

Become a Kinship Care Provider

To become a kinship care provider, you must be at least 18 years old.

Additional factors taken into consideration may include:

- Family make-up
- Criminal background check (including fingerprinting)
- Employment history
- Marital/personal relationship history
- Financial history/current financial situation
- Home environment (safety inspection)
- Physical and/or mental health assessment
- Drug/alcohol assessment
- Review of juvenile court records for any minors residing in the home

Some kinship care providers elect to become licensed foster care providers. Since every kinship situation is unique, Tuscarawas County Children Services can help you determine if this makes sense for your family.



This brochure has been written and distributed by:

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Tuscarawas County Job & Family Services helps children, families, and adults achieve and maintain safety, security, and self-sufficiency



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Tuscarawas County Kinship Care



Why Kinship Care?

When serious concerns arise, sometimes it isn't safe for children to remain with their birth family. When this happens, out-of-home placement with a relative or close family friend, known as *kinship care*, can be the best option for children and their family during a stressful, challenging time.



KINSHIP CARE

Kinship care refers to cases where a relative or non-relative has taken over the full-time care, nurturing and protection of a child. The definition for kinship caregivers also goes beyond the scope of blood relatives and may include an adult who has a familiar relationship or bond with the child and/or family.

Are you a grandparent who is caring for a grandchild in Ohio, but cannot make vital decisions because you don't have legal custody?

If so, visit www.pcsao.org and www.kinshipohio.org for helpful information concerning this issue.

For additional advice and tools for kinship care, visit www.grandparents.com or review the Ohio Resource Guide for Relatives Caring for Children at the following link <http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=1779&type=application/pdf>.

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY KINSHIP CARE SERVICES

Program referrals are voluntary, and will be accepted for Kinship Families residing within Tuscarawas County based on the following criteria:

- * Kinship families with closed child welfare cases
- * Kinship families with open protective cases at risk for disruption
- * Kinship families referred by community partners
- * Kinship families eligible for the KPI program
- * Kinship families who self-refer

CLOSED CASE SERVICES

TCJFS provides support services to those who accept the role of caregiver for a child once a TCJFS case has been closed. Kinship families are linked with support groups, one-to-one counseling (when needed), and other community services. The goal is to help the child and caregivers adjust to new and challenging family dynamics and avoid disruption.

The kinship Care Program may offer the following services to TCJFS (closed cases) kinship care providers:

- * Home visits to assess, guide, educate and support families in addressing their needs
- * Short-term financial supports to pay for child care, respite, furniture, bedding, children's clothing, car seats, school fees, extracurricular activity fees, camps, lessons, and any emergent basic needs
- * Information and referral to community resources
- * KPI eligibility determinations and caseload management
- * Additional supportive services as identified

Some services require meeting financial eligibility guidelines and have a one-time limit, whereas others have annual limits. These services will be in operation as long as funds are available.

OPEN CASE SERVICES

The kinship care program is designed to provide a one-stop-shop for supportive services to kinship families while a case is open with TCJFS. The goal is to ensure teamwork and communication between the kinship families and the agency.

Services may include:

- * Educational orientation about TCJFS and support services
- * Limited material assistance (to those who qualify)
- * Assistance with case transition
- * Additional home visits to maintain placement

KINSHIP PERMANENCY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Some kinship families are eligible to receive help through Ohio's Kinship Permanency Incentive Program (KPI). KPI is a state initiative that provides kinship families, who received legal custody or guardianship of a kinship youth on or after July 1, 2005, with cash payments dispersed over a 4-year period.

To begin the process to be assessed for KPI funds, the kinship caregiver must fill out the form and submit it to TCJFS. The form can be accessed at <http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=401&type=application/pdf>. TCJFS can only assess kinship caregivers living within Tuscarawas County. If you reside outside of Tuscarawas County, please contact your local children services agency for assistance.

Additional program information is also available at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/KinshipCare.pdf>.

For more information about TCJFS' Kinship Program, call 330-339-7791 (Elizabeth Benedetto) or email her at Elizabeth.Benedetto@jfs.ohio.gov.

