

Washington State Kinship Care



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

● Legislature appropriates \$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 **state-wide 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

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



2001

2002

● 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.

2003

2004

● 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.

2005



