LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE FFTA TFC/KINSHIP INITIATIVE


**Primary focus of the article:** The unique cultural context for Latino kinship families and the barriers they face.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- Many Latino families face barriers to licensure as foster parents due to immigration status, their relationship to the child (i.e. godparents and not blood relationships) and language barriers
- Latino families do not understand the child welfare system and licensing process and many have not had option of licensing presented to them
- Some Latino families live in mixed documentation families and do not want to submit to background checks for everyone in family because of immigration status
- Low income Latino families ineligible for foster care licensing will carry the burden of additional family members without state support
- The article recommends a broad definition of kin consistent with Latino culture, removal of language barriers, and access to financial support and services regardless of documentation status
- Community based organizations may be able to facilitate culturally sensitive services to Latino kinship families to minimize fear and trust issues with the public system

Baum, J., & Grogan, T.J. (2009). Using the Fourteenth Amendment to protect the integrity of kinship foster families. Children’s Rights 11(2).

**Primary focus of the article:** Constitutional protection of the integrity of kinship foster families. Protection of due process against removals, from kinship care, by child caring agencies.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- Some states require child protective agencies to seek out and advise family members of their right to apply to become paid foster parents of minor kin.
- Numerous court rulings have found constitutional protections for preserving kinship placement arrangements, despite child protective agency opposition to same.
- The Rivera decision of 1982 established a 7 point checklist for child advocates to use in challenging removals, or possible removals, from kinship foster care.

Primary focus of the article: Blair and colleagues use the Strengths and Stressors Tracking Device or SSTD (Berry et al., 2003) to study the strengths of kinship care providers while they deal with various stressors in their lives. 77 caregivers participating in the child-only component of the TANF program were interviewed with the empirically based SSTD. With the data found the researchers discuss the impact on case management and administration. Researchers make suggestions for the direction of case management to move towards a more strength-based approach. The study finds that this approach is more effective than the problem-based approach with this population and they possess significant strengths that can be used in a strength-based approach.

Key takeaways of the article:

- In the strength-based model the client is the “centerpiece” and the caseworker turns the focus to the client’s internal and external resources along with the client’s vision, values and hopes, rather than the caseworker holding access to the resources and therapy.
- Blair and colleagues emphasize that the stressors should not be the main focus but part of a holistic approach that emphasizes building strengths.
- The study indicates that improvements in any one of the domains (environment, social supports, family/caregiver, child well-being) tested would result in improvements across all domains tested. Focusing on and enhancing one area of strength for a client will reduce stress and increase the client’s ability to improve other areas of need.


Primary focus of the article: To explore the how kinship care can positively and negatively impact reunification among African American woman with a history of substance abuse; 26 women, 19-43 years old and 20 professionals were interviewed as well as a review of research studies. Blakey found that kinship placements tend to be more stable in terms of disruptions but children were reunified with their biological parents at a much lower rate. The result revealed three factors that influenced reunification: family support with parameters, limited family support and enabling family support.

Key takeaways of the article:

- Blakey defines family support with parameters as support in which the care givers and care receivers clearly understand the limits of the support and as that there is a predetermined end point or limit. This type of support contributed to successful reunification.
- Women with limited family support, either the family could not provide physical support or they were placed with relatives who could only provide physical support for a limited amount of time were more likely to be reunified.
• Enabling family support was defined as support that protected the women from the natural consequences of their behavior. This type of support tended to lead to permanent loss custody for the mothers.


**Primary focus of the article:** Examined the needs, mitigating factors and outcomes for children in Latino kinship families

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- 2/3 of grandparents’ reported worse health between the first and second interview
- Kinship families with fewer informal supports, those with contact with the child’s mother, those with fewer unmet service needs and those with less income were more likely to have children leave care
- Kinship families caring for a child with special needs were more likely to still be caring for the child
- Despite worsening conditions of grandparents, the vast majority expected to continue care indefinitely and many had moved from informal care to legal guardianship


**Primary focus of the article:** The study examined the extent to which worker, foster family, and child-level processes account for variance in children in-care’s externalizing behavior. It was hypothesized that social worker education level, foster family experiences relating to type of foster care placement (kinship, foster and group care), and child-specific experiences relating to parental negativity and placement satisfaction would explain differences in children in-care’s externalizing behavior.

Data was collected in 2007-2008 on 1,063 children in-care, 528 social workers and 962 foster families. Data was from the Ontario (Canada) Looking after Children project.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- Relative to those in foster care, children in kinship care displayed lower levels of externalizing behaviors; however, children placed in group care displayed higher levels of externalizing behaviors. The causality of this relationship was not determined in this study but the authors stated that it is likely in part a selection effect where more externalizing children get placed in group homes because they cannot be tolerated in
other settings, and perhaps exposure to delinquent peers (in a group home setting) increases the children’s own externalizing behavior.

- 9.7% of the variation in children in-care’s externalizing behavior was attributable to differences between workers, and workers with less education were more likely to work with more difficult children – however the causality of this relationship was not determined in this study.
- 18.5% of the variation in children in-care’s externalizing behavior was attributable to differences between foster families. Children’s externalizing behaviors were associated with the family average of parental negativity as well as differential experiences (between youth) within foster families.
- 72.4% of the variance in children in-care’s externalizing behaviors was explained by unique characteristics and experiences of the children. Children’s externalizing behavior was found to be related to placement satisfaction.


**Primary focus of the article:** To determine if there is a difference in training competence and foster/adoptive parent retention for participants who completed the initial 27 hour Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE preservice training and resource family development program in the state of Idaho in 2003 to 2004.

114 foster/adoptive parents who completed and graduated from the Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE preservice training and resource family development program, and who became foster/adoptive parents for children in the custody of the Idaho Dept. of Health and Welfare, participated on a voluntary basis.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- The evaluation results indicate that there is a significant difference in participant competence for those who participate in and complete the 27 hour Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE preservice training and resource family development program in Idaho. In addition, the study found an 80.39% retention rate one and half years after training.


**Primary focus of the article:** Overview of trends in the field. This article discusses the relatively recent movement towards placing foster children with kin caregivers rather than non-relative caregivers and explores some possible reasons for this shift.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- According to the authors, “…no single study to date concludes that children placed with kin fare better in the long term than children placed in non-kin foster care.” They conclude that although it may be true, there is simply no evidence to support the idea that
children benefit from kinship care more than non-kin care, so this is not a valid reason to move towards placing more foster kids with kin rather than non-kin.

- They explore several alternative reasons why kin care has risen in popularity over non-kin care: 1. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the population of kids requiring foster care placements rose dramatically in many parts of the U.S. At the same time, the number of non-kin foster homes decreased by 32% in the U.S. 2. There is a growing sense that the traditional placement options are ineffectual. 3. In many parts of the U.S., child protection agencies have received reduced support and increased direction from government. All of these may have pushed agencies to seek kin support of foster children in order to take advantage of a nepotistic bias to help and support kin.


**Primary focus of the article:** A study of kinship caregivers’ experiences and characteristics in order to identify factors that predict the level of adoption intent and guardianship intent of the kinship caregiver as low or high.

830 caregivers and 1,339 children in their care in a US southwest state participated in the study. The Kinship in Nevada (KIN) survey tool was used to gather the data.

Intent to provide permanency (adoption or guardianship) was the dependent variable. Caregiver motivation and sustaining factors; perceptions and experiences; service needs; child well-being; child rearing; readiness and capacity; family involvement and social support; caregiver stress and strain; and demographic characteristics were all independent variables.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- The majority (63%) of the sample expressed a low intent level when asked, “If need be, would you establish permanency for the child in your care through adoption?” However, 78% of the caregivers said that if need be they intended to provide permanent legal guardianship for their relative’s child.
- Several kin caregiver experiences and characteristics were identified that led to a higher likelihood of adoption: adequate caregiver information about and involvement in case planning and court proceedings; well-managed caregiver emotional stress; and caregivers caring for sibling groups. Also, caregivers were more inclined to move toward adoption when the children in their care were emotionally detached from their biological parents and didn’t exhibit signs of depression or other behavior problems such as running away.
- Despite children’s behavior problems, kin caregivers were willing to commit to permanency with guardianship, especially when the children do not have regular contact with their parents.

Primary focus of the article: The authors seek to describe the experience of rural kinship caregivers to provide practitioners and policy advocates with strategies for increasing support to children in their care. They use attribution theory to analyze results and question the extent to which caregiver perceptions of their own capabilities (as influenced by others) impact well-being.

Key takeaways of the article:
- Rural caregivers possess remarkable strengths and abilities despite caregiving challenges.
- Family involvement and social support contribute significantly to caregiver readiness/capacity and parenting abilities.
- Community programs, outlets and opportunities to network with other caregivers and friends and neighbors have a positive affect.
- Caregivers with the highest service needs and highest levels of frustration when attempting to acquire services were caregivers whose children’s well-being scores were the lowest.
- Unmet service needs negatively affect children’s well-being.
- Practitioners need to understand the needs of rural kinship caregivers, address these needs, and be prepared to advocate for increased opportunities for kinship caregivers to have these needs met (including social support).


Primary focus of the article: To describe the experiences and perceptions of adult siblings caring for children.

Key takeaways of the article:
- Adult siblings are the third largest relative caregiver group and interventions for kin families are typically not geared toward this population.
- Shared family experiences between siblings may serve as a buffer against the stress and strain of caregiving, particularly given that the #1 reason siblings care for children is because they volunteered to do so.
- Study found overall low levels of family involvement and social support, but higher levels of permanency intention when the family support is high.
- Many adult siblings find strength from religious support.
- Adult siblings more likely to adopt if they younger sibling has special needs.
- Implications for practice: agencies should assess parenting capacity of adult siblings and tailor education and training to role of parenting throughout developmental cycles; siblings also need socialization and support with other siblings caring for children.

**Primary focus of the article:** The research focused on the willingness and ability of grandparents to provide formal or informal care to their grandchildren should their adult child and spouse not be able to provide care.

Semi-structured interviews were completed on 20 grandparents who were not providing full-time care to their grandchildren at the time of the study.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- Grandparents were unanimous in their willingness to provide care to their grandchildren and expressed the importance of having access, regardless of family issues.
- Grandparents identified potential needs should they be called upon to provide care for their grandchildren including financial, babysitting, legal rights, medical costs, housing, access, counseling (to help with possible behavioral issues of the children), daycare, respite care, recreational activities, support groups, transportation, and their need to know more about child development.
- Grandparents were clear that they would not want to “interfere” or supersede the role of the available parent in the case that only one parent was unable to provide care.


**Primary focus of the article:** This study examines whether children’s appraisals of their lives following removal from their families differ as a function of age, gender, race, type and severity of maltreatment, length of time in out of home care placement type, attachment to current caregivers, and rating of current caregiver/home. Data was collected from 1809 9-11 year old children currently in out of home care who were asked about their perceptions.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- Children living in group care were more likely than those living in family foster care or with kin to report that their lives would have been better had they remained with their families of origin.
- Differences were not found between children living in family foster care and those living with kin, nor did children’s appraisals differ based on age, race, ethnicity, length of time in out of home care neglect of severity of maltreatment.


**Primary focus of the article:** The article compares children living with kin vs. non kin in terms of quality of the placement and characteristics of the child and caregivers.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- The findings of the review are very similar to findings in research in the US
- There is no difference in the characteristics of the children living with kin vs. non kin. Kin are caring for children with some very challenging behaviors
- Kin caregivers face significantly greater challenges than non kin, including health issues, overcrowding and financial difficulties
- Kin caregivers AND children with kin face lower levels of services
- Children living with kin have more contact with family members
- At the time of this writing, UK was still working on a national policy related to kin care, with local jurisdictions developing their own policies and practices which this article was intended to inform


**Primary focus of the article:** This paper considers the factors that relate to placement quality and disruption in kinship care in England. The study is based on case file reviews of 270 children (half in kinship care and half in foster care) and interviews with a sub-sample of 32 family and friend careers and a number of social workers, parents and children.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- There was no significant difference between the ratings of placement quality between kin and unrelated foster care
- Similar proportions of kin and unrelated foster placements had disrupted by the end of the follow-up period
- Children placed with grandparents were the least likely to experience disruption when compared with other family or friends. Only 8% disrupted with grandparents compared with 27% with aunts and uncles and 30% with other relatives and friends. This compares with 23% of placements with unrelated carers.
- Disruption rates rose significant for non kin as the number of previous behavioral and emotional problems increased (this was not significant for kin placements)
- Placements with kin carers who had been approved as foster carers were significantly less like to disrupt than those where they had not been approved.


**Primary focus of the article:** The purpose of this study was to examine whether placement in kinship foster care served as a long-term protective factor against the development of mental health issues in adult alumni of foster care. Data was drawn from case record data on 1582 alumni and interviews of 1068 alumni.
Key takeaways of the article:

- Kinship placements were not predictive of mental health outcomes regardless of amount of time in kinship care. Placement in kinship care alone did not show significant effects on mental health outcomes when compared to individuals who had no kinship care placements.
- However…the study did show that the following control variables had significant effect on mental health outcomes:
  - preparation for leaving care and leaving care resources (access to employment and independent living training, health insurance, money, driver’s license and dishes and utensils)
    - + school services and changing schools
  - having a close relationship with an adult
  - maltreatment in care
  - history of runaways
- *** Kinship foster care alone was not a good predictor of positive mental health outcomes. Results of this study support the importance of child welfare legislation and services focusing on the BEST fist for the child regardless of placement type, taking into account the aforementioned factors


Primary focus of the article: The primary focus of this article is an attempt to explain the disproportionate risk of adverse experiences, including placement instability, in African-American children in the child welfare system. The article compares placement instability among African-American and white children.

Key takeaways of the article:

- African-American children have more out of home placements than their white peers. African-Americans comprise 34% of the children in foster care settings even though they represent only 15% of the US population.
- African-Americans in foster care experience more frequent placement changes. Older age, initial placement in a setting other than kinship care, and having more externalizing problems are associated with greater placement instability. However, among white children, only initial placement in a foster care setting predicted placement instability.
- The majority of the racial difference in placement instability remains unexplained.


**Primary focus of the article:** Examined the effectiveness of a support group program designed to address the support needs of formal kinship caregivers

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- Relative foster parents receive great benefit from support groups. Benefits include information and education about working with the child welfare system and emotional and social support

- Respondents were conflicted about whether to make support groups mandatory, but agreed that having support groups when children are newly placed is important. A mandatory orientation followed by support groups is the best model

- Social workers must be aware that the support groups exist so caregivers can take advantage of them as soon as children are placed

- Support groups can be more effective if child care and transportation is provided…food as well…and they should be run less like classes and more like support groups. Fixed attendance that consists only of kinship caregivers (not non kin foster parents) also important

- Qualifications of the facilitators are critical; it is best if they have 3 facilitators: 1 with personal experience as a kinship caregiver; 1 who is a trainer/facilitator; and 1 who with knowledge of community resources.


**Primary focus of the article:** The article focuses on probably of disruption for children living in kinship care compared to those living in non kin care for children with and without a disability. The study examined children 3-10 years old and looked at non behavioral disabilities, behavioral disabilities and those with both behavioral and non-behavioral disabilities

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- Living with a kin caregiver decreased the odds of disruption. Type of disability had no effect on placement disruption. However, having a behavioral disability approached Significance (p = .07) and increased the odds of disruption 3.8 times compared to no disability.
• Kinship placements fostering children with different types of disabilities at baseline were not more or less likely to disrupt compared to children without a disability. In the end, kinship placements were as stable as non-kinship placements for a majority of children, regardless of disability status.

• Placements with older children with either a behavioral disability only or a combination of behavioral and non-behavioral disabilities were more likely to disrupt compared to younger children.

• The results show that a majority of children, regardless of type of disability, will find their kin placement as stable as children without a disability placed with kin. Providing disability-specific training to caseworkers authorized to place children into out-of-home care has been reported by caseworkers as needed (Orelowe, Hollahan, & Myles, 2000) and may ease this reluctance to place children with a disability with kin.


**Primary focus of the article**: The focus on the article is to provide an empirical knowledge base by which services and policies for kinship foster care children and caregivers may be built.

**Key takeaways of the article**:

• Kinship foster caregivers are significantly more likely to be older, have low educational attainment, live in poverty, and are more at risk for poor health than non-kinship foster caregivers. While kinship care has been accepted and expanded in all states, many policy-makers fail to provide equal service provisions on parity with services provided to foster families.

• At the micro- and mesosystem levels, there is a need for clinical therapeutic intervention and case coordination to address issues such as caregiver-child relationships and attachment problems kinship foster caretakers and children may experience. It is also important that childcare workers have requisite understanding of the dynamics that the child and the caregiver present in a kinship foster care setting as opposed on non-kinship foster care setting.

• At the exosystem level, there is a need for education and training, as well as increased social-support services for kinship foster caregivers. It is also imperative that practitioners recognize the importance of the extended family network particularly for racial and ethnic minority families.

• At the macrosystem level, there is a major need to review the existing child welfare policy in areas of permanency planning, disparities in funding for kinship versus non-kinship foster caregivers, and placement outcomes for children in kinship foster care.


**Primary focus of the article**: The purpose of the article was to examine the extent of behavior problems in children being raised by grandmothers and to determine factors in their current environment that are related to children behavior problems.
Key takeaways of the article:

- The most commonly reported reasons children are being raised by a grandmother are parental substance abuse, child maltreatment, abandonment, mental illness, incarceration and homicide. Many children raised by grandparents have experienced multiple adverse events that place them at greater risk for emotional and behavioral problems.

- The most common type of child maltreatment reported was neglect (76.5%), followed by emotional abuse (34%), and physical abuse (15%).

- Almost one-third of children in the study had clinically elevated behavior problem scores.

- Children of grandmother caregivers who had increased psychological distress, fewer family resources, less social support and less supportive home environments had increased behavior problems, both internalizing and externalizing.

- The findings suggest that factors related to the caregiving environment (e.g., lack of resources) and attributes related to grandparent caregivers are closely related to the child’s wellbeing.


Primary focus of the article: The focus of this article was to examine whether the type of pre-discharge placement, kinship vs. non-kinship foster care, has a net impact on children’s likelihood of re-entry into foster care, applying both statistical regressions and matching methods. One of the most frequently highlighted factors shows that children reunified from kinship foster homes are less likely to re-enter foster care, however regression models were used and were not thought of as adequate enough to control the different characteristics of kin and non-kin homes.

Key takeaways of the article:

- Children discharged from kinship foster homes are more likely to be African American and less likely to have disabilities.

- Children in kinship foster homes experience greater stability during their out of home care placements than children in non-kinship foster homes.

- Children that are reunified and or experience guardianship from kinship placements are more likely to be younger than those from non-kinship placements.

- Children in kinship foster homes are more likely to stay in out of home care for a shorter period of time than non-kinship children in the samples of reunified and guardianship children, however longer for adopted children.
• The findings of this study suggest there are selection biases that differentiate the types of children that are accepted into and discharged from kinship and non-kinship care.

• Child protective authorities may be quicker to re-intervene with economically vulnerable families if kin caregivers have previously been involved in the care of children and are willing to resume caregiving responsibilities.

• The findings of this study suggest that the lower risks of foster care re-entry previously observed for children reunified from kinship foster homes are largely attributable to the differences in child characteristics at removal.


Primary focus of the article: The aim of this paper was to contribute to this small body of literature addressing adoptive kinship. [The author] consider[s] traditional sociological and anthropological theories of kinship and reflect[s] on why adoptive families may have been ignored in much of the literature, before moving on to discuss new kinship studies. The paper concludes by suggesting that contemporary adoption has much to contribute to new theories of kinship. New kinship theory also has a contribution to make to contemporary adoption discourse.

Key takeaways of the article:

• She points out the tensions inherent in a kinship relationship. Despite the primacy of the blood tie, what constitutes meaningful kinship remains in dispute.


Primary focus of the article: The research examined outcomes for children placed with kin as the result of court proceedings brought because of child protection concerns about parental care. The study used information from case files and interviews with social workers and kinship caregivers. Key outcome variables were: placement stability, placement quality, relationship with the carrier and the child’s well-being.

While the majority of the kinship placements in this study were intended to be permanent, 27% did not last as long as needed.

Key takeaways of the article:

• Consistent with other studies, older children’s placements were significantly more likely to end prematurely than those of younger children

• Other significant factors were the carrier’s relationship to the child and whether they had previously cared for him or her full-time
• More than half of the children remained within their family networks, moving either to a parent or another relative and the original carers often retained a positive relationship with the child. Thus there is a strong argument that kinship care provides an enveloping supportive network for many children even when there are problems.
• Our findings suggest that certain factors indicate that some placements may be more vulnerable to breakdown and thus may need more support: placements of older children, placements with aunts/uncles, and placements were the career and child care less familiar with one another. More data is needed to support these conclusions.


**Primary focus of the article:** Article focused on the evaluation of the mental health functioning of children who were abused or neglected with a comparison group to determine the level of functioning of the youth. The purpose of the study was to determine whether the mental health functioning of the adolescents differed by maltreatment status and placement type, those in placement versus those who remained in their homes. Findings indicate that maltreated children who remain with their birth parents have mental health problems at the same rate as maltreated children who are in non-relative foster care or in kinship care.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
• Maltreated children who remain in their home have similar functioning levels as do children in placement.
• Maltreated children who remain in their home tend to not access services for their mental health needs at the same rate as children who enter the foster care system.
• Role for child welfare may be in finding ways to ensure that mental health treatment can be received for all children in need.


**Primary focus of the article:** The purpose of this study was to assess what children understand about permanency and how their cognitive structures regarding their situations are aligned with the concept of permanency. Additionally, this research sought to identify situations that predict and affect group membership regarding children’s expectations for permanency outcomes while living in their temporary homes.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
• Secure attachments between children and their foster or kin caregivers are equally important to children’s successful adjustment, development, and perceived feelings of belonging.
• Overall, this research demonstrates differences in children’s perceptions, with regard to placement preferences and expectations. Children seemed to express a feeling of belonging when asked if they felt like part of the family, regardless of their desire to stay in the placement.
• As supported by the tenets of social capital theory, children with access to other relatives for help with a serious problem were more likely to want permanency and adoption than those without such relatives.


**Primary focus of the article:** Article focused on an analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health data examining the kinship household’s eligibility for, utilization of, and potential educational benefits of increased income through the “child-only” state grants.

Findings show that an increase in monthly household income is associated with a 7% greater likelihood of youth in kinship care graduating from high school. There also was no utilization of child-only grants among kinship families although they were eligible for the grants. An implication for the field is in the area of improving the circumstances of kinship families especially in improving their financial situations while caring for youth in their home. Efforts can be made to advocate for these families to better assist them in their role of caregivers.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
• Kinship caregivers do not utilize child-only grants to provide a modest monthly income to assist in the care of youth in their home
• Kinship caregiver can be assisted by human service workers in the learning of available resources available to them
• Efforts can be made in public policy to identify and incorporate needed assistance for kinship families to support them


**Primary focus of the article:** This article focused on factors associated with formal substitute care placement following a maltreatment investigation for children who stayed with their biological parent, and those placed informally with kin or non-kin caregivers.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
• Informal kin placements often lead to more formal substitute care
• Moving from informal to formal placement doesn’t necessarily mean a disruption in placement
• Reliance on kinship care for rearing children both in and out of foster care has been increasing
• Research findings indicate a decrease in disruptions in kinship placements
• Financial incentives encourage informal caregivers to become foster care placements
• Importance of starting foster care training earlier in the process


**Primary focus of the article:** The significance of implementing Family Team Meetings (FTM) as an integral component of the planning process for a child entering into the child welfare system. The study compared the permanency outcomes for children who had a FTM with those who did not. Findings from the study included; increased likelihood that children would be placed in kin foster homes, have family-group-type permanency goals, exit care faster, and be discharged to family or relatives when a FTM meeting had taken place.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- When family groups take part in child welfare decisions, the plans tend to keep children at home or with kinship care
- Increase likelihood of placement stability, increased contact with family, better adjustment, and greater sense of social support and well-being when placed in kinship care
- Importance of going beyond the parent-worker relationship to include the extended resources within the family system and community


**Primary focus of the article:** A modified Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) model, Keeping Foster Parents Trained and Supported (KEEP) foster parent training intervention for regular foster parents was subjected to a randomized effectiveness trial with an ethnically diverse sample of 700 foster parents and kin families with children 5-12 years in San Diego County, California. The parents in the KEEP group used positive reinforcement more than discipline, which reduced child behavior problems. The KEEP groups where twice as likely to experience a positive exist from care (reunification and adoption) and reduced disruptions in placements. Ethnic match of caregiver group training leader further reduced problem behaviors. Further, using the Cascading Dissemination model, the effectiveness of KEEP continued even when delivered by a community service contractor provide with adequate training a supervision.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- Top 3-5 takeaways from the article of relevance to FFTA project on kinship care
- Effective Treatment Parent Training can be effective in the training kin.
- Training of kin in parenting can reduce behavior problems in their children.
- Training of kin can reduce disruptions in placement and increase permanence of children
• Ethnic matching in an important in the choice of parent training leaders
• Training effectiveness continue by community contractors if adequately trained and supervised.


**Primary focus of the article:** The design of this study was a convenience criterion-referenced sample in which all kinship and foster care cases that fit the criteria where included (i.e. of 26 kinship and 208 traditional foster care children ranging in age from 1 day to 16 years who were in need of out of home care (kinship or traditional foster care as determined by the Children’s Aids Society in Ontario, Canada). Criteria for inclusion in both samples were (a) presence of partner violence and (b) need for out of home placement. Adjustment while in care as well as stability and permanency were compared between the two sample groups. Children in the kinship group showed significant increased adjustment in care (less physical and verbal aggression, manipulative behavior, compulsive lying) and stability/permanency (shorter length of stays in care and more likely to be reunified) than those in traditional foster care.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

• Children in kinship exhibit fewer adjustment problems.
• Kinship placement are more stability and permanence
• There exits mutual benefits of kinship placements for addressing the needs of both the victims of violence as well as their children. Both the rights and protection of the children as well as the rights of the mother can be addressed as the mother-child bond can be preserved
• Mothers in kinship placements can be given the opportunity to work through their issues while continuing to exercise a more healthy style of parenting while maintaining attachment with their children.


**Primary focus of the article:** This research article focuses on if parenting styles (demandingness and responsiveness) and family functioning reported by kin caregivers predict their ratings of child behavior, controlling for caregiver age, total household income, length of time caring for the child, number of children and adults in the home, number of family transitions, caregiver foster home licensing status and the focus child’s age and gender.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

• The findings of this article provide empirical support for the relationship between kin caregivers’ perceptions of family functioning and the child behavioral functioning for children in the custody of the child welfare system.
• Kin caregiving families may experience more role strain and confusion than is experienced by the average family headed by biological or adoptive parents, and the role strain and confusion would be associated with higher levels of child behavior problems.

• Caregivers’ perceptions of healthy role functioning are associated with the children’s healthy functioning.

• Higher levels of responsiveness are associated with healthier general family functioning.


**Primary focus of the article:** This study examined data from the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Wellbeing, conducted by the Department of Health & Human Services (n = 1,404 youth). Three groups of youth were identified – those placed into general foster care with no subsequent kinship care, those placed into kinship care within one month of a maltreatment report, and those placed into kinship care after one month. Severity of behavior was controlled for statistically between the groups, using the CBCL Total Problems T-Score Outcome variable was placement stability at 18 and 36 months post-maltreatment report.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- Differences between general foster and kinship care groups
- Youth placed in general foster care (versus kinship care) often presented (prior to placement) with greater levels of behavior difficulties, higher rates of psychotropic medication, higher rates of using mental-health services, had caregivers with serious mental health concerns
- Youth placed in kinship care (versus general foster care) often had lower risk for placement instability and lesser levels of behavior difficulties
- Outcomes related to placement stability
- Children placed into kinship care had fewer behavior problems 36 months after the maltreatment report when compared with youth in general foster care
- Cautions when interpreting results
- The study did not control for placement into kinship care versus general foster care
- The study did not collect data on the kinship placement or even the availability of such a placement. Thus, it is unclear if youth placed in general foster care had a relative who would have been an appropriate option
- Conclusion: When possible, kinship care should be considered to promote placement stability for youth with a maltreatment history

**Primary focus of the article:** This study included analysis of administrative data to explore the relationship between kinship care placements and the risk of delinquency. This study included a sample of youth (n=13,396) in out-of-home placement from 2000 to 2008, who had spent at least 80% of time in either kin or non-kin home. The researchers created comparison groups of kin and non-kin placements using propensity score matching. Survival analysis was used to calculate the odds of youth experiencing an arrest within the observation period.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- The results indicated the following: African American and White adolescent males in kinship setting were at significantly greater risk to experience arrest compared to similar males in non-kin homes. Hispanic males and females had lower risk of experiencing arrest in kin homes compared to non-kin homes.
- Older female (entering care after age 11); females who had run away; and females in group care were all at increased risk of experiencing an arrest.
- African American males, Hispanic males, and older males were all at an increased risk of experiencing an arrest. Males in foster care with 3 or more placement changes; males who had run away from placement; and males in a group care placement were all more likely to experience at least one arrest.
- The authors also recommend examining other contextual factors in looking at kin placements, such as neighborhood effect and peer relationships in kin and non-kin homes.
- For treatment foster care agencies, it is interesting to note that the impact of placement instability and group care setting on increased risk of juvenile delinquency.


**Primary focus of the article:** Examined how kinship adoptive experience differs from other adoptive types. Using tobit regression analysis examined data from 2,382 adopted children (397-kin; 1,985-non-kin) whose families participated in the Florida Adoption Project (FAP) FAP investigates key indicators of successful and unsuccessful adoptive placements among the population of parents who adopted a child through Florida’s child welfare system and were receiving a special needs subsidy payment.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- Kinship families were smaller in size, more likely to be white, contained fewer children, more frequently single parents, had lower levels of education and reported an average of $15,874 less yearly income than non-kin families.
- Children adopted by kin were more likely to be female and younger and experienced fewer total placements; however waited longer prior to finalization of the adoption.
- Kin adoptive parents more negatively assessed the family’s current functioning – possible explanations: feeling more obligated despite unpreparedness; kin adoptive parents may have answered the question by considering the impact on extended family.
• Kinship adoptive families do report being generally satisfied with the overall adoption and having a positive relationship with their adopted child
• Kin adoptive parents were 10% more likely than non-kin adoptive parents to indicate the strongest willingness to adopt the child again
• Parents with more education experienced significantly worse family impacts from the adoption, poorer family functioning, and lower parent-child relationship satisfaction


**Primary focus of the article:** Many children in the US who are court-ordered to live in out-of-home care are placed with kinship caregivers. Few studies have examined the impact of living with kin on child well-being. This study examined the relationship between length of time living with kin and indices of adolescent well-being in a cohort of children who were initially court-ordered into out-of-home care. The multivariate findings suggested a pattern of poorer functioning for youth who spent more time living with kin, but there were no significant bivariate findings.

**Key takeaways of the article:**
- This study found that longer length of time living with kin (through both court-ordered placements and following case closure) was significantly associated with more delinquency, sexual risk behaviors, substance use, total risk behaviors, ticket/arrests, and poorer grades, after adjustments for relevant covariates. There was also a trend in these analyses for longer length of time living with kin to predict more suspensions and trauma symptomatology.
- The current study’s finding should not be misinterpreted to represent a comparison of the impact of foster and kinship placements. Almost all (84%) of the children who had lived with their kin also spent time in foster care, and therefore we examined duration of time living with kin as opposed to comparing children who had experienced kinship versus foster care.
- The study’s findings do not suggest that we should avoid placing maltreated children in kinship care for extended periods of time. They do suggest that we should not presume that spending more time living with kin is beneficial for youth.
- Rather, we need to look at factors that will promote well-being among youth who live long-term with kin both during and following child welfare involvement.


**Primary focus of the article:** This study used administrative data of 22,311 foster family placements in Illinois, to explore the relationship between foster family demographic characteristics and children’s permanency outcomes, with a focus on comparing outcomes for children placed in kinship, traditional non-kin and treatment foster homes. The sample included children who entered substitute care between July 1, 1996, and June 30, 1999 and were discharged before June 2005, and one child was chose from each family and placement histories were examined. The Cox proportional hazard model was used to explore the relationship
between permanency outcomes (defined as reunification, adoption or guardianship) and foster family characteristics, such as placement type (kin, traditional non-kin and treatment); foster parent age, race, income and fostering history.

**Key takeaways of the article:**

- Kinship foster parents are, on average, older and more likely to be over 65; more likely to be African American; more likely to be single adults; and have lower average family income compared to traditional non-kin foster parents and treatment foster parents.
- Children placed in kin foster homes are more likely to be African American and are more likely to be placed with a sibling compared to traditional non-kin and treatment foster care placements.
- Children placed in treatment foster families were found to have a lower rate of reunification than children placed with kinship and traditional non-kin foster families.
- When controlling for foster parent age, race and ethnicity, and foster family wage income, there is no difference in likelihood of adoption between kin and non-kin homes. This finding is not entirely consistent with other studies that children placed with kin are less likely to be adopted, because these studies did not control for these mediating foster parent characteristics.