



Kinship Care in Kentucky

October 2022



Kinship Families
COALITION OF KENTUCKY



Kinship Care in Kentucky

Informal kinship care

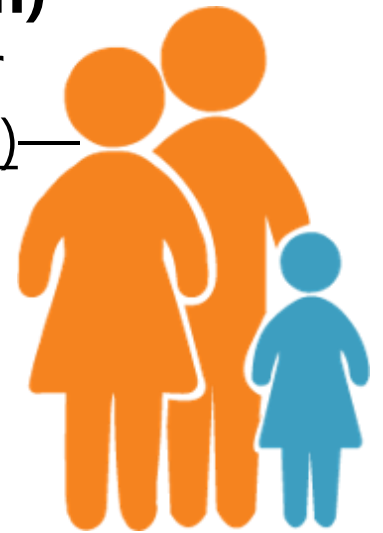
Varying types of custody depending on arrangements made within those families.

Kinship care/Fictive kin care




Children who are placed with **relatives** or **close family friends (fictive kin)** as a result of an investigation and removal due to dependency, neglect, or abuse. Involvement with Department or Community Based Services (DCBS)—custody of the child is maintained by the relative or DCBS.

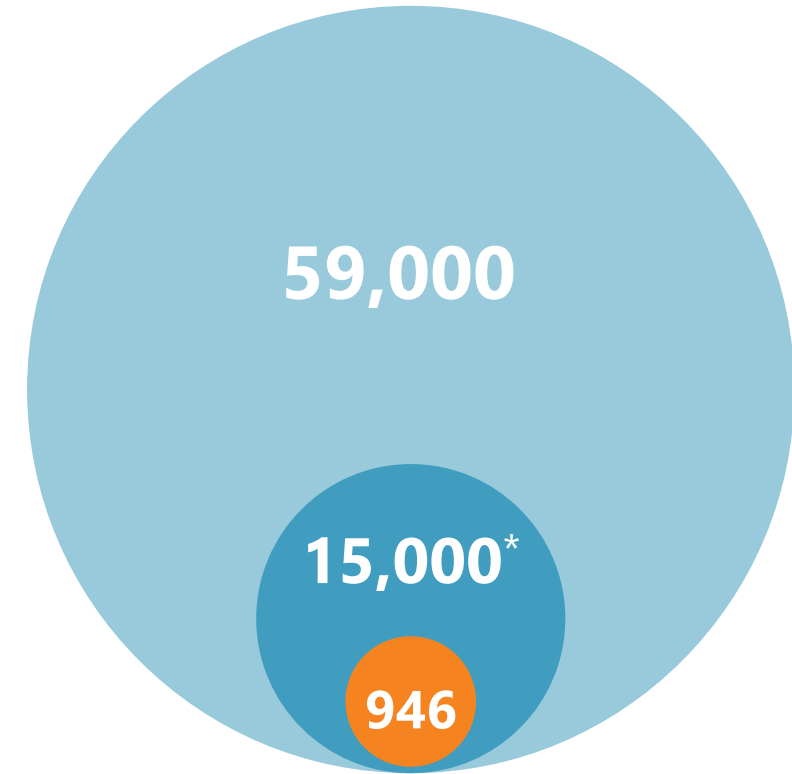
Relative foster care

Children placed with relatives or close family friends who have become certified as foster parents—custody of the child is maintained by DCBS.



Kentucky Kids in the Care of Relatives

-  Children Being Cared for by Kin Both Formally and Informally¹
-  In Kinship Care Due to Removal from Home²
-  Kentucky Kids in Relative Foster Care³



Progress Made

- ✓ **2014** – Kinship Caregiver Authorization Affidavit signed into law (allows relatives without legal custody the ability to complete a form to make education and medical decisions)
- ✓ **2015** – A Kinship Hotline was established and hosted by DCBS
- ✓ **2016** – Child care assistance becomes a recognized benefit that kinship caregivers should have access to without a copay or their income considered
- ✓ **2017** – Regulations changed for ease of access to Relative Placement Support Benefit, electronic distribution
- ✓ **2018** – HB 1 included language to allow the state to establish a program for kinship care and provide additional supports for kinship caregivers, and legal access to de facto custodians
- ✓ **2019** – HB 2 required the creation of a service array and a collection of reporting of data around kinship care, including kinship diversion and relative foster care
- ✓ **2019-2021** – Increased access to supports through DCBS KY-FACES, including relative caregiver service array
- ✓ **2021** – Improved access to supportive services through the University of Kentucky Kinship Resource Center (KKRC)



Current Kinship Caregivers

2021 Kinship Summit

- 5 Focus Groups and Interviews
- Findings
 - ✓ Relative caregivers have seen some improvements in access to services
 - ✓ Across the board—communication needs to be improved
 - ✓ Urgent need for behavioral health supports
 - ✓ Urgent need for more legal supports
 - ✓ Continued need for on-going financial supports
 - ✓ Continued need to access training

Ongoing Case Advocacy

- Phone calls, emails, and personal outreach to the Kinship Families Coalition of KY



Continuing the Progress

- Reduce burden on caregivers
 - Child support enforcement
- Implement the Guardianship Assistance Program
- Increase clear communication related to supports
- Create a pathway for respite care
- HB 2 (2019) Report related to kinship placements upon request (every 3-5 years)

Thank you!



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