



February GSC Meeting Spotlight Presentation February 20, 2019



KINSHIP CARE RESPITE PROGRAM

Contact Information:

Michele Brock; Director of Community Engagement
Michigan State University; School of Social Work
Email: brockm@msu.edu

Francine Watts; Kinship Care Coordinator
Email: waggiewatts@gmail.com

Joe Kozakiewicz; Director of Chance at Childhood Program
Michigan State University Law Clinic
Email: kozakiew@msu.edu

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KINSHIP CARE RESPITE PROGRAM

Adults age 55 and older who are full-time caregivers of relative children face many challenges. **It is important for caregivers** to focus on parenting, but also to remember **to take care of their own needs**.

The **Kinship Care Respite Program** is a resource offered through the Tri County Office on Aging—for Ingham, Eaton, and Clinton county residents.

The **Kinship Care Respite Program** was developed to provide **rest, relief, and a break from everyday caregiving**. This program will assist the full-time caregiver by helping to arrange and pay for an activity for their child to attend.

Activities may include:

Day care • Sports camp • Summer class
Extra-curricular activities • Afterschool care/activities

Who Is Eligible to Participate in This Program?

Kinship caregivers must be:

- Age 55 or older
- Full-time caregivers of children under the age of 18
- Permanently reside in Clinton, Eaton, or Ingham counties

How Much Does This Program Cost?

There is no cost to eligible caregivers in the Tri-County Area.

The program is funded by the *Federal Older Americans Act* grant provided to Tri-County Office on Aging through the Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency.

Contact the **Kinship Care Resource Center** for more information
at **517-355-9600** or email **kinship@msu.edu**
Toll Free 1-800-535-1218

***Funds are capped at \$250 and available to eligible Kinship Caregivers on a first come, first served basis.**



Kinship Care Resource Center

Michigan State University
School of Social Work

1-800-535-1218



What is Kinship Care

- Kinship care is the full-time care and nurturing of a child by a relative or someone with a significant emotional connection to the child, such as a close family friend, when parents are not able to provide care.

Child Welfare Information Gateway

MSU Kinship Care Resource Center 1-800-535-1218

Who

- Female
- Trend of grandparents under age 55, aunts, and cousins

MSU Kinship Care Resource Center 1-800-535-1218





Types of guardianship

- Formal-- an agreement exists through the court, foster care, guardianship, adoption
- Informal-- the parent(s) have voluntarily left the child with the relative caregiver or have abandoned them with no involvement from the court.

Guardianship, Foster Care, Adoption

According to Michigan's Children, "...over 4,000 children live with a relative who is a licensed foster parent, and according to Generations United, more than ten times that many children outside the foster care system live with a grandparent or other relative. However, the full picture of Michigan children in informal living arrangements with relatives is not well known." (2017)

- Many families were unaware of foster care option before assumed guardianship
- Increase in callers with active Child welfare involvement
- Increase in referrals to Chance at Childhood and other legal resources in the State

Needs and Supports

- Basic needs (food, clothing, house repair, utilities, rent, furniture)
- Counseling
- Parenting education and supports
 - Parenting a child who has experienced trauma
 - Effective discipline
 - Supporting grieving children
 - Navigating systems (education, health, child welfare)
 - Support groups (specific)

How You Can Help



- Inform prospective kinship caregivers of their right to pursue formal care through DHHS when applicable (or refer to us)
- Assist in care coordination
- Use trauma informed lens through which to offer support
 - Complex past and present
 - Break down problems
 - Encourage kinship caregivers
- Teach self-advocacy skills
 - What kinds of questions should they ask about services?
 - When referring to other resources- practice how to navigate
 - Steps to take when problem is unresolved