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## Keeping Kids with Family: How Texas Can Better Support Kinship Care

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Across Texas, family members and friends have stepped up to provide homes for children whose parents cannot care for them. These "kinship care" arrangements include all children who receive care from grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles, cousins and close family friends for a given period of time. While court orders or the foster care system formally establish some Texas kinship care arrangements, the vast majority are informally arranged by families without any interaction with state authorities.

Informal kinship caregivers save Texas taxpayers millions of dollars every year in foster care costs as they care for children who would otherwise fall into the custody of the state.<sup>1</sup> And more importantly, caregivers offer love and stability to many of the state's most vulnerable children.

Although kinship caregivers have voluntarily stepped in to become substitute parents, many have limited resources and struggle to assume the sudden financial burden of parenting. Despite the need, informal kinship caregivers in Texas have no centralized way to determine whether financial help is available for the children they are attempting to raise, and they must navigate a complex system with multiple barriers. Kinship caregivers in Texas need and deserve more support.

This report examines the prevalence and variety of kinship care situations in Texas, the assistance programs available to households and the challenges that caregivers encounter when they apply for help. The report offers a range of policy solutions Texas should implement in order to support kinship caregivers in their efforts to provide new homes and families for the children who need them.

### Kinship Care Arrangements

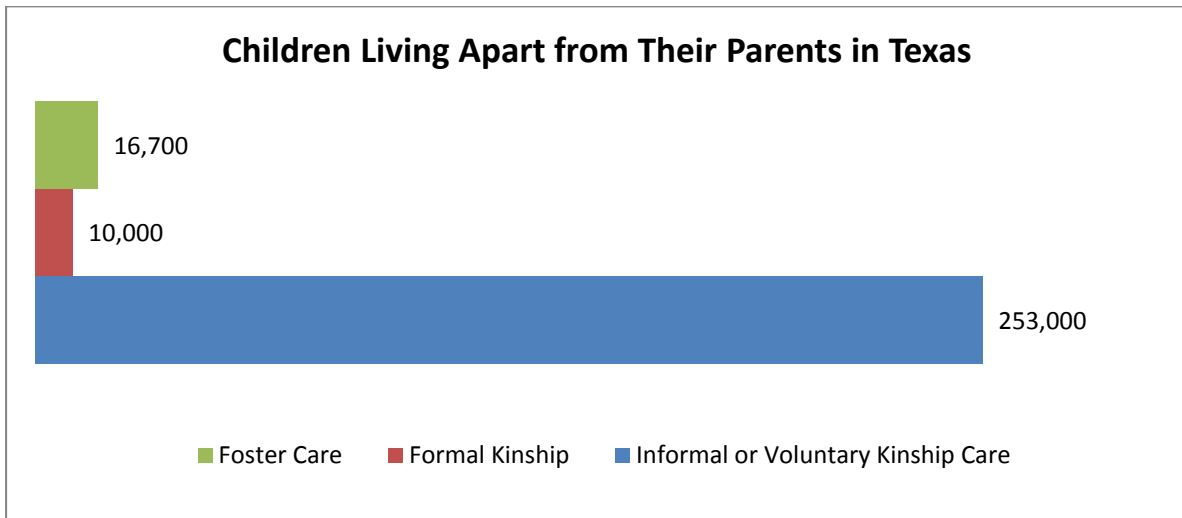
**Informal Kinship care** – children are cared for by a relative or family friend without the involvement of state authorities.

**CPS Voluntary Placement Kinship care** – CPS oversees the temporary placement of a child with a relative or close family friend, but the parent retains custody.

**CPS Formal Kinship care** – children are removed from their parents' custody by the state and placed in the care of a relative.

### Kinship Care in Texas

According to the most recent estimates from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, there are 253,000 children living in an informal or voluntary placement kinship care situation in Texas, the second highest such number after California.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, 10,000 children are formally placed through state-supervised kinship foster care and 16,700 in paid foster care.<sup>3</sup> Of all children living away from their parents in Texas, 90 percent are in informal or voluntary kinship care placements.



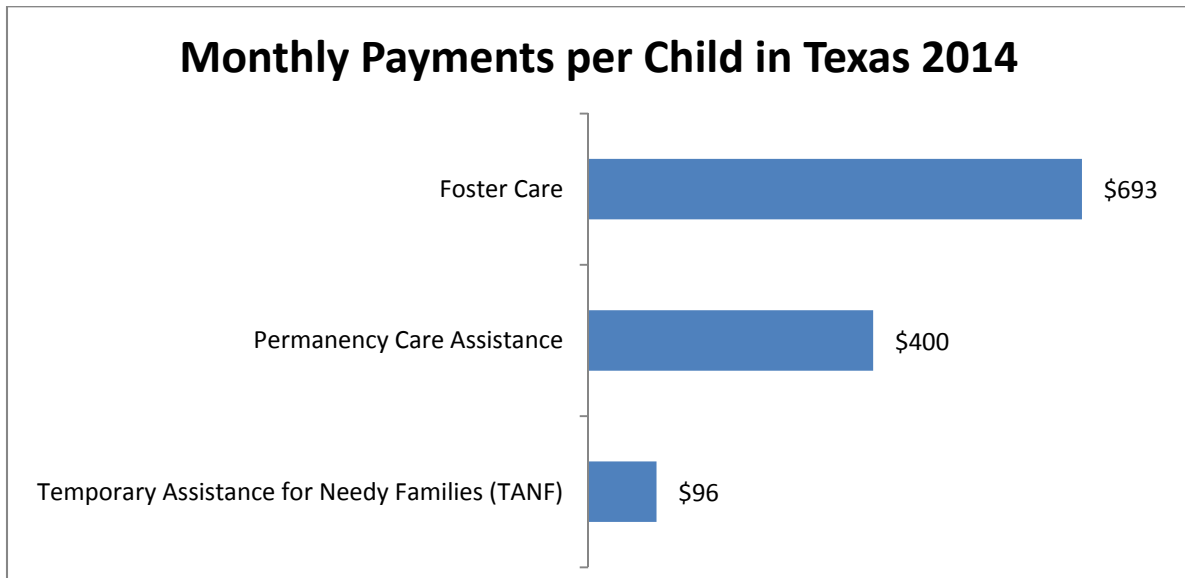
*Source: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and Kids Count Data Center*

Kinship caregivers can experience significant hardship when they take on the responsibility of caring for additional children.<sup>4</sup> Frequently the kinship arrangement is unforeseen, and families face financial, health, and social challenges as a result. Children often end up in the care of extended family after a traumatic event, which creates additional mental and behavioral health challenges and needs for the kinship family.

Despite the hardship and adverse conditions that families experience, kinship caregivers have a significant positive impact on the children they welcome. Research shows that kinship care placements are often preferable to non-kin foster care because they provide the child with a sense of family support and familiarity.<sup>5</sup> As a result many states, including Texas, attempt to place at-risk children with kinship caregivers before taking children into state custody and placing them in state-supported foster care.

For those children and kinship caregivers who do interact with the child-welfare system in Texas, there is some help available. When the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and its Child Protective Services (CPS) division become involved, caregivers may receive case management, support services, and financial assistance from the agency. DFPS runs two programs that provide state assistance to formal relative caregivers -- the Permanency Care Assistance (PCA) and Relative and Other Designated Caregiver Assistance programs (RODCAP).<sup>6</sup> The PCA payment made to formal kinship caregivers in Texas is at least \$400 per month.<sup>7</sup> Texas licensed foster caregivers also receive significant financial support from the state. The minimum foster care payment for a child in Texas is \$693 per month. This support helps to ensure that children receive safe, stable, and nurturing care after removal from their parents' home.<sup>8</sup>

## Monthly Payments per Child in Texas 2014



Source: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Unfortunately the 90 percent of children who live apart from their parents in informal kinship care arrangements do not receive the same support as children involved with the state, although they are often in similar situations of financial, social, and emotional distress. They are eligible for some federal and state public benefits and income support programs but often face significant barriers to accessing those resources.

### Characteristics of Kinship Care Arrangements

	Informal Kinship Care	CPS Voluntary Placement Kinship Care	CPS Formal Kinship Care
CPS involved	No	Yes	Yes
Placement made because of immediate safety risk to the child	No	No	Yes
Agreement made between parents and caregivers	Yes (Authorization Agreement for Nonparent Relative or Voluntary Caregiver)	Yes (Parental Child Safety Placement) <sup>9</sup>	No
Parent retains legal guardianship	Yes	Yes	No
Financial assistance provided by state	No	No	Yes
Support services provided by state	No	Yes	Yes

## Public Benefits & Resources for Informal Kinship Care Families

Informal kinship caregivers provide an invaluable service to the children they care for and to the state of Texas. They are, however, often in difficult financial situations even before they take in a child. According to the U.S. Census, kinship families are more likely to be poor, single, older, less educated, and unemployed than traditional families with at least one parent present.

For this reason, kinship families are often eligible for the means-tested income support and assistance programs included in the table on the next page.

### **An Important Tool: the Authorization Agreement for Nonparent Relative or Voluntary Caregiver**

The Authorization Agreement is a legal document that can be used in informal kinship care cases not ordered by the court. It must be signed by a parent. The agreement is like a Power of Attorney and allows the caregiver to do the following on behalf of a child in their care:

- Authorize medical treatment
- Obtain and maintain health and automobile insurance coverage
- Enroll the child in daycare, preschool, and all public or private schools
- Apply for and receive public benefits
- Authorize participation in extracurricular activities
- Authorize the child to obtain a learner's permit/driver's license
- Authorize employment of the child

The Authorization Agreement does not substitute for other eligibility requirements a program may have other than parental consent.

## Support Programs Low-Income Kinship Care Families May be Eligible for in Texas

Program	Administering Agency	Benefits	Income and Asset Limits
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)	Approximately \$122 per child per month in electronic benefits to spend on grocery food items	Income limit: At or below 165% of the federal poverty level (FPL) <sup>10</sup> Asset limit: \$5,000 cash assets, \$15,000 first vehicle
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): One-time grandparent payment <sup>11</sup>	HHSC	One-time \$1,000 cash payment to grandparent caregiver	Income limit: At or below 200% FPL Asset limit: \$1,000 cash assets, \$4,650 first vehicle
TANF: Monthly cash assistance	HHSC	Average monthly cash payment of approximately \$73 per person in household	Income limit: At or below 11% FPL <sup>12</sup> Asset Limit: \$1,000 cash assets, \$4,650 first vehicle
Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)	Monthly electronic benefits for purchase of staple food items for infants and children under 5. Average value of food package is \$26.46 per month per participant	Income limit: At or below 185% FPL
Subsidized school meals	Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)	Free or reduced-price school breakfast and lunch for each school-aged child in household	Income limit: At or below 130% FPL (free meals) At or below 185% FPL (reduced-price meals)
Childcare subsidies	Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)	Subsidized childcare up to 100% of the cost of care, depending on household income, for children under age 13	Maximum income limit: 52-85% of state median income, depending on workforce region
Housing Assistance	Texas Department of Housing & Community Affairs (TDHCA)	Ongoing rental assistance for up to two years including Section 8 vouchers; Emergency housing resources such as short-term rental payments	Income limit: Below 30-50% of median Income in local area
<i>The following are additional benefits specific to children in kinship families, regardless of income, aimed at easing the transition for households:</i>			
Children's Medicaid	HHSC	Public health insurance benefits for any child in kinship care under the age of 19	Not Applicable: While a minor does not live with their legal parents, they are considered independent and caregiver income does not count toward eligibility status
TANF Child-only Payments	HHSC	Monthly cash assistance benefits of \$89 for 1 child, \$128 for 2 children, and \$179 for 3 children	

## Major Finding: Kinship Caregivers Are Less Likely To Access Resources

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According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, there were 253,000 children living in informal or voluntary kinship care in Texas in 2011-2013, meaning that there was no parent present in the household, and the caregiver was not state-assigned. However, according to data from the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), only 11,000 of the children in the care of a grandparent, other relative, or family friend were receiving monthly TANF payments in November 2013, despite virtually all being eligible. Data from HHSC also indicate that only 130,731 children living in the household of a non-parent caretaker were receiving children's Medicaid, despite virtually all being eligible.

Grandparents who are caring for a grandchild and who have a household income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible to receive the one-time grandparent payment, yet only a small fraction receive it. HHSC reported that in fiscal year 2012, only 589 households received the one-time TANF grandparent payment, and 648 families received it in FY 2013.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly food stamps, is available to families who have gross income at or below 165 percent of the federal poverty level. The amount of SNAP benefits that a household receives is based on the number of eligible individuals in the household. A relative who takes in a child and is already receiving SNAP benefits can have their benefits supplemented to help cover the care of the child. In November 2013, HHSC reported about 130,000 children on SNAP cases where the head of household was not their biological parent.

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### Identified Barriers

There are several reasons why kinship caregivers do not access the programs and assistance that would help ensure a stable household for the child in their care.

#### **Barrier #1: Accessing information related to kinship care and support services**

Many kinship caregivers, especially grandparents, are not aware of the benefit programs for which they are eligible or how to access them.<sup>13</sup> Outreach targeted at kinship caregivers from the administrative agencies in Texas is extremely limited. For example, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), which administers TANF, SNAP, and Medicaid, currently performs very little outreach specifically aimed at kinship care families to inform them of their eligibility for particular programs. The most recent kinship-related publication from HHSC is from 2008. Additionally, if a kinship caregiver does apply for assistance from a state-administered program, according to agency representatives, state eligibility staff do not necessarily inform them or encourage them to apply for other programs for which they may be eligible.

## Solutions:

- The State of Texas should establish a Kinship Navigator program by forming a partnership with an existing statewide nonprofit to conduct outreach and serve as a referral network for kinship caregivers across the state. A navigator would act as an information source and offer individual assistance to kinship caregivers through a hotline.
- Texas should develop and maintain a Kinship Navigator website that clearly explains to families the various programs and services available at the local, state, and federal level and the eligibility requirements for each. The site should direct caregivers both to online applications like [www.yourtexasbenefits.com](http://www.yourtexasbenefits.com) and to local providers who can provide application assistance such as HHSC's Community Partners.
- When a kinship household does apply for a program, the agency in question should automatically inform the applicant of their potential eligibility for any other programs or services they administer. For example, when a kinship household applies to HHSC for Medicaid benefits for a child, HHSC should also inform them of their potential eligibility for TANF and SNAP benefits.
- The Legislature should direct all state agencies overseeing programs available to kinship households to include a section on outreach to kinship caregivers in any annual state outreach plans they are required to file. For example both TWC and HHSC should include a section on kinship caregiver outreach in the SNAP state outreach plan they are required to file with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

## Barrier #2: TANF cash assistance payments are insufficient

If a kinship caregiver does apply for and meets the requirements associated with the receipt of one or more public assistance programs, the benefit may not be sufficient to truly meet the needs of the family. For example, in 2013 a kinship caregiver in Texas who received TANF monthly cash assistance only on behalf of the children in their care (known as child-only TANF) received a maximum of \$93 for one child and a maximum of only \$134 for two children.<sup>14</sup> Nationally only Arkansas (\$81) and Oklahoma (\$87) provided less than Texas.<sup>15</sup> Given the real costs associated with providing for a child, this amount is simply too low to ensure that a child receives adequate care. For example the minimum monthly payment provided to a foster parent in Texas is \$23 per day or approximately \$693 a month. For kinship caregivers not receiving financial assistance through DFPS on the other hand, the average TANF payment is about \$3 per day for one child.

Maximum Monthly Child-Only TANF Payment 2013	
Nevada	\$417
Utah	\$288
New Mexico	\$227
Florida	\$180
Colorado	\$128
Louisiana	\$122
Mississippi	\$110
<b>Texas</b>	<b>\$93</b>
Oklahoma	\$87
Arkansas	\$81
US Average	\$238

Source: Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database

## **Solutions:**

- The Legislature should raise child-only cash payments in the TANF program to be similar to the amount the state pays to caregivers enrolled in the Permanency Care Assistance program. PCA and foster care payments attempt to reflect the state's estimation of the true cost of raising a child. Informal and voluntary kinship caregivers incur the same costs but receive a fraction of the help even if they qualify for TANF.
- The Legislature should remove the state's \$1,000 liquid asset limit and \$4,650 vehicle value limit for TANF, which prevent all but the most destitute of caregivers from applying for help. The current limits are so low that receiving social security payments or owning a functional car are enough to disqualify a household.
- The Legislature should enhance the one-time TANF grandparent payment by raising the grant amount to reflect the impact of the inflation since it was first established. While grandparents are the most common kinship caregivers, the one-time grant should be expanded to include other family members who step into the role of caregiver.
- The Health and Human Services Commission should improve the process for applying for child-only TANF. Because the child-only option is currently not listed on the application, some relatives are denied on the mistaken assumption by HHSC staff that they are applying for cash assistance for themselves.

## **Barrier #3: Legal documentation requirements**

Kinship caregiving arrangements usually take place during stressful and chaotic circumstances, and a child's official identification records like a birth certificate and social security number are often hard to quickly obtain. The Authorization Agreement partially solves this problem, but if a kinship family never comes into contact with DFPS or CPS they are unlikely to be aware of the form. None of the state agencies that administer public benefit or income support programs require the Authorization Agreement for kinship caregiver applicants, but to establish guardianship they do require official documentation that kinship caregivers may lack.

## **Solutions:**

- DFPS and HHSC should promote the Authorization Agreement form to kinship caregivers by making it widely available in places they may turn to for help such as state agency offices, local service providers, and state agency websites.
- State officials should provide information to caregivers on how to obtain official copies of government documents through a Kinship Navigator website and should make more personalized help available when needed.

## **Barrier #4: Confusing application and eligibility requirements**

Navigating the application and eligibility processes for assistance programs can also be a challenge for informal kinship caregivers. Public benefits in Texas are provided through a variety of Texas state agencies and have inconsistent document requirements and eligibility standards. Additionally, requirements for enrolling a child in school are determined at the district and school level in Texas. While schools are required by state law to accept children who are homeless or in the custody of the state, districts can determine what documentation is required from kinship caregivers to establish guardianship and residency within the district. The Authorization Agreement, created by DFPS but available to informal kinship families, works in these cases but



many school districts prefer a notarized agreement or legal affidavit to ensure the legality of the relationship.

### Identity and Guardianship Documents Required by a Kinship Caregiver for Program Enrollment in Texas

Benefit or Program	Agency	Identity Documentation Required	Guardianship Documentation Required
TANF (child-only payments)	HHSC	Child's birth certificate and social security number	Verify residency via school enrollment address, Personal Responsibility Agreement
TANF (one time grandparent payment)	HHSC	Birth certificate for child and grandchild	Verify residency via school enrollment address
SNAP	HHSC	Birth certificate and SSN, school enrollment information	Self-declaration
Children's Medicaid	HHSC	Child: Birth certificate, SSN, immigration status information	Self-declaration
Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants & Children (WIC)	DSHS	One identity document for each individual on case; health screening	Written statement from parent or "Change in Custody" form
Childcare subsidies	TWC	Social security numbers of all members of household (may vary by workforce region)	Legal document or sworn affidavit verifying reason why parent is not available and establishing primary responsibility for child
Child support	Office of Attorney General (OAG)	Birth certificates of children, income and asset information	Proof of child's residency
Housing and Energy assistance	TDHCA	Social security or alien registration number of all individuals in household	Self-declaration
School enrollment	TEA	Varies by district (Can include: birth certificate, immunization record, last report card, parent photo identification)	Varies by district (Can include: notarized guardianship letter, affidavit, proof of address)
Subsidized school meals	TDA	N/A	Self-declaration

## **Solutions:**

- The state should use its access to digital records to streamline application processes and share data among state agencies. For example, if a caregiver has a signed Authorization Agreement, an agency should be able and required to access state databases for the birth certificate of a child born in Texas without the need to present a paper copy.
- HHSC should train eligibility staff at all applicable state agencies as well as school personnel throughout the state about the existence of the Authorization Agreement form and when to accept it.

## **Barrier #5: Stigma associated with government assistance programs**

Another barrier to receiving assistance is that kinship caregivers may perceive a stigma in receiving a government "handout."<sup>16</sup> The requirement to go into a state office or a community-based organization to apply for assistance may be a real barrier for individuals who have not applied for benefits in the past.

## **Solutions:**

- HHSC and DFPS should encourage trusted figures like religious leaders, health professionals, counselors and school personnel to direct caregivers to a Kinship Navigator website or other online application sites.
- HHSC should train state eligibility workers to be sensitive to the difficulties that kinship households may face, and to understand that many caregivers will be grandparents dealing with their agencies for the first time.

## **Bridging the Gap for Informal Kinship Care Families**

Whether they are grandparents, family members or close friends, kinship caregivers have voluntarily stepped in to become substitute parents but often struggle financially to do so. Kinship caregivers currently have no centralized way to determine whether there is help available for the children they are attempting to raise, and they must navigate a complex system with multiple barriers.

To support families and keep children out of the state's already overburdened foster care system, Texas should move quickly to ease the financial burden of becoming a kinship caregiver in Texas. The establishment of a Kinship Navigator program would be one major improvement that would help inform thousands of struggling families about their potential eligibility for existing federal and state programs and services. But more information is not enough.

In order to support caregivers struggling to provide for the children placed in their care, it is important to acknowledge that meaningful cash assistance is often needed but not available. We must improve our TANF program to allow it to meet the needs of kinship families. The Texas Legislature has the opportunity to raise TANF benefit levels and remove program barriers such as outdated asset and vehicle limits so that we can fulfill the program's mission of assisting needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or the homes of relatives.

Kinship caregivers in Texas need and deserve more support. Their willingness to become substitute parents saves the state's foster care system millions of dollars each year while, more importantly, offers love and stability to the state's most vulnerable children.

## **Appendix A**

### **Efforts to Advance Kinship Care in Other States**

Many state officials and advocates have taken notice of the increasing rate of families relying on informal kinship care arrangements and the benefits of adequate kinship care. As a result, a number of state governments have invested in supports and resources that specifically advance kinship care.

#### **New York**

The New York state legislature has funded a nonprofit organization since 2005 to operate a statewide Kinship Navigator program that partners with county service providers. Through this network, kinship caregivers are connected to state and local resources based on their individual needs. The New York Kinship Navigator Program hotline receives an average of 300 calls per month from kinship caregivers. The website receives over 4,000 visits per month on average. Public service announcements, presentations delivered to kinship service providers and other relevant organizations, and media appearances by navigator staff drive usage of the Navigator services.

#### **Maryland**

In 2012, the Maryland Department of Human Resources created a Kinship Care Coordinator Position and developed a landing page on their website specific to kinship caregivers. The landing page details all state and regional assistance and support programs available to kinship caregivers. It also includes a contact form and state and regional phone numbers for kinship care service providers. The Maryland Kinship Care page also includes information about the state affidavits used to establish guardianship for school and healthcare enrollment. The Maryland Kinship Care Coordinator created a factsheet detailing the benefits, support services, and other resources available for kinship caregivers. The factsheet includes information on documentation required for each program, how to proceed with application, and whether eligibility is based on caregiver income. The Kinship Care Coordinator also does routine trainings with child protective services caseworkers and social service eligibility staff to inform them of the special needs of informal kinship families and best practices for connecting those cases with the programs and benefits they're eligible for. The Kinship Care Coordinator receives approximately 150 calls per week from kinship caregivers.

Through their kinship navigator and outreach initiatives, these states perform comprehensive outreach, assistance, and referrals for informal kinship care families via public-private partnerships, online and telephone assistance, and data sharing between agencies. They are making an up-front investment in kinship households that prevents future costs, harm, and hardship.

## Appendix B

### State Agency Resources Currently Available

#### Department of Family and Protective Services

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) publishes two manuals related to kinship care which are made available to families who come to the attention of Child Protective Services (CPS). The [Volunteer Caregiver Manual](#) is designed for families who through a Parental Child Safety Placement voluntarily agree to take care of a child whose parents are involved with CPS. Besides explaining CPS's rules and expectations, the manual offers a list of assistance programs for which families may qualify.

DFPS also publishes a [Kinship Manual](#) for relatives who agree to care for children who have been placed in CPS custody. The manual explains the legal and financial issues involved in becoming a kinship caregiver as well as helpful resources that might be available.

#### Health and Human Services Commission, *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Brochure*

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) published a [brochure](#) in 2008 that lists the programs available to grandparents caring for a grandchild. It includes information on the one-time TANF grandparent payment, which is the only benefit program that exists specifically to serve kinship caregivers. Additionally, it details the child-only TANF payment that grandparents can apply for on behalf of the child in their care. This benefit is available to all children who do not reside with their legal guardian, and the eligibility process does not require a review of the caregivers' resources.

#### Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) Caregiver Support

The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) hosts a website that lists the resources available to grandparents taking care of a grandchild or a disabled family member. The website refers caregivers to their local Agency on Aging (AAA) for help finding services in the area. It also refers individuals who care for children to the National Family Caregiver Support Program, which is available to adults or other relative over 55.

The DADS website does not address the general kinship caregiver population and doesn't include links to benefits and resources that aren't specifically related to providing care. Local Agency on Aging locations provide similar information but are region-specific.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> For children in paid foster care, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services reported total foster care payments of \$366,436,000 annually, and an average monthly payment per child of \$1,903 in 2013. Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Data Book 2013.

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About\\_DFPS/Data\\_Books\\_and\\_Annual\\_Reports/2013/finance.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Data_Books_and_Annual_Reports/2013/finance.asp)

<sup>2</sup> Kids Count Data Center, 2011-2013. While data on the number of voluntary placements overseen by Child Protective Services (CPS) is not available, evidence suggests that the majority of kinship care placements are informal and are made without the knowledge of CPS.

- <sup>3</sup> There were a total of 27,924 children under state conservatorship in Texas on August 31, 2013. Presentation to the House Select Committee on Child Protection: Interim Charge Presentation. July 1, 2014  
[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child\\_Protection/pdf/2014\\_7\\_1-House\\_Select\\_Committee.pdf](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child_Protection/pdf/2014_7_1-House_Select_Committee.pdf)
- <sup>4</sup> Ehrle, Jennifer, and Rob Geen. 2002. "Children Cared for by Relatives, What Services Do They Need?," Washington, D.C. The Urban Institute.
- <sup>5</sup> Conway, Tiffany and Rutledge Hutson 2007. "Is Kinship Care Good For Kids?" Center for Law and Social Policy, March 2.
- <sup>6</sup> Both programs provide an opportunity for kinship caregivers to become licensed foster parents; however, Permanency Care Assistance involves a different legal arrangement in which the caregiver is named as the permanent managing conservator for the child.
- <sup>7</sup> For Permanency Care Assistance payments, the maximum monthly payment amount depends upon the child's authorized service level (ASL). The PCA payment ceiling for a child whose service level is Basic Care is \$400 per month; the payment ceiling for a child whose service level is Moderate, Specialized or Intense is \$545 per month.
- <sup>8</sup> Kinship caregivers in the Relative and Other Designated Caregiver Program who cannot or choose not to be licensed foster care parents receive case management, but are only eligible for two types of assistance: a one-time \$1,000 integration payment and reimbursement of \$500 a year on the anniversary of the child's placement in their home.
- <sup>9</sup> The Parental Child Safety Placement (PCSP) is a temporary out-of-home placement made by a parent when CPS determines that the child is not safe remaining in the parents' home and it is considered an alternative to court-ordered removal of the child. PCSP lasts for a period of 1 to 90 days and the parent(s) choose the kinship caregiver or "fictive kin" but does not confer legal custody to the caregiver. A PCSP includes a plan for the parent(s) to ameliorate what caused the initial issue.
- <sup>10</sup> For 2014 the Federal Poverty Level for a family of three was \$19,790 per year. In Texas, to be eligible for SNAP a family of three must earn below 165 percent of FPL or \$32,664 per year.
- <sup>11</sup> In order to receive the payment, a grandparent caregiver must not have received a one-time TANF payment in the past, even if for the care of different grandchild. Other caregivers including aunts, uncles, older siblings, or family friends are not eligible for the TANF one-time grandparent payment.
- <sup>12</sup> The TANF income cap in Texas for an adult and two children is \$188 a month which is currently 11 percent of the federal poverty level.
- <sup>13</sup> Population Reference Bureau, "The Health and Well-Being of Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren", p 4.
- <sup>14</sup> TANF applicants can apply for benefits for all members of the household or just on behalf of a child which is known as child-only TANF. When adults are included on the case each household member's income and assets are reviewed, but in a child-only case when children do not live with their legal parents they are considered independent and their caregiver's income does not count toward eligibility status.
- <sup>15</sup> Source: The Urban Institute's Welfare Rules Database, funded by HHS/ACF and HHS/ASPE.  
<http://anfdata.urban.org/wrd/tables.cfm>
- <sup>16</sup> Ehrle and Geen, Children Cared for by Relatives: What Services Do They Need

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