Franklin County
Children Services

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

A Guide to Kinship Care

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

MISSION

Through collaboration with families and their communities, we advocate for the safety, permanency and well-being of each child we serve in a manner that honors family and culture.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We Are Child Welfare Professionals

- We constantly pursue excellence
- We recognize the importance of providing effective and timely services
- We value, respect and support each other
- We are proud that we improve the quality of life for families in our community
- We are fiscally responsible
- We aspire to be culturally competent

We Value Every Child

- We respect the individuality of each child we serve
- We advocate for each child's safety, permanency and well-being
- We honor each child's family and culture

We Honor Families

- We respect families' strengths
- We understand families are the experts of their own experience
- We recognize that children are best served within their family and community
- We separate what parents do from who they are

We Value Partnerships

- Families have the right to be a part of the decision-making team
- Casework is the most important function of the agency team
- Families, communities and government share the responsibility to keep children safe

MISSION OF THE KINSHIP DEPARTMENT

The Franklin County Children Services (FCCS) Kinship Department serves children and families by assessing and supporting those providing kinship care for children. When possible, kinship care is the most desirable setting for children who cannot live with their parent/guardian/custodian. Kinship care preserves a sense of family and maintains connections between children and their family's culture and traditions, while efforts are being made to achieve reunification/permanency.

This mission of the Kinship Department is accomplished by:

- promoting collaborative relationships between the parent/guardian/custodian, service teams, community partners and the kin/kinship caregivers
- completing home studies and providing ongoing assessments of a family's stability and possible needs
- offering the kin/kinship caregivers support and assistance to ensure they are able to provide a stable and nurturing home for the children in their care
- linking kin/kinship caregivers with community resources to enhance their knowledge of available community services and increase self-sufficiency
- serving as an extension of the service team to support and educate kinship caregivers while striving to achieve safety, permanency and well-being for the children

Franklin County Children Services

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SECTION 1

What is Kinship Care?

When a child cannot live with his or her parent/guardian/custodian, kinship caregivers often take over the full-time responsibility of caring for that child, providing ongoing stability, support and guidance. The definition of a kinship caregiver also goes beyond the scope of blood relative and may include an adult who has a familiar relationship/bond with the child and/or family.

Kinship care can be temporary, meaning the child eventually returns home, or moves to another home. Kinship care can also be permanent, meaning the kin caregivers will care for the child until he or she becomes an adult.

Kinship care takes many forms. When the child goes to live with a relative or close family friend, the court may also give that person temporary custody of the child. Or, the court may grant Children Services custody while the child lives with the kin caregiver.

Regardless of the type of kinship arrangement, the kinship caregivers' voluntary commitment to step up and devote their lives to the children under their care can be a courageous, life-changing decision.

SECTION 2

Caring for Children who have Experienced Abuse, Neglect, or Dependency Situations

Even if the children in your care are happy to be with you, they have faced significant challenges. Losing a parent is hard on a child, as are the many changes that might occur in the child's life. For example, the child you are caring for may have one or two parents who abuse drugs or alcohol, be violent or have mental health concerns. Because of these circumstances, the children in your care may have been hurt physically and/or emotionally. They may have been underfed, or without the care they needed to be safe and grow. They may have been allowed to see sexual activity or have been sexually abused themselves. Any of these experiences could affect the child in your care, who may need special help to grow and thrive.

In addition to signs of physical abuse or neglect, children who have suffered a loss seem to share several emotions and behaviors. However, each child will react or respond to their loss differently, depending upon the:

- significance of the loss
- coping abilities of the child
- availability of supports
- age and developmental abilities of the child (at the time of the loss and at present)
- whether the loss is temporary or permanent

Consequently, while some children may react in extreme ways, others may respond mildly or not at all. In addition, one child may be affected in one area, while another child may be affected differently. Below is a list of common emotions and behaviors that could affect the child in your care.

Grief

When children have been separated from people who are important to them, their emotional response is one of grief and mourning. There are five identifiable stages of grief: shock/denial, anger/rage, bargaining, depression and resolution/acceptance.

Control

Many children who have experienced loss feel that they have no control or decision-making power over their own lives. Consequently, they may try to regain control of their lives by being orderly, compulsive, or by planning ahead. Other youth may demonstrate their need for control through constant power struggles with authority figures, truancy, defiance, substance abuse or tantrums.

Loyalty

Having different caregivers may create a conflict for the child. He or she may feel that closeness and love for one caregiver may be an act of disloyalty towards the parent or a previous caregiver.

Rejection/Fear

Regardless of the actual circumstances surrounding a child's loss, the child's perception may be that he or she was rejected and then abandoned by their birth parents. To avoid rejection, some children may not allow themselves to get close to others, or they may react by continually seeking acceptance and approval from those around them.

SECTION 3

Legal Issues

If a determination is made that a child must be removed from their home, the agency may file a complaint with Franklin County Juvenile Court. The court will then make a decision on whether the complaint has merit and may order a temporary custody change at that time. If FCCS receives custody, the agency may place the child with an approved kinship caregiver. The agency would discuss your role and responsibilities with respect to the child placed with you at that time. Your responsibilities would include, but not be limited to, ensuring that the child's day-to-day medical and educational needs are met.

Pursuant to Ohio law, once a child has been removed from the home, FCCS is responsible to participate in concurrent planning. Therefore, the agency will be working with the parents in an effort to assist them with resolving the concerns which caused the children to be separated from their parents. If the children cannot be reunified with a parent within a reasonable amount of time, a decision will need to be made about a permanent plan for them. Permanency can be achieved by the court granting legal custody to a kinship caregiver or by granting permanent custody to the agency for the purposes of adoption.

Are birth parents allowed to visit with their children?

Once the court becomes involved, any visitation time with the parents is determined by the court. The court will make an order determining whether parental visitation needs to be supervised by the agency or designee. If FCCS feels you would be an appropriate designee to supervise visits—and you would be comfortable doing so—you and the caseworker will collaborate to make appropriate arrangements.

Do I have to come to court?

If FCCS is granted custody, it is not mandatory that you attend hearings. It would be helpful for you to attend hearings so you can know first-hand how decisions are made and be able to offer input into the decision–making process. Court hearings will keep you up-to-date on the child and the family's situation. If you want to be considered for custody of the child, it would be mandatory for you to attend court. If you are granted custody of the child, it would also be mandatory for you to attend court.

Will I need a lawyer?

You may want to consult an attorney if you have questions about this process. They would be able to explain the differences between you and/or FCCS having custody. An attorney would also be able to explain the differences between legal custody and adoption. You are certainly entitled to counsel and should feel free to retain counsel at your own expense. If you are granted custody and meet the requirements specified by the court, you may be assigned a court-appointed counsel. For more information on obtaining an attorney, please contact the American Bar Association.

SECTION 4

What is a Home Study?

A home study is a state-mandated evaluation of your home to determine whether or not it is appropriate for placement of a child and whether you can meet the child's needs. The agency may determine that a home study is needed for other situations when kinship caregivers are caring for children as well. A home study may be initiated prior to the child coming to live with you and will be completed within 30 days of receiving fingerprint reports back on all adult household members. When FCCS holds custody, all home studies will be updated on an annual basis or following any change in household status, including a move or another person joining the household. A potential kinship caregiver must be 18 years of age or older to be considered for placement.

A HOME STUDY INCLUDES:

Site and Safety

The caseworker will need to observe the home environment to ensure that the home is safe for the child to reside there. A portion of the home study assesses safety factors such as having working smoke alarms and proper storage of weapons. The caseworker may be able to assist you with some of these items.

FCCS follows all current and applicable laws regarding the safety of children.

Financial Information

Caregivers will need to provide information on income and household expenses.

Interviews

The caseworker will need to interview the kinship caregiver. The kin/kinship caregiver's ability to protect and support the child will be discussed and information on all household members is required.

Background Checks

Criminal background checks on the prospective kinship caregiver and all household members 18 years of age and older must be completed. Depending upon their age, children may also have a juvenile criminal record check. These checks will be conducted by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCI & I) and with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and will include fingerprints. The required criminal record check results must be received prior to FCCS approving the prospective kin placement, and must be updated annually. Additional checks may be conducted as required by state rule or agency policy.

SECTION 5

What are the Kinship Caregiver's Responsibilities for Children in Agency Custody?

All children in FCCS custody are required to have routine medical and dental care, and kinship caregivers are responsible for ensuring children placed in their care receive such health services. Kinship caregivers will work with the service team to notify the parent/guardian/custodian prior to any scheduled medical appointments in order to allow the parent/guardian/custodian the opportunity to attend. The service team will make kinship caregivers aware of any restrictions on parental involvement.

- Comprehensive physical examinations are to be completed within 60 days of placement, and annually thereafter. A comprehensive physical exam includes the following:
    - Health and developmental histories
    - Developmental (including physical and mental health), nutritional, vision, hearing, immunization and dental screenings
    - A lead toxicity screening
    - Lab tests
    - Health education and counseling

- For children three years and older, dental examinations are to be completed no later than six months after they first enter care and annually thereafter. If known, the caseworker will provide information to the kinship caregiver regarding prior dental exams.

- Vision will be assessed via screenings or during the comprehensive physical examination. If concerns are identified, the caregiver will make an immediate referral to an appropriate doctor. If the child wears glasses, caregivers will follow the doctor's recommendations for follow-up.

- Hearing will be assessed via screenings or during the comprehensive physical examination. If concerns are identified, the caregiver will make an immediate referral to an appropriate doctor.

- If a child has an untreated existing or presenting condition which indicates a need for immediate treatment, then treatment must be coordinated as directed by medical providers.

- In case of a medical emergency, kinship caregivers will call 911 or have the children seen at the nearest emergency room.

- If a child is in mental distress, appears to be psychotic or is an immediate danger to his or her self or others, kinship caregivers will call 911 or have the child seen at NetCare Access. For a NetCare consultation, call 614-278-0122. For NetCare's 24-hour hotline, which provides crisis and assessment services, call 614-276-2273. For additional information, please visit www.netcareaccess.org

Service teams will provide kinship caregivers with information specific to each child's medical history.

- The Medical Information Provided by Parent/Guardian/Custodian (MIPP) form provides health history information, including a record of immunizations, childhood diseases, allergies, medications, past treatment and past treatment providers. If available, a copy of this form will be provided to the kinship caregiver.

Kinship caregivers will follow the FCCS process for giving/obtaining consent for the provision of routine and non-routine health care.

- The *Franklin County Children Services Medical Consent for FCCS Custody* and the *Franklin County Children Services Medical Consent By Parent Voluntary Agreement of Care* are general consent forms that give kinship caregivers authorization to seek and consent to routine medical, dental and mental health treatment. **Important: please take this form with you any time you are seeking routine medical treatment for a child placed in your home.**

- FCCS must grant specific consent for non-routine medical practices and any prescription for psychotropic medication.

- Any discretionary medical treatment must be approved by the custodial parent(s), unless FCCS has permanent custody of the child.

- The *Medical Report Form for All Youth in Custody* is a summary form of medical care received for children in FCCS custody. Kinship caregivers will be responsible for providing the form to treatment providers and may obtain this form from FCCS staff. The treatment provider will complete the form and either submit it along with any medical documents to the FCCS Medical Department or give it directly to the kinship caregiver. **Please note: the medical provider may provide other forms of written documentation of services provided instead of the completed form, and this is acceptable. Kin caregivers are NOT expected to pay for the FCCS form to be completed.**

Process to Provide Medical Consent For Children in FCCS Custody

	Medical Consent for FCCS Custody **OR** Medical Consent By Parent Voluntary Agreement of Care **AND** Medical Report Form	Specific Medical Consent Form **AND** Medical Report Form
Physical Examinations	✓	
Standard and Preventative Dental Services	✓	
Standard and Preventative Vision Services	✓	
Standard and Preventative Auditory Services	✓	
Childhood Immunizations	✓	
Routine Medications	✓	
Routine Lab Work/Testing	✓	
Oral and Short-term Contraceptives	✓	
Mental Health Services (Assessments and Counseling)	✓	
Psychiatric Care (Psychiatric Appointments)	✓	
Psychiatric Hospitalization	✓	
Psychotropic Medications	✓	✓
Surgeries and Other Non-routine or Invasive Treatments	✓	✓

If there are any questions, please contact the caseworker assigned to work with the child.

Water Safety

When children in the care of Franklin County Children Services are in, on, or around water areas (including but not limited to lakes, ponds, rivers, quarries, piers, fountains, creeks, water parks, and pools) and in cases where children will be using these water areas, all necessary steps will be taken to obtain written parental consent. The kinship caseworker will work with you, the parent, and agency administrators to obtain the necessary consent.

The following precautions must be taken:

- No non-swimmer or beginning swimmer shall be in, on, or around a water area without close supervision. Close supervision is defined as the child being within arm's length unless there is someone who is certified as a lifeguard and physically present at the water area.
- A lifeguard must be present for youth swimming in a public pool or beach.
- Non-swimmers and beginning swimmers, regardless of age, must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD). Toy flotation devices do not qualify for these purposes.
- Under no circumstance will children be permitted by the caregiver to swim alone or swim outside of designated swimming areas.
- Caregivers who have pools or other water features, or who allow children to regularly participate in water-related activities such as swimming, boating, and fishing are encouraged to have children in their care take swimming lessons. This must be with the knowledge and consent of the child's caseworker.
- If you have a pool or other water area on your property, the child's caseworker and your kinship worker will work with you to assure that necessary precautions are in place.
- All watercraft in which children ride in or on must meet Ohio (or relevant state and federal) boating regulation standards for safety.

Traveling with Kinship Children

Kinship children should always be included in your vacation plans. Accompanying your family on vacation gives a child an important sense of belonging. If the kinship child in your care is in the custody of the agency, and you are planning an overnight trip out of the county, you must inform your caseworker and obtain a travel letter. If your travel takes you out of the country, the FCCS Executive Director must grant permission for the kinship child to accompany you. The child's caseworker will help you obtain the permission letter.

SECTION 6

School Information

Each child in the State of Ohio is guaranteed the right to an education. Children who are removed from their home and placed into the home of a kin caregiver may experience a great deal of stress and anxiety. To ease this transition, it is important that the educational needs of the child be met as quickly as possible. When a child comes to live with you, talk with the child's caseworker to help determine if the child needs to enroll in a new school or not.

What do you need to enroll a child in school?

Contact the school district and make a list of the items you will need to enroll the child. The requirements can vary from district to district. The most common requirements include:

- Court documentation, called a "Journal Entry," indicating that either you or FCCS has custody of the child
- A "*School Enrollment and Notification to School District*" form from FCCS, which is for children in agency custody only. This form is part of the placement paperwork provided to you by FCCS, in the packet called the *Individual Child Care Agreement (ICCA)*
- Names and addresses of child's previous school(s)
- Child's birth certificate
- Proof of your residence in the school district
- Your photo identification
- *FCCS Consent to Treat* medical form(s) (for children in agency custody only)

Emergency Contact Information

- List yourself as the child's primary emergency contact
- For children in agency custody, list the FCCS caseworker as an additional contact for the school

What to Tell the School

- Provide necessary medical information, including any medication the child needs to take during the school day, the reason the medication is needed, and the dosages
- The child's school may have special forms or requirements to administer medication; these vary from district to district
- Let the school know if the child is learning disabled or in a special education classroom
- Children in special education will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) that must be followed from the time of enrollment
- You have a right to act as the child's surrogate on an IEP and should ensure that the district lists you as such and invites you to attend all meetings
- If you have any questions regarding special education, call the school or the local board of education and ask to speak to the special education department or a representative.

Information for Preschool Children

What is *Early Head Start*?

Early Head Start (EHS) is a federally-funded program that provides education, care and comfort to infants/toddlers and pregnant women through prenatal and postpartum support.

Who is eligible for *Early Head Start*?

An infant/toddler who comes to live with you may be eligible. *Early Head Start* provides services to infants/toddlers ages 0-3 who live at or below the poverty level, as well as children with disabilities and their families. Financial eligibility for this program is governed by state and federal laws. Women who are pregnant are also eligible for *Early Head Start* prenatal and postpartum services.

What is *Head Start*?

Head Start is a federally-funded, all-day or half-day program that provides education, enrichment and many other services to preschool-age children and the adults raising them.

Who is eligible for *Head Start*?

A preschool-age child who comes to live with you may be eligible. *Head Start* provides services to children ages 3 to 5 who live at or below the poverty level, as well as children with disabilities and their families. Financial eligibility for this program is governed by state and federal laws. For more information or to apply, call 614-460-8740. If you live outside of Franklin County, talk with FCCS staff about contacting the *Head Start* office in your county of residence.

What is a *Home-Based* Program?

With a *Home-Based* program, home visitors provide in-home, one-on-one instruction to the children enrolled and their siblings. Caregivers of the enrollees act as co-teachers, and assist in developing and enhancing the socialization skills of the children. A child enrolled in the *Home-Based* program will participate in "socialization" days in the *Head Start* classroom setting twice per month.

SECTION 7

Additional Resources for Kinship Families

FCCS may provide additional resources to kinship families, including:

- education and orientation about FCCS
- information about available supportive services
- linkage to community resources
- limited material assistance to those who qualify
- referral to FCCS Aftercare Program upon case closure, for those who qualify

Am I Eligible to Receive Financial Assistance, Medicaid or Other Assistance for Children in My Care?

Raising children is expensive. No matter how much you love the children in your care, you have to be practical. Before the children came to live with you, you probably had a household budget which met your needs. Now it may be strained to the breaking point. The good news is that financial assistance may be available to you, as listed below.

Ohio Works First Cash Assistance

Caregivers and the children in their care may be eligible to receive Ohio Works First (OWF) monthly cash assistance. To qualify, kinship caregivers must document the relationship by blood or marriage to the child. Non-relative kinship caregivers must be legal guardians or custodians to the child in care in order to qualify.

Medicaid

Ohioans can file a Medicaid application using benefits.ohio.gov or by calling the Ohio Consumer Medicaid hotline at 1-800-324-8680.

Child-Only (OWF) Benefits

There are two ways that relatives can receive Ohio Works First (OWF) benefits. The first way is for you to receive cash assistance ONLY for the children in your care. In these cases, the Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) does not take into account your income and will provide money for you as part of the OWF grant for the children. These are called "child-only cases." You will generally be able to receive this money until the child turns 18 or leaves your home. If you have a child-only grant, you will not be affected by many of the OWF requirements that you may have heard about, such as work requirements or time limits. However, in order to receive OWF child-only assistance, you must be willing to cooperate with Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) requirements to ensure that the child's parents are held financially responsible.

Examples of documents a maternal grandparent would need to prove a relationship:

- Birth mother's birth certificate
- Child's birth certificate

Examples of documents a paternal grandparent would need to prove relationship:

- Birth certificate of the father (to prove you are his parent)
- Birth certificate of child must show the father's name, or paternity must be established through the Child Support Enforcement Agency
- Child's birth certificate

Examples of documents an aunt/uncle would need to prove relationship:

- Birth mother's birth certificate
- Aunt/uncle's birth certificate, showing the same parent
- Child's birth certificate

Examples of documents a brother/sister would need to prove relationship:

- Child's birth certificate
- Brother/sister's birth certificate showing at least one same parent

If you are unable to obtain any of the above-listed documents, your FCCS kinship worker or JFS case worker may be able to assist you.

Household OWF Grants

The second way for kinship caregivers to receive OWF for the child in your care is for you to also be part of the grant. A kinship caregiver can be included in the grant if you have no children of your own living with you. This means that the county JFS will look at your income and if you are eligible for OWF, include you as part of the grant (your spouse's income will also be reviewed). You will receive more money because the grant will be for both you and the children in your care. However, the new welfare reform requirements will apply to you. This means that you will be required to work and will be limited to three years of OWF assistance.

Most relative caregivers receive child-only grants and do not have to meet the work requirements and time limits.

If you want to be included in the cash grant, you will need to provide the following information for each individual (including the child placed in your home):

- Proof of relationship
- Proof of citizenship
- Identity
- Copy of Social Security card or the Social Security card number if the card is not available
- Information about income

Food Assistance Benefits/Direction Card

Food assistance for kinship caregivers is possibly available as a plastic card called the *Ohio Direction Card*, which can be used instead of cash to buy food. No sales tax can be charged on these purchases. The *Ohio Direction Card* cannot be used to buy non-food items like soap, diapers, alcohol or tobacco. Your JFS caseworker will determine whether your household qualifies for food assistance by looking at the gross income of everyone in the household.

Please note: if you have a child-only grant for the children in your care, then your income was not initially considered by JFS when it determined your eligibility for OWF. Your income may be too high for your family to obtain food assistance, even though you can receive OWF. The important thing to know, however, is that you should apply for both programs.

What should I bring when I apply for the *Ohio Direction Card*?

Bring as much information as possible when you apply with JFS. The more you can tell your JFS caseworker, the more quickly your application can be processed. Bring as many of the following items as possible:

- A rent receipt, mortgage information, or lease with the landlord's name or telephone number (this information verifies your current address and housing expenses).
- Current bills to show how much money you generally spend on heat, electricity, water, and phone services
- Social Security cards (or Social Security numbers if the cards are not available) for all persons in your household
- Proof of any income deductions you can potentially claim, such as childcare expenses, child support, tuition or care for someone who is an invalid
- Income verification for everyone in the household
- Birth verification for everyone in the household
- Identification for everyone in the household

Household OWF Grants

Kinship caregivers can also apply online for OWF, Medicaid and food assistance and/or report changes to their current JFS case by using odjfsbenefits.ohio.gov or jfs.franklincountyohio.gov. The odjfsbenefits.ohio.gov website also gives customers the ability to check on their benefit status, to see if it is approved, denied or pending.

Child Support

Child support may be available to any kinship caregiver who is caring full-time for a child. In order to be eligible for child support, the caregiver must have physical custody of the child. This means that the child must live with, and be cared for full-time by the kinship caregiver. The amount of child support the child's parents will be ordered to pay to the caregiver depends on both of the parents' ability to pay, and the needs of the child. If the caregiver is already receiving OWF for the child, child support will be paid directly to the county JFS. A Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) is located in every county and provides services to obtain and maintain child support. A CSEA can help order child support wage withholding from a parent's paycheck, intercept tax refunds, help to locate an absent parent, and establish paternity.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides cash assistance to those over age 65 or for disabled or blind individuals of any age with limited income and resources. For additional information or to apply for SSI, please contact the Social Security Administration office at 1-800-772-1213 or at www.ssa.gov.

Child Care Assistance

Child care assistance may be provided if your family is enrolled in the Ohio Works First program, if you are low-income and need help with child care costs while you are at work, or if you are enrolled in a job-training program. Your entire household income will be considered in determining your eligibility for child care assistance. You can apply for this program at your county JFS.

Ohio Grandparent/Kinship Coalition

The Ohio Grandparent/Kinship Coalition (OGKC) is an organization consisting of kinship caregivers, kinship caregiver advocates and agencies throughout Ohio.

OGKC's purpose is to:

- Educate kinship caregivers and agencies regarding state and national programs and issues that affect kinship caregivers
- Advocate for the support of kinship families at local, state and national levels
- Provide a networking system for caregivers and agencies
- Link caregivers with services in their communities
- Connect new kinship programs with its speakers bureau
- Conduct statewide conferences

More information can be found at www.ohiograndparentkinship.org.

FCCS Kinship Aftercare Program

Franklin County Children Services' Kinship Aftercare Program was established to provide supportive services to eligible kinship caregivers, from the time the case is closed for up to 36 months as funds are available. Support is provided through community resources, material assistance and/or financial assistance and is assessed individually on an ongoing basis. These services are contingent on the kinship caregiver:

- maintaining legal custody/guardianship of the kinship children
- continuing to have a closed case with FCCS for the eligible kinship children
- meeting 300% or under of the federal poverty guidelines
- submitting a completed annual re-determination application

Kinship Permanency Incentive Program (KPI)

Some kinship families are eligible to receive help through Ohio's Kinship Permanency Incentive Program (KPI). KPI is a state initiative that provides kinship families who received legal custody or guardianship of a kinship youth on or after July 1, 2005, with cash payments dispersed over a set time frame.

To apply for KPI funds, the kinship caregiver may request an application by calling 614-341-6161, or by completing the form located at www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=401&type=application/pdf and submit the application to **Kinship Department at 855 W. Mound Street, Columbus, OH 43223.**

Some other helpful information to review includes:
the Ohio Administrative Code rule located online at
codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-40-04
that governs KPI and a list of frequently asked questions at
www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services/assets/pdf/Frequently-Asked-Questions-KPI.pdf.

When determining KPI eligibility, Franklin County Children Services can only assess kinship caregivers living within Franklin County. If you reside outside of Franklin County, please contact your local children services agency for assistance.

SECTION 8

How to Become a Licensed Foster Parent

Kinship caregivers who are interested in becoming licensed foster parents can obtain more information through the ODJFS, Office on Families and Children website at http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/For-Foster-Parents.stm

SECTION 9

Rights of Children in Kinship Care

This is a list of children's rights, per the Ohio Administrative Code. (5101: 2-5-35 Children's rights.)

(A) No agency, foster caregiver or residential facility or any employee of an agency or residential facility shall in any way violate any of the following rights of children:

(1) The right to enjoy freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or to abstain from the practice of religion.

(2) The right to reasonable enjoyment of privacy.

(3) The right to have his or her opinions heard and be included, to the greatest extent possible, when any decisions are being made affecting his or her life.

(4) The right to receive appropriate and reasonable adult guidance, support, and supervision.

(5) The right to be free from physical abuse and inhumane treatment.

(6) The right to be protected from all forms of sexual exploitation.

(7) The right to receive adequate and appropriate medical care.

(8) The right to receive adequate and appropriate food, clothing, and housing.

(9) The right to his own money and personal property in accordance with the child's service or case plan.

(10) The right to live in clean, safe surroundings.

(11) The right to participate in an appropriate educational program.

(12) The right to communicate with family, friends, and "significant others" from whom he or she is living apart, in accordance with the child's service or case plan.

(13) The right to be taught to fulfill appropriate responsibilities to himself or to herself and to others.

Kinship Care

Kinship Care is when a relative or close friend of the family or child has taken over the full-time care, nurturing, and protection of a child. Kinship care preserves a sense of family and maintains connections between children and their family's culture and traditions, while efforts are being made to achieve reunification and permanency.

For more information, contact:
Kinship
855 W. Mound St.
(614) 341-6161
Kinship@fccs.us

Children Services is here to help.
Please call us with your questions.

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General Office Hours:
8am - 5pm, Monday - Friday

Office of Client Rights
855 W. Mound St.
(614) 275-2621

24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline:
(614) 229-7000

To make a report of child abuse or neglect in Franklin County, Ohio, call the 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline at 614-229-7000 or visit the offices of Intake & Investigations at 4071 E. Main Street, Whitehall, OH 43213.

www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services

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Franklin County Children Services

Protecting Children by Strengthening Families