Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others

Time: 2.5 hours

Developmental Competencies

- CCW201-02: Knows the policies and legal/judicial processes and how they apply to Caregivers: the Indian Child Welfare Act; child welfare agency policies; regulations; legal liability; abuse and neglect reporting procedures; juvenile court processes.
- CCW202-01: Understands the caregivers’ role on the child welfare team as a collaborator on the case plan and as an advocate for the child and family.
- CCW203-01: Understands the benefits and challenges of different permanency options; including the legal status, and financial and service supports associated with each permanency outcome.
- CCW203-04: Understands how adopting a child may affect relationships with family, friends, and community members.
- CCW203-06: Understands the legal, social, and emotional changes when caregivers become adoptive parents.
- CCW204-01: Knows how to advocate and obtain assessments, treatment, and services for children in care for health, mental health, developmental delays, and other issues.
- CFAM232-01: Understands the need to identify and seek services, supports or training available to develop the skills needed to support and help to heal the emotional trauma of children in care.
- CFAM235-01: Understands the effect on the family of being a care provider.
- CFAM237-01: Understands the need to support children’s relationships and contact with primary families, including mother and father and siblings.
- CFAM237-02: Understand the role of the caregiver in parent/child and sibling/sibling visitation including the importance of caregiver relationships with primary parents and the potential value in providing social support to a primary parent.
- CFAM237-03: Knows healthy boundaries in caregiver relationships with primary parents.
- CSELF281-03: Understands the need to adjust to the impact and stresses of caregiving on the self, marriage, adult relationships, permanent children and the family as a whole.
**Talking about Competencies**

The financial, legal, and emotional issues of raising a relative’s child can be challenging. Services and support when raising a relative’s child can be a lifesaver. Kinship caregiving in all of its forms is becoming increasingly common. Recent WA State child welfare data (Partners for Our Children-1/1/2015) show that 41 percent of children in out of home care are living with a relative. Many more children are living with relatives or other close family friends informally, without the ongoing supervision of the state’s foster care system.

Often kinship caregivers do not access the benefits which are available to them.

This class will address the issues that Kinship Caregivers struggle with most:

1. **Financial Needs**
2. **Legal Challenges**
3. **Navigating** public service systems
4. Needing **more social services**
5. **Information** about resources/caregiving

This class is designed for licensed and unlicensed caregivers caring for children currently or previously involved in the dependency system. Caregiver Core Training (CCT) is not a prerequisite. However, this course is supplemental to CCT for kinship caregivers, and can be a field experience during CCT.

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**Materials and Preparation**

- Computer with Internet connection
- Projector
- Flip chart paper or white board
- Markers

**Handouts and Resources**

Alliance Supplemental Slide Handout

A Resource Guide for Relatives as Parents **DSHS 22-996(x)** (Look for most recent publication)

Constituents Relations Card **DSHS 22-830** (6/06)

Consent to Health Care for the Child in Your Care/A Kinship Caregiver’s Guide **DSHS 22-1119x** (Rev. 1/10)

Caregivers Communication Guide

Did You Know...About the Services and Supports for Grandparents and Relative Raising Children? **DSHS 22-1120** (Look for most recent publication)
Welcome and Introduction – 20 minutes
Welcome to Kinship 101. We are so happy to have you here. We want you to know how much we appreciate you and value your commitment to the children in your care. The truth is that we couldn’t do the important work of keeping kids safe without you. We hope this class will provide you with the information you need to work with the child welfare system or to be able to access resources and support in your community to obtain the best outcome for the children you care for.

*Trainers introduce themselves and take care of housekeeping tasks such as facility information, sign in sheets and cell phone usage.

Agenda

1. What is Kinship Care and Why is it so Important?
2. The Legal Process - Placement to Permanency
3. Children's Administration's Requirements of Kinship Care Providers
4. Resources and Supports

This training has been divided into four sections that will address some of the most immediate and pressing concerns of relative care givers. These topics are:

1. What is Kinship Care and Why is it so Important
2. The Legal Process
3. Requirements of Kinship Care Providers
4. Resources and Services.
Let’s get started by doing introductions and covering a couple of questions to help us make sure that we meet everybody’s needs. If you could let us know your name, the number of children in your care, ages of children and what information you would like to walk away with tonight.

Trainer makes a list of questions on the white board/flip chart as the participants identify them. Let the participants know that you will attempt to answer questions throughout the training and address any unanswered questions at the end.

**Section 1**

**What is Kinship Care and Why is it so Important? – 45 minutes**

Invite the participants to come up with a definition and other terms for kinship care. Look for terms such as relative care and suitable other.

The State of Washington uses a broad definition of the word Kin. It can refer to family members or non-related adults who have a significant relationship with the child they are caring for. Kinship care can be defined as the full-time care, nurturing, and protection of a child by relatives, members of their Tribe or clan, godparents, stepparents, or other adults who have a significant relationship to a child.* (Child Welfare Gateway)

People can become Kinship Care providers in a number of different ways, both formal and informal. In this training we will be addressing the specific needs of Kinship Caregivers who are working with Children’s Administration (CA). We will also cover information for those working with Family Court and people who have an informal agreement with birthparent(s) (who are not involved with CA).
How Common is Kinship Care?

- 43,000+ grandparents (not including aunts and uncles)
- 8,382 in placement
- 41% (3,500) in Kinship Care

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

*Number of grandparents in WA State caring for a grandchild. Information obtained from Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (ALTSA) website.

Benefits of Kinship Care

- Greater Stability
- Fewer Behavioral Issues
- Maintain Cultural Connections
- Less Traumatic

When children can be placed with safe and appropriate relatives, they experience many benefits, including:

* Invite the participate to share what they view as Benefits to Kinship Care
Have a piece of flip chart available to write down their ideas. After they have finished brainstorm their list, revel one at a time the points listed on the slide. Discuss similarities. Discuss the points that were not brought up.

**Greater Stability**
- Fewer Placements
- Less School Moves - This is significant as children lose up to 6 months of academic progress with each school move
- Less Likely to Re-enter Care after Reunification
- More Likely to Live with Siblings

**Fewer Behavioral Issues**
- Children feel loved, valued and cared for
- Belonging and feeling settled - not being moved around and subjected to disruption

*Ask participants what behaviors they noticed or would anticipate
Maintain Cultural Connections
- Wanting to be with people who they know
- Sustaining a sense of who they are (identity) through contact with family, siblings and friends
- Able to be placed/stay with siblings
- Maintaining a child’s connection to their cultural heritage, language and religion

Less Traumatic
The Trauma of being placed into foster care is lessened when a child is placed with someone that they already have a relationship with. It also reduces the stigma for a child.
https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/kinship.pdf#page=2&view=Benefits of Kinship Care

Challenges of Kinship Care
- Family Dynamics
- Change of Role
- Lack of Time to Prepare for New Role
- Emotional Impact
- Financial Stress

* Invite the participate to share what they view as Challenges to Kinship Care
Have a piece of flip chart available to write down their ideas. Have participants come up with specifics for each area. Discuss the points that were not brought up.

Trainer might consider spending extra time with this discussion.

Family Dynamics
Redefines existing family relationships
Creates a need for relatives to establish boundaries with parents
If CA is involved with the placement the SW will work with the family to determine boundaries with the birth parent (s)

Change of Role—Example, moving from Grandparent to Parent
Loss of/ change of relationship with the child in your care (i.e. loss of your role as a grandparent)
Loss of/change of the relationship with your child

Emotional Impact
Guilt
Shame
Grief

Lack of Preparation for New Role
Often it is a surprise
Not have all the items needed for a child or children
Adds extra financial burden when you need to acquire needed items

**Financial Stress**
Adds extra financial burden when you need to acquire needed items

**Other**

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**Using Self Advocacy to Set Safe and Healthy Boundaries in Kinship Care**

**I FEEL, I NEED ACTIVITY**

One of the ways you can reduce the stress and frustration is to advocate for yourself and the child in your care.

Reunification is more likely to occur when caregivers set clear boundaries with birth parents. If Boundaries are not set and the birth parent has easy access to their child they are likely to view themselves as “having the best of both worlds”. They get access to their child without having to assume the responsibility of parenting. This can lead to a lack of urgency on the part of the birth parent. Setting boundaries with birth parents also prevents the parent’s unhealthy behaviors from negatively impacting the children.

In addition to setting boundaries with the birth parent, you will need to advocate for yourself and the child in your care with the Child Welfare System. At times you may be asked to do things that you feel are not in the best interest of the child or are beyond your resources.

We are going to do an activity to help you practice this skill of advocacy and boundary setting.

**Refer participants to the handout with the list of scenarios for the “I Feel, I Need Activity” (spend up to 15 min. on activity). The lists of scenarios are on pages 26 and 27 in manual.**

“I Feel . . . I Need” role plays:
- Place participants in pairs
- Inform the participants they need to pick “One” scenario that they would like to talk about. If a scenario does not fit their situation they can create one. Inform them they have one (1) minute to pick or create a scenario. Instruct them to read it alone.
Each pair will identify who goes first. One person will be a caregiver; the other will be another team member.

The first person will read their situation to the other, and then state how they feel (what emotions the situation evoked), and what they need from the other person. **Give person three minutes to discuss/process their scenario then switch.**

Have the partners change roles, with the second person reading their situation, stating their feelings and what they need from the other person.

**Note Trainers:** There is not enough time for each person to read aloud and discuss their specific scenario with the whole group. Instead, lead a large group de-brief with the following questions.

Debrief by asking the following questions of the participants:
- Was it easy to identify your feelings?
- Would you be willing to share your feelings with other team members?
- Was it easy to figure out what you needed?
- Would you be willing to share your needs with other team members?

Refer to page 1 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

Summarize with:
- Self-advocacy is extremely important and includes:
  - Understanding your strengths and needs
  - Identifying your goals
  - Understanding a “chain of command” and/or the process of how to initiate change
  - Speaking up for oneself
  - Knowing your limits and saying “NO” when you need to
  - Documenting
  - Being persistent
  - Communicating with other team members
  - Asking for support from others
  - Knowing your legal rights and responsibilities
Section 2

The Legal Process: Placement to Permanency – 20 minutes

Dependency Court VS Family Court

Dependency Court Vs. Family Court

How do you know if your child is involved with Dependency Court?

Dependency Court actions are initiated by CA. They typical follow a CPS investigation when there are concerns about child safety.

Family Court actions are initiated by private citizens. A legal action initiated by a person who is not the parent, asking the court for the legal custody of a child. This can be granted if the parent is unfit or placement with the parent detrimentally effects the child’s growth and development.

Once a case is open in Dependency Court, all issues of custody and visitation are under the jurisdiction of that court.
Placement Preferences in Dependency Court

State Law

Federal Law

Refer to bottom of page 1 and top of page 2 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

Placement preferences in Dependency Court

If the child in your care is involved with CA, and the dependency court has jurisdiction CA will be making decisions for the most appropriate placement for that child.

There are State and Federal laws that guide placement preferences.

The State Law RCW 74.15.020....... the department must search for appropriate relatives before considering nonrelative placements.

Federal Law requires CA to notify all known relatives within 30 days of placement in hopes to identify a possible relative placement.

Dependency Timeline

Refer to “Understanding the Dependency Court Process” handout

This is the ideal timeline, however each case is different.
This slide is to provide explanation of the formal dependency process. Following the Dependency Timeline, explain the legal process.

Starting with a CPS referral. Shelter care within 72 hours, shelter care review at 30 days, Fact Finding Trial within 75 days of filing a dependency petition and within 90 days Dependency is established (in-home or out-of-home). First Dependency Hearing held when the child has been in care for six months and every six months thereafter until the child is returned home or another permanent plan established.

A Permanency Planning Hearing (this is a Dependency review where they will review the permanent plan) is held at the 12 month date and ongoing reviews every six months until child returned home, guardianship or temporary custody (third party custody) or adoption occurs.

*Ask participants to identify where their child’s case is in the Dependency Timeline.

### Dependency Court Permanency Options

- Return Home
- Adoption
- Guardianship
- Nonparental Custody (3rd Party Custody)

### Dependency Court Permanency Options

When children are involved with CA the SW is always working towards establishing a permanent plan for the child, that allows CA and the Dependency Court to no longer be involved in the child’s life.

These are the options for permanent plans.

- Return home
- Adoption
- Guardianship
- Non parental custody (3rd Party Custody)

The permanent plan for most children is return home (approximately 59 % return home).

### Adoption

At times there is reluctance for relatives to adopt.

- Adoption as being interpreted as “giving up hope” about the biological parents being able to parent
- Concerns about conflict with the birth parents
- Feeling the existing blood ties make legal bonds unnecessary
Relative caregivers need to have hard conversations with the child’s worker and with experts to ensure they understand accurate information about adoption and how it will give them legal custody to be able to make decisions about the continued role of the birth parents in the lives of their children. In some cases, adopting the children in care is going to be the path that gives the caregiver the most freedom to ensure a strong relationship between the birth parent and their child because the system will no longer be involved.

**Guardianship**

Permanent plan of guardianship must be in the child's best interest and specific criteria must be followed (which would be determined by the department).

For adoption and guardianship, funding may be available. We will discuss it further in the resource section.

**Non parental custody**

Is not commonly used within the dependency process. You may sometimes hear it referred to as 3rd Party Custody.

### Family Court Legal Options

- Non parental custody (3rd Party Custody)
- Temporary Parental Consent Agreement
- Adoption

**Non Parental Custody** is a legal action initiated by a person who is not the parent, asking the court for the legal custody of a child. This can be granted if the parent is unfit or placement with the parent detrimentally effects the child’s growth and development.

**Temporary Parental Consent Agreement** is a written agreement between the parents and you that gives you the authority to make medical and educational decision and to get care and services for the child. It is not a court order. The parents can revoke it at any time—which can be a big problem in cases where the parent is volatile or the relationship is difficult.

Refer to the Northwest Justice Parental Custody FAQ for example of a sample. See last page of handout.
Adoption is an option. Parental rights will need to be terminated (either voluntary or by the court) before you can adopt. You will most likely need to work with an Attorney, as this is a complicated legal process.

Break – 10 Minutes

Section 3

Requirements of Kinship Care Providers working with CA- 15 Minutes

Refer to page bottom of page 3 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

Requirements
In order for a person to be a placement resource, the person must:

- Have an existing relationship with the child.
- Have a safe and suitable place to live.
- Pass a background check. Anyone 16 or older must also pass the background checks.
- Have their home inspected for health and safety hazards.
- Have a review of the family's living and sleeping arrangements.
- Cooperate with the service plan for the family.

The Home Study
The Home Study Process is an in-depth evaluation to ensure that children will be cared for by a family that is able to meet their unique needs and provide a safe, stable and nurturing home environment. All families, foster and kinship, must complete a home study!

In an emergent situation a child may be placed in your home prior to a home study being completed. It’s extremely important for you to follow through on the required paperwork to complete the home study process. Lack of follow though could jeopardize the placement of the child in your care.

The Home Study Process

Includes:
Application
Criminal history background check on all people over 16 residing in the home
Child abuse and criminal clearances
Personal information
Medical statements
Income/financial statement
Marital History Form
References
Contacts with licensing social worker (four contacts including at least one in the family home)
Home inspection

*Highly encourage participants who have not attended CCT to attend the Alliance’s Caregiver Core Training (Commercial for CCT) and Caregiver Continuing Education classes

Refer to these handouts.
Household Safety Inspection for Unlicensed placement and Adoption Home Study updates
Unlicensed Placement Application Checklist
Confidentiality

Confidentiality Reminder

➢ Information You Receive
➢ Information You Can Share

Child Welfare records are confidential and a release of information must be signed by the parties in order to share information about the parent. As a caregiver you are entitled receive all information you may need to parent the child in your care.

Caregiver’s Responsibilities

Refer to top of page 4 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

Caregiver’s Responsibility

Relatives caring for dependent children are expected to:

• Provide a safe home for the child.
• See that the child is cared for and loved.
• See that school age children attend school.
• Provide supervision for the child.
• Cooperate with the goals of the service plan.
• Cooperate with visitation between child and parent.
• Cooperate with court ordered services.
• Make sure the child keeps all appointments.
• Keep the social worker and court informed of the child’s progress.
• Explain to the child in a positive way why the parent is not able to provide care right now.
Know Your Rights

- Notification of meetings and court dates
- Provide input at court
- Receive timely communication from CA
- Know the resolution process

Refer to bottom of page 4 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

Know your Rights

Notification of all meetings and court proceedings

Provide input at court hearings in the form of the Caregivers Report

Receive timely communication from Children’s Administration

Refer to June 9th letter “Notice of Hearings to Caregivers” handout

Know the resolution process

Refer to handout Caregivers Communication Guide

- Chain of Command
- Constituent Relations
- Ombud’s

*Information for Constituent Relations and Ombud’s is also on the “Understanding the Dependency Court Process” handout.

Section 4

Resources and Supports- 40 Minutes
Resources and Supports

Items we will be covering in this section

- Financial Assistance
- Licensing
- Health/Mental Health
- Educational Supports
- Community Resources
- Support Groups

Financial Assistance

Refer to pages 4-6 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

Financial Assistance

CA Involved
TANF/Child-Only grant
Foster Care payments
Child Care
WIC
School Free Lunch program
Mileage
Adoption Support
R-GAP
Respite
Relative/Other Suitable Support Services (RSS) Funds-from CA SW

Non CA involved (Informal)
TANF
Child Care
WIC
School Free Lunch Program
Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program (SNAP)
Kinship Care Support Program (KCSP)
TANF Talking points for CA involved and Informal care

When you have a child(ren) place in your home by CA and you receive a placement letter from the Social Worker for that/each child, prior to being licensed you are eligible to receive a CHILD-ONLY TANF grant.

Bring the placement letter you received from the social worker with you when you apply for the Child-Only TANF grant at your local Community Service Office (CSO). If the child is receiving money from Social Security you will not be able to receive a Child-Only TANF grant.

Since this is a child that is placed in your home with an official placement letter from CA and you are requesting a Child-Only TANF grant, this TANF grant is not income dependent.

For Informal caregivers (not CA involved) you can go to your local Community Service Office (CSO) to see if you would be eligible to receive a TANF grant. Be prepared to provide financial information. The TANF grant will be income dependent for Informal caregivers.

*Refer to Informal Caregivers-Eligible for a child-only TANF grant handout

Talking points about the difference between Relative Support Service (RSS) Funds from CA and funds from the Kinship Care Support Program (KCSP)

If you have a child connected with CA you are eligible to receive funds through the Relative Support Services program from your Social worker connected to the child’s case. The Relative Support Services program is for emergency, short-term funds to pay for furniture, clothing and school supplies.

*Refer to RELATIVE AND OTHER SUITABLE PERSON SUPPORT SERVICES FUNDS (RSS) handout

For Informal caregivers there is a Kinship Caregiver Support Program (KCSP) which can provide emergency, short-term funds to pay for food, housing, clothing and school supplies.

KCSP funds are for relative caregivers not involved in the child welfare system through the Kinship Caregivers Support Program. Connect with the Kinship Navigator in your community to access these funds. These funds are income dependent.

Adoption Support

CA Involved Families

➢ Post adoption financial supports may be available on a case by case basis.
Adoption Support
The Adoption Support Program assists in removing barriers for families adopting special needs children by providing ongoing medical, counseling and financial supports. Child must be CA involved and 4-E eligible to qualify for Adoption support funds.

R-GAP
(Relative Guardianship Assistance Program)

What is R-GAP?
A subsidy program for children in a guardianship with relatives licensed by the Division of Licensed Resources (DLR).

R-Gap

The Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP) provides financial support to qualified relatives to care for children in their care. It is a subsidy program for children in a guardianship with relatives licensed by the Division of Licensed Resources (DLR). This option must be CA pre-approved and the child must be 4-E eligible to qualify for this program.

*Refer to the R-GAP handout

Licensing Benefits
For CA Involved Families, with Court Supervision

Monthly foster care payments-payment is higher than TANF monies especially if you have a sibling group placed in your home

Respite for licensed caregivers is intended to provide the caregivers’ relief from caregiving, responsibilities allows personal time away from home or can also be used in emergencies. Respite may also be used to avoid placement disruptions.
**Foster Parent Reimbursement Program**-In the event a foster child causes significant damage or loss, please check with your social worker whether or not it would be appropriate to submit a reimbursement claim, under the Foster Parent Damage Claim & Liability Program.

**Extended Foster Care** - continue to receive foster care payment for a dependent child in your home through age 21.

**Support from Licensor** - The Licensor is your Social Worker. They are your ADVOCATES!

****If you chose to become licensed and receive foster care payments you are no longer able to receive the Child-Only TANF grant. You must notify the CSO of your change of circumstance to avoid overpayment. (No double dipping). If you fail to notify the CSO you will be required to return the funds.

*Refer to handout-Foster Care Licensing for Relatives DSHS 22-1493

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**Medical Services**

Refer to bottom of page 6 and top of page 7 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

**Medical Services**

**Medical Insurance**

Children who are CA involved automatically receive medical insurance that covers medical, dental and mental health services.

Mental Health services are typically provided through community mental health agencies.

For those families not involved with CA you can apply for medical insurance (Apple Health/Medicaid) through the Health Care Authority. The majority of children in informal care are eligible for coverage. You can also look into your employer based insurance to see if they will allow you to add the child(ren) to your policy.

If you need help signing your child up for Coordinated Care/Apple Health program connect with a Navigator to assist you with that process. Washington Health Plan Finder. Have a question call 1-855-923-4633
Important Note.....You may need to call around to see what providers will take “state” insurance. You may need to advocate with the current health care providers you have a relationship with to see if they will accept your child and their insurance.

Looking for a Dentist that will take “state” insurance?

Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD)
http://abcd-dental.org/
http://abcd-dental.org/for-parent/find-an-abcd-dentist/

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Educational Supports

➢ Early Intervention Services for children birth to three.
➢ Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP)
➢ Head Start Program
➢ The Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO)
➢ Treehouse Educational Services

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Refer to bottom of page 7 and top of page 8 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

Educational Supports

Children who are in out-of-home care may have special needs and have experienced trauma. Keep in mind that children in out-of-home care are often behind academically. Did you know that every time a child moves to a different school it sets them back six months in their education? It’s also puts them at a higher risk of dropping out.

So here are some resources available to you to help advocate for the child in your home for their educational needs.

Early Intervention Services for children birth to three

Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP) (4-5 years)

Head Start Program varies in each area.

The Office of the Education Ombudsman (OEO)

Treehouse Educational Services (for foster youth and some support for relative/ suitable other)

http://www.treehouseforkids.org

*Refer to Education Advocacy Guide for Caregivers DSHS 22-1192
Local Supports

- Local and Online Support Groups
- Resources you found helpful?

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**Local Supports**

Refer to bottom of page 8 and top of page 9 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide

Local support groups with other relative caregivers are available in many communities. For more information regarding the whereabouts of these groups you may call or go to:

Kinships Support Groups-DSHS-ALTSA (Aging and Long-Term Support Administration)

Website: [https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/kinship-care-support-services](https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/kinship-care-support-services)

**Fostering Together** provides free, ongoing support to families caring for children in out of home care. Here is a list of some of the many resources available to families. We are also available by phone at 1-866-958-KIDS (5437) any time you need us.

Website: [http://fosteringtogether.org/](http://fosteringtogether.org/)

**FosteringWA** is a program of Eastern Washington University and under the auspices of the Idaho Child Welfare Research and Training Center (ICWRTC) seeks to adapt a successful foster parent peer mentoring program to meet the needs of Eastern Washington’s families, as it has been doing in Idaho since 2007.

Website: [https://sites.ewu.edu/fosteringwa/](https://sites.ewu.edu/fosteringwa/)

*Talk about other local resources and support*

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**Statewide Resources**

Refer to bottom of page 9 and all of page 10 in supplemental handout corresponding with slide
Kinship Navigators serve as a one-stop shop, providing information and assistance to relatives who may not know where to turn or how to apply for benefits and services in their local community.

Website: https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/kinship-care-support-services

The WithinReach hotline helps provide information and referrals on a broad range of health and social services related to raising children of all ages. 1-800-322-2588

Website: http://www.withinreachwa.org/

Website: www.parenthelp123.org additionally families can apply for benefits using the benefit finder.

The Washington Connection Website provides information about many DSHS services, including kinship care Web: www.washingtonconnection.org

Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence offers training opportunities for relatives and foster parents coping with problem behaviors. All training resources are available to all caregivers.

Website: https://allianceforchildwelfare.org/

The DSHS Children's Administration (CA) website offers information about foster care and the child welfare system. Website: https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca

Aging and Long Term Support Administration (ALTSA) offers information to assist with getting answers to questions and finding services, programs, and support can be confusing and overwhelming. We are here to help.

Website: https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/home-and-community-services-kinship-care/kinship-care

Parent to Parent (P2P) Programs offer support and information for families of children with developmental disabilities.

Website: http://arcwa.org/getsupport/parent_to_parent_p2p_programs

Legal Voice-


*We can show them how to access some of these websites from the Alliance website “Caregivers” link/ribbon.
Questions and Wrap Up

Today we covered:
- What is Kinship Care and Why is it so important?
- The Legal Process—Placement to Permanency
- Children’s Administration’s Requirements of Kinship Care Providers
- Resources and Supports

Any other questions?

Thank you!
Questions?
The Social Worker is expecting that parent-child visits will be done in my home.

The Holidays are approaching and you won’t be able to have the parent of the child in your care to your home to celebrate for the first time.

The parent of the child in my care asked to spend the night at my home because they just lost their housing and have no place to stay tonight.

The parent of the child in my care came to a preplanned event and was obviously high.

I haven’t received my payment for mileage reimbursement.

The Social Worker assumes that I will transport the child to visits, but my schedule just doesn’t allow it.

The parent of the child in my care missed a scheduled visit and wants to make it up at a time that is inconvenient for our family.

The parent of the child in my care is saying negative things about the child's other parent - in front of the child.

The parent of the child in my care wants to know everything I feed the child - and has very different ideas about food and nutrition than I do.

The parent of the child in my care says negative things about the other children in our home.

The parent of the child in my care wants daily phone calls with the child and I can't always be available to make that happen.
The parent of the child in my care gave the child a gift that I do not think is appropriate for the age/abilities of the child.

The parent of the child in my care brought so many things for the child that I do not have room to store them.

The school is not following the child's IEP, and is disciplining him for negative behavior that could have been avoided.

The parent said they would care for the child today, and I made other plans. Now they are canceling again.

The child came back from a visit with their parents and is now saying negative things about me.

The parent is making promises to the child that I know they won't keep.

*If you don’t see a scenario on this list you may create one that fits your situation.

**Directions**

You will be placed in pairs for this activity

You will need to pick “one” scenario that you would like to talk about. If a scenario does not fit your situation you can create one. You have one (1) minute to pick or create a scenario. Please read the scenario alone.

In your pair, identify who will go first. One person will be a caregiver; the other will be another team member.

The first person will read their situation to the other, and then state how they feel (what emotions the situation evoked), and what they need from the other person. Each person has three minutes to discuss/process their scenario then switch.

Change roles, with the second person reading their situation, stating their feelings and what they need from the other person.
Original Handouts
(Handouts to print off for participant packet)

3100EN-Nonparental Custody: FAQ from Northwest Justice Project, October 2013

Household Safety Inspection for Unlicensed Placement and Adoption Home updates DSHS 10-453 (Rev. 9/2015)

Unlicensed Caregiver Placement Checklist DSHS 15-280 (REV. 09/2011)

June 9th letter “Notice of Hearings to Caregivers”

Caregivers Communication Guide

RELATIVE AND OTHER SUITABLE PERSON SUPPORT SERVICES FUNDS (RSS) handout
https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/CA/fos/documents/RSSfunds.pdf

Informal Caregivers-Eligible for a child-only TANF grant handout

Foster Care Licensing for Relatives DSHS 22-1493 (4/16)

Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP) Handout (from Alliance curriculum)
Supplemental handout information to correlate with Kinship 101 slides

Using Self Advocacy to Set Safe and Healthy Boundaries in Kinship Care

I FEEL, I NEED ACTIVITY

- Self-advocacy is extremely important and includes:
  - Understanding your strengths and needs
  - Identifying your goals
  - Understanding a “chain of command” and/or the process of how to initiate change
  - Speaking up for oneself
  - Knowing your limits and saying “NO” when you need to
  - Documenting
  - Being persistent
  - Communicating with other team members
  - Asking for support from others
  - Knowing your legal rights and responsibilities

Placement Preferences in Dependency Court

Placement Preferences in Dependency Court

State Law

Federal Law

WAC 388-25-0445

Under what circumstances does the department choose a relative as the placement for a child in need of out-of-home care?
(1) When the department determines that a child needs to be placed outside the home, the department must search for appropriate relatives to care for the child before considering nonrelative placements. See RCW 74.15.020 for the definition of "relative."

(2) The department reviews and determines the following when selecting a relative placement:

(a) The child would be comfortable living with the relative;
(b) The relative has a potential relationship with the child;
(c) The relative is capable of caring for the child and is willing to cooperate with the permanency plan for the child;
(d) The relative is able to provide a safe home for the child;
(e) Each child has his or her own bed or crib if the child remains in the home beyond thirty days.

(3) The department may consider nonrelated family members as potential resources, if these family members become licensed to provide foster care (see RCW 74.15.030).

The Department is required to conduct relative searches throughout the life of the case.

If you know of a relative, even if they may not be a placement option, please share that information with the social worker

___________________________________________________________________________________________

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Requirements

In order for a person to be a placement resource, the person must:

- Have an existing relationship with the child.
- Have a safe and suitable place to live.
- Pass a background check. Anyone 16 or older must also pass the background checks.
- Have their home inspected for health and safety hazards.
- Have a review of the family's living and sleeping arrangements.
- Cooperate with the service plan for the family.

___________________________________________________________________________________________
Caregiver’s Responsibilities

 Relatives caring for dependent children are expected to:

- Provide a safe home for the child.
- See that the child is cared for and loved.
- See that school age children attend school.
- Provide supervision for the child.
- Cooperate with the goals of the service plan.
- Cooperate with visitation between child and parent.
- Cooperate with court ordered services.
- Make sure the child keeps all appointments.
- Keep the social worker and court informed of the child’s progress.
- Explain to the child in a positive way why the parent is not able to provide care right now.

Know Your Rights

- Notification of meetings and court dates
- Provide input at court
- Receive timely communication from CA
- Know the resolution process

Chain of command information

- Website for contacting DSHS staff. [https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/ca/employeedirectory](https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/ca/employeedirectory)
- Constituent Relation’s phone # 1-800-723-4831 or ConstRelations@dshs.wa.gov
- Ombud’s phone # 1-800-571-7321 or [https://fortress.wa.gov/es/ofcoform/](https://fortress.wa.gov/es/ofcoform/)
CA involved with Court Supervision

Non-Income Dependent:
TANF(Child Only Grant)
Foster Care Payments
Child Care
WIC
Free and Reduced Lunch Program
Mileage
Adoption Support
R-GAP
Respite
Relative Support Services Fund-Through CA

A relative may be able to receive one of two types of government financial assistance while the child is placed in the home of a relative:

1. TANF - Temporary Assistance for Non-Needy Families
2. Foster care payments, if licensed

The relative may not receive both types of assistance at the same time.

Other assistance and support for relatives that may be available:

- Relative Support Services Fund - Relatives caring for children who are in the custody of the state may be eligible for Relative Care Support Funds to help with some expenses for the child.
- Medical care. Call 1-800-547-3109 to obtain more information on free medical care through the Foster Care Medicaid Unit. Non-licensed relatives should contact the local DSHS Community Service Office (CSO) or the DSHS Medical Eligibility Determination Services office at 1-800-204-2469.
• **Clothing Vouchers.** If the child comes into foster care or a relative placement with little or no clothing, Child and Family Services (CFS) may purchase limited clothing for the child. A clothing voucher is a one-time payment per child.

• **Transportation Costs.** CFS may pay relatives for mileage when they drive the child to activities that are part of the child’s service plan. Mileage reimbursement may be claimed for trips made only for the benefit of the child. Mileage forms can be obtained from the child's social worker and must be submitted to CFS for payment on a monthly basis.

• **Child Specific Care Plans.** This is available only to relatives who are licensed foster parents. Some children have medical conditions that require special care; CFS may authorize support and financial assistance for children above the basic foster care rate.

• **Respite Care.** In some cases CFS may allow the child to stay with another caregiver for brief periods of time, such as a weekend, in order to give relatives a break from demanding parenting responsibilities.

• **Child Care.** Child care services are available to relatives who work. CFS will work with caregivers to make child care arrangements. CFS may also pay for child care to reduce the stress of providing daily care for several children or for a child who has severe behavioral or developmental problems. Child care is funded through TANF.

• **Assistance with Physical Care.** If the child’s physical and personal care needs are assessed to be extremely high, you will be referred to Medicaid Personal Care.

• **Counseling.** Children with serious emotional problems often receive mental health services from agencies that accept Medicaid. The child's social worker can help a relative locate a local mental health agency that accepts Medicaid. In some cases, DCFS may pay for counseling if the chosen counselor does not accept Medicaid. These decisions are made as part of the child's service plan.

**Non-CA Involved**

**Income Dependent:**

TANF

Child Care

Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program (SNAP)

WIC

Free and Reduced Lunch Program

Kinship Caregiver Support Program

**On-going financial assistance/TANF**

Cash and medical assistance for children who are in the care of a relative or other adult through a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families - TANF child-only grant. The caregiver must meet certain income guidelines to qualify for assistance on behalf of the child. Recipients of child-only TANF can also get additional one-time cash payments for help with emergency housing or utility needs. Go to [DSHS website and look for Child only grant](http://www.dshs.wa.gov) to learn about the program.
To apply for services, contact your local Community Services Office (CSO) or apply on-line using the Online Application for Services. Website: [https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/how-apply-services](https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/how-apply-services)

- TANF
- Child Care
- Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program (SNAP)

**Women, Infant and Children (WIC)**

- WIC is a nutrition program for pregnant women, new and breastfeeding moms, and children under five.
- Dad, grandparents, and other caregivers of children under the age of five may also sign kids up for WIC.
- Foster children under age five and foster teens who are pregnant are eligible for WIC.
- If you or your family member are on Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Basic Food you may be eligible for WIC too.
- Many working families and military families are eligible for WIC.

Find out if WIC can help your family.

- Call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.
Website: [http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC](http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC)

**Free Lunch and Reduced Lunch Program**

Website: [http://www.k12.wa.us/ChildNutrition/Programs/NSLBP/FreeReduced.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/ChildNutrition/Programs/NSLBP/FreeReduced.aspx)

**Kinship Caregivers Support Program**

**Short-term support to pay for food, housing, clothing, school supplies, legal services**

Funds are for relative caregivers **not** involved in the child welfare system through the Kinship Caregiver Support Program. Connect with the Kinship Navigator in your community to access these funds. **These funds are income dependent.**
**Medical Services**

Children who are CA involved automatically receive medical insurance that covers medical, dental and mental health services. Mental Health services are typically provided through community mental health agencies.

For those families not involved with CA you can apply for medical insurance (Apple Health/Medicaid) through the Health Care Authority. The majority of children in informal care are eligible for coverage. You can also look into your employer based insurance to see if they will allow you to add the child(ren) to your policy.

If you need help signing your child up for the Apple Health program connect with a Navigator to assist you with that process. Washington Health Plan Finder. Have a question call 1-855-923-4633

Important Note.....You may need to call around to see what providers will take “state” insurance. You may need to advocate with the current health care providers you have a relationship with to see if they will accept your child and their insurance.

Looking for a Dentist that will take “state” insurance?

**Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD)**

http://abcd-dental.org/

http://abcd-dental.org/for-parent/find-an-abcd-dentist/
**Educational Supports**

- Early Intervention Services for children birth to three.
- Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP)
- Head Start Program
- The Office of the Education Ombudsman (OEO)
- Treehouse Educational Services

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**Educational Supports**

Keep in mind that children in out-of-home care are often behind academically. Did you know that every time a child moves to a different school it sets them back six months in their education? It’s also puts them at a higher risk of dropping out.

So here are some resources available to you to help advocate for the child in your home for their educational needs.

**Early Intervention Services for children infant to three (ESIT)**
Website: [https://www.del.wa.gov/development/esit/services](https://www.del.wa.gov/development/esit/services)

**Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP) (4-5 years)**
Website: [https://wsaheadstarteceap.com](https://wsaheadstarteceap.com)

**Head Start Program (programs vary around the state)**
Website: [https://wsaheadstarteceap.com](https://wsaheadstarteceap.com)

**The Office of the Education Ombudsman (OEO)  1-866-297-2597**
Website: [http://oeo.wa.gov/](http://oeo.wa.gov/)

Learn more about resources, tips and ways to help your child to succeed academically

*We are able to talk to any family, in any language using a live interpreter through our language line.

**Treehouse Educational Services (foster and relative youth)**
Website: [http://www.treehouseforkids.org](http://www.treehouseforkids.org)
Local Supports

Local support groups with other relative caregivers are available in many communities. For more information regarding the whereabouts of these groups you may call or go to:

**Kinships Support Groups**-DSHS-ALTSA (Aging and Long-Term Support Administration)
Website: [https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/kinship-care-support-services](https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/kinship-care-support-services)

**Fostering Together** provides free, ongoing support to families caring for children in out of home care. Here is a list of some of the many resources available to families. We are also available by phone at 1-866-958-KIDS (5437) any time you need us.

Website: [http://fosteringtogether.org/](http://fosteringtogether.org/)

**FosteringWA** is a program of Eastern Washington University and under the auspices of the Idaho Child Welfare Research and Training Center (ICWRTC) seeks to adapt a successful foster parent peer mentoring program to meet the needs of Eastern Washington’s families, as it has been doing in Idaho since 2007.

Website: [https://sites.ewu.edu/fosteringwa/](https://sites.ewu.edu/fosteringwa/)

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**Statewide Resources**

**Kinship Navigators** serve as a one-stop shop, providing information and assistance to relatives who may not know where to turn or how to apply for benefits and services in their local community.
The **WithinReach hotline** helps provide information and referrals on a broad range of health and social services related to raising children of all ages. 1-800-322-2588

Website: [https://www.withinreachwa.org/](https://www.withinreachwa.org/)

Website: [www.parenthelp123.org](http://www.parenthelp123.org) additionally families can apply for benefits using the benefit finder.

The **Washington Connection Website** provides information about many DSHS services, including kinship care.  Website: [www.washingtonconnection.org](http://www.washingtonconnection.org)

**Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence** offers training opportunities for relatives and foster parents coping with problem behaviors. All training resources are available to all caregivers.

Website: [https://allianceforchildwelfare.org/](https://allianceforchildwelfare.org/)

**The DSHS Children’s Administration (CA)** website offers information about foster care and the child welfare system.  Website: [https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca](https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca)

**Aging and Long Term Support Administration (ALTSA)** offers information to assist with getting answers to questions and finding services, programs, and support can be confusing and overwhelming. We are here to help.


**Parent to Parent (P2P) Programs** offer support and information for families of children with developmental disabilities.  Website: [http://arcwa.org/getsupport/parent_to_parent_p2p_programs](http://arcwa.org/getsupport/parent_to_parent_p2p_programs)

**Foster Parent & Caregiver Support line - 1-800-301-1868**

The Foster Parent & Caregiver Support Line provides phone support when foster parents and relative caregivers are in crisis. Children’s Administration social workers answer the calls and can offer behavior management advice, problem solving tips and a listening ear. The support line operates after business hours through CA’s Central Intake.

5:00 pm - 8:00 am Mon - Fri & all weekend hours for emergencies

**Legal Voice**-

*Options for Grandparents and Nonparental Caregivers: Adoption, Dependency Guardianship, Nonparental Custody and Temporary Agreements/A Legal Guide for Washington State handbook.*  
Website: [http://www.legalvoice.org/tools-family](http://www.legalvoice.org/tools-family)
This is a practical handbook for grandparents and other nonparental caregivers who want to understand their rights to establish and maintain legal relationships with the children.

Written in simple and clear language, the book gives basic information on key areas of family law, juvenile justice issues and public benefits, including:

- Dependency process
- Guardianship
- Nonparental/Third-Party Custody
- Visitation
- Indian Child Welfare Act
- Temporary Parental Consent Agreements
- Child in Need and At-Risk Youth Procedures

It also provides resource information about grandparent groups, legal services and public agencies across the state.
DSHS Kinship Publications

The following free publications are PDFs that can be viewed on-line. Many are available in several languages. If you would like printed copies, go to the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services website (look under booklets or brochures) or by:

- e-mail at fulfillment@prt.wa.gov
- phone at (360) 586-6360
- fax at (360) 586-6361
- If you don't order online, you will need the publication number which is on the back page of a publication in the format DSHS 22-###(X). Make sure to include your mailing address.

- **Consent to Health Care for the Child in Your Care: A Kinship Caregiver's Guide** (DSHS 22-1119x) This brochure explains a new law passed by the 2005 WA State Legislature which spells out a relative's rights and responsibilities. English, Cambodian, English, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Vietnamese. (PDF)

- **Did You Know about the Following Services and Supports for Grandparents and Relatives Raising Children** (DSHS 22-1120x) This six page pamphlet provides a comprehensive list of various resources, benefits, and support services available to relatives raising children. English, Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Laotian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese (PDF) (English and Spanish copies can be ordered)

- **Education Advocacy Guide for Caregivers- Supporting School Success for Children and Youth in Care** (22-1192) This guide can help caregivers better understand what education advocacy is and what is expected of students from preschool to high school. English (PDF)

- **Relatives as Parents: A Resource Guide for Relatives Raising Children in Washington State** (DSHS 22-996x) This 75 page booklet is an extensive resource guide for relative caregivers. English

- **We Want to Hear from You: Wallet Card** (DSHS 22-830) This wallet size card gives the phone number and email address for Constituent Relations. English and Spanish available


**Helpful tips when you are developing your profile on the myPRINT.wa.gov website**

When you are filling out your profile you will come to a field that looks like this ……

* Cost Center: 

Put the words The Alliance in that field.

Also…if you log into the myPRINT website and it appears blank, try using a different **Browser** to log in.