

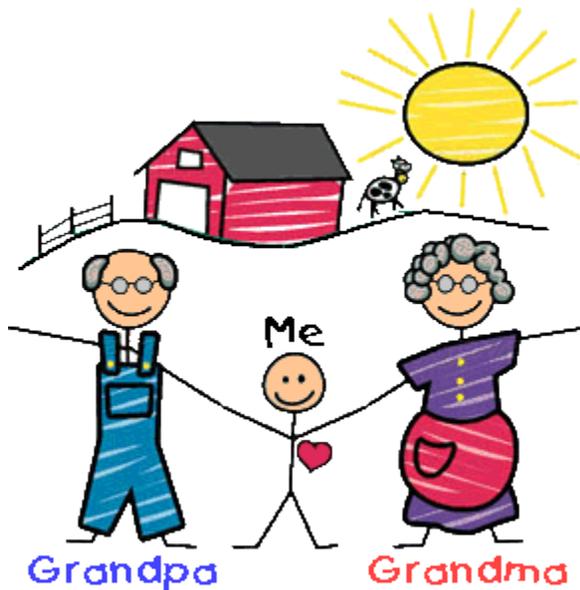
# Kinship Care Management Program

612 Elizabeth Street

Utica, NY 13501

315-272-2630

March 2018



More and more children are being raised by someone other than their parent. It is estimated that in New York State alone there are 153,000 children living with grandparents, aunts, uncle, cousins, adult siblings and family friends. A vast majority of the children are living with grandparents.

There is help and there is hope out there for anyone raising a child who is not their own. Here is some information to help guide you.

## **The New York State Kinship Navigator Program**

The Kinship Navigator is a statewide program operated by Catholic Family Center and specially designed to provide an information and referral network for kinship caregivers across all of New York State. A kinship caregiver is a grandparent, relative or family friend who

is a full time caregiver of a child that is not biologically their own.

Since 2006, the Kinship Navigator has provided leadership for a broad-based coordinated effort to provide comprehensive services that address the multiple needs of kinship caregivers and their families. The Kinship Navigator along with local kinship programs, are part of the NYS Office of Children and Families Services efforts to support grandparents and other relatives who are caring for children not in foster care. By going to the Kinship Navigator county resource menu, readers can identify information about any of these kinship programs.

For caregivers from all counties in New York State, there is the Kinship Navigator, where everyone can find information about kinship legal issues, events, assistance, and specialized services. Please view our home page to begin accessing our services. Phone: 877-454-6463

TTY: New York Relay 711 or 1-800-421-1220

Fax: (585) 456-1676 and visit the website at

[www.nysnavigator.org](http://www.nysnavigator.org).

There is a wealth of information on the website!



Many times children placed with other relatives or family friends have experienced a trauma of some kind – whether it be physical or emotional. Sometimes children are removed from a parent’s care due to neglect. Many times they require a more thorough medical exam and sometimes an evaluation through a mental health professional. Here is an interesting article regarding this issue.

## Published – March 2017

Kinship care families: New policy can guide pediatricians to address needs

Sarah H. Springer, M.D., FAAP

- AAP Policy

A growing body of evidence suggests that children who cannot live with their biological parents fare better overall when living with extended family than with nonrelated foster parents.

Acknowledging the benefits of kinship care arrangements, federal laws and public policies increasingly favor placing children with family members rather than in nonrelative foster care.

Despite overall better outcomes, families providing kinship care endure many hardships, and the children experience many of the same adversities as children in traditional foster care.

A new AAP policy statement from the Council on Foster Care, Adoption and Kinship Care outlines the unique strengths and vulnerabilities of these children and families, and offers strategies for pediatricians to help them to thrive. The policy, *Needs of Kinship Care Families and Pediatric Practice*, is available at <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2017-0099> and will be published in the April issue of *Pediatrics*.

As many as 3% of U.S. children live in kinship care arrangements.

Because placement with a kinship caregiver often is sudden and unplanned, caregivers frequently are unprepared to meet the needs of the children and are unaware of available supports. Furthermore, caregivers may not have legal authority to advocate or make decisions for a child, complicating health care and educational decisions. Caregivers frequently have their own financial and health burdens, and often are asked to care for sibling groups, multiplying the stresses.

Pediatricians can help by recognizing these families in the office setting and addressing their needs.

Among the recommendations in the policy are the following:

- Children may need more frequent visits to address mental health, developmental and educational needs, similar to children in traditional nonrelative foster care. These needs are more common and often more complicated than for children who live with their biologic parents.

- Families may need information about supports and help accessing legal, health insurance and financial assistance programs.
- Consent and confidentiality roles may need to be specifically defined.

The policy statement provides information to help pediatricians learn more about resources available in their own states and communities, and how to connect families to those resources. Advocacy opportunities also are reviewed in the policy, such as working with policymakers and others to eliminate barriers so children can be placed with kin, when appropriate, and ensuring funding to support provision of care and health and social services.

The pediatrician's role in meeting the health needs of children in kinship care is especially important because most of the families are not connected to child welfare or other formal services.

*Dr. Springer, a lead author of the policy, is a member and former chair of the AAP Council on Foster Care, Adoption and Kinship Care. She also chaired the former Task Force on Foster Care*

We hope that this information has been helpful to you – please feel free to contact us at 315-272-2630 if you have any questions regarding Kinship Care.