

## REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

### Kinship Care Oversight Committee

RCW 74.13.621  
Chapter 4, Laws of 2015

December 1, 2018

Aging and Long-Term Support Administration  
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## Executive Summary

The annual Kinship Care Oversight Committee (KCOC) progress report for September 2017 through August 2018 is required by Chapter 4, Laws of 2015 and RCW 74.13.621. KCOC was formed in 2003 to provide guidance to the Legislature in identifying, supporting and strengthening kinship care families. Kinship care includes relatives raising for children who are not formally involved with the public child welfare system, as well as those connected to the formal child welfare system. DSHS' Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA) and Economic Services Administration (ESA) as well as the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) staff participate in KCOC, with kinship caregivers, child and caregiver advocates, non-profit service providers, tribes, and legal community representatives.

KCOC meets quarterly, providing a forum to exchange information about state policy changes, local initiatives and concerns, and to monitor, guide, and report on kinship care recommendations and implementation activities.

Achievements this past year include:

- Means testing for child-only TANF grants was eliminated. Effective July 1, 2018, caregivers are no longer required to provide verification of their income in order to receive child-only TANF grants for children in their care.
- The legislature reauthorized the continuation of KCOC through June 2019.
- The 15th annual statewide *Voices of Children Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives* Contest Award Ceremony was held at the Governor's Mansion in Olympia on July 25, 2018. Senator Curtis King shook the hands of children with winning entries who attended as they received awards. He also presented a special honor to one of the state's first Kinship Navigators, Mary Pleger, who has served since 2005.

## 2019 KCOC Recommendations

Looking to 2019, the KCOC makes the following recommendations to the Legislature:

1. A statewide system of legal supports for kinship caregivers - Establish a statewide Kinship Caregivers Legal Aid Support and Training Coordinator to help pro bono and low bono attorneys provide legal assistance.  
\$100,000/year = \$200,000/biennium  
Total = \$200,000

2. Increase the Kinship Care Support Program, (KCSP) - Add a \$500,000 to the \$1 million/year urgent need fund for kinship care families who are not involved with the child welfare system. The program budget has not seen an increase since 2006.  
Total = \$500,000
3. Add 3.5 additional Kinship Navigators  
\$86,518/year per full time Navigator;  
\$43,374/year per .5 Navigator  
Total = \$605,856/biennium
4. The Tribal Navigator Program was funded at a maintenance level of about 50% of original appropriation. The SFY 19 state budget returned the program's funding to the original level. Requesting \$243,000/per year to maintain this original appropriation.  
Total = \$486,000/biennium
5. Require the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to include a place on their school forms to indicate if the child/youth is living with kin as the primary caregiver.  
Total = Cost uncertain
6. Exploring Child-Only SNAP Benefit - The possibility of using GF-S dollars to establish a child-only SNAP benefit for kinship caregivers, who do not otherwise qualify for the program, is currently being explored. Discussions are underway with ESA.

### **Facts about our state's Kinship Caregivers**

Children who live with their grandparents and other relatives are brought together for different reasons: primarily for parental opioid and substance abuse issues, incarceration, mental illness, child abuse and neglect, parental death, or military deployment. These families represent all income levels, races, and ethnicities. In Washington state, an estimated 51,000 children are being raised by grandparents and other relatives.<sup>1</sup> For every child placed in out-of-home care with a relative through Washington's child welfare system, there are approximately eleven children living "informally" with a relative. According to data from DCYF, 4,253 children in out-of-home care are placed with kin, representing 46% of all children placed in out-of-home care in the child welfare system.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count Data Center, WA State, 2016-2018

<sup>2</sup> DCYF *FAMLINK Metrics Report September 2018*

Many of the children cared for by their relatives have experienced trauma while living with their parents. It is also common for these children to have physical challenges, mental health, emotional, and/or behavioral issues. The state's bi-annual Healthy Youth Survey continues to monitor risk factors, comparing youth living in kinship care with youth living with parents, and youth living in foster care.

Utilizing the 2016 WA State Healthy Youth Survey, ALTSA and DCYF collaborated on the report, [Risk Factors Associated with Different Living Arrangements: Youth in Kinship Care, Foster Care, Unstable Housing, and Homelessness](#) prepared by Looking Glass Analytics, Inc. This latest report compares youth in 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, and also provides an analysis by the Area Agencies on Aging service regions.

## **2018 KCOC Activities**

### **Education and Awareness**

KCOC participants organize various recognition events, conferences and other efforts highlighting the important role of kinship care providers. Examples of events and activities include:

- Washington State Kinship Care Children's Poetry, Drawing and Essay Contest, Voices of Children Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives. 2018 marked the 15th anniversary of the Voices of Children Contest. A celebration of winners and their families took place at the Governor's Mansion on July 24, 2018. (To read the winning essays, see Appendix 1.)
- Governor Inslee proclaimed May 16, 2018 as Kinship Caregiver Day. Since 1995, Pierce County's HopeSparks' Relatives Raising Children Program has led this annual recognition to honor relatives raising children.
- The Annual Pacific Northwest Caregivers' Conference at Great Wolf Lodge May 4-6, 2018 brought together child welfare staff, advocates, and both foster and kinship caregivers. DCYF provided 150 conference scholarships for the event.
- KCOC members met with the representatives from OSPI and program staff to discuss challenges kinship caregivers face in enrolling children in school. Further training and resources for Kinship Navigators were explored to support easier school access as well as data needs regarding this population to benefit schools and programs.
- The WA Nursing Commission News published an article in Spring 2018 written by ALTSA and Department of Health staff titled, "Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children – How Nurses Can Support the Unique Needs of Kinship Care

Families.” The goal was to inform nurses of the risk factors that many of these families face and learn about available statewide resources to better support them.

- **Recreational Opportunities for Kinship Care Families:** The Woodland Park Zoo provided 750 free tickets for kinship care families which were distributed by Kinship/Tribal Navigators around the state. In eastern Washington, Kinship Navigator Programs and tribes were offered free passes to the Mobius Science Center and Children’s Museum, along with tickets to the Spokane Indians minor league baseball games. The Pacific Science Center continues to offer one-year free kinship care passes and the Seattle Aquarium offers two-year free passes which are distributed by Kinship/Tribal Navigators and DCYF staff.
- A total of 3,026 people attended the 10th annual “We Are Family” Day celebration at Safeco Field, May 20, 2018, sponsored by DCYF and the Seattle Mariners for kinship, foster and adoptive families. Over 900 attended the morning recognition event for caregivers, where vendor tables, carnival games, and donations that included tickets to a Mariner’s suite for the game for 18 caregivers and children, were available.
- **Opioid Grant Collaboration:** AL TSA, DCYF, and Juvenile Rehabilitation are collaborating on a Safe Storage Workgroup convened by the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery/Health Care Authority to utilize \$5,000 of grant funds allotted to several agencies to target preventative work. The focus is safe storage of opioid medication and stakeholder communication. Agencies will disperse literature that defines and encourages the safe storage of opioid medication for targeted audiences. This effort recognizes the need for cross-agency collaboration in order to impact this widespread crisis that affects all of our families.

### **Washington State Kinship Recognition**

This year, a number of Kinship Navigators, host agencies and Kinship Caregivers were recognized for their contributions.

**Rosalyn Alber**, Director, Kinship Services and Hope Sparks of Pierce County received the Galaxy Award recognizing the 20th year of their vibrant, respectful, effective and multi-dimensional kinship care program.

**Mary Pleger**, Kinship Navigator, was selected for the 2018 Voices of Children’s Contest as its annual honoree. Mary launched supportive services for kinship caregivers in Southeast Washington through Catholic Family and Child Services. She is also one of our state’s first Kinship Navigators.

**Lynn Urvina**, Kinship Navigator, received the National Casey Excellence for Children Award, recognizing her distinguished work, exceptional leadership and relentless dedication to serving kinship care families. Lynn is a Kinship Navigator for Family Education and Support Services in Olympia. She was also featured in KinCare Today, *Kinship Navigators Help Families Find Their Way*, Special Edition 2018.

**Unsung Heroes:** Annually, DCYF promotes and receives nominations from around the state for Unsung Hero Awards for parents and caregivers. The winning heroes have a page in their honor printed in Seattle's Child magazine--one for each day in February. They and their families are also recognized at a special dinner and honoring ceremony put on by DCYF. In 2018, a record 7 of the 28 Unsung Heroes represented kinship care.

**Tim Cavanaugh**, Samish Nation, one of the recognized Unsung Heroes, went on to be selected by Generations United as a member of the GrAND Advocacy Network. The GrAND Advocacy Network is a select group of grandparents and other relative caregivers from across the country who provide feedback on policies and practices affecting grandfamilies. They share their perspectives on family strengths, needs and service gaps. Sharon Gebhardt, Turtle Mountain Chippewa, and Carmen Kalama, Nisqually, were also selected this year to join this special network.

### **Legal Options for Kinship Caregivers**

- Senate Bills 5490 and 6453 passed during the 2018 legislative session. These bills give DCYF the ability to purchase legal services for parents and kinship caregivers when it supports safety, permanency, or well-being for a child. No appropriation of funds accompanied the legislation, and implementation was left to DCYF discretion, though collaboration with the state Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) and the Office of Public Defense (OPD) was recommended. DCYF, OCLA, and OPD have begun work on a potential pilot that would include data gathering and an initial limited implementation. This work is in its early stages and the focus is on parenting plans and non-parental custody agreements for kinship caregivers caring for dependent children.
- Legal assistance programs for kinship caregivers across the state are concentrated in four counties: King, Thurston, Whatcom, and Yakima. These services focus on educating caregivers about the non-parental (third party) custody process and assisting with completing paperwork for uncontested cases.
- To better educate kinship caregivers about the legal process:

- Legal Voice, a non-profit in Seattle, translated its updated *Options for Grandparents and Other Non-parental Caregivers: A Legal Guide for WA State* into Spanish. AL TSA printed 2,500 copies and distributed them to Kinship/Tribal Navigators. The publication is also available online: [www.legalvoice.org/tools-family](http://www.legalvoice.org/tools-family)
- AL TSA staff continually send information to caregivers who request legal assistance and resources, including a consent for health care brochure and legal options and mediation DVDs.
- DCYF staff provide information to kinship caregivers about the dependency court process. Caregivers receive the child’s placement packet containing the caregiver’s report and instructions on how to complete and submit this report for the child’s review hearings in court. Caseworkers provide advance notice of court hearings so caregivers can attend. Information related to the legal process is available for caregivers on DCYF’s website and in the monthly Caregiver Connection newsletter.
- A new DCYF publication in 2018, “[Understanding the Dependency Court Process for Caregivers](#)” is available on the DCYF website under forms; DSHS 22-1741.
- A new DCYF publication “[Kinship Care: Relative and Suitable Other Placement](#),” outlines resources, supports and tasks related to new child welfare placement. It is available on the DCYF website under forms; DSHS 22-1765.

### **Collaborations to Support Kinship Care Families**

Regional Kinship Collaborations have formed in the past decade to support kinship caregivers in a variety of ways. These include:

- The King County Kinship Collaboration;
- The Yakima Region KINDred Spirits Collaboration;
- The Lewis-Mason-Thurston County Kinship Regional Collaboration.

The KCOC relies on these collaborations to share information about local resources and events and to raise issues of statewide concern. (For examples of local Kinship Collaboration activities during 2018, see Appendix 2.)

### **AL TSA’s Benefits and Services for Kinship Caregivers**

The services provided through AL TSA, the Area Agencies on Aging and their community partners focus on kinship care families facing a variety of needs and challenges who are primarily not involved with the child welfare system.

### **Kinship Navigator Program**

The Kinship Navigator Program, authorized by the 2005 Legislature, provides a one-stop shop in partnership with nine of the thirteen Area Agencies on Aging regions and community partners. 30 of the state's 39 counties have coverage by Kinship Navigators who help kinship caregivers access services, offer emotional support, help reduce barriers, problem-solve challenges, and advocate in order to keep children out of foster care. Kinship Navigators are still needed in the 9 other counties. (For a complete listing of Kinship and Tribal Navigators see Appendix 3.)

### **Tribal Kinship Navigator and Respite Care Services**

The 2016 Legislature funded a Tribal Kinship Navigator initiative which enabled eight Tribal Nations to develop a proposal and receive funding for SFY 2017. A half-time position at ALTSA was supported to guide kinship programs. For SFY18, the funding was reduced by fifty percent which impacted the tribal kinship programs and staffing. The SFY 19 state budget returned the program's funding to the original level.

ALTSA received an Administration on Community Living Tribal Kinship Respite Grant in September 2017 to complement the Tribal Navigator program. Pilot project funds were distributed to the eight participating tribes to support various culturally-relevant activities (e.g., kinship camp, drum and regalia dress making, storytelling) for youth raised by relatives, as well as to support other respite programs.

### **Kinship Caregivers Support Program**

The Kinship Caregivers Support Program (KCSP), authorized in 2004, assists low-income caregivers with short-term financial support to meet the child(ren)'s urgent needs and provide greater stability for children by purchasing goods (e.g., beds, clothing, safety items or supplies) and/or services when no other resources are available to meet a particular need(s). Each county in the state has an access point where kinship caregivers can apply for this urgent-need funding.

### **DSHS Kinship Care Website**

ALTSA hosts the state's [Kinship Care Website](#). The website provides information to kinship caregivers and professionals. It includes how to locate Kinship Navigators, support groups, and KCSP offices. It offers information on resources and services that include financial assistance, legal, health care, drug/alcohol and mental health services, child care, support groups, resources for caring for children with special needs, tips on raising relative children, kinship navigator regional newsletters, and related news items.

### **Kinship Navigator Trainings and Grandfamilies Leadership Certificate**

In Fall 2017 and Spring 2018, two, two-day in-person Kinship Navigator trainings took place in Olympia and in Yakima in conjunction with kinship providers, Family Education and Support Services and Catholic Family and Child Services. A rich array of guest speakers focused on timely topics, such as Therapeutic Intervention and Services, Trauma Informed Care, Integrated Case Management, Child Support, Legal Options, Healthy Boundaries, Kinship Caregiver's Rights in Schools, Understanding TANF changes and more.

In conjunction with the University of Maine's Center on Aging Certificate in Grandfamilies Leadership, AL TSA provided 11 scholarships to tribal and AAA connected Kinship Navigators to participate in a course involving nine online modules over a three-month period on topics like grief and loss, the legal system, special populations, trauma, mental health, etc.

### **Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF's) Benefits and Services for Kinship Caregivers**

DCYF prioritizes placement of children entering out-of-home care with relatives and other significant adults known to the family. Searches assist in locating family members. Family members are invited to attend Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) meetings to offer supports for the children and family.

Kinship caregivers with children placed in their home can access monthly reimbursement by becoming a licensed foster parent. Unlicensed caregivers have access to the Non-Needy Child-Only TANF grant without income restrictions as of 2018, and to Relative Support and Service Funds to support temporary needs. Medical/dental/counseling and therapeutic services are available to children through Apple Health Core Connections.

Contracted providers, Olive Crest's Fostering Together for Western Washington, and Eastern Washington's Fostering Washington for Eastern Washington, assist kinship caregivers with system navigation, the licensing and home study processes, and more.

### **Family First Prevention Services Act**

On February 9, 2018, landmark bipartisan legislation, the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was signed into law as part of a federal budget bill. This law broadened allowable uses for Title IV-E funding which pays for the federal portion of foster care services. Prevention services are included with a focus on preventing the need for children to enter foster care. Prevention activities for eligible children and their parents or kinship caregivers are defined as mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment services, and in-home parent skill-based programs. States that elect to use this funding for these programs must demonstrate that the programs use a trauma-informed approach and meet evidenced-based criteria. DCYF is working on implementation of this legislation.

### **Federal Kinship Navigator Grant Proposal**

DCYF partnered with AL TSA to submit a federal Kinship Navigator Grant Proposal, made available under FFPSA. In September 2018, DCYF was notified that \$361,000 of federal grant funds were awarded. The funds are available for specific activities from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. DCYF is the qualifying Title IV-E agency for the funding. DCYF and AL TSA will evaluate the current Kinship Navigator program in Washington with the goal of meeting evidenced-based promising practice criteria. The Kinship Navigator

Program, administered through the Area Agencies on Aging and their community partners, has the ability to serve both formal and informal kinship caregivers—those involved in the child welfare system and those who are not. The goal is to increase the program’s ability to serve both populations and meet standards that may allow for further partnership and funding.

A primary grant component is a formal university-level evaluation of the Kinship Navigator program led by Dr. Angelique Day of the University of Washington and Partners for our Children. Dr. Day is an expert in kinship care and was instrumental as an author of the Family First legislation, as well as in her role as Congressional Fellow with Congressman Danny K Davis' office; Ranking Member, Human Resources Subcommittee; Ways and Means Committee, U.S. House of Representatives. Kinship Navigators, caregivers, and referral/advocate agencies will participate in focus groups with Dr. Day as information and data is gathered for the evaluation. Dr. Day and her team will be working with AL TSA to update their data system to align with data being collected by DCYF, allowing kinship families to be tracked across both systems.

Dr. Day and her team will develop fidelity tools to support an evidence-based Kinship Navigation program and revise the Kinship Navigator manual to support a program model and model fidelity. This partnership between systems that serve formal and informal kinship caregivers has the potential to enrich the quality of work in both systems for the support of kinship caregivers and the children in their care.

### **Training and Online Services**

The University of Washington’s Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence (Alliance) is DCYF’s training partner. The Alliance provides professional training for caseworkers and skills development for foster parents and kinship caregivers. The Alliance utilizes their website for training, including a range of formats to allow for greater access to families. Caregiver Core Training, (CCT) the classes required to become a licensed caregiver, are now available online as well as in classroom format.

The Kinship 101 class through the Alliance expanded from classroom-only to webinar format in 2017, and includes one-on-one coaching with kinship caregivers as of 2018. Also in 2018, The Alliance began offering a “Supporting Kinship Caregivers” class for DCYF staff.

### **Foster Care and Caregiver Website and Listserv**

DCYF continues to serve caregivers through information available on its [Foster Parent and Kinship Care](#) webpages. A Listserv delivers information to licensed and prospective foster parents, kinship caregivers, DSHS and child placing agencies, community partners, and interested child welfare stakeholders. The monthly Caregiver Connection is delivered through the Listserv and is sent out to over 9,200 subscribers. A Kinship Korner section of this

publication was added in 2018, with articles that focus on the kinship caregiver experience in the child welfare system.

### **Supports through Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Contractors**

DCYF's foster care recruitment and retention contractors, Olive Crest's Fostering Together and Eastern Washington University's Fostering Washington, offer support services to kinship caregivers with dependent children placed in their home. Their websites offer information about services, supports, and training. Relative/kinship Facebook pages offer caregivers, with a child in the child welfare system, information and advice from experienced caregivers.

### **Concrete Supports**

Short-term assistance is available for DCYF's unlicensed kinship caregivers through the Relative Support Service Funds. The funds are used to help kinship caregivers accept placement of a child or to help maintain the child's placement. These funds continue to be utilized by offices around the state.

DCYF continues to provide a clothing voucher or pre-approved reimbursement for licensed and unlicensed caregivers with a child placed in their home, and mileage reimbursement is available for case-related travel expenses.

The Relative-Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP) is a subsidy program for dependent children who have guardianship established with a licensed relative. In addition to a monthly subsidy, R-GAP covers non-recurring costs up to \$1,500 to finalize legal requirements to establish relative guardianship. It allows for successor guardians, if named in advance, to receive R-GAP in the event the relative guardian becomes incapacitated or dies.

### **Other Supports**

A DCYF statewide kinship program manager position continues to lend focus to improving support for kinship families involved with the child welfare system. DCYF has convened an on-going Kinship Advisory Committee with both internal and external stakeholders to identify program improvements and supports for DCYF's kinship caregivers.

### **Economic Services Administration's Benefits for Kinship Caregivers**

#### **Means Testing Repeal**

Since November 2011, caregivers applying for a child-only TANF grant were required to provide verification of their income for eligibility of the TANF grant. This caused some caregivers to be ineligible for Kinship care TANF assistance. In the 2016 annual report to the Legislature, the Oversight Committee recommended elimination of means testing for child-only TANF.

Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5890 (foster care and adoption), provided funding eliminating means testing for child-only TANF cash assistance. Effective July 1, 2018 all Kinship families are now eligible for a child-only TANF grant, regardless of the caregiver's income (if all other eligibility requirements are met). TANF grants increased for many children whose caregivers income fell between 200-300 percent of the federal poverty level and more Kinship caregivers will now qualify for these essential supports.

The Legislature also approved a 9.3% increase in the TANF grant, effective July 1, 2018, and an asset limit increase, effective February 1, 2019, to help build supports for children and families, address the increasing costs to raise a family and allow families to have some savings when emergencies arise.

ESA provides cash assistance (child-only TANF grants), food assistance, and subsidized child care (Working Connections Child Care) to caregivers who qualify. Recipients of child-only TANF are eligible for one-time emergency assistance for shelter-related expenses through the Additional Requirements for Emergent Needs (AREN) program.

In coordination with DCYF, the ESA offers the Concurrent Benefits program for children temporarily placed in out-of-home care, allowing caregivers to receive a child-only TANF grant for a child, while a parent receives a TANF grant for themselves and their child during the reunification process.

## Appendix 1

### Voices of Children – Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives Contest - 2018 Winning Entries

What Me and Grandma Do: Read, Fed animals, Swim, T-Ball, Library, Garden, Homework, Bike, Basketball, We Love



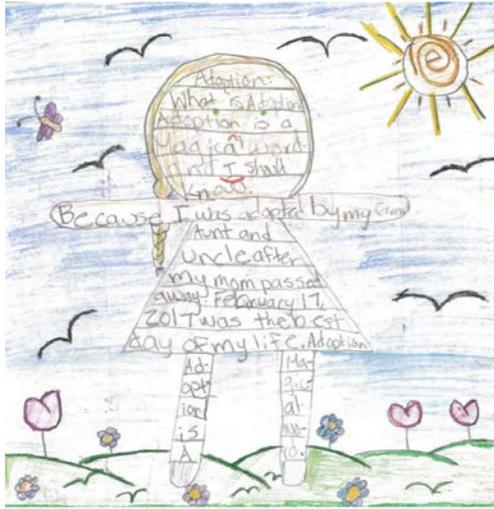
**Kinsley, age 6**

I love my family they gave me a home. They take good care of us like feeding us. I love my Grandma and Grandpa.



**Izzy, age 7**

Adoption: What is adoption? Adoption is a magical word and I should know. Because I was adopted by my Great Aunt and Uncle after my mom passed away. February 17, 2017 was the best day of my life. Adoption is a magical word.



Gracie, age 10

My Grandparents are the fertile soil that makes the fruit of our family tree... and that's me!



Ayza, age 11

Living with a Grandparent is hard because you don't get to see your parents often. When you live with a grandparent you get to experience more on life skills. They help you with things just like parents do. They never leave your side and always make you happy when your sad. Grandparents are just like as if your living with your regular parents. I still love my parents even

tho thoughts happen in life that your parents might regret. Life as a kid is hard even tho you know your parents aren't here to guide you through life as you go and at least I have someone who reminds me of my mom and not have her forgotten. The main person who has been here for me my whole life is my Grandma Joanne. I appreciate and love her and she provides for us even if she don't have the money.

**Kemiya, age 13**

From the age of 3 to now 18 my grandma has been the one there for me when my parents were too unstable to do their job. She raised me on her own, which I admire. At first yes I was sad that my parents were not around but I soon realized that where I was, was best for me. My grandma has taught me many things such as responsibilities. I was taught to write with good handwriting and to turn everything in and ask when I needed help. She has taught me to cook and bake. I mean I'm not gourmet chef but I know the essentials which is very helpful. My grandma has impacted my life because she wanted to and because of that I am still in high school, graduating this year on time first in the family and attending college. I plan on being successful and being the best I can possibly be so, thank you grandma.

**Xzavia, age 18**

## **Appendix 2**

### **2017 Highlights of Kinship Regional Collaborations**

#### **King County Kinship Collaboration (KCKC)**

In 2018, Catholic Community Services will be receiving Best Starts for Kids funding from the King County Department of Community & Human Services to increase the infrastructure of the Kinship Collaboration and Kinship Navigator programs, focusing on families who are not involved with the formal child welfare system. The funds will add hours to the KCKC coordinator position, and will provide another Kinship Navigator as well as a program assistant.

For the past nine years, KCKC has sponsored an overnight retreat for kinship families. This year, 20 families from different parts of the county attended. The retreat was supported by the YMCA and Odessa Brown Children's Clinic. Children (ages 5-17) participate in activities while caregivers get a chance to relax by the fire, meet in a group, take beach walks, or do arts and crafts. Families are together during meals, campfire, skits, and cabin time.

Other KCKC activities from the past year include: monthly networking meetings, a Kinship Caregiver Celebration in May, legislative advocacy at the city and state level, hosting a state Senator at a support group, and hosting an End of Life workshop. Additionally, support was provided to eight kinship support groups, and to three reporters who worked on/are working on kinship articles.

#### **Yakima County KINDred Spirits Collaboration**

This collaboration celebrated its 13th year, meeting regularly and producing bi-monthly newsletters, scheduling quarterly events and hosting an ongoing support group. The annual Caregiver Day was held to say "Thank You" to informal kinship caregivers with a day of self-care, and a movie and meal in November. Other special events include a Pancake Feed to celebrate both kinship caregivers and foster parents, hosted by Applebee's in May, and the Back to School event where the collaboration gave out over 250 backpacks to both kinship and foster children in August. The ongoing pro bono monthly Legal Options Clinic continues through this Collaboration with key partners Catholic Charities, Casey Family Programs and Volunteer Attorney Services.

#### **The Lewis, Mason and Thurston Kinship Regional Collaboration**

Kinship Navigator, Lynn Urvina, continues to serve as a member of the National GrAND Network of Kinship Advisors organized by Generations United – which includes a select group of relatives who provide feedback on resources, policies and advocacy. She also participated on the DCYF Kinship Advisory Committee and remains active with the State Kinship KCOC. Spanish-speaking Navigator Assistant, Rosa Venancio, represents the needs of kinship caregivers with Latinas Advocates and the Latino Equity Network of Washington State.

The Lewis, Mason and Thurston Kinship Regional Collaboration coordinated: Kinship Advocacy Day, Washington State Kinship Caregiver's Day, and the Statewide 15th Annual Voices of Children Raised by Relatives contest for youth being raised by grandparents and other caring relatives. It continues to partner with the local Jubilee Retirement Community to provide holiday gifts for over 100 kinship children and gift cards for their caregivers. For nine years the collaboration has partnered with Great Wolf Lodge to provide reduced rates at the hotel/water park for kinship families to celebrate Washington State Kinship Caregiver Day in May. Caregivers from across the state come to relax and have fun with their kinship children. The reduced rate, about half the normal price, makes this special experience available to those that might not otherwise be able to attend.

## Appendix 3

### Washington State's Kinship Navigators Serving Grandparents and Relatives Raising Children

#### Central Washington

- **Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan, Grant, Lincoln, and Adams Counties:** Aging and Adult Care of Central WA  
*Kinship Navigators:* Phoebe Nelson (Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan)  
[nelsop@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:nelsop@dshs.wa.gov)  
509-886-0700  
Jean Fitzgerald (Grant, Adams, and Lincoln Counties)  
[fitzgj@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:fitzgj@dshs.wa.gov)  
509-886-0700

#### Southwest Washington

- **Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania, Wahkiakum Counties:** Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington  
*Kinship Navigator:* Sarah Revord  
[kinshipnavigator@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:kinshipnavigator@dshs.wa.gov)  
360-759-4317

#### Eastern Washington

- **Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties:** Rural Resources Community Action  
*Kinship Navigator:* Art Mathew  
[amathew@ruralresources.org](mailto:amathew@ruralresources.org)  
509-685-6115
- **Spokane County:** Elder Services – Frontier Behavioral Health  
*Kinship Navigator:* Patricia Robinson  
[probinson@fbhwa.org](mailto:probinson@fbhwa.org)  
509-458-7450 x4
- **Whitman County:** Rural Resources Community Action  
*Kinship Navigator:* Andree Marcus-Rader  
[arader@ruralresources.org](mailto:arader@ruralresources.org)  
509-332-0365

#### Southeast Washington

- **Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Kittitas, Walla Walla and Yakima Counties:** Catholic Family and Child Services  
*Kinship Navigator:* Mary Pleger

[mpleger@ccyakima.org](mailto:mpleger@ccyakima.org),

*Spanish-speaking Navigator Assistant:* Laura Dow

[ldow@catholiccharitiescw.org](mailto:ldow@catholiccharitiescw.org), 509-946-4645

### **Puget Sound**

- **King County:** Catholic Community Services  
*Kinship Navigator:* Shannon Jones  
[ShannonJ@ccsw.org](mailto:ShannonJ@ccsw.org)  
206-328-5951
- **Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties:** Family Education and Support Services  
*Kinship Navigator:* Lynn Urvina  
[Lynn@FamilyESS.org](mailto:Lynn@FamilyESS.org)  
*Spanish-speaking Navigator Assistant:* Rosa Venancio  
[Rosa@FamilyESS.org](mailto:Rosa@FamilyESS.org)  
360-754-7629 or 1-877-813-2828
- **Pierce County:** HopeSparks  
*Kinship Navigator:* Rosalyn Alber  
[ralber@hopesparks.org](mailto:ralber@hopesparks.org)  
253-565-4484 ext. 112  
*Kinship Navigator:* Pati West  
[pwest@hopesparks.org](mailto:pwest@hopesparks.org)  
253-565-4484 ext. 144
- **Snohomish County: Homage Senior Services**  
*Kinship Resource Person:* Amy Dennis  
[adennis@homage.org](mailto:adennis@homage.org), 425-265-2287

### **Northwest Washington**

- **Whatcom County:** Opportunity Council  
*Kinship Navigator:* Kate Stragis  
[kate\\_stragis@whatcomhsc.org](mailto:kate_stragis@whatcomhsc.org), 360-734-5121 ext. 2171

### **Tribal Kinship Navigator Program Contacts**

- **Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation**  
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Audrey Seymour - [Audrey.seymour.aaa@colvilletribes.com](mailto:Audrey.seymour.aaa@colvilletribes.com)  
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Billi Taylor – [Billi.Taylor.aaa@colvilletribes.com](mailto:Billi.Taylor.aaa@colvilletribes.com)

- **Lummi Tribe**  
Chastity Jeffries - [ChastityJ@lummi-nsn.gov](mailto:ChastityJ@lummi-nsn.gov)
- **Makah Tribe**  
Rose Tageant- [kinship@makah.com](mailto:kinship@makah.com)
- **Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe**  
Donna Jones - [DonnaJ@Pgst.nsn.us](mailto:DonnaJ@Pgst.nsn.us)
- **Quileute Tribe**  
Dawn Ward - [dawn.ward@quileutenation.org](mailto:dawn.ward@quileutenation.org)
- **Samish Tribe**  
Ana Cortez - [acortez@samishtribe.nsn.us](mailto:acortez@samishtribe.nsn.us)  
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- **Aging & Long-Term Support Administration DSHS**  
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1-800-422-3263 or 360-725-2556  
  
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