

Supporting Kentucky's Kinship Caregivers Through Respite Care

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WHAT IS KINSHIP CARE?

Kinship: When a child lives with relatives instead of their parents, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, adult siblings, or other extended family members.

Fictive Kin: When a child is cared for by a close family friend who is not related by blood or marriage.



BENEFITS OF KINSHIP CARE FOR YOUTH

- ✓ Helps children feel safer by staying with family
- ✓ Reduces trauma and keeps siblings together
- ✓ Maintains ties to school, culture, and community
- ✓ Leads to more stable, long-term placements
- ✓ Leads to better behavioral and mental health outcomes

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_interest/child_law/resources/child_law_practiceonline/child_law_practice/vol-36/july-aug-2017/kinship-care-is-better-for-children-and-families/



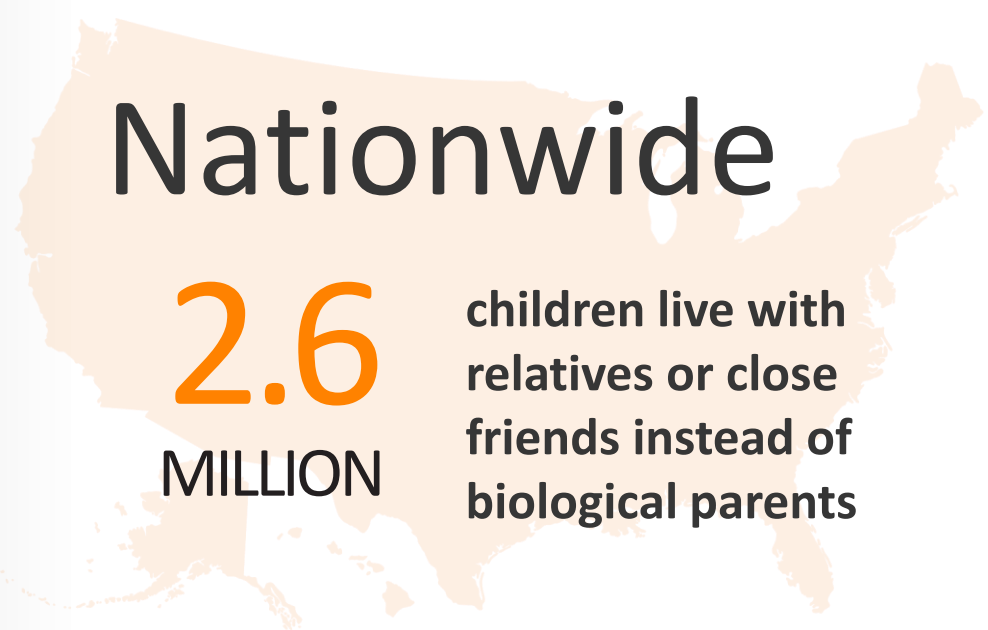
TYPES OF KINSHIP CARE

- ✓ Informal Kinship Care
- ✓ Relative or Fictive Kin Care
(Non-Foster Care)
- ✓ Relative or Fictive Kin Foster Care





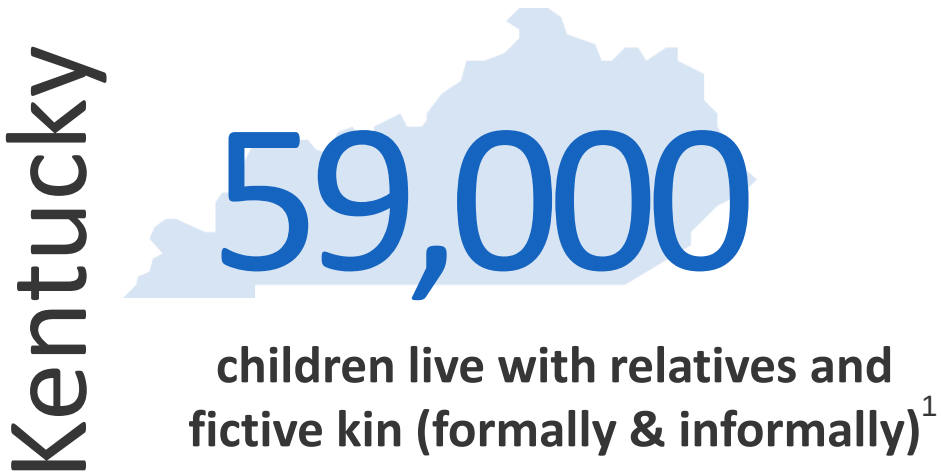
PREVALENCE OF KINSHIP CARE



As of August 2, 2026²

1,338 children in non-foster relative/fictive kin placement

1,083 in foster homes with relative or fictive kin caregiver



Subsidized Permanent Custody (SPC)³

124 Aetna SKY members in SPC as of Q2 2026, up from 40 in Q2 2025

Note: SPC allows kinship foster caregivers to obtain permanent custody after at least 6 months in foster care while continuing to receive financial assistance and other supports.

1 <https://datacenter.aecf.org/data/tables/10455-children-in-kinship-care?loc=19&loct=2#detailed/2/19/false/2638,2554,2479,2097,1985,1757/any/20160,20161>
2 CHFS Foster Care FACTS, August 2026
3 Aetna SKY, Medical Oversight Advisory Board presentation, August 26, 2026

WHAT IS RESPITE CARE?

- Short-term, temporary care that gives caregivers a break from their caregiving responsibilities.
- Ensures the child continues to be safely cared for while the caregiver rests or handles other responsibilities.
- Can help reduce caregiver stress and burnout and support the stability of the child's placement.



ACCESS TO RESPITE CARE

Non-Foster Relative or Fictive Kin Care

NO ACCESS

Not eligible for state-funded respite care.

Subsidized Permanent Custody

LIMITED ACCESS

Respite may be included in the SPC agreement for children previously approved for a higher-needs foster care rate.

Relative or Fictive Kin Foster Care

HAVE ACCESS

Eligible for one reimbursed respite day per child per month.

Traditional Foster Care

HAVE ACCESS

Eligible for one reimbursed respite day per child per month.

Additional Respite for Higher-Needs Placements

Foster Care

- Medically Complex or Care Plus: Up to 3 days per month
- Specialized Medically Complex: Up to 4 days per month

Subsidized Permanent Custody

- Medically Complex or Care Plus: Up to 2 days per month
- Specialized Medically Complex: Up to 3 days per month

WHAT KENTUCKY CAN DO

- Expand respite access for non-foster kinship caregivers and families receiving Subsidized Permanent Custody who do not currently have access
- Provide dedicated state funding to support this expansion
- Ensure Kinship Navigators inform families about available respite supports and help connect them to services





Thank you! Questions?

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