.grandfamilies.org.

	ADOPTION	GUARDIANSHIP
Rights and Responsibilities		
<i>What are my legal rights and responsibilities for the child?</i>	You will become the parent in the eyes of the law forever. You have all rights and responsibilities for the child.	You will have most of the rights and responsibilities that come with caring for a child until the child reaches adulthood or the guardianship is ended.
<i>What are the birth parents' rights and responsibilities for the child?</i>	The birth parents' rights are terminated.	Birth parents keep the rights to visit the child and to consent to adoption and/or name change. Birth parents keep the obligation to financially support the child and pay child support.
<i>Do I have authority to access services for the child?</i>	As an adoptive parent, access to services for the child is the same as for any birth parent.	Guardians access to services for the child is typically the same as for any birth parent.

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Foundation
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Building Resilient Families for Children in Foster Care

Additional Resources





< Resources

TIP SHEET

Kin-Finding Toolkit

Download This Resource



< Resources

TIP SHEET

Tips to Include Kinship/Grandfamilies in Programmatic Decision-Making

Download This Resource

Increasingly, government and nonprofit leaders are recognizing the value of engaging individuals with lived experience when creating and enhancing programs and services. Programs and services are more effective, trusted, and used when they intentionally draw on the perspectives of those they seek to serve.

Strengthen Services & Support



**American Indian & Alaska
Native Grandfamilies:
Helping Children Thrive
Through Connection to
Family and Cultural Identity**



**African American
Grandfamilies: Helping
Children Thrive Through
Connection to Family and
Culture**



**Latino Grandfamilies:
Helping Children Thrive
Through Connection to
Culture and Family**

State and Tribal GrandFacts

**GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP
SUPPORT NETWORK**
A National Technical Assistance Center



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GrandFacts: Fact Sheets

The GrandFacts fact sheets for grandfamilies include data and programs as well as information about public benefits, educational assistance, legal relationship options and laws for each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



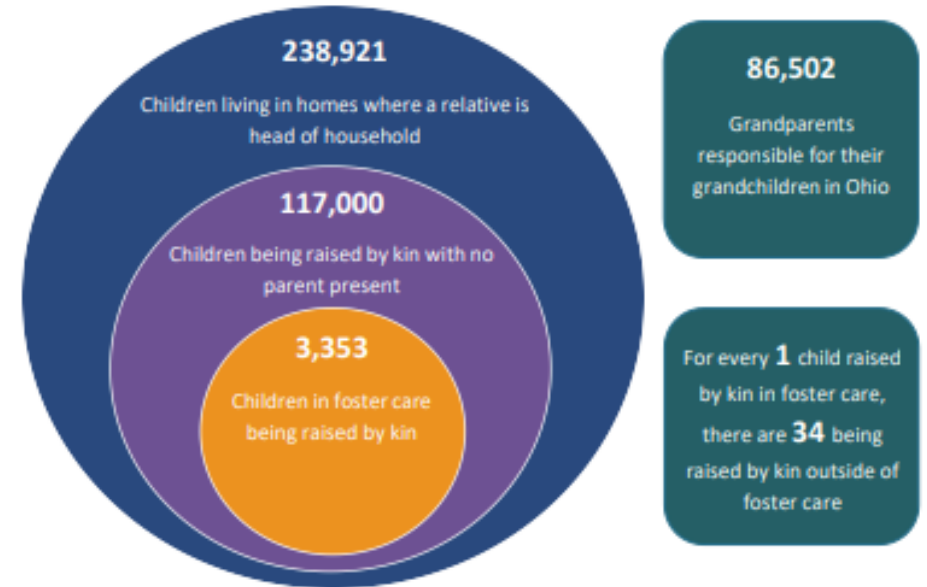
GRANDFACTS STATE FACT SHEETS FOR GRANDFAMILIES



The GrandFacts state fact sheets for grandfamilies include state-specific data and programs as well as information about public benefits, educational assistance, legal relationship options and state laws. Visit www.grandfamilies.org to find this and all GrandFacts state fact sheets.

Ohio

Grandfamilies Data



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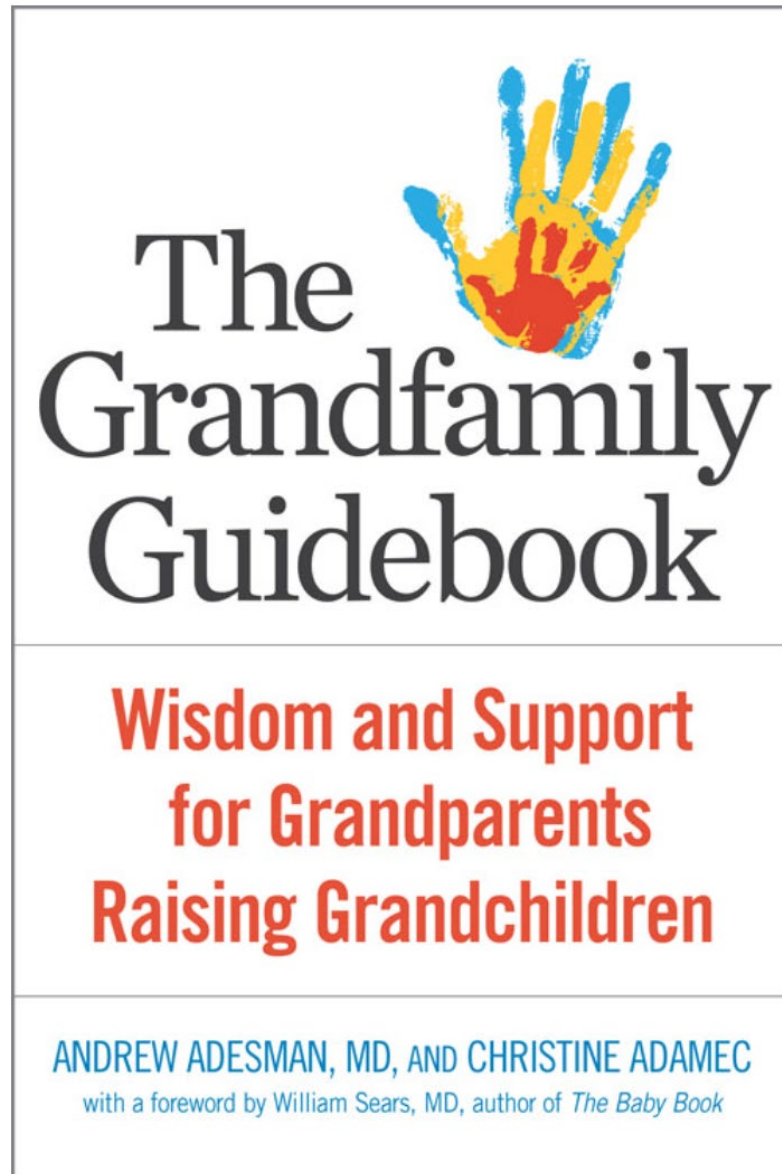
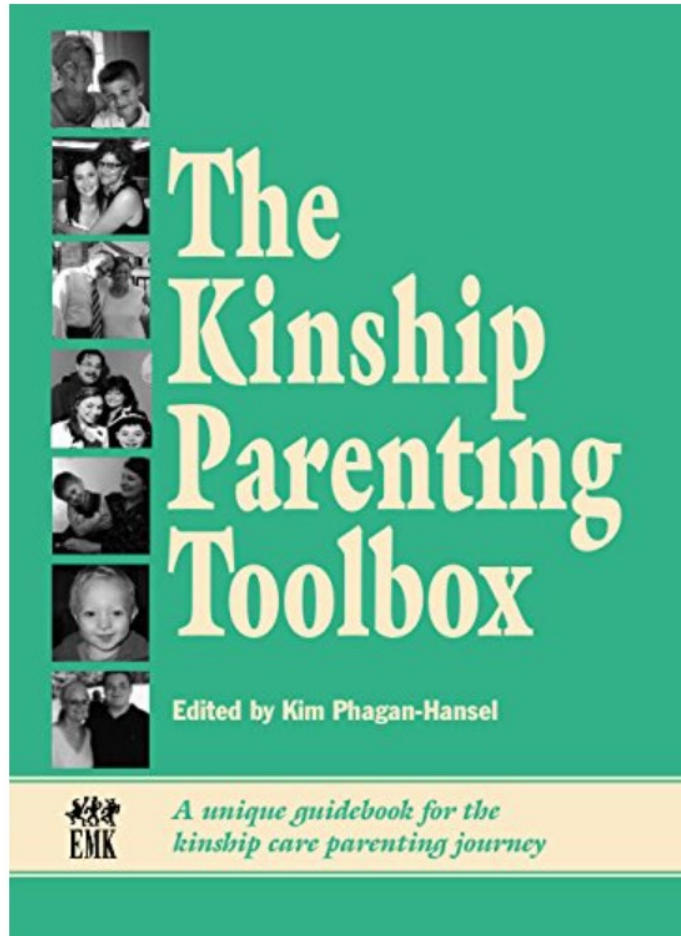


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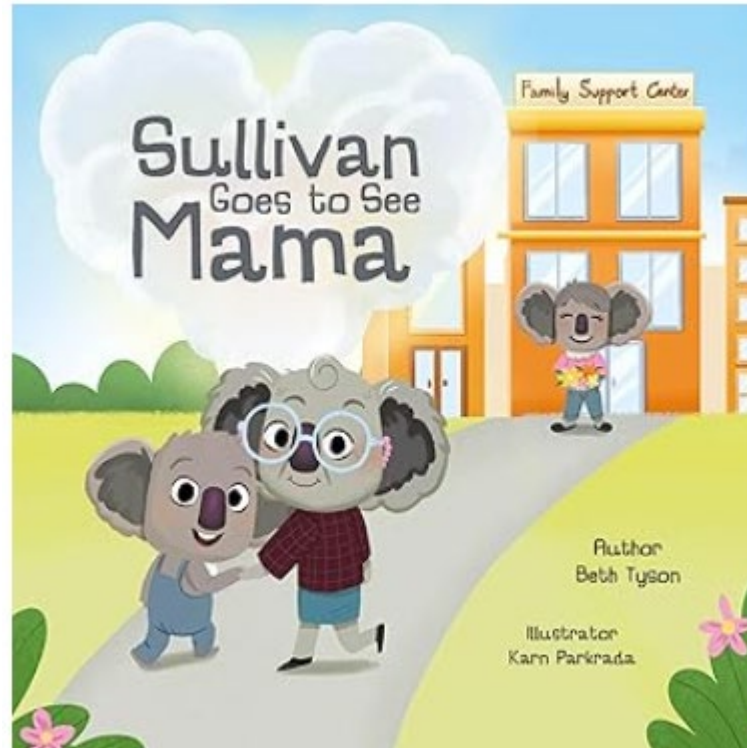
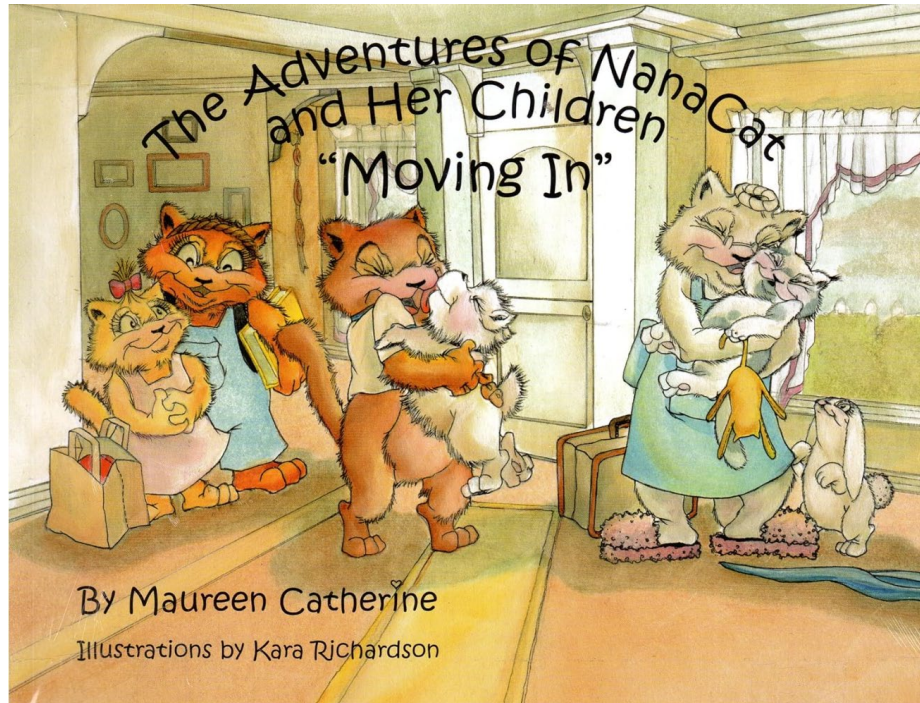
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www.gksnetwork.org/grandfacts-fact-sheets/

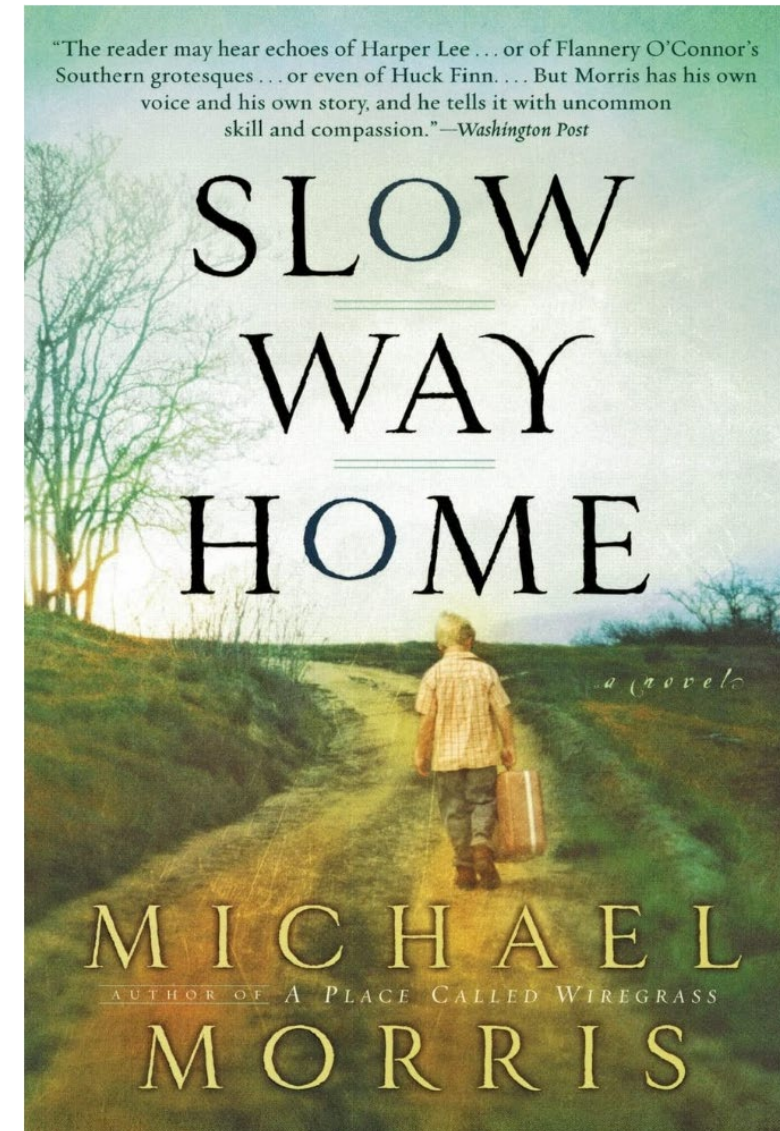
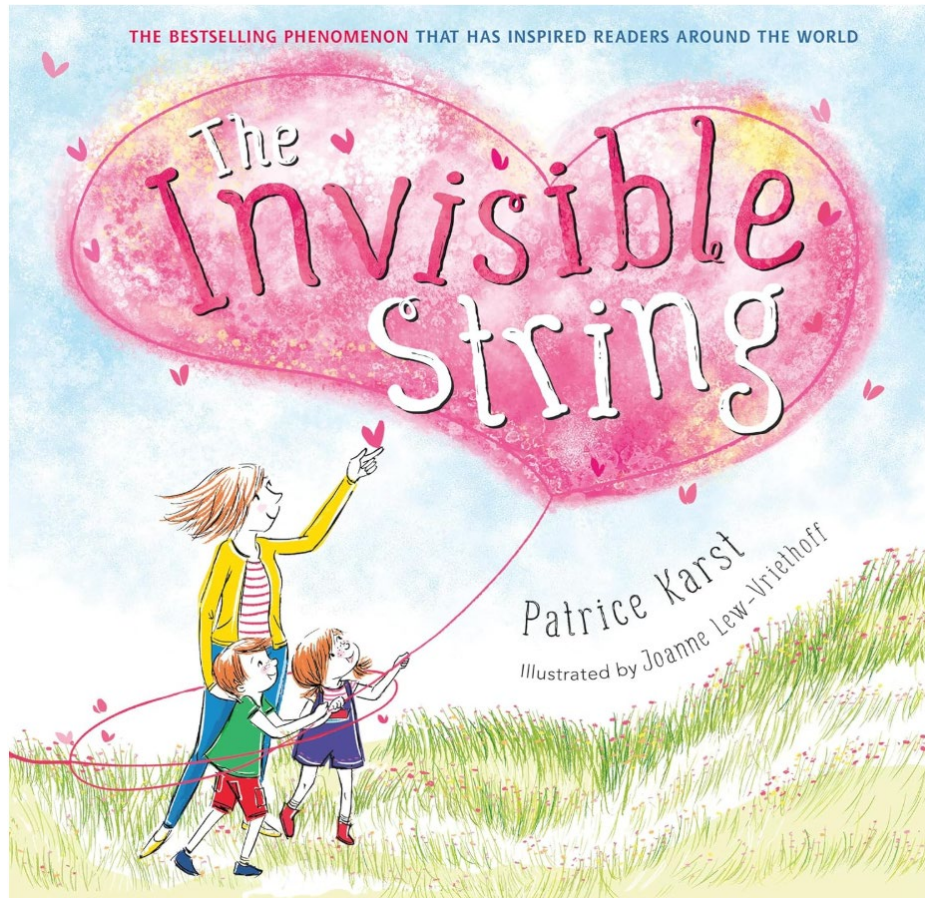
Guidebooks for Caregivers



Children's Books



Children's Book & Young Adult Novel



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The Network is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$9,950,000 with 95 percentage funded by ACL/HHS and \$523,684 and 5 percentage funded by non-government sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.