

# **Report to the Legislature**

## **Kinship Care Oversight Committee**

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Washington State Kinship Care Oversight Committee  
Report to the Legislature  
December 2013

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*Interspersed throughout this report are the winning poems and essays from the “2013 Voices of Children” event, writings by children who are living the experience of being raised by kinship caregivers.*

## Executive Summary

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee (Oversight Committee) was formed in 2003 to provide guidance in identifying, supporting, and strengthening kinship care families. Kinship care includes relatives caring for dependent children within the child welfare system as well as relatives caring for children not formally involved with the public child welfare system. The Children's Administration, Economic Services Administration and Aging & Long-Term Support Administration are the three public administrations that participate in the Oversight Committee. Since its beginning, the Oversight Committee has worked hard to improve life for these families. Achievements include:

- Enhancing collaborations within DSHS administrations to better respond to the needs of kinship caregivers.
- Building close relationships with Area Agencies on Aging and their community partners in connecting kinship care families with available resources and services.
- Providing DSHS with the ability to hear directly from the caregivers themselves.
- Using the Kinship Care Oversight Committee as a venue for issues of statewide importance.
- Planning by a diverse group of stakeholders to make themselves heard on kinship care issues, both on the local level through "kinship collaborations" and in the Oversight Committee; kinship collaborations are active in Yakima, King, Whatcom, Pierce, and Lewis/Mason/Thurston counties, among others.
- Providing legislators with a better understanding of caregiver issues and encouraging the legislature to pass budget and policy items that have positively impacted caregivers.
- Building a relationship with the foster parent community as a way of working together for the common goal of better supporting caregivers of children in out-of-home care.

## **Kinship Care Oversight Committee 2013 Recommendations**

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee comprised of kinship caregivers, child and caregiver advocates, legislative staff, state agency representatives, non-profit services providers, tribes, and legal community representatives made the following recommendations for 2013:

- Maintain the Kinship Caregiver Oversight Committee through legislative action.
- Restore all or some of the funding eliminated through TANF means testing.
- Maintain current funding for Kinship Navigators, expanding its program if dollars allow. Build on relationships established through an application for the federal grant to expand the Kinship Navigator program.
- Maintain the Aging & Long-Term Support Administration's (AL TSA) Kinship Caregiver Support Program, Children's Administration's (CA) Relative Support Service Funds, Economic Service Administration's (ESA) Additional Requirements for Emergent Needs (AREN) program, and other services for kinship caregivers.
- Increase efforts to improve regional utilization of CA's Relative Support Service Funds for relatives caring for state-dependent children.
- Work with Children's Administration to increase the number of relatives who are licensed as foster parents to care for dependent children.
- Seek creative ways to provide kinship caregivers with much needed breaks (respite care), such as AL TSA's collaboration with Lifespan Respite of Washington on the state's three-year federally funded Lifespan Respite Grant.
- Continue to build collaborations with the foster parent community, enhance Navigators' connections with the Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention liaisons, and work with the foster parent community when possible, such as helping plan and put on the annual Caregivers Conference.
- Continue collaboration building between the Community Service Offices (CSOs), Kinship Navigators and Children's Administration to connect clients effectively with services.
- Continue discussions about a feedback group for kinship providers similar to the Foster Parent Consultation Team for foster parents.

## What Do We Know About Our Kinship Caregivers?

Many of our kinship caregivers are grandparents raising grandchildren. Here is what we know nationally and locally about grandparents as caregivers.

A report published by the Pew Research Center in September 2010, provided national information about grandparents raising grandchildren. Notably, the number of grandparents raising grandchildren has risen dramatically since 2007, the first year of the Great Recession. One in ten children lives with a grandparent,

and of those, 42 percent are being raised primarily by that grandparent with no parent in the home.

Families headed by grandparents come together for different reasons – parental death, substance abuse, military deployment, incarceration, and mental illness. As a result, these families are in every area of the country, of all income levels, of all races, and all ethnicities.

In Washington state, according to data from the Children’s Administration, nearly 3,400 (approximately 40 percent) dependent children are placed with relatives.

Data from the 2010 U.S. Census shows the number of children living with relatives in Washington state is much higher than in other states.

- 123,390 children under age 18 live in homes where the householders are grandparents or other relatives (7.8 percent of the children in the state).
- 37,371 children live in homes with grandparent householders where grandparents are responsible for them.
- 40,305 grandparents are the householders and are responsible for their grandchildren living with them.
  - 66 percent of those grandparents are Caucasian; 5 percent are Black; 7 percent are Asian; 5 percent are American Indian or Alaska Native and 12 percent are Hispanic.
  - 42 percent of these households do not have parents of the children living in the home.
  - 65 percent of caregivers are under age 60.



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Do you have admirable grandparents? I do, there are nice, caring, trustworthy, willing to help, and full of love. They are always there for me, they constantly encourage me, also they trust me, and teach me new things everyday. They're teaching me how to be a young gentleman all together. Also they make me strong and healthy with their mouth-watering food they always make. They always help me in my school work, and already helping with my future plans. They're leading and have led me in an outstanding direction. Also, they love me so much it can't be expressed, and taught me so much you can't sum them up.

- 14 percent of caregivers live in poverty.
- The 2012 Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) which examined the risky behaviors of middle and high school youth living with relatives has produced valuable kinship data which will be studied by the Kinship Oversight Committee and other advocates. In fact, Washington is the first state to include kinship care as a demographic category in the HYS. The 2012 data will be used to develop a baseline for future surveys as well as to compare youth in foster care to those living with relatives and then to the broader youth population in our state. ALISA and the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery Administration collaborated on the new kinship questions which were reviewed by national researchers and within the department. The questions were piloted with older youth through the DSHS Passion to Action Youth Advisory Board and adopted by the Washington state HYS committee.

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## Kinship Care Oversight Committee Activities

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee and its subcommittees provide advocacy, education, and awareness to the community and legislators about the needs of kinship caregivers. The Oversight Committee was extended from 2011 to 2015 in the 2013 legislative session.

### Advocacy, Education and Awareness

Members of the Kinship Care Oversight Committee are instrumental in planning and organizing various recognition events, conferences, and other efforts highlighting the important role of kinship care providers. The Oversight Committee works to increase awareness of kinship care issues. Some of the events which honor and support our relative caregivers include:

- Washington State Kinship Care Children’s Poetry, Drawing and Essay Contest, *Voices of Children Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives*. 2013 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> year the Voices of Children has occurred;
- Regional kinship care conferences, trainings or support groups in all three DSHS regions;
- Local celebrations and recognition events honoring the contributions of kinship caregivers;
- Each May, a Proclamation by Governor Inslee to honor relatives raising children;
- A Kinship Navigator (from Lewis/Mason and Thurston Counties) is an active board member of FPAWS (Foster Parent Association in WA State);
- Active planning participation in the Second Annual Pacific Northwest Caregivers’ Conference at Great Wolf Lodge in January.
- The Oversight Committee is also involved in the following activities:
  - Implementation, oversight, and expansion of the Kinship Navigator program;
  - Feedback regarding the challenges of accessing financial resources for kinship care families;
  - Exploration of legal issues and development of legal resources for relative caregivers;
  - Updating the DSHS Kinship Website: [www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare). Recent updates include the addition of the “Did You Know?” document listing resources for kinship caregivers, which is now printed and translated into eight languages;
  - Provision of various training opportunities for caregivers;
  - Dissemination of information about guardianship as a permanent plan for dependent children, the eligibility requirements for the Relative

Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP), and support available through R-GAP in Washington state;

- Exploration of respite care service options and models through mini-grants provided to several Area Agency on Aging service areas in the state;
- Providing feedback on the Children’s Administration Unified Home Study;
- Promotion of local collaborations to support kinship care families; and
- Expansion and diversification of its membership.

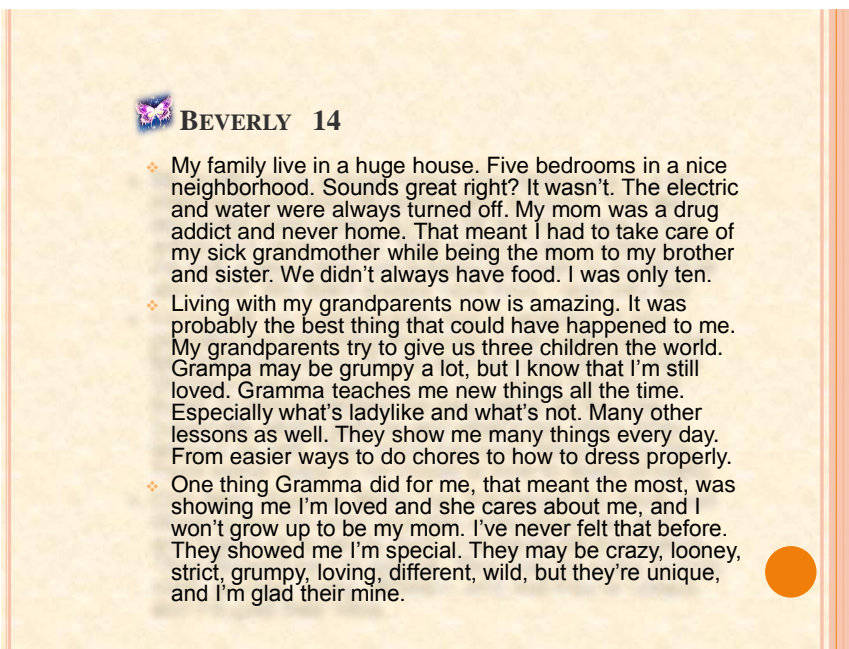
### **Kinship Navigator Program**

Promoting and supporting the Kinship Navigator Program across the state has been a very high priority for the Oversight Committee.

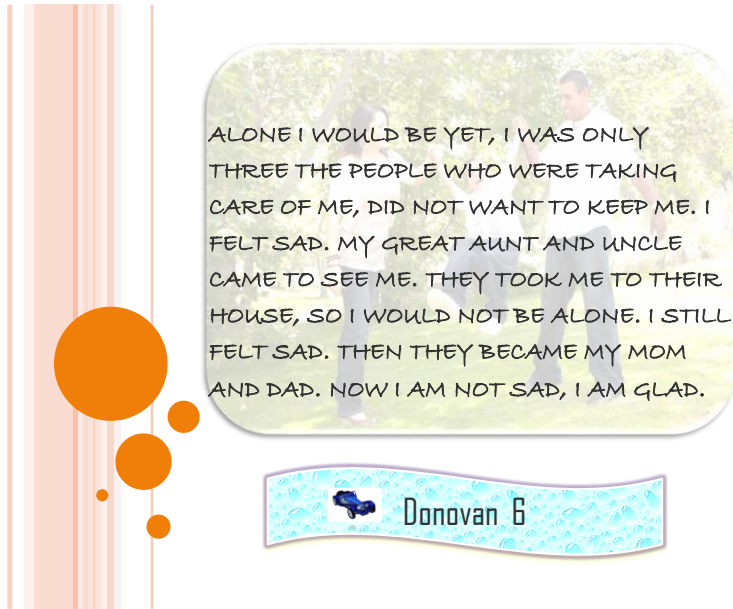
Grandparents and relatives who are raising children are often unaware of available supports. Kinship Navigators connect families with a multitude of community resources: health, financial and legal services; support groups; and emergency funds. For example, Kinship Navigators help kinship caregivers locate appropriate housing to fit their expanded family size, explain how to apply for various benefits, advocate on their behalf, and help acquire beds, clothes, and food for their children.

Kinship Navigators provide a crucial link between relatives and these services. These links create more stable environments to help keep children out of the child welfare system and provide better support for relative caregivers.

During the last year, Kinship Navigators served a total of 2,052 Kinship Caregivers who were raising 3,542 children. They also provided 302 presentations to community organizations and state agencies such as DSHS.







ALONE I WOULD BE YET, I WAS ONLY THREE THE PEOPLE WHO WERE TAKING CARE OF ME, DID NOT WANT TO KEEP ME. I FELT SAD. MY GREAT AUNT AND UNCLE CAME TO SEE ME. THEY TOOK ME TO THEIR HOUSE, SO I WOULD NOT BE ALONE. I STILL FELT SAD. THEN THEY BECAME MY MOM AND DAD. NOW I AM NOT SAD, I AM GLAD.

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The Kinship Navigator Program is administered through ALTSA which contracts with eight of the thirteen local Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). The AAAs provide the services directly or contract out the service(s) to a local community service organization. ALTSA facilitates a bi-

monthly conference call with the Kinship Navigators to provide access to information, subject experts, and create networking opportunities.

The long-term goal of the Kinship Navigator Program is to have Navigators available to serve caregivers in all 13 AAA service areas in the state. Counties which do not yet have Kinship Navigators include Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Kitsap, Snohomish, Island, San Juan, and Skagit Counties. In addition, the Colville Indian Reservation (Area Agency on Aging) is also in need of a Navigator. (Attachment 2 provides a complete listing of Kinship Navigators and their sponsoring agencies.)

Regular trainings occur throughout the year to benefit Kinship Navigators' knowledge about resources. A sampling of the trainings includes:

- Department of Health staff provided training on Child Profile health promotion materials available to Navigators and caregivers;
- Office of Education Ombudsman offered training on the available resources and advocacy which their staff can provide to caregivers;
- College Success Foundation trained on resources to prepare youth for post-high school success.
- Health Care Authority staff trained on the new Autism Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) intervention available this year to families.

As the result of discussions between kinship and foster parent leaders, the Foster Parent Association of Washington State (FPAWS) voted to put a Kinship Navigator on its board of directors. The common goal of FPAWS and leaders in foster and

kinship care is for the two communities of caregivers to work together more closely for the common good of children in their care.

A Kinship Navigator is active in planning the Annual Northwest Caregiver's Conference held each January. The conference includes "The Night of a Thousand Dreams" to recognize and honor quality work in child welfare. The 2012 conference recognized two individuals with awards specifically given to leaders in the kinship community. A legislative champion of kinship care was also recognized. Tom Berry, program manager with the DSHS Economic Services Administration received the Galaxy Award. Rosalyn Alber, Kinship Navigator in Pierce County, received the Edith Owen award. Representative Eric Pettigrew was recognized with the Elected Official award.

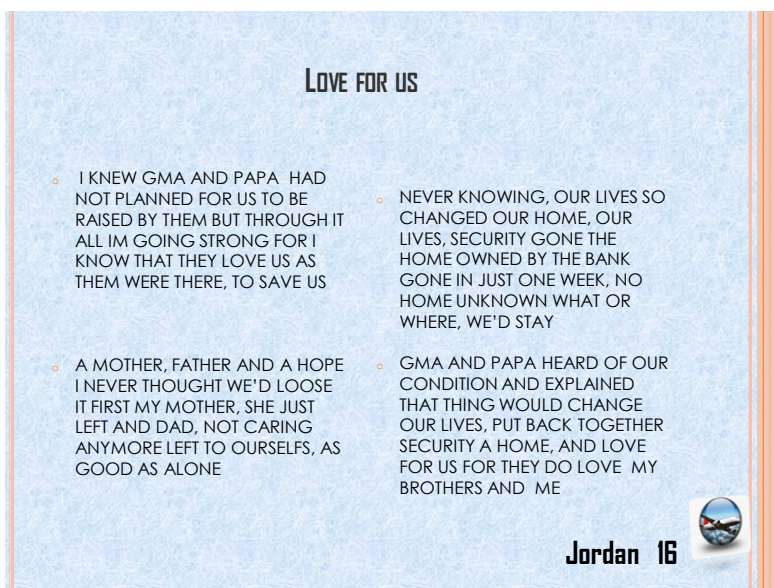
### **Exploring Legal Issues and Options for Kinship Caregivers**

The Oversight Committee continues to advocate for the expansion of legal services, currently being offered in a few counties, across the state. Increasing legal services information available on the Internet along with printed and DVD resources remain a priority. The Oversight Committee will continue to explore funding options for critically needed legal services.

The longest running kinship legal project in the state is the Kinship Care Solutions Project sponsored by the King County Bar Association. It continues to provide direct representation to low-income relatives and other caregivers in non-parental custody (also known as third party custody) cases.

Caregivers receive referrals to a pro bono panel of trained volunteer attorneys who receive comprehensive training and ongoing mentoring through the project. In Thurston County, legal information can be found through a self-help legal education kiosk (the first of its kind) located at the Thurston County Courthouse. This information also exists on the Family Education and Support

Services agency Kinship web-page [http://familyess.org/?page\\_id=676](http://familyess.org/?page_id=676). Whatcom County continues its free, monthly Kinship Non-Parental Custody Clinic which began in July 2010. This service is a collaborative effort between LAW Advocates



of Whatcom County and the Northwest Regional Council. In Yakima, a similar monthly legal clinic was created through the sponsorship of the Casey Family Programs. It utilizes pro bono family law attorneys to assist relatives in completing legal paperwork for third party custody.

The Economic Services Administration is preparing a “legal options” handout for caregivers to be distributed at CSOs. Children’s Administration produced the brochure “Understanding the Dependency Court Process” to help families learn how dependency cases enter and move through the court system. Members of the Oversight Committee share these materials in their work with caregivers.

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

Collaborations have formed throughout the state in the past decade to support foster parents in a variety of ways. These collaborations include:

- The King County Kinship Collaboration
- The Yakima Region Kindred Spirits Collaboration
- The Lewis-Mason-Thurston County Kinship Advisory Committee
- The Whatcom County Kinship Partnership Group
- The Whatcom County Family and Community Network
- The Pierce County Kinship Collaboration

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee actively works with these collaborations to share information, resources, and events. Each collaboration works to establish and maintain support groups for kinship caregivers, establish and hold honoring events and time-specific events such as Caregiver Day and back-to-school events. The collaborations host trainings for caregivers and build community outreach efforts. The following are other examples of specific local collaboration activities:

- King County employs a coordinator who directs their Kinship Collaboration and partners with their two year old Kinship Center operated at the Central Area Senior Center. In July 2013, Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen presided over a ceremony in conjunction with the Thurston-Lewis-Mason County Kinship Advisory Committee to honor the winners of the Voices of Children contest.
- The Kinship Navigator with the Thurston-Lewis-Mason County Kinship Advisory Committee collaborated with the local United Way and several banking institutions to develop and launch a “Bank ON” fiscal literacy program that helps caregivers to open and maintain bank accounts.
- The Pierce County Kinship Collaboration, together with Hope Sparks and other Oversight Committee members, implemented a strong collaboration to submit a federal grant application seeking to expand the Navigator

program. Though the application was not chosen for funding, this effort enhanced the Kinship Care Oversight Committee's framework of collaboration.

- The Whatcom County Kinship Partnership activities included administration of the Kinship Respite Care Program offering supervised activities for children, while giving relative caregivers much needed respite.
- The Whatcom County Partnership also supported the Kinship Custody Clinic which offers free monthly legal clinics for relative caregivers seeking non-parental custody.
- The Yakima Regional KINdred Spirits sponsored kinship social and appreciation events, trainings and support groups, and an annual conference for kinship and foster parents. Staff provides a newsletter, and one caregiver runs a clothing bank.

## **Department of Social and Health Services Kinship Services**

### **DSHS Kinship Care Website Link**

The Department of Social and Health Services provides a link and manages the Kinship Care Website, [www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare). This website was established in spring 2006, through the efforts of the Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA), the Economic Services Administration (ESA), and the Children's Administration (CA), with feedback from the Kinship Care Oversight Committee. The website has become increasingly important in providing information to caregivers and professionals who can access information on financial assistance, health care, drug/alcohol and mental health services, child care, foster care, support programs, and information on caring for children with disabilities, as well as related news items. The number of people accessing the website has grown every year. Other statewide websites such as Within Reach, and Washington State Child Care Aware also have links to this statewide kinship web-page.

### **Children's Administration Foster Care and Caregiver Website**

Children's Administration continues to serve caregivers through information available on its caregiver website. Updated information, news, policy information, placement supports, staff contact information, and training information all are available to support caregivers.

### **Children's Administration Foster Parent and Caregiver Listserv**

This Listserv delivers timely information to licensed foster parents and relative caregivers. It also delivers the monthly Caregiver Connection which for more than eight years has been providing information of interest to caregivers. The Listserv currently delivers information to nearly 7,200 subscribers and is the second largest Listserv operated by DSHS.

### **DSHS Kinship Care Workgroup (KCW)**

Re-established in 2010 to help coordinate services to kinship families, the DSHS Kinship Care Workgroup (KCW) includes representatives from Economic Services Administration, Children's Administration, Aging and Long-Term Support Administration, Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration; Juvenile Justice and Rehabilitation Administration; Office of Planning, Performance, and Accountability; Health Care Authority; Department of Health; Department of Early Learning (DEL); and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

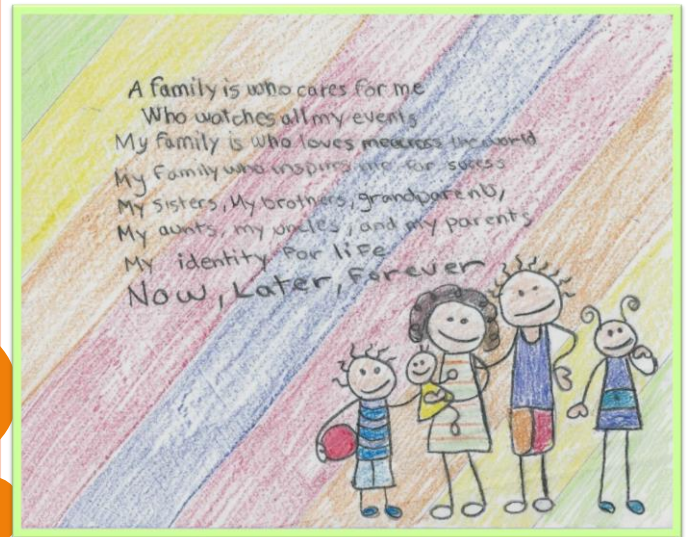
## Training

The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence is Washington state's comprehensive statewide training partnership. Established in 2012, the Alliance is dedicated to developing professional expertise for social workers and to enhancing the skills of foster parents and caregivers working with vulnerable children and families.

Within the Alliance, the Resource Family Training Institute (RFTI) provides training for foster,

adoptive, and non-licensed relative caregivers statewide. Kinship caregivers are able to access all training provided through RFTI. This includes all classroom training, self-directed online workshops, and online video trainings. Some training has been developed that is specific to the needs of kinship caregivers.

The Alliance has facilitated workgroups this year to clarify and identify the competency needs for licensed foster parents and non-licensed relative caregivers. The workgroup is charged with implementing a training curriculum specific to the needs of caregivers as well as being responsive to scheduling availability and accessibility. Flexible scheduling as well as on-line availability of courses has been identified to enhance caregiver training options with a projected "go live" date of March 2014.



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## ATTACHMENT 1

### 2013 Kinship Care Report Recommendations and Status Report

2002 Recommendations High Priority/Short-Term	2013 Status
Provide full TANF payment for second child in kinship family	Means testing required by the legislature has affected the economic situations of caregivers not involved with the formal child welfare system and has been a step away from this goal.
Strengthen relative search process	<p>Social workers have adjusted their practice to comply with policies specific to relative search and the priority of placing children with relatives when appropriate and safe to do so. Social workers ask parents and children about relative resources at the time of placement and before the 72-hour shelter care hearing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within 30 days Children’s Administration staff launches a comprehensive relative search. All adult relatives identified receive a letter from the child’s social worker explaining a relative child has been placed into out-of-home care and how they can be involved.</li> <li>• When making placement changes, social workers consider relatives or suitable persons before using foster care.</li> <li>• Relatives are invited to participate in the Family Team Decision Meetings (FTDMs) regarding their relative child.</li> <li>• CA regions have increased the number of relative search specialists who have access to the information systems in partner agencies, such as ACES and SEMS. In addition, relative search staff utilizes the national database program, “Accurint” that searches other public information databases on potential relatives.</li> <li>• 35 CA employees now utilize “Accurint” and receive periodic training to advance their search skills. Training on relative search is also offered to CA social workers.</li> </ul>
Create Kinship Navigator positions	Eight FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) Kinship Navigators currently provide “one-stop shop” information and resources to relatives living in a 30 county area. A total of 2,052 Kinship Caregivers were served by Kinship Navigators.
Implement aggressive public education and awareness campaign on kinship care issues	The annual <i>Voices of Children</i> award ceremony hosted by the Governor or Lieutenant Governor continues to recognize art, poetry, and essays created by children being raised by grandparents and other relatives. The ceremony provides a great opportunity to bring attention to kinship care.

2002 Recommendations High Priority/Short-Term	2013 Status
	<p>Various local and regional trainings and conferences also take place around the state along with six regional kinship collaborations.</p> <p>Kinship care is taking a greater role in the statewide Northwest Caregivers Conference, raising awareness about this growing population.</p> <p>Kinship stories and issues also are more frequently presented in the CA Caregiver Connection, the monthly newsletter to the care giving community and interested stakeholders along with other publications, e.g. Crosscut.</p> <p>Kinship caregivers and children have become an integral element in the annual “We Are Family” Day at Safeco Field in May, during which Foster Care Month and Kinship Care Day are celebrated.</p> <p>There are no dedicated funds for public education and awareness so most efforts are generally local.</p>
<p>Improve the delivery of TANF benefits to relative caregivers</p>	<p>The DSHS Kinship Care webpage provides a wealth of information about various state resources available to kinship caregivers including TANF and Medicaid.</p> <p>ESA is working on instructions which will assist relatives in appropriately filling out the benefit application form.</p>
<p>Create an education/medical consent waiver</p>	<p>The creation of the medical/dental/mental health waiver has been helpful; however, there continues to be confusion about the services a relative caregiver can consent to. The Oversight Committee continues to discuss improvements for access to care.</p> <p>Information about the medical consent law is distributed through the Washington State Hospital Association and the Washington Chapter of the American Association of Pediatrics. The brochure on medical consent has been updated and reprinted.</p> <p>There remains no education waiver in statute. The Oversight Committee continues to assess whether a statute related to an education waiver is warranted.</p>
<p>Establish a legal services pilot project</p>	<p>In addition to the various small kinship legal projects located around the state, a subcommittee of the Oversight Committee continues to focus on recommendations to improve availability of legal kinship resources. Both ESA and Children’s Administration have developed informational documents to assist caregivers with legal options and supports.</p>



<b>2002 Recommendations High Priority/Short-Term</b>	<b>2013 Status</b>
Create a statewide respite care inventory	A three-year Lifespan Respite grant awarded to ALTSA/DSHS in 2010 continues to be used to improve access and information about available respite care services for caregivers of individuals of all ages. The statewide Lifespan Respite WA website and 1-800 telephone number is about to be launched together through a new federal Lifespan Respite Grant (\$247,000). This will run from August 2013 through January 2015. A statewide respite care inventory will be finalized along with a new respite voucher system open to all caregivers.
Establish a support services fund for relative caregivers	<p>The (ALTSA/DSHS) Kinship Caregivers Support Program continues to receive \$1 million per year in funding. These funds of last resort support relative caregivers who are not involved with the formal child welfare system who have an emergent need or crisis. In SFY 2012, 3,542 children were living with 2,052 relatives who were served with these funds. A total of 83 percent of all families served had annual incomes of less than \$30,000.</p> <p>The Children’s Administration Relative Support Services budget allocates funds for relatives caring for dependent children with an open case who have a short-term emergent need. In SFY 2013, the allocation was increased to \$725,901 with expenditures of \$538,984.14. The 2013 expenditures were \$208,636.09 higher than funds expended in SFY2012 showing a distinct increase in spending to support relative caregivers.</p> <p>The Oversight Committee continues to request information on utilization of these funds to ensure relative families served by CA are able to access short-term financial supports. Clearly defining the “open case” may also improve utilization of these funds. Children’s headquarters staff handles policy questions on utilization of these funds and supports field staff with case specific questions.</p>
Support Lifespan Respite Act and position state to receive funding	The first Lifespan Respite grant provided \$189,000 over 3 years for lifespan respite initiatives.

<b>2002 Recommendations High Priority/Long Term</b>	<b>2013 Status</b>
Provide full TANF payment for all multiple-child kinship	This recommendation has not been implemented in great part due to budget constraints and is likely to continue for the foreseeable

2002 Recommendations High Priority/Long Term	2013 Status
families	<p>future. The Oversight Committee continues to review how other states address financial assistance to kinship caregivers.</p> <p>Relative guardianship established for dependent children served by CA and supported by the Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP) is one way to increase support. However this is only available to a limited number of families based on eligibility requirements.</p>
Promote systems collaboration	<p>The DSHS Kinship Workgroup is an example of the commitment to collaboration among multiple state agencies serving kinship families.</p> <p>Foster parent and kinship care leaders continue discussions begun in 2011 to collaborate on services for children in their care. FPAWS now includes a Kinship Navigator (who is also a kinship provider) on its board.</p>
Provide GAL/CASA services	<p>No formal action steps have been taken to address this issue specifically for kinship families. Progress is not expected due to continuing budget constraints.</p>
Provide respite care services for relative caregivers	<p>Respite care continues to be a critical need for kinship caregivers. It is one of the top two priorities identified by the cross-agency kinship committee.</p> <p>Children’s Administration provides respite for kinship caregivers in the child welfare system.</p> <p>The Kinship Care Oversight Committee continues to advocate for the provision of respite dollars.</p> <p>In September 2012, AL TSA awarded the last of four, \$20,000 grants to Area Agencies on Aging (one in eastern and three in western Washington) where respite pilot programs have focused on kinship care families</p>
Provide training opportunities for all caregivers	<p>Children’s Administration offers training sessions to both foster parents and relative caregivers monthly on an on-going basis. The training catalog is distributed through the Kinship Navigator network and is available online on the CA kinship webpage.</p> <p>In January 2013, kinship providers were invited to participate in the Pacific Northwest Caregivers Conference sponsored by the Foster Parents Association of Washington State. All workshops were available to kinship caregivers as well as specific training developed for relatives.</p>

<b>2002 Recommendations Medium Priority/Short-Term</b>	<b>2013 Status</b>
Increase oversight and accountability for non-parent caregivers on TANF	This is being considered as part of the TANF redesign.
Incorporate kinship families in Special Children Health Care Needs pilot	No formal action steps have been developed to address this issue.
Fund legal information packet and website	<p>The legal resources guide, developed by Legal Voice of Seattle, continues to be published and distributed.</p> <p>A DVD on Washington state legal options and a video on mediation were developed and are circulated to support groups, kinship navigators and caregivers.</p> <p>The Oversight Committee continues to identify and improve access to legal resources for kinship caregivers.</p> <p>The Thurston County legal kinship kiosk model serves as an information sharing model for other counties and states.</p>
Educate judges and attorneys about kinship care issues	This issue remains an ongoing effort around the state in various ways. Local collaborations have partnered with many legal professionals in their communities including judges, attorneys, and other service providers. Judges and attorneys are members of task forces and advisory committees with kinship caregivers, which provide opportunities for education and collaboration. The federal Fostering Connections legislation supports court systems to review practices regarding kinship care.
Support statewide Unified Family Court (UFC)	No formal action steps have been developed to address this. However, many members of the Oversight Committee supported 2012 legislation that moved in the UFC direction.

<b>2002 Recommendations Federal Recommendation</b>	<b>2013 Status</b>
Amend National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP)/Older Americans Act/U.S. Administration on Aging	The Older Americans Act was amended in 2006 allowing for relatives age 55 years or older who are raising their grandchildren to receive services under the NFCSP. Only 10 percent of the funding to states is permitted to serve relatives raising children.

Subsidized Guardianships	Eligible children served by Children’s Administration who achieve permanency through a relative guardianship are assisted with services offered by the Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP). The number of relative families receiving these benefits continues to increase each year.
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## ATTACHMENT 2

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

**Benton, Franklin, Columbia, Garfield, Walla Walla, Yakima, Kittitas and Asotin Counties:** Catholic Family and Child Services – **Kinship Navigator:** Mary Pleger, [mpleger@ccyakima.org](mailto:mpleger@ccyakima.org), 509-965-7100 or 800-246-2962

**Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan, Grant, Lincoln, and Adams Counties:** Catholic Family and Child Services **Kinship Navigator:** Jennifer Santillan, [jsantillan@ccyakima.org](mailto:jsantillan@ccyakima.org), 509-662-6761 ext. 4557 or 1-800-261-1094.

**Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania, Wahkiakum Counties:** Children's Home Society, Southwest Washington region, **Kinship Navigator:** Tammy Bedlion, [Tammyb@chs-wa.org](mailto:Tammyb@chs-wa.org), 360-695-1325 ext. 4214

**Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties:** Rural Resources Community Action, **Kinship Navigator:** Art Mathew, [amathew@ruralresources.org](mailto:amathew@ruralresources.org), 509-684-3932

**Spokane County:** Elder Services - Spokane Mental Health **Kinship Navigator:** Anna O'Connor, [avictor@smhca.org](mailto:avictor@smhca.org), 509-458-7450 ext. 3100

**Whitman County:** Rural Resources, **Kinship Navigator:** Chelsey Fanara, [Chelsey.ruralresources@gmail.com](mailto:Chelsey.ruralresources@gmail.com), 509-332-1517 x807 or 800-873-5889

**King County:** Catholic Community Services, **Kinship Navigator:** Lulit Merid, [Lulitm@ccsww.org](mailto:Lulitm@ccsww.org), 206-328-5951 or 206-328-5787 (Kinship Intake Line)

**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:** Jesie Holden, [jholden@hopesparks.org](mailto:jholden@hopesparks.org), 253-565-4484 ext. 134

**Whatcom County:** Northwest Regional Council (AAA), **Kinship Navigator:** Laina Berry, [BerryLS@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:BerryLS@dshs.wa.gov), 360-676-6749

**Yakama Nation:** (Position funded by Nation), **Kinship Navigator:** Jenece House, [Jhowe@yakama.com](mailto:Jhowe@yakama.com), (509) 865-5121 ext. 4878

**State contact:** Hilarie Hauptman, Aging & Long-Term Support Administration, DSHS [Hilarie.hauptman@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Hilarie.hauptman@dshs.wa.gov), 1-800-422-3263 or 360-725-2556

**Kinship Care in WA State Website:** <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare/>

## ATTACHMENT 3

### 2013 Kinship Caregiver Oversight Committee

Teri Aguilera-Flemming	Kristie Lund
Rosalyn Alber	Fai Matthews
Gerri Barsh	Lulit Merid
Tammy Bedlion	Ron Murphy
Laina Berry	Anna O'Connor
Tom Berry	Sara Pennington
Celeste Carey	Ann Phillip
Myra Casey	Karen Pinkham
Barbara Clark	Mary Pleger
Amy Dennis	Linda Porter
Chelsea Fanara	Deanna Potter
Akelia Farve	Deborah Ray
Lauren Fredrick	Jennifer Santillan
Barbara Giachetti	Helen Sawyer
Hilarie Hauptman	Katy Smith
Jesie Holden	Paula Steinke
Amy Holland	Melinda Trujillo
Jenece Howe	Margaret Turner
Monica Jenkins	Lynn Urvina
Kathleen Keenan	Lynne Van Horn
Cara Lauer	Rosa Venancio
Lyman Legters	Kimberly Walker
Laurie Lippold	Meri Waterhouse
Jennifer Louch	Shelly Willis
Gilda Lyons	