Washington State Kinship Care



House Bill 1121
(Permanent legal custody) allows relatives to go into court, get custody, and not terminate parental rights.

\$1,000,000 in TANF funding (biennium) creating the Relative Support Services Fund for unlicensed kinship care families involved in the child welfare system and \$50,000 to study the issue of kinship care in Washington State and make recommendations.

House Bill 1233 requires development of a stronger relative search process for families in the child welfare system, the creation of a statewide Kinship Oversight

Committee to oversee kinship care activities, and development of two Kinship Navigator pilot projects to help kinship families navigate the service system by offering information and referral, advocacy, and support.

Annual *Parenting The Second Time Around* (developed by Cornell Cooperative Extension) facilitator training begins.

Substitute House Bill 1280 continues the Kinship Oversight Committee, a coalition of 40 public and private organizations, advocates, and caregivers to address issues facing kinship care families and oversee legislative initiatives.

Substitute House Bill 1281, Washington's Kinship Medical Care, allows kinship caregivers to give informed consent to medical care for children in their care without parental signature.

Legislature appropriates \$100,000 per year to ADSA for two regional kinship navigator projects.

Regional Kinship Care Coalitions begin forming in several counties to better collaborate services between providers and caregivers.

1998 1999 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005

Senate Bill 5210 directs Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to place children with relatives, unless issues of safety precludes placement.



Legislative report and results of state-wide survey published by WA State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP).

House Bill 1397 authorizes Kinship Care Work Group to develop and prioritize recommendations from WSIPP study and develop a report on how to improve service system.

Legislature appropriates annual budget of \$500,000 for creation of *Kinship Caregivers*Support Program (KCSP) for ADSA or relatives not involved with the child welfare system to provide financial assistance for items like clothing, food, school activities, and transportation.

The two pilot *Kinship Navigator Projects*, sponsored by Casey Family Programs for 18 months, undergo an extensive project evaluation. A replication and evaluation manual is developed by Tri-West Group.

Voices of Children-Annual Kinship Care Children's Contest is designed for children ages 5-19 to express in drawing or words how living with a relative(s) has made a positive difference in their life.

The *Kinship Care Solutions Project* begins as a model kinship legal program through the Seattle/King County Bar Association screening cases for referrals to volunteer attorneys to represent the kinship caregivers in non-parental custody cases.



Department of Social & Health Services

ADSA Aging & Disability
Services Administration
www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov

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House Bill 3139 Kinship Caregivers' Consent for Mental Health Care of Minors clarifies kinship caregivers are able to consent to mental health care of children in their care in the same way they are able to consent to health care.

Legislature doubles funding for the **Kinship Caregivers Support Program** to \$1,000,000 per year.

Washington State Kinship Care website goes on-line and provides easy access to resource and service information and on-line applications.

Statewide kinship care video conference, *Helping Children-Supporting Kinship Families Through Collaboration*, is held and televised to 12 sites. Sponsored by DSHS, Casey Family Programs and Washington State University - Extension Services, the conference provides important crosstraining for staff working with children and relatives throughout the public and private service system.



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Legislature increases Kinship Navigator Program (\$132,000) for 1.5 additional Navigators.

Relative search specialists appointed in every Children's Administration region.

ESA allows TANF benefits for birth families for six months when children are removed but expected to return home. Relative caregiver could receive child-only grant during this time period.

2006 2007 2008 2009 Legislature increases Kinship Navigator **Program** funding (\$400,000) for 4 additional Navigators and adds funding 2 positions to full-time SHB 1961-R-GAP, Relative Guardianship Washington State Department of Health includes kinship question in (Behavioral Risk Assistance Program becomes law. Surveillance System (BRFSS) statewide SSB 5431 and ESSB 5811 addresses early survey. relative search, existing relationships and placement priorities and becomes law. Legislature continues Kinship Oversight Committee through June 2011.



Visit Washington State's Kinship Website

www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare/