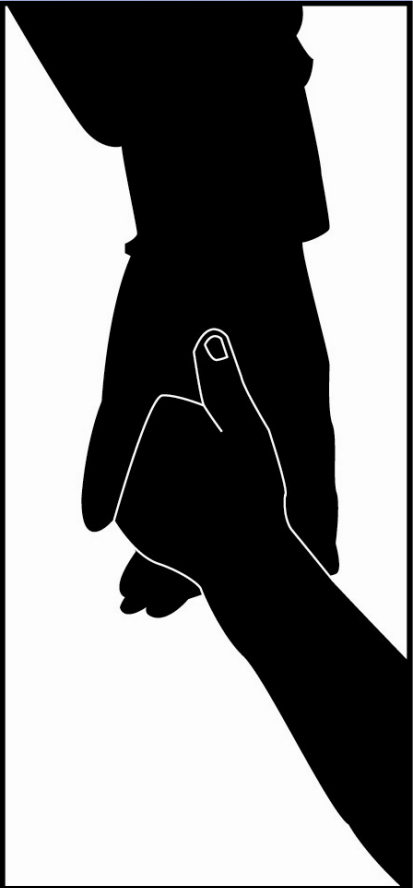




Advocating for safe children, stable families and supportive communities



Ohio Enhanced Kinship Navigator Grant Update

Crystal W. Allen, Executive Director
Public Children Services Assoc of Ohio
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May 17, 2010

Kinship Care



Context

- Seven Ohio Counties – large, med, small - some with good resources, some poor
- KN Services for informal kin families and those formally involved with CPS
- 4 establishing/expanding Kinship Navigator program in CPS
- 3 using community based orgs (larger counties)
- Rest of Ohio – all CPS seeks out and depends on kin caregivers; services vary, robustness varies – especially for informal kin families.



Progress to Date

- All counties hired, expanded, contracted with Kin Navigator staff
- Grant Sponsored Training for grant leads
 - Kinship Dynamics and Navigator services
 - Community Mapping
 - Advocacy
 - Ohio Benefit Bank orientation
 - Evaluation and web-based data tool info



Progress to Date

- Local Advisory Boards – locals, kin
- Local brochures, media, presentations
- State Advisory Board – Ohio Kin Advisory Council & Ohio GP Kin Coalition
- www.KinshipOhio.org website launched – local & state resource
- Joint statewide letter from ODJFS, ODAging, AARP, other statewide orgs



April 8, 2010

To: Ohio's Area Agencies on Aging
88 County Public Children Services Agencies
88 County Job and Family Services Agencies
88 County Family and Children First Coordinators

From: Barbara Riley, Director, Ohio Department of Aging
Larke Recchie, Executive Director, Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Doug Lumpkin, Director, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Jane Taylor, Executive Director, AARP Ohio
Joel Potts, Executive Director, Ohio Job and Family Services Directors Association
Crystal Ward Allen, Executive Director, Public Children Services Association of Ohio
Angela Sausser Short, Director, Ohio Family and Children First

Re: Local Partnerships to support Grandparents and other Kin Caregivers

As we all know, today's society has more and more grandparents and other kin caregivers with sole responsibility to raise the children in their home. The 2000 Census showed 86,000 grandparent caregiver homes shouldering this responsibility, many with sibling groups of children, and of course many more aunts, uncles and other kin raising their extended family's children. We fully expect a higher number in grandparent homes in the 2010 Census. Children fortunate enough to be cared for by safe, familiar kin caregivers have far better outcomes than children placed in unrelated foster care – better school attendance and academic performance, fewer community behavior problems, and much greater long term stability. Kinship reduces child trauma and governmental costs – both desired outcomes in today's world.

So – thanks to all of you that have partnered locally to support kin caregiver homes! We are dedicated at the State level to support your efforts. We want to bring attention to new tools and opportunities to support your families locally, and encourage you to:

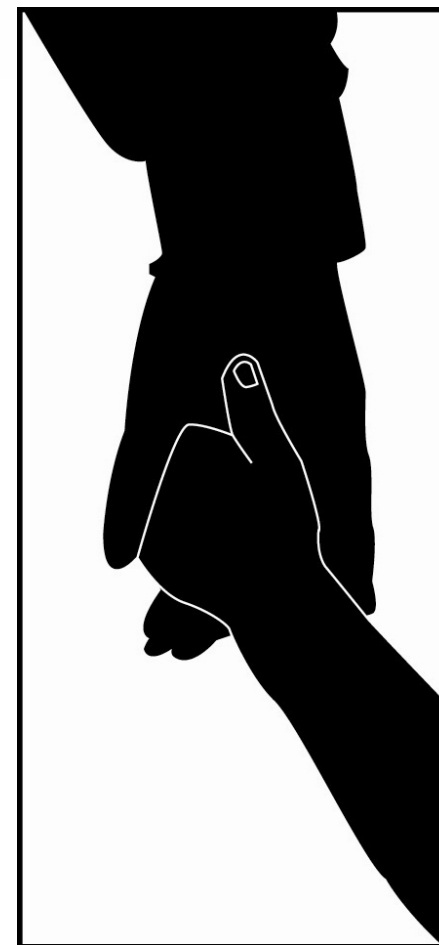
- Promote the new www.KinshipOhio.org website with local families and community partners. This was developed specifically for kinship caregivers, with simple discussion about kinship and how to navigate existing supports and resources (compliments of Ohio's Enhanced Kinship Navigator Grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services).
- Send specific local/county info on the clickable state map, www.kinshipohio.org/countyResources.htm. Local address, phone, contact, website? Send to PCSAO at jcsd@pcsao.org, she will load your local info.
- Work together to identify, advocate for and secure local, state, federal and foundation funding to support services for kinship caregivers, including, but not limited to, the AAAs local allocation of Older Americans Act National Family Caregivers Support Program (NFCSP) funds. If available, AAAs may use up to 10% of their NFCSP allocation to provide support services to grandparents and older individuals who are relative caregivers of a child who is not more than 18 years of age.
- Consider a partnership (formal or informal) between the county Family and Children First Council and the Area Agency of Aging.
- Look to your peers for best practices locally; an excellent example is in Lucas County, where the Area Office on Aging, Job & Family Services and Children Services have come together to develop a comprehensive kinship care program that in 2009, served 3,011 adults and 3,805 children.

We thank you for your good work, we know local partnerships are the key to serving Ohio's citizens throughout their life continuum.

For more information, please contact:

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OFCF, Angela Sausser Short, Angela.SausserShort@governor.ohio.gov

www.KinshipOhio.org



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Challenges

- Regular start up challenges – hiring staff, RFPing when contracting
- Developing consistency for decision points for evaluation purposes
- Expansion of community resources such as 211 in poor communities – budget cuts abound in Ohio

Evaluation ?s

Kin Navigator grant counties compared
to like counties...

Process

- Increased **amount & accessibility of resources?**
- Improved **community service network** for KCGs?
- Greater community **awareness** re: needs of KCGs?

Outcomes

- KCGs more likely to **step forward?**
- KCGs **remain committed?**
- KCGing **easier & more rewarding?**
- Is there **greater child well-being?**
- Quicker **permanency?**
- Effect on child **safety?**
- ID family **characteristics** re: outcomes...

Evaluation Activities

- Logic Model
- Web Based Data System
 - Case level data
 - System data
 - Family follow up
- Implementation reports
- Comparison counties
- Site visits
- SACWIS Data requests

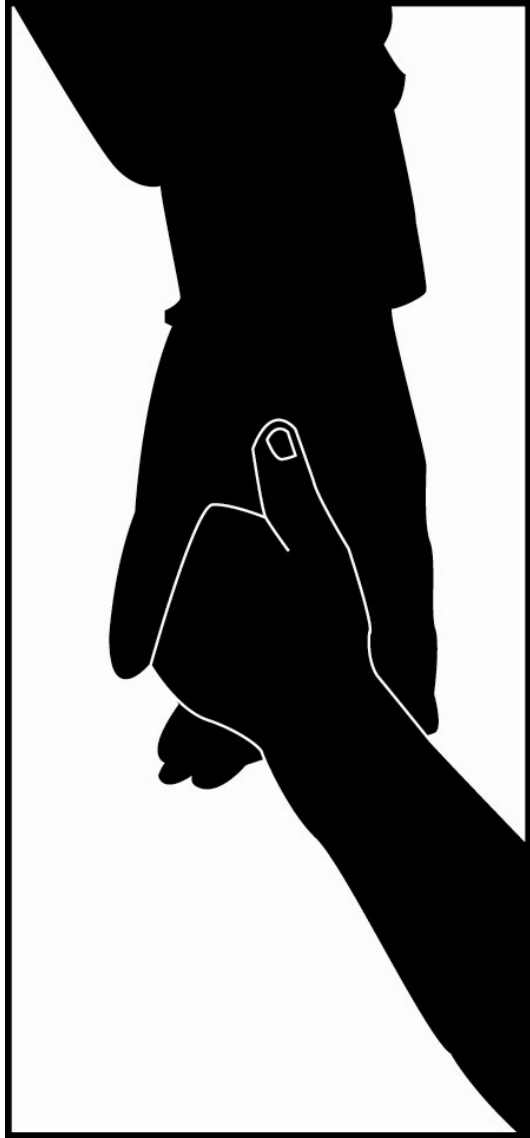
Technical Assistance?

- How are others measuring success?
- Consistency issues?
- Linkage to CFSR outcomes?
- Evaluation needs comparison counties, project manager striving for statewide application...



Conclusions

- KGCs are very appreciative
- Basic supports essential
 - TANF child only cash assistance
 - Medicaid for child
 - authority to care for child – school enrollment, medical care
- Then find out what they want – often not the world, but an important need for their family.



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