Grandparents and Other Non-Parent Kinship Families: Legal Rights

Friday, August 14, 2020, 1 pm

COLLATERAL DAMAGE: Elder Abuse and the Opioid Epidemic in Rural Virginia Pre-conference ZOOM Webinar

Housekeeping

All attendees are muted by the host, but will be unmuted during the live Q&A session immediately following the presentation.

Use the **Chat Box** for comments and to report technical concerns. Use **Q&A** to ask questions.

Written materials were made available to attendees in advance. A recording will be posted to **www.svlas.org** (website of Southwest Virginia Legal Aid) after the training.

Southwest Virginia Legal Aid

Non-profit law firm serving low-income families in 17 counties and four small cities in southwestern Virginia

Offices in Castlewood, Christiansburg, and Marion

www.svlas.org



in collaboration with

Southwest Virginia Elder Justice Task Force

Presenter

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New York State Kinship Navigator

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Talk Based Upon

Wallace, G. W. (2016). A FAMILY RIGHT TO CARE: CHARTING THE LEGAL OBSTACLES. *GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research, Practice and Policy*, 3 (1).

Available at:

http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/grandfamilies/vol3/iss1/7

Key Lessons

- 1. Who are Kinship Families
- 2. What are Kinship Navigator Services
- 3. Two Key Issues
 - Child-Only Financial Assistance (TANF)
 - Child Welfare "Safety Plans"
- 4. Kinship Perspective: a Legal Right to Care
 - Opportunity to Care
 - Enabling Caregiving

1. Who Are Kinship Families

SEARCHABLE, INCLUSIVE, CONSISTENT

WHO ARE RELATIVES, WHO ARE RELATED?

WHAT TERMS ARE USED?

WHAT ARE THEIR CUSTODIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Kinship Care: Defined

"Kinship care" means the full-time care, nurturing, and protection of children by relatives. (VA, § 63.2-100)

"Kinship care is the full-time care and nurturing of a child by a relative or someone who has a significant emotional relationship with a child not born to them" (Families First Virginia)

http://familyfirstvirginia.com/prevserv/kinship_nav.html

Kinship Care: Defined

Kinship care is commonly 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 family relationship to a child."

https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/outofhome/kinship/

Defined in Kinship Caregiver Support Act (U. S. Senate Bill 2004), Section 103 defined kinship caregiver, and even earlier by CWLA in 1990.

Kinship Care NYS Definition

"Kinship caregiver" means a relative or non-relative who is acting as a parent and who:

- (a) is related to the child through blood, marriage or adoption;
- (b) is related to a half-sibling of the child through blood, marriage or adoption; or
- (c) is an adult with a positive prior relationship with the child, a half-sibling of the child or the child's parent, including, but not limited to, a step-parent, godparent, neighbor or family friend.

Kinship Care: Legal Terms

In Loco Parentis

De Facto Custodian

Person acting as a parent

Person in parental relationship

Relative caregiver

Relative caretaker Grandparent

Non-parent caregiver

Related by blood, marriage, adoption

Related by degree Arrangements of sanguinity

caregiver

Fictive Kin

And

Various Legal

Custodial

LEGAL ARANGE- MENT	KINSHIP PARENTING NEEDS				
	А	В	С	D	E
	RECOGNITION PROCEDURE	AUTHORITY	SECURITY	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	SERVICES
INFORMAL CUSTODY	?	?	X	?	Х
LEGAL CUSTODY	А	?	?	?	Х
CHILD WELFARE CUSTODY	Α	?	?	?	Х
LEGAL GUARDIAN	А	А	?	?	?
KINSHIP GUARDIAN	А	Α	?	?	?
FOSTER CARE	А	x	?	Α	А
ADOPTION	А	А	А	?	?

Informal / Formal Kinship Care?

Informal: Only kinship families without court orders

Formal: All kinship children subject to court orders (foster care and non-foster care), or

Informal: All kinship families who are "on their own" (private court orders or no court orders) (guardians, legal custodians, informal custody, parental powers of attorney, etc.)

Formal: Only kinship foster children, some specialized child welfare programs, or

Public and Private: "This report defines kinship care arrangements that occur without child welfare system involvement as private and those that occur with child welfare involvement as public." 2000 Report to Congress on Kinship Foster Care - public and private: https://aspe.hhs.gov/report/report-congress-kinship-foster-care

Kinship Care / Grandfamilies

Kinship Care

- 2000 Report to Congress on Kinship Foster Care
- Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program, Kinship Navigators (2008)
- U.S. Senate Resolutions Declaring September as Kinship Care Month (Res. 264, 2018)
- Federal Kinship Navigators, Memo in Support of Using the Word "Kinship" in Federal Legislation, describes use of both words Available at http://www.nysnavigator.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Memo-in-Support-of-Word-Kinship_With-Appendixes-ABC-1.pdf

Grandfamilies

- No federal or state enactments
- Used by Generations United, others
- Question is before U.S. Senate Advisory Council To Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kinship Circumstances

DWARFS CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM, BUT SIMILAR CAUSES FOR CARE

How Many Kinship Children?

2.7 million children - U.S. Senate Resolution 2018, declaring "September as Kinship Care Month"

About 65% grandparents - Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2017.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, pages 3-4.

American Community Survey 2018 Estimate: 4,287,306 kinship children

ACS reports "Grandparents responsible for grandchildren in their household" – this number is 2.7 million, add in other relatives using grandparents as 65% of all kinship care (note: 1,069,314 children no parent present with grandparent)

AFCARS 2018 (Foster Care): 139,004 children in Foster Care with a relative

New York State

200,000 children in public and private kinship care

Fewer than 8,000 children in kinship foster care

- 40% of All Foster Care
- NYC vs. Rest of State (ROS)
 (NYS OCFS data)

Ξ

Virginia

69,000 children in public and private kinship care

312 children in kinship foster care

<u>Stepping Up for Kids, Annie E. Casey Foundation (2012)</u> (estimates are based upon 2010 Census)

317 children in kinship foster care - AFCARS 2017

(Child Trends: https://www.childtrends.org/the-share-of-children-in-foster-care-living-with-relatives-is-growing)

Who are the Children?



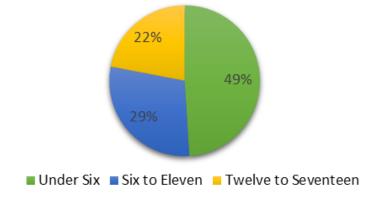
Prevalence:

1 in 11 of all children will live in a kinship home during childhood

1 in 5 black children live in a kinship home

Age:

- 49% of children are under the age of 6
- 29% are between 6-11
- 22% between 12-17



The Children

Trauma

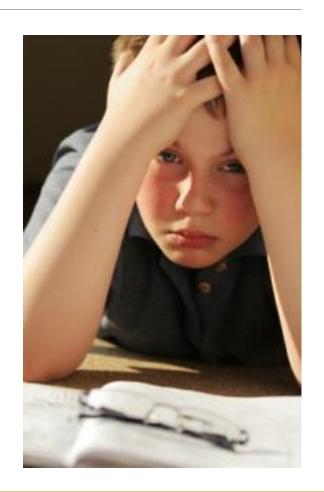
- Abuse/Neglect
- Separation from parents

Often upset and derailed

Disruptive Behaviors

Higher rates of ADHD, ODD, PTSD, adjustment and attachment disorders

ACE scores tend to be higher



Causes, Poverty, and Trauma

SIMILAR TO REASONS FOR REMOVALS
UNEXPECTED CARE
ADVERSE EXPERIENCES

Causes

Primary Cause - Parental Substance Abuse

Abuse

Neglect

Abandonment

Incarceration

Mental Illness

Incapacity

Other

Poverty and Kinship Children

38% of children in public and private kinship care live below the poverty line

63% below 200% of poverty line

Stepping Up for Kids, Anne E. Casey Foundation (2012)

(Estimates are based upon 2010 Census)

Trauma, Loss, Toxic Stress

Physical Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Emotional Abuse

Physical Neglect

Emotional Neglect

Intimate Partner Violence

Mother Treated Violently

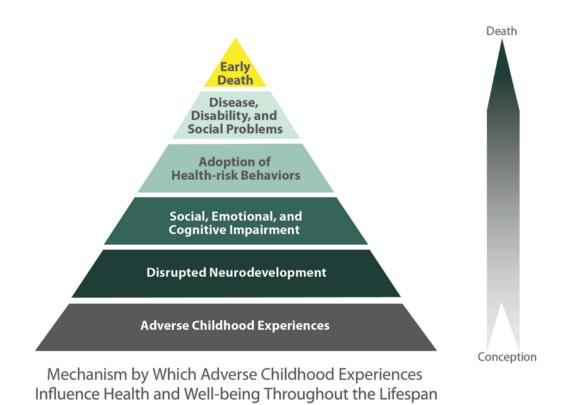
Household Substance Abuse

Parental Separation or Divorce

Incarcerated Household Member

Centers for Disease Control ACE Pyramid

The Adverse Childhood Experiences Pyramid



Value and Special Issues



AND

А

NATIONAL

RESOURCE!

Kinship Care and Protective Factors

Compared to children living in foster care with non-kin foster parents, children in foster care living with relatives have:

- Greater likelihood of achieving permanency
 - Recent study = 78% of teens in relative foster homes achieved permanency
- Experience fewer school changes
- Better behavioral and mental health outcomes
- More likely to report "feeling loved"
- More likely to keep connections to sibling groups, extended family, and loved ones
- Less likely to re-enter foster care after returning to birth parents

Aging Caregivers

Elder abuse

Cultural dissonance

Social disconnection

Loss of retirement

Covid Isolation

2. KINSHIP NAVIGATORS



Help for Kinship Caregivers in all of New York's 62 Counties

The NYS Kinship Navigator is an information, referral and advocacy program for kinship caregivers in New York State. A kinship caregiver is an individual that is caring for a child that is not biologically their own. In New York State, there are an estimated 200,000 caregivers, 131,000 of whom are grandparents. Many others are aunts and uncles.

The Navigator seeks to assist these caregivers by providing information on financial assistance, legal information and

Local
Presentations
Now Available!



Indirect and Direct Services

Indirect

Information and Referral, Help Lines, Websites, Social Media, "Virtual Assistance", Online access to services, collaborations, etc.

Direct

Case management, support groups, in person advocacy and education, specialized local services, collaborations, etc.

NYS Kinship Navigator

www.nysnavigator.org

877-454-463

Information

- Legal Fact Sheets
- County Resources
- Helpline

Referral

- Case Management Programs
- Support Groups
- Legal Referral Network

Education

- Statewide Presentations
- Online Video Archive
- Legislative education
- The Face of Kinship Care

Advocacy

- Case by case advocacy
- Statewide advocacy

Kinship Navigator Best Practices

CWLA/Kinship Navigator Summit Position Paper (available www.nysnavigator.org)

Information, Referral, Education

Stabilization Services

Permanency Services

Specialized Services

Ancillary Services

Collaborations

Kinship Navigator Virginia

Families First

(888) 593-1972;

http://familyfirstvirginia.com/prevserv/kinship nav.html

Six Pilots;

Arlington, Bedford, Dickerson, James City, Virginia Beach, Smyth

And more:

Central Virginia: http://kinshipnav.com/

NewFound Famililes: Locator Tool https://newfoundva.org/about-

kinship/kinship-navigator-tool

3. Identifying Two Key Issues

- Child-Only Financial Assistance (TANF)
- Child Welfare "Safety Plans"

Non-Parent "Child Only" Grants

FINANCIAL HELP FOR KIN OUTSIDE FOSTER CARE

"Child Only" Grants

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) - Non-Parent (Child Only) Financial Assistance

NYS Other Terms: PACO, NDG, Kinship, OTG, NPC, Grantee

24,693 children receiving special "child-only" grant

"Child Only" Grants

Eligibility

- Based on child's income
 - Child Support Payments
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Social Security benefits related to death or disability
- Caregiver's income and resources NOT a basis for eligibility

Caregivers do not need legal custody or guardianship of a child to be eligible for assistance

"Child Only" Grants

Barriers to applying

- Child Support Enforcement
- Good Cause Exemption and Cooperation with Support Collection
- Eligibility Rules
- Confusion around application documents

Safety Plans: Source of Informal Kinship Care?

Diversion from Foster Care – No removal (no neglect/abuse proceeding)

Common source of informal kinship care

Not recorded in AFCARS

"CPS gave me my grandchild eight years ago, this is the first time I've found out there's help" Bronx grandma

4. Legal "Rights"

UNMET RIGHTS: TO CARE AND TO SERVICES

Parents' Fundamental Rights

- Meyer v. Nebraska, 262 U.S. 390, 399, 401, 43 S.Ct. 625, 67 L.Ed. 1042 (1923)
- Pierce v. Society Of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510, 534-535, 45 S.Ct. 571, 69 L.Ed. 1070 (1925)
- Prince v. Massachusetts, 321 U.S. 158, 64 S.Ct. 438, 88 L.Ed. 645 (1944)
 (Aunt Custodian)
- Stanley v. Illinois, 405 U.S. 645, 651, 92 S.Ct. 1208, 31 L.Ed.2d 551 (1972)
- Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205, 232, 92 S.Ct. 1526, 32 L.Ed.2d 15 (1972)
- Santosky v. Kramer, 455 U.S. 745, 753, 102 S.Ct. 1388, 71 L.Ed.2d 599 (1982)

Kinship Rights

- Moore v. City Of East Cleveland, 431 U.S. 494 (1977))
 Some Parent Rights Extended Families – Zoning Law
- Troxel v. Granville, 530 U.S. 57 (2000)
 Grandparent Visitation Special weight
- Smith v. Org. Of Foster Families For Equality & Reform ("OFFER"), 431 U.S. 816 (1977)
 but Foster Parent – No Constitutional Protections

"Kinship Rights" – Kinship Foster

Procedural and Substantive Due Process

Procedural due process generally requires a **hearing** prior to depriving a parent of custody or a prompt post-deprivation hearing if the child is removed under emergency circumstances....

Substantive due process protects individuals from arbitrary **government intrusions** by requiring a reasonable basis or justification for such actions. *Velez v. Reynolds,* 325 F.Supp.2d 293, 303 (S.D.N.Y. 2004)

"Family Rights" — Kinship Foster

Procedural vs. Substantive (Foster Removals)

Half sister, who had liberty interest in preserving familial relationship with her half brother and sister, did not waive any of her constitutional rights by entering into foster care agreement with state welfare department, even though agreement authorized state to remove children from foster home at any time, where there was no evidence that half sister intentionally and intelligently waived her due process rights when she signed the agreement or that state informed her of legal implications of her decision.

Rivera v. Marcus, 696 F.2d 1016 (1982)

"Family Rights" Sometimes

Procedural not Substantive

- Balbuena v. Mattingly, 2007 WL 2845031, (S.D.N.Y. Sep 28, 2007)
- Johnson v. City of New York, 2003 WL 1826122, (S.D.N.Y. Apr 08, 2003);
- Rodriguez v. McLoughlin, 49 F.Supp.2d 186, 194+ (S.D.N.Y. Jan 08, 1999);
- Cabrales v. Los Angeles County, 644 F. Supp. 1352, 1354+ (C.D.Cal. Sep 03, 1986);
- Bellet v. City of Buffalo, 2009 WL 2930464, *3+ (W.D.N.Y. Sep 11, 2009).

Kin Opportunity to Care

Versus Parents

- When parents consent
- When parents will not consent
- When caregivers already reside with children (De Facto custody statutes and case law)

Versus the State

Children in foster care system

Opportunity to Care for Children Not in State Care

Family Law is State Specific

Consent can be removed

Without consent, must show parent unfit for child or child has lived with you for extended period of time

NYS Example

Bennet v. Jeffreys, 51 A.D.2d 544 (N.Y. App. Div. 1976; DRL 72(2); Suarez v. Williams, 134 A.D. 3d, 1479 (2015); 26 N.Y.3d 440, Ct. of Appeals (Dec. 16, 2015)

NYS Domestic Relations Law § 72

Opportunity to Care for Children in State Care

State and Federal Law

Right to petition for private custody/visitation

No Right to petition for foster care

But if Kinship Foster Parent:

Miller v. Youakim, 440 U.S. 125 (1979)

Miller ended practice of two-tiered foster care, but did not end diversion

"Diversion" No Foster Care Placements

1. No "Removals"

Safety Plans ("Alternative Living Arrangements")

"CPS Gave Me My Grandchild Eight Years Ago, This is the First Time I've Found Help"

2. After Removals – Notice to Relatives

Do Kin Learn Their Options?

Do They Get to Choose Foster Care?

Quasi Foster Care Arrangements Encouraged?

"Diversion" – After Removals

Debra VV. v. Johnson, 2nd Dept, 26 A.D.3d 714; 811 N.Y.S.2d 457 (N.Y. App. Div. 2006).

Glisson v. D. O, 847 F.3d 374 (6th Cir. 2017): Private Right of Action to Seek Foster Care Payments (Grandmother was approved foster parent)

Federal Child Welfare Act confers upon foster parents an individually enforceable right to foster care maintenance payments that is enforceable under § 1983; absent resort to § 1983, foster families possess no federal mechanism to ensure compliance. Social Security Act § 472, 42 U.S.C.A. § 672(a)(1); 42 U.S.C.A. § 1983.

"Diversion" – No Formal Removal: Source of Informal Kinship Care

"Safety Plans" – No removal (no neglect/abuse proceeding)

America's Hidden Foster Care System, 72 Stan. L. Rev. Josh Gupta-Kagan (Forthcoming 2020)

Arrangements for care by kin, voluntary or coerced?

Diversion Debate, Annie E. Casey, 2018, others www.nysnavigator.org at "Kinship Policy"

Why Do Kin Not Become Foster Parents?

- Cost benefit of informal vs formal
- De facto policies and practices
- More kin into foster care, but also keep children with kin outside of foster care?

Kinship Custodial Arrangements

- Informal custody (no court order)
- Legal custody
- Legal guardianship
- Kinship guardianship
- Child welfare quasi-custody
- Foster care
 - Voluntary placement agreements
- Adoptions

Arrangements -Needs

RECOGNITION, AUTHORITY, SECURITY, SERVICES, RESOURCES

LEGAL ARANGE- MENT	KINSHIP PARENTING NEEDS				
	Α	В	С	D	E
	RECOGNITION PROCEDURE	AUTHORITY	SECURITY	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	SERVICES
INFORMAL CUSTODY	?	?	X	?	х
LEGAL CUSTODY	Α	?	?	?	Х
CHILD WELFARE CUSTODY	А	?	?	?	Х
LEGAL GUARDIAN	А	Α	?	?	?
KINSHIP GUARDIAN	А	А	?	?	?
FOSTER CARE	А	х	?	Α	А
ADOPTION	А	А	А	?	?

Authority

Schooling and school enrollment

Medical decision-making:

- Immunizations, routine, major medical
- Admissions

Access to records:

Birth certificates, Social Security cards, Passports, medical

Authority by Arrangements

Informal care: Statutory authority, parental powers of attorney

Legal custody: Different requirements

Child welfare: Depends on type of placement

Foster care: State requirements

Guardianship: Similar to parents

Adoption: Replaces parent

Security by Arrangements

Informal care: No protections

Legal custody: Court orders must be challenged

Child welfare: State retains power

Foster care: State retains power

Guardianship: Court must be challenged

Adoption: Parental rights cease, but sometimes

right to contact

Access to Public Benefits and Services

TANF: Eligibility rules for "child-only" grant; parent "support"

SNAP: Household Concept

Social Security: SSI, Grandparent Retirement, SSD

Daycare: May be eligible

Medicaid/CHIP: Eligible

FAFSA: Custody and guardianship differ

Income Tax Credits: 6 month rule

Services: Child Welfare, Aging (Community Living), Mental

Health, OASAS

Access to Legal Assistance

Legal Assistance

- Indigent parties assigned counsel in civil actions?
- No funded legal services?

Caregiver Support Act 2000 (Community Living)

Families First Prevention Services Act 2018

Abuse/Neglect proceedings

Legal Information

Kinship Navigators

Federal Child Welfare Kinship Policies

2008 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act

Due Diligence Search, 30 days

Notice to Relatives, Especially Grandparents

Inform about All Options for Care

Kinship Guardianship

Plus: kinship navigators, "intensive" family finding

Families First Prevention Services Act 2018

States can use funds for time limited services aimed at preventing use of foster care in maltreatment cases

Candidates for entry into foster care can get 12 months of preventive services

Kinship Navigator Funding

State Option: includes a maintenance of effort requirement

Other Recent Federal Acts

Consolidated Appropriations Act (2018)

- Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations page 955 (\$20,000,000 for kinship navigators).
- Second and Third Years; Fourth Year?

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act (2018)

Create federal Agency Advisory Council

Towards Kinship Family Right to Care - Suggested Laws

Child Welfare and Security

- Regulate Safety Plans
- Provide Private Remedies for Diversion
- Permit Petition Pathway into Foster Care
- Use Voluntary Placement Agreements and Constructive Removals
- Require Increases in Percentages of Kinship Foster
 Care

Towards A Kinship Family Right to Care - Suggested Laws

Public Assistance

- Permit Exclusion of Children in Filling Unit
- Require State to NOT Seek Support When Exemptions Claimed
- Increase Amount of Payments
- Facilitate Applications

Services

- Fund Kinship Navigators but Eliminate Onerous Evidence Based Requirements
- Engage Other Systems in Targeted Services

"The Face of Kinship Care"

2015 Film, Produced by Kinship Navigator

- Three New York State Families
- Their Stories, In Their Own Words

Permission to Contact

Service Providers Courts

Temporary Assistance & Child Welfare:

- Permission to Contact Form
- 600% Increase in Referrals
- Trainings for Staff
- Community Collaborations



Makes it easier for kinship families to have contact and receive services from kinship programs

Allows client to indicate when it is preferred to contact them

Takes the "onus" off families in crisis/struggling

PERMISSION FOR KINSHIP NAVIGATOR TO CONTACT CAREGIVER

Please check, sign and complete permission and contact information below, and then return to your staff person

Pe	mission for Kinship Navigator to call you: Yes No (If No, Stop here)					
Si	nature:Date					
1.	Name of Primary Caregiver					
2.	Mailing Address: Apt Number:					
	City:State: Zip:					
3.	Home Phone: Area code: phone					
4.	Cell Phone: Area code:					
5.	Other Phone: Area code:					
6.	Email Address:					
7.	7. What language do you prefer? Tenglish Spanish					
	Preferences for contact (check all that apply) Time of day: Morning (9-12) Lunchtime (12-1) Afternoon (1-4) Evening (4-6) By Email Mail Home Phone Cell Phone					
na co	tructions for Staff: Please complete the information below, and fax this form to 585-456-1676 or email to igator@nysnavigator.org. Please store all completed forms for pick up by Kinship Navigator project ordinator.					
Co	untyStaff Person					
9	hild Welfare Staff Only: Types of Placement:					
Temporary" (No Article Ten); Article Ten "direct"; Article Ten into Article Six;						
	KinGAP: Other					
Or	ganization/AgencyUnit/Supervisor					
Do	es the client have a Safety Plan in place? 🔲 Yes 🔲 No					
Da	te fax/email sent//					
If	aregiver declined to be contacted, please check box.					
(P1	ease fax the form even if caregiver declined to be contacted; this is important for our records).					

Outreach

View film "The Face of Kinship Care"

https://vimeo.com/409095289/7096f79272

Use Permission to Contact Form

September is Kinship Care Month

Kinship Event: TBD

HELP KINSHIP CAREGIVERS BY REFERRING CAREGIVERS
TO KINSHIP SERVICES!

THANK YOU!

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