



## Kinship Care Facts

- More than 3,000 children in Vermont do not live with either parent.
- Children in kinship care far outnumber those in DCF foster care.
- Grandparents form the largest group of kinship care providers.
- Kinship caregivers are primarily women.
- Parental health issues (mental, physical and substance abuse) and incarceration are the primary reasons why children enter temporary kinship care.
- Legal guardians are also known as kinship care providers, relative caregivers and grandfamilies.
- Having multigenerational kinship family support early in the placement process improves the overall experience for all three generations (parent, child, caregiver).
- Support is available for all three generations (and sometimes 4!).
- Advocacy efforts are most effective when kinship families share their lived experiences. Our voices and stories make a difference and have the power to effect change.

### K.I.N. Networks Offer Group & 1:1 Kinship Peer Support

- Intake and Needs Assessment
- Hot Line Support
- Warm Line Support
- Court Support
- Meeting Support (IEP, etc)
- Specialized Information
- Training Opportunities
- Navigation to Services
- Visitation Assistance
- Advocacy and Referral

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### Kinship Support Groups Offer Opportunities to:

- Meet other kinship families
- Share kinship experiences
- Ask questions
- Learn from others

### K.I.N. — K.A.N. Vermont

*Kinship Information & Navigation networks, joined in statewide collaboration with the Kinship Advocacy Network*



## Peer Support for Families Involved in Kinship Care

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## What is Kinship Care?

When a child cannot live with a parent and must stay with another family member or adult that they have a close connection to, that relationship is known as kinship care. There are many routes to kinship care. Most kinship families across Vermont are created through a voluntary minor guardianship process in Probate Court. There are, however, other routes to kinship care:

- Some relatives become licensed DCF kinship foster parents for related children in DCF state custody.
- Some accept custody when there has been involvement with a state agency and/or court, but no state custody of the child occurs.
- Relatives enter into a private arrangement with the child's parents; these may not include any court or state agency.

*There are pros and cons to each route, as benefits and supports are different in each type of kinship care. K.I.N. Specialists are available statewide to explore what families believe would benefit their family and circumstance.*

## K. I. N.

### Kinship Information & Navigation

Each K.I.N. network has access to Kinship Specialists who have:

- Lived experience in Kinship Care
- Specialized training in a variety of areas that intersect with kinship care
- Expertise assisting legal guardians, kinship foster parents and those kin caring for children with no involvement with a state agency or court
- Access to information about agencies, organizations, and community partners providing support and services

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## K. A. N.

### Kinship Advocacy Network

Federal and state laws impacting kinship care have changed. Relatives must now be considered when an out-of-home placement occurs or a child is "at risk" of being placed in out-of-home care.

Advocacy concerns are referred to the K.A.N. by:

- Kinship navigators
- Families
- Service Providers

Advocacy occurs not only in kinship care but also in disciplines that intersect with multigenerational family care. Our goal is to strengthen the voice of families to ensure that **"no decisions about us are made without us."**

## Our Mission ...

To ensure that multigenerational families involved in kinship care are aware of - and have access to - the support and services they are entitled to, including:

- Reach Up Child Only
  - Medicaid / Dr. Dynasaur
  - Childcare Subsidy
  - WIC
  - Free / Reduced-Price / Summer Meals
  - College / Post-Secondary
  - Respite
- .... and more

Contact **K.I.N. - K.A.N Vermont** or a county kinship navigator to receive information and navigation assistance to services and support

**Phone / Text :** 802.578.9518  
**Email:** kinkanvermont@gmail.com