

# Kinship Navigator Services Manual

Adapted from Families First Counseling Services Kinship Navigator Program Manual and the ProtectOHIO Kinship Supports Intervention Manual

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## Overview

### **Kinship Navigator Services Goals**

- Create a safe, stable and supportive home environment for children
- Keep children within their natural supports
- Understand gaps and delays with service delivery to kinship caregivers
- Maintain and engage kinship caregivers using a strength-based approach
- Ensure kinship caregivers receive information about available supports and resources
- Increase kinship placements
- Decrease lateral movements

### **Service Philosophy**

Kinship Navigator Services assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet their needs. Kinship Navigator Services are structured to meet the needs of kinship caregivers while supporting placement stability, reunification, and child safety. Kinship caregivers are encouraged to vocalize their own needs and goals allowing them to play an integral role in the direction of service provision. Kinship Navigator Services support standards and goals established by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

### **Service Description**

Kinship Navigator Services focus on providing support to the kinship caregiver, tailored to be responsive and supportive to individuals to help them successfully provide for the care of, and meet the needs of the child(ren) placed with them. Activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assessment of kinship caregiver needs related to identifying the best way to support them and the children in their care.
- Development of a kinship support plan with action steps specific to identified outcomes. This could include such things as:
  - Support with identifying affordable child care.
  - Access to medical, dental, and mental health services.
  - Ensuring basic needs are met including clothing, beds/cribs/furniture, food, and gas cards.
- Opportunities for parent/caregiver education including SafeCare.
- Support groups that provide an outlet for shared communication and emotional support.

- Connecting kinship caregivers with supplemental resources such as food assistance, child care assistance, family investment program (FIP), medical insurance, legal aid and/or referring a caregiver to be approved for Kinship Foster Care and educating on the Kinship Caregiver Payment Program.

Service delivery is targeted toward increasing placement in kinship care, reducing placement in stranger foster care, supporting placement stability, and reducing re-abuse.

## **Alignment with the ProtectOHIO/Kinship Supports Intervention Model**

Iowa's Kinship Navigator Services program is aligned with the ProtectOHIO Kinship Supports Intervention (KSI) model and includes provision of core KSI model components. The KSI model is listed as a "Promising" evidenced-based intervention on the Prevention Services Clearinghouse as a study outcome of the model demonstrated a favorable effect on child placement stability. The goal of the KSI intervention is to meet children's physical, emotional, financial, and basic needs by connecting kinship caregivers with federal, state, and local resources.

The Kinship Caregiver Support Plan is a key component of the KSI model intervention. This plan focuses on case management and support activities and may address topics such as financial assistance, referral services, and training/education for kinship caregivers. This plan is intended to be individualized, incorporating information from tools such as the home assessment and needs assessment/family resource scale, and to be reviewed and updated regularly.

Monthly home visits with the Kinship specialist provide an opportunity to establish trust between the kinship caregiver and the Kinship specialist. The KSI model is designed to promote more effective communication, education, assessment, planning, and support for the family, and increase placement stability of the child in the caregiver's home.

### **Kinship Supports Intervention Model/Protect Ohio Core Model Components**

1. Kinship Support and Coordination
2. Kinship-Specific Assessment Tools and Processes
3. Support Plans for Caregivers
4. Home Visits with Kinship Families
5. Kinship Handbook provided to Kinship Caregiver
6. Services are Available to Support Kinship Families in Accordance with Their Needs

## **Eligibility**

Kinship Navigator Services are available during an open HHS service case to kin or fictive kin caregivers with children placed in their care or temporarily residing with them as arranged by the child's parent. As long as there is an open HHS service case and an identified need, there is no limit to the number of referrals for a kinship caregiver to receive Kinship Navigator Services and no limit to the length of time Kinship Navigator Services can remain open throughout the time of the child's placement with the caregiver during an open service case.

## **Referrals**

HHS is responsible for making the referrals for Kinship Navigator Services within three days of placement of the child with the kinship caregiver. Once the referral is received, a Kinship specialist is assigned to the referred kinship caregiver. The HHS worker is notified of case assignment.

## **Kinship Specialist Training**

Kinship specialists are required to receive a minimum of four (4) hours of orientation training prior to providing Kinship Navigator Services, including but not limited to the following:

- Family finding.
- Importance and values of keeping children in their natural supports, i.e. kinship placement.
- Understanding traumatic events, such as removals.
- KSI model core components and program tools.

## **Kinship Navigator Services Coordination**

Kinship Navigation Services includes working directly to support kinship caregivers and working in an indirect role to develop and build on knowledge of available resources, establishing community relationships and educating staff and partners on the needs and available resources and support to kinship families.

Direct support to kinship caregivers may include:

- Direct contact with the kinship caregiver, administering a needs assessment and development of a plan to meet identified needs, provision of information on available supports and resources, and general case management activities.
- Providing education and training opportunities to kinship families.
- Advocating for kinship families in the context of policy and practice changes.

- Supporting kinship caregivers in fulfilling their roles in connection with child welfare court proceedings.
- Providing kinship caregivers with information regarding the juvenile and family court system and their roles in different types of court proceedings involving a child in their care.

Indirect work to support kinship families may include:

- Establishing relationships with community public and private service agencies, including schools, community based or faith-based organizations and relevant government agencies, to increase their knowledge regarding the needs of kinship families and to develop capacity and expertise to respond to their needs.
- Assuring that local resource guides are up to date so that it is useful to kinship caregivers and staff.
- Training and development for kinship specialists on how to effectively engage with kinship caregivers, assess needs, and be experts in available resources to meet the needs of kinship caregivers.
- Serving as a resource to HHS case managers in their work to support kinship families, assisting them to locate services and supports for the caregiver when possible.

## Service Components

### Communication and Engagement

The assigned kinship specialist makes phone contact with the kinship caregiver within two business days from date of referral. The kinship specialist will ensure the following occurs during this phone contact:

- Introduction of kinship specialist including specialist name, organization name, and referring HHS case manager name. Provide kinship specialist contact information to kinship caregivers.
- Explain how Kinship Navigator Services can be a support to the kinship caregivers and what supports are available to them.
- Explain frequency of contact

The kinship specialist maintains consistent contact with kinship caregivers to ensure placement stability, engagement, and promote well-being of the family unit.

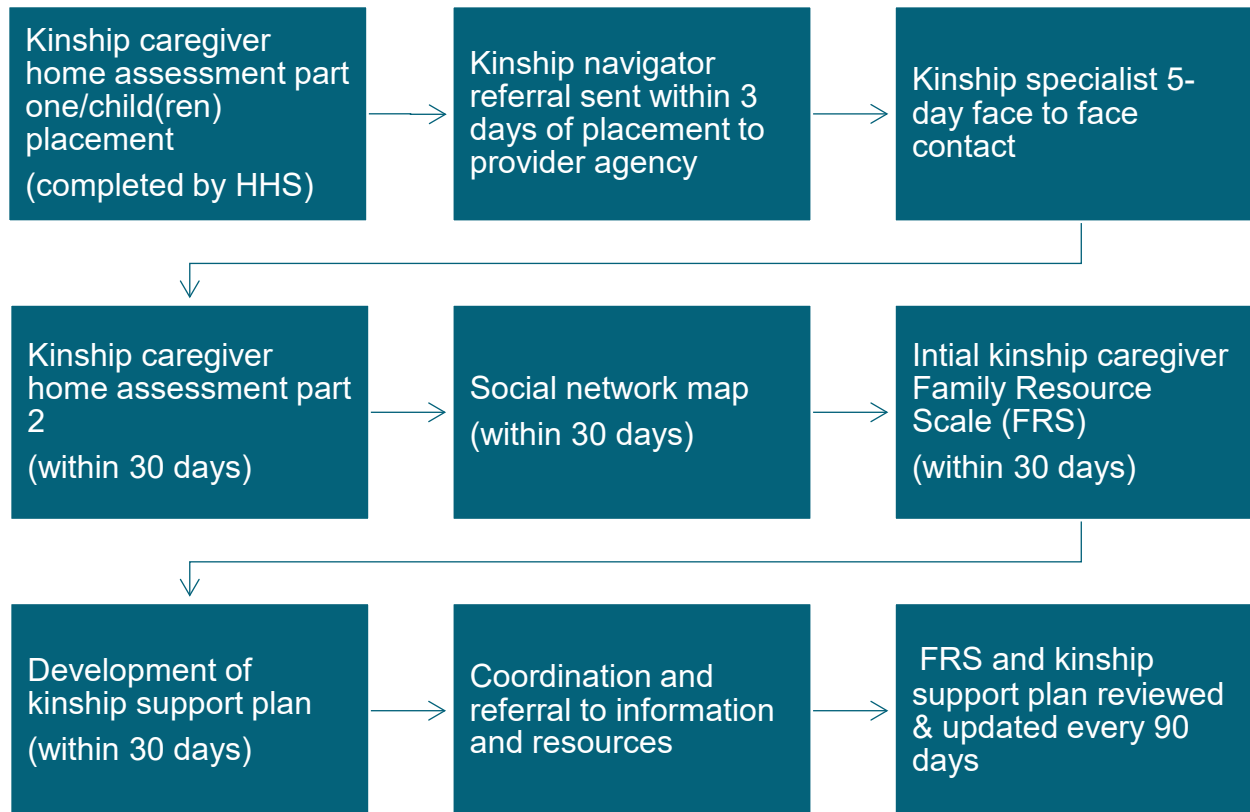
Kinship caregivers provide signatures documenting their willingness to consent to services and supports provided to them. Ongoing contact occurs no less than twice a month totaling two hours of time during the initial 60 days the kinship caregiver is receiving services. Contact with the kinship caregiver may be reduced to once per month after 90 days, depending on the needs of the caregiver. The kinship specialist will increase monthly contact with the kinship caregiver if a need for additional support is identified. These contacts can occur in the community or in the kinship caregiver’s home.

### Kinship Navigator Contact Matrix

Accepted kinship navigator services	Number of contacts per month 1-60 days	Number of contacts per month 60-90 days	Number of contacts per month 90-120 days++
Contact frequency with kinship caregiver	Minimum 2 in-person meetings per month	Minimum 1 in-person meeting and 1 in-person meeting or via videoconference	Minimum 1 in-person meeting per month

Kinship Navigator Services are voluntary, allowing the kinship caregiver a choice in whether they participate with services and/or supports. When a kinship caregiver chooses not to engage and participate in services, the assigned HHS case manager is notified.

## Kinship Navigation Services Flow Chart



### Contact with Kinship Caregivers

The kinship specialist makes phone contact with the kinship caregiver within two business days of the referral.

The kinship specialist will complete an in-person contact within five business days of the referral with all kinship caregivers referred for services. This should be completed in the kinship caregiver home but if the caregiver requests another location, this can occur.

The kinship specialist will ensure they provide support for any of the immediate needs identified by the kinship caregiver during initial phone contact. The Kinship specialist will provide a copy of the Kinship Caregiver Handbook to the kinship caregiver and will establish a list of any concrete supports necessary as identified by the kinship caregiver.

Kinship caregivers will be allowed the opportunity to choose whether the Kinship specialist completes entitlement applications alongside them during initial contact or if they prefer to complete these themselves between the initial and follow up contacts. Kinship caregivers may also elect not to complete and submit these forms if not necessary to meet family needs.

The kinship specialist will review the Kinship Caregiver Payment (KCP) Program with the kinship caregiver during the initial visit. The kinship specialist will explain the kinship caregiver payment to all kinship caregivers and provide them with a copy of Kinship Caregiver Payment Program, Comm. 604. The kinship specialist will also discuss the benefits of licensure with all kinship caregivers within 30 calendar days from the date of referral. The kinship specialist will provide kinship caregivers with a copy of Benefits of Kinship Foster Care Approval, Comm. 603.

## **Kinship Support**

Face-to-face contact with the kinship caregiver is opportunity to establish trust between the Kinship specialist and the caregiver and promotes effective communication, education, assessment, planning and support for the family. Some areas of focus to address when interacting with the kinship caregiver during monthly contacts include:

- Kinship caregivers very often assume their role as caregiver during a time of crisis. This requires them to make many changes in their home life to accommodate a child with little time for preparation. Changes typically include accommodating space in the home, arranging for child care, health, school and other specialized services for the child. Prompt attention and response to these needs can quickly remove barriers or obstacles and ease stress and burden for the kinship family.
- Finding themselves in the role of the primary caregiver may be a primary issue for kinship caregivers. Kinship caregivers may be parenting their own children, have not been in a parenting role for a long time or have limited parenting knowledge. Parenting children who have experienced trauma or who present with other special needs should be addressed. Kinship caregivers may need timely access to available training, education, and resources related to these concerns.
- Kinship caregivers may encounter feelings of loyalty, strain and/or alienation from others within their family system. The complexity of these dynamics may produce stress, confusion and conflict for the caregiver. Significant attention and support are needed to help families adjust and re-align from previously defined roles while promoting positive connections and relationships among family members. Caregivers need individual opportunities to communicate around these issues and concerns.
- Kinship caregivers may feel overwhelmed by the child welfare system, and specifically concepts of family interactions, reunification and permanency. While providing information on the child welfare system may target this area of need, face-to-face discussion with the caregiver may alleviate concerns, misconceptions and fears related to the child welfare process, decision-making, and the direct impact on the caregiver and child.

- Family interactions can be stressful for kinship caregivers, especially when the kinship caregiver supervises or facilitates parent/child contact. Ongoing support to ensure that the kinship caregiver can manage these interactions safely and to be able to manage the child's behavior after family interactions occur is important.

### **Kinship Home Assessment Tool**

The Kinship Home Assessment Tool has been developed to ensure that HHS case managers and/or Kinship specialists have thoroughly assessed the kinship caregiver's ability and willingness to ensure safety, permanency, and well-being for the child(ren) placed in their care.

Part 1 of this Tool is meant to cover the minimum information needed to determine whether a placement is appropriate. The HHS Placement Worker will complete Home Assessment Part 1 to provide the document with the Child Welfare Referral Services Form 470-5150 to refer the caregiver to Kinship Navigator Services within 3 days of placement with the Kinship Caregiver.

Part 2 of this Tool is a kinship-specific tool to be utilized for discussion in greater depth during the needs assessment process through initiation of Kinship Navigator Services and in the development of the Kinship Support Plan. The Kinship specialist completes Home Assessment Part 2 within 30 days of the Kinship Caregiver accepting services.

### **Kinship Caregiver Family Resource Scale**

The Family Resource Scale (FRS) is administered by the kinship specialist to the kinship caregiver to identify what services and supports are needed and to assess the current strengths/resources of the kinship caregiver to meet the needs of the child(ren) placed in their care.

The Family Resource Scale (FRS) questionnaire should be completed by the kinship caregiver(s), one per kinship household, within the first 30 days of the kinship caregiver accepting Kinship Navigator Services and is readministered at a minimum of every 90 calendar days. If the caregiver(s) needs help in understanding the questions or how to complete the FRS, the kinship specialist can assist the caregiver(s) in completing the form. This may be especially important for caregivers for whom English is not their first language, if the caregiver has difficulty with reading or understanding the items on the FRS, etc. It will be important to explain to the kinship caregiver(s) the purpose of the FRS to gain insight into their needs for support.

The FRS is intended for assessment of the kinship caregiver's current family needs at a point in time. Based upon a thorough discussion with the caregiver, the FRS will guide the development of the kinship support plan and in reviewing progress of the support

plan every 90 days. The kinship specialist will review the completed FRS and ask follow-up questions to consider how placement of a child(ren) may or has impacted the caregiver's ability to meet the child's needs when priority needs have been identified in the assessment.

## **Social Network Map**

The social network map is completed in collaboration with the kinship caregivers within the initial 30 days of service delivery. This process allows kinship caregivers the opportunity to identify information and formal supports available to them. The kinship specialist will utilize targeted questions to assist in the identification of these supports. A copy of the social network map is provided to the assigned HHS case manager and the kinship caregivers.

## **Kinship Support Plan**

The kinship support plan is developed with kinship caregivers during the initial 30 days of service delivery. The kinship specialist ensures kinship caregivers are active in the process and have a voice in developing their specific goals. Kinship caregivers should be encouraged to vocalize how services and supports can be of benefit given their specific strengths and needs.

The information gathered from the Home Assessment Part 1 and 2, the Family Resource Scale, social network map and discussions with the kinship caregiver will be used to create the kinship support plan to guide service delivery and supports. The kinship specialist utilizes the Home Assessments and Family Resource Scale in addition to feedback from the kinship caregiver in developing the kinship support plan.

Support plan characteristics:

- a. Individualized: Kinship caregivers typically are motivated by a desire or obligation to step in at a critical moment to meet the caregiving needs for a specific child when a parent/caregiver is unable. Their individual needs vary and correspond with their skills, life experience, perceptions and knowledge of the family and their own parenting capacity. Needs are further influenced and defined by the distinct needs of the child in their care. A support plan must correspond with the individual needs of the caregiver but acknowledge that wider family involvement is needed.
- b. Based on the Kinship Home Assessment Tool and Family Resource Scale results: The Kinship Home Assessment Tool and FRS guide the plan of support and establish a clear connection between needs, services, supports and resource provision. Caregivers guide their needs assessment through

completion of the FRS and by participating in the completion of their support plan.

- c. Subject to ongoing assessment and review: Support plans must be reviewed, monitored and updated regularly. The Family Resource Scale is re-administered to the caregiver at various stages throughout Kinship Navigator Services to ensure supports meet the current needs of the caregiver. The FRS is administered at least every 90 days but can occur more frequently according to the needs of the caregiver or as case circumstances would warrant.

The focus of the support plan may encompass a wide range of activities that may include assessment, planning, crisis support, training/education, accessing financial assistance, information and referral, and various activities that promote and support kinship caregiver's ability to provide ongoing care.

The kinship specialist can utilize the social network map to build upon familial and other informal supports' capacity to help support and to connect the caregiver to resources that are sustainable and accessible for the long term. The extent of the support plan will depend on the extent of the kinship caregiver needs. Support plans may simply include only case management and support if no specific services are needed.

A copy of the kinship support plan is provided to the kinship caregivers and goals are reviewed regularly to assess progress and/or fluctuating needs. A copy of the kinship support plan is also provided to the assigned HHS case manager.

## **Kinship Caregiver Handbook**

The Kinship specialist shall make available a handbook for kinship caregivers that contains helpful information and outlines the services and supports available to caregivers. The Kinship Caregiver Handbook is available on the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services website on the Kinship Care webpage and can supplement local information provided by the kinship specialist whenever possible. The Kinship Caregiver Handbook will provide information on general resources and supports available, as well as general information about what kinship care entails. The handbook should be provided to the kinship caregiver when the child is placed in a kinship home, or at the time kinship navigator begins provision of services.

## **Resources and Supports**

Kinship caregivers will be offered continued support addressing the need for concrete supports throughout service delivery, including any necessary community resources and other service referrals. The Kinship Caregiver Handbook provided at the initial

meeting will include relevant information about accessing services and supports for the caregiver to meet the needs of the child and their family.

The kinship specialist will continually assess whether contact that is more frequent is necessary to appropriately meet kinship caregiver needs.

## **Collateral Contacts**

Collateral contacts are those who have firsthand knowledge of a family's circumstances and can provide, clarify, or verify information. Information gathered from collateral contacts assists in monitoring any needs identified as well as progress on a case.

The kinship specialist should be in direct communication with the HHS case manager. Kinship specialists will notify the HHS case manager whether the referred kinship caregivers engage and participate with Kinship Navigator Services. In addition, they will also notify the HHS case manager of the kinship caregiver's interest or willingness to participate in the foster care licensing process.

The kinship specialist should work collaboratively as a team with Family Centered Services (FCS) and others to provide necessary interventions and/or supports to address needs.

## **Family Interaction**

Family interaction planning is key when children are removed from their homes. A copy of the family interaction plan should be made available to the Kinship specialist to assist in identifying any role the kinship caregiver may have to allow for frequent, consistent, and meaningful contact with their family through parent-child interactions, sibling interactions, or interactions with other key supports.

The Kinship specialist will provide support to kinship caregivers in feeling comfortable and well equipped to facilitate these interactions if they are approved to provide supervision. In an effort to promote and support collaboration between biological parents and kinship caregivers, the Kinship specialist will collaborate with the HHS case manager regarding family interaction planning. This discussion may include:

- Requesting approval for kinship caregivers to facilitate contact between parents and their children.
- Addressing any limitations to supervision.
- Providing training to kinship caregivers on what to look for during supervision of interactions.
- Understanding expectations of supervision of interactions.

Consider the following questions when talking with the HHS case manager:

- Is there a current family interaction plan?
  - If yes, can I get a copy?
  - If no, when will one be developed?
- May the kinship caregiver supervise interactions?
  - If no, what are the concerns or barriers to allow this to occur?
- Are you comfortable with the kinship specialist working with the kinship caregiver to overcome these barriers?  
If yes, ask the following:
  - Is there anyone that cannot be at the interaction?
  - Are there stipulations on when and where these can occur?
  - Is there anything else we should know?
- What is the plan for communicating any changes in expectations that may occur to the kinship caregiver and kinship specialist?

The Kinship specialist will devise a plan to communicate expectations to kinship caregivers and ensure they understand the plan. The Kinship specialist will continue to provide support and understanding to kinship caregivers as they navigate their role supervising family interactions.

## **Family Finding**

Family finding means strategies to find and engage kin and fictive kin of children living in foster care and establishes lifetime network of support for children and youth who are disconnected or at risk of disconnection through placement outside of their home and community. The process identifies family members and other supportive adults, estranged or unknown to the child, especially those who are willing to become a permanent connection for him/her. The social network map is a useful tool in identifying potential family and other important connections for a child. The kinship specialist is encouraged to share additional potential connections identified through support to the caregiver with the HHS case manager.

## Ongoing Service Activities

### **Emotional Support**

Kinship specialists collaborate and partner with kinship caregivers to provide them support and encouragement as they facilitate communication and work to maintain healthy relationships with birth parents.

Kinship specialists support and educate kinship caregivers on how transition can have an impact on family routine, how children may react and behave as they adjust to these transitions, and changing family roles. Kinship specialists also work to facilitate communication between team members and the kinship caregivers to ensure that all parties receive advance notice of the timeline when transition is imminent. Kinship specialists help ensure kinship caregivers understand their role during this transition and once the children return home.

Once children return home, the kinship specialist should reach out and offer the kinship caregiver a meeting for additional support prior to ending Kinship Navigator Services. Kinship caregivers have the option to participate or decline the additional meeting.

### **Information and Referrals for Assistance**

Kinship specialists are encouraged to establish relationships with local community services and supports and participate in local community meetings to become aware of available resources. As much as possible, provide kinship caregivers with a list of local services, supports, and resources available in their county of residence. Kinship specialists can connect kinship caregivers to these community resources as well as to resources available to kinship caregivers statewide. This may include information on important supports such as rent and utilities assistance, child care resources, transportation assistance, and available respite care options.

Kinship specialists will educate kinship caregivers on how to access 211 Iowa, which is a free, comprehensive information and referral system. 211 is a central, single point of contact for thousands of health and human service programs, community services, disaster services and governmental programs.

### **Kinship Caregiver Education**

Kinship specialists provide information on opportunities for kinship caregiver education on a variety of topics including the availability of SafeCare and other appropriate curriculums geared to support and education relevant to kinship caregivers.

## **Support with Entitlement Applications**

All kinship caregivers are provided the opportunity for the kinship specialist to assist them in completing and submitting entitlement applications such as FIP, SNAP and WIC as appropriate. This support includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Provision of the actual forms/documents
- Assistance in completion of forms/documents
- Education on program requirements and qualifications
- Assistance in submission of forms/documents

## **Access to Medical, Dental and Mental Health Services**

Kinship specialists should collaborate with the assigned Family-Centered Services (FCS) provider to understand medical, dental and mental health needs that exist for the children. Kinship specialists can collaborate with the HHS case manager to ensure the children obtain a physical upon entry to assess for any medical needs. Kinship specialists provide assistance with coordinating efforts between the birth family and kinship caregivers to obtain medical care, when necessary. Kinship specialists can provide support to kinship caregivers in scheduling, organizing and arranging transportation for these appointments when needed.

Kinship specialists may provide kinship caregivers with training and support in planning for safe responses to emergencies. Emergencies include accidents, serious illnesses, fires and both natural and human-caused disasters. Kinship specialists provide education and support regarding appropriate medical responses, including ensuring kinship caregivers have access to the any specialized medical training and support as needed to meet the needs of children in their care.

Kinship specialists can assist the caregiver in accessing local resources and available supports for mental health and counseling/therapy services. This may be to meet the caregiver's needs or to help meet the needs of the child. Caregivers may first need approval from the child's parents and/or the HHS case manager to begin mental health or counseling/therapy services for the child in their care.

## **Access to Legal Assistance**

Kinship specialists may refer kinship caregivers to Iowa Legal Aid for assistance with legal representation and advice. When available, kinship specialists provide kinship caregivers with names of local attorneys who provide discounted or free legal services to kinship caregivers.

## **Case Management**

Case management serves as a means for achieving placement stability through advocacy, communication and connection with resources and services.

## **Concrete Supports**

Kinship specialists may provide support in meeting basic needs as identified through the kinship care plan. Examples of approved concrete supports include:

- Cribs/beds/mattresses
- Bedding/sheets/blankets
- Dressers/tables/chairs
- Highchairs
- Car seat/booster seat
- Household safety kits/cabinet locks/gates
- Diapers/pull ups/wipes
- Clothing/shoes/boots/coats
- Utility payment/partial payment
- Temporary housing assistance
- Food/grocery
- Toiletries

## Support Groups

Kinship support groups allow additional time for education and fostering peer-to-peer relationships among kinship caregivers, including training opportunities. Kinship caregivers in attendance are encouraged to exchange contact information and develop supportive relationships amongst themselves.

Kinship Navigator Services provide kinship caregivers support in training to ensure their ability to care and support the children placed in their home. This can be achieved through regular or monthly support groups, newsletters, and use of technological advances. Technology may be used to create online support groups, access to websites for resources and information specific to kinship caregivers, and through the development of an online peer-to-peer community. Kinship caregivers are provided with additional opportunities for local training and may attend foster parent training opportunities as available.

## Attendance at Additional Meetings

### **Family Focused Meetings (FFMs)**

Kinship specialists may participate in FFMs if the family invites and consents to their attendance. The Kinship specialist attends as a support for kinship placements. The kinship specialist may assist kinship caregivers in communicating their strengths and needs. Kinship specialists may provide the team information regarding kinship support plan goals and service targets. Team members may utilize this time to communicate to the kinship specialist and kinship caregiver items they would like addressed through services and expectations for family interactions.

### **Juvenile Court Hearings**

Kinship specialists may attend juvenile court hearings alongside the kinship caregivers involved with Kinship Navigator Services. Kinship specialists will act only as emotional support to kinship caregivers in these instances and will attend only when requested to do so by the kinship caregiver.

## Case Closure

Kinship Navigator Services may be provided for the duration of the children's placement with the caregiver during an open service case. Cases served through Kinship Navigator Services will close successfully when the following occurs:

- Children are returned to their parental home, or
- Kinship caregivers and the kinship specialist agree the appropriate level of support and resources to successfully maintain the kinship placement without continuation of services is met. When this occurs, the kinship specialist and kinship caregivers will establish and implement an aftercare plan to ensure continued positive outcomes and access to necessary services can continue at the close of the Kinship Navigator Services case.

When the Kinship Navigator Services case closes, a termination summary is completed and provided to the assigned HHS case manager and the kinship caregivers within 10 business days of case closure.

## Collaboration Process with Recruitment, Retention, Training and Support (RRTS) Contractor

- Kinship specialists will complete the KNS to RRTS Referral Form 470-5777 to refer kinship caregivers to RRTS when caregivers are ready to begin the kinship foster care approval process.
- Kinship specialists will send the completed form to the RRTS caseworker via email and copy the child's case manager on the referral email.
- Kinship specialists will assist kinship caregivers who are interested in becoming approved for Kinship Foster Care with the application and home study process.
- The RRTS contractor will follow up with the kinship specialist if any of the kinship caregiver's application process documents are incomplete or if record check evaluations are missing.
- The kinship specialist and the RRTS caseworker will communicate by phone, email, or in-person to discuss any concerns.
- If the kinship caregiver becomes approved for Kinship Foster Care while Kinship Navigator Services are open, the kinship specialist will continue to provide support to the caregiver through Kinship Navigator Services as needed.