



Report to the Legislature

**Washington State Kinship Care Oversight
Committee**

Chapter 284, Laws of 2005 - RCW 74.13.621

November 2008

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Voices of Children-Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives Contest

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee collaborated with public and private partners in sponsoring the fifth annual, 2008 Washington State Kinship Care Children's Poetry and Essay contest, *Voices of Children-Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives*. This writing contest for children, ages five through nineteen, honors the relatives the children were currently living with or had lived with for at least one year. The goal was to recognize the dedication of the more than 35,000 grandparents and other relatives who are raising children in Washington State. The winners of the contest received a signed certificate from Governor Christine Gregoire, a \$100 check and tickets to a Seattle Mariners game.

The *Voices of Children* Contest Winners

5-7 Year Category

I live with my Grandma and Grandpa because my Mom and Dad do drugs that make me sad. My Grandma and Grandpa make me happy. We do homework together. Me and Grandma make tomato soup. Me and Grandpa go to the park. They teach me about healthy food they keep me safe. They love me and take care of me. I feel safe and loved living with them.

Morgan, Age 6, Yakima

I like to live with my grandparents because we do fun things together like go fishing in the summer and going to the wellness center. When we go fishing I get to hunt four night crawlers four bait. I like to drive in the woods to the lake. When we get there we go out in the boat, my grandpa taught me to row the boat set the anchor and cast my pole. My grandpa also taught me how to use my knife to clean the fish. My favorite part is reeling in my own fish. At the wellness center I love to go swimming. It's lots of fun but also good exercise. It's fun to jump off the side and cannon ball her. The slides are fun because I go really fast and it scares my belly a little. It is nice to know everyone loves each other. My grandparents really raise me to feel loved. I wouldn't like to live anywhere else because of how much I love them and how much they love me.

Caleb, Age 7, Usk

8-12 Year Category

My cousin Carrie is a very nice person. She took my sister and I into her house when we had nowhere to go. When I lived with my mom, I got hungry a lot because my mom slept so much. But I found safety and care when Carrie took me in. Now I am fed better. Carrie even got a new house just so my sister and I could have our own rooms! Carrie makes sure we are fed before she gets food and she goes to college. I love to read and Carrie gives me lots of books. She is nice, caring, smart, responsible and giving. Those are the qualities that make me appreciate Carrie and all she does for me.

Ariel, Age 9, Wenatchee

With my father imprisoned, life hasn't exactly been a trip to cherry world for me. My grandmother and grandfather have taken extremely good care of me. My mother couldn't afford to take care of me so my grandma got custody of me and told my mom that if she didn't have her life together by the time I was five, my grandmother would keep me. So here I am. My mom is living in Everett with my little brother who is four years old, and my step dad with my step dad's parents. I've only seen my father twice; he went to prison when I was 2 months old. Even though my grandparents and I don't always get along, life is really going well for me. It even scares me to know what my life would be like if my grandparents hadn't stepped up for me. They have taught me that you never see the bad times in a photo album, but the bad times are what get you from one happy photo to the next.

Taylor Age 12, Malaga

13-18 Year Category

Uncle Mitch is the fuel that keeps the fire of my heart burning. He has always been there. He has loved me every day since he has met me. Everything he does is for my best interest. I think he deserves more appreciation than he gets. Every time I need a place to go he is there to take me. Every time I need a way out he is there to save me. If the stress is too much he's there. He's my light in the dark, my warmth in the cold. I need this warmth, I need his love. I felt unloved by many people for many years. But I always knew he loved me. I always knew he was there for me. He taught me many things in life. But most of all he taught me to love people. I used to be so mean because no one had ever loved me. I was angry at the world. He taught me to forgive. He taught me to love. I love him, I need him. He is the most important person I have in my life. I love him, because of him the fire of my heart burns on.

Mitchell, Age 13, Lacey

Grandfather: My Native American Heritage

Gives me advice

Shows me respect for other living things

Very knowledgeable about many things

Teaches me about family heritage

Has taught me to hunt

Shows kindness to those who provide a service

Listens to my point of view

Teaches me about animals

Teaches me about discipline

Tells funny stories

Ben, Age 16, Olympia

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee remains committed to this recognition event and are making plans for the 2009 Kinship Care *Voices of Children* contest.

Washington State Kinship Care Oversight Committee
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Executive Summary

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee was established by the legislature in 2003 continuing through 2010, to provide guidance in identifying, supporting and strengthening kinship care families. Membership includes kinship caregivers, child advocates, legislative staff, representatives of state agencies, non-profit service providers, tribes and the legal community.

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee is involved in several important activities to support kinship care providers including:

- Washington State Kinship Care Children's Poetry, Drawing and Essay Contest - *Voices of Children-Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives*;
- Public education and awareness
- Kinship Navigator Program
- Review of Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Federal Legislation
- Exploring legal issues and options for kinship caregivers
- Collaboration to support kinship care families

Members of the Kinship Care Oversight Committee continue to be instrumental in planning and organizing various recognition events, conferences and other efforts highlighting the important role of kinship care providers. Some of these include:

- DSHS Kinship Care website
- Support for the annual Foster Parent and Caregiver Conference
- Support for the Kinship Caregivers Health and Well-Being Survey

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Background

In the November 2002 Kinship Care Report to the legislature, the Kinship Care Workgroup proposed sixteen high priority recommendations for improving kinship care in Washington State. In response to that report, in 2003 the legislature enacted SHB 1233, which required the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to create a Kinship Care Oversight Committee. In 2005, the legislature passed SHB 1280, which continued the Committee through 2010.

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee was established to provide guidance in identifying, supporting and strengthening kinship care families. Membership includes kinship caregivers, child advocates, legislative staff, representatives of state agencies, non-profit service providers, tribes and the legal community.

The 2000 census revealed that one in twelve children under age 18 lives in a home headed by a grandparent. Another startling figure is that 6 million children are being raised in households headed by grandparent(s) and other relatives. Of these, 2.5 million are in households with neither parent present. Approximately 150,000 children in foster care, or one-third of all children placed in out of home care though Child Protective Services in the U.S. are being cared for by their relatives.

In the state of Washington, 35,341 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them, 71% percent are under the age of 60, and 13% live in poverty. However, the majority of children living with grandparent(s) are not in custody of the child welfare system. Their grandparent(s) provide a safety net to children inside and outside the social welfare system in cases where parents struggle with substance abuse, incarceration, mental illness, economic hardship, divorce, domestic violence and other issues leading to their absence as primary caregivers for their children.

With the continued increase of kinship caregivers nationally and in Washington State the Kinship Care Oversight Committee continues to be committed and guided by the 2002 recommendations and an update on the progress on each recommendation is included in Attachment 1.

Kinship Care Oversight Committee Activities

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee and its sub-committees provide education and awareness to the community and legislators about the needs of kinship caregivers and address the four areas identified in the 2002 Kinship Care report: financial needs, service delivery and practice, legal issues and social services.

Public Education and Awareness

Members of the Kinship Care Oversight Committee continue to be instrumental in planning and organizing various recognition events, conferences and other efforts highlighting the important role of kinship care providers. Some of the events include:

- Washington State Kinship Care Children's Poetry, Drawing and Essay Contest - *Voices of Children-Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives*;
- Regional Kinship Care conferences;
- Foster Parent and Caregiver Annual Conference;
- Parenting the Second Time Around Train the Trainer workshops;
- Two proclamations by the Governor honoring relatives raising children;
- Presentations at national and state conferences.

The committee is also involved in the following activities:

- Implementation and expansion of the Kinship Navigator program;
- Identifying financial resources for kinship care families;
- Planning, organizing and promoting public education and awareness regarding kinship care issues;
- Exploring legal issues and options for relative caregivers;
- Provide training opportunities for caregivers;
- Exploring subsidized guardianship in the state of Washington;
- Exploring respite care service options and models;
- Expanding and diversifying its membership; and
- Collaboration to Support Kinship Care Families

Kinship Navigator Program

The 2007 legislature appropriated additional funding of \$400,000 for the creation of four new Kinship Navigator Program sites, as well as increased funds to allow for full-time positions in both the Yakima and Seattle-King County regions. The Kinship Navigator Program is administered through the Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA) which contracts with local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). In June 2007, a request for proposal was distributed to the 13 AAAs. Four of the seven submitted proposals were selected for funding. There are six Kinship Navigator program sites, three of which serve Eastern Washington and three of which serve Western Washington.

Kinship Navigator Programs and their Sponsoring AAA:

King County:

Senior Services of Seattle - AAA: Aging and Disability Services, Seattle/King County: Joan Ebenal, Joan.Ebenal@Seattle.Gov, (206) 684-0641

King County Kinship Navigator: Helen Sawyer, helens@seniorservices.org, (206) 727-6264

Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Kittitas, Yakima and Walla Walla Counties:

Catholic Family and Child Services - Yakima AAA: Southeast Washington Aging and Long Term Care: Lynne Van Horn, vanhol@dshs.wa.gov, (509) 965-0105

Kinship Navigator: Mary Pleger, mpleger@cfcisyakima.org, (509) 965-7100 or 1-800-246-2962

Spanish Speaking Kinship Navigator: Terri Aguilera-Flemming taguileraflemming@cfcisyakima.org, (509) 965-7100 or 1-800-246-2962

Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties:

Family Education and Support Service AAA: Lewis-Mason and Thurston Area Agency on Aging: Carrie Petit, petitcg@dshs.wa.gov, (360) 664-2168

Kinship Navigator: Lynn Urvina, KinNavigator@qwestoffice.net, (360) 754-7629

Pierce County:

Child and Family Guidance Center AAA: Pierce County Aging and Long Term Care: Connie Kline, ckline@co.pierce.wa.us, (253) 798-3782

Kinship Navigator: Roslyn Alber, ralber@cfgcpc.org, (253) 565-4484 ext. 104

Spokane and Whitman Counties:

Elder Services - Spokane Mental Health, Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties: Rural Resources - AAA: Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern WA: George Brower, browegm@dshs.wa.gov

Kinship Navigator: Angela Andreas, aandreas@smhca.org, (509) 458-7450

Kinship Navigator: Vicki Pontecorvo, vpontecorvo@ruralresources.org, (509) 684-3932

Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Lincoln and Okanogan Counties, Aging and Adult Care of Central WA AAA:

Aging and Adult Care of Central WA: Rick Einar, einarr@dshs.wa.gov, (509) 886-0700

Kinship Navigator: Nancy Thorn, thornn@dshs.wa.gov, 1-877-380-5787

Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania, Wahkiakum Counties, Children's Home Society, Southwest Washington region. AAA:

Southwest Washington Agency on Aging and Disabilities:

Mike Reardon, ReardML@dshs.wa.gov, (360) 501-8371.

Kinship Navigator: Lauren Head, laurenh@chs-wa.org; (360) 695-1325, ext 4224

Whatcom County: Northwest Regional Council (AAA):
Richard Dietz, DietzRC@dshs.wa.gov, (360) 676-6749
Kinship Navigator: Laina Berry, BerryLS@dshs.wa.gov; (360) 676-6749

Review of HR 6893 - Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act Federal Legislation

The HR 6893, Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act will help hundreds of thousands of children and youth in foster care by promoting permanent families for them through relative guardianship and adoption and improving education and health care.

This new federal law provides states the option to extend federal support for youth to age 21. HR 6893 will offer for the first time many American Indian children important federal protections and support related to foster care, guardianship and adoption support.

Exploring Legal Issues and Options for Kinship Caregivers

The Committee continues its advocacy for expanding the legal services project, currently available in King County and beginning in other counties, into other areas of the state. Increasing legal services information available on the internet along with printed and videotape resources remain a priority. The Committee will continue to explore funding options for legal services.

In Thurston County, legal information can be found through a self-help legal education kiosk located at the Thurston County Courthouse, along with monthly workshops to assist relatives with completing legal paperwork.

The Clark County Volunteer Lawyers Program is beginning a two-part program for kinship caregivers. The first is a monthly seminar held at the YWCA to teach relatives how to obtain legal custody, secure medical care/medical insurance and provide other needed information. Secondly, low-income kinship caregivers will be able to attend self-help classes where a local attorney will provide help with securing formal or informal custody.

Collaboration to Support Kinship Care Families

The *Cowlitz/Wahkiakum County Kinship Care Coalition* was formed in the last year by local agencies to provide a forum for information sharing and networking, identifying gaps in kinship care services, advocating for new services and resources, maintaining a “support group connection” for families and promoting acceptance for Kinship Caregivers among the general public.

In addition to the Cowlitz/Wahkiakum County Kinship Care Coalition, three previously formed coalitions, the King County Kinship Collaboration, Yakima County Kindred Spirits Coalition and the Clark County Kinship Care Coalition, continue to expand. The Kinship Care Oversight Committee is committed to

working with these coalitions to share information, resources and events. During the coming year, the Kinship Care Oversight Committee will travel to different parts of the state to hold its quarterly meetings, hosted by various county kinship coalitions.

Department of Social and Health Services

DSHS Kinship Care Website Link

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) provides a link and manages the Kinship Care Website, <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare/>, which was established in spring 2006 through the efforts of Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA), Economic Services Administration (ESA) and Children's Administration (CA), with feedback from the Kinship Care Oversight Committee. The website provides important information for caregivers. Both caregivers and professionals can access information on financial assistance, health care, drug/alcohol and mental health services, child care, foster care, support programs and information on caring for children with disabilities.

Twenty-Sixth Annual Foster Parent and Caregiver Conference

The DSHS Children's Administration sponsored the 26th annual Foster Parent and Caregiver Conference in Yakima, where 500 people assembled at the Yakima Convention Center September 21-23, for the Twenty-Sixth Annual Foster Parents and Caregivers Conference. Several state agencies, community groups and members of the Kinship Care Oversight Committee partnered to make this year's conference a huge success. This year's theme, "We Are Family" was truly felt by most participants and by all reports, participants felt included in all aspects of the conference. The conference was attended by foster parents, relative caregivers and kinship caregivers.

Kinship Caregivers

Who Are the Kinship Caregivers?

One in 12 American children live in a household headed by a grandparent or other relative. In the state of Washington approximately 86,691 children live in households headed by a grandparent or other relative and the numbers continue to rise.

In many of these homes, grandparents and other relatives have become the primary caregivers, or kinship caregivers, for children whose parents cannot or are unable to care for them due to substance abuse, illness, child abuse and neglect, economic hardship, incarceration, divorce, domestic violence or other serious problems.

Kinship caregivers are not like most parents; they are retired, on a fixed income, some have medical issues, most are not familiar with resources available to them and there are not enough resources for all of them. These caregivers need extra support as they struggle to give the children in their care the best possible care. In

addition, care giving can be stressful and may contribute to serious illness, depression and many other medically related issues.

In providing a vital safety net for children, grandparents and other relative caregivers often face serious challenges in locating services to address the basic needs of the children they are raising. Health care, child care, applying for public benefits and enrolling the children in school, are often difficult systems to navigate.

Kinship Caregivers Health and Well-Being Survey

A recent study of kinship care givers in Washington State, Hawaii and Kansas utilizing the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) revealed some interesting risk factors for kinship care givers.

Washington State was one of the three states (along with Hawaii and Kansas) selected to implement a new ten-item family caregiver questionnaire as part of the 2007 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) conducted annually by the Washington State Department of Health.

Results

During 2007, 13,826 Washington BRFSS respondents were asked, “During the past month, have you been raising a child under age 19 whose parents are unable to take care of them?” Respondents who answered “yes” to this question were classified as kinship caregivers. A total of 180 respondents said “yes” to this question; this report details the results of the 122 kinship caregivers who reported only providing kinship care and not some other type of care in addition.

Kinship Caregiver Characteristics

Most kinship caregivers were women (55.8 percent) with an average age of 43.9 years. Kinship caregivers were less likely to have received a college degree (20.6 percent) than non-caregivers (37.7 percent). Nearly three in ten kinship caregivers reported having a disability (28.4 percent), which was higher than the rate of disability among non-caregivers (23.3 percent).

Kinship caregivers reported more days per month of poor physical health (5.5 days) compared to non-caregivers, (3.6 days). Kinship caregivers also reported more days per month of poor mental health (4.9 days) than non-caregivers, (3.2 days). Kinship caregivers reported that their general health was fair or poor more often than non-caregivers (23.3 percent and 12.8 percent respectively).

Kinship caregivers and non-caregivers reported similar levels of physical activity, (53.9 percent of kinship caregivers and 53.5 percent of non-caregivers met physical activity recommendations).

Kinship caregivers reported consuming five or more servings of fruits and vegetables less often than non-caregivers (23.3 percent compared to 26.2 percent)

and were more likely to be obese than non-caregivers (47.9 percent of kinship caregivers versus 25.0 percent of non-caregivers had a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher).

Kinship Caregivers Experience

A majority of kinship care recipients were male (55.4 percent) and between the ages of 6-17 (72.0 percent). Care recipients were most commonly a family member of the caregiver (52.0 percent); though, 22.4 percent of kinship caregivers provided care for a friend and 13.6 percent cared for a non-family member.

When asked the greatest difficulty faced personally, kinship caregivers most often said that caregiving created a financial burden (25.3 percent) or that caregiving created stress (14.2 percent). Among kinship caregivers, 71.5 percent reported being the primary caregiver for the recipient and only 15.1 percent reported receiving compensation for their care. In the past 12 months 3.9 percent of kinship caregivers reported being injured.

When kinship caregivers were asked what two services they would find most helpful, 46.5 percent reported needing money to pay for additional resources (such as supplies, equipment, etc.), 27.9 percent needed information about local services and programs, 14.8 percent reported needing family consultation/counseling to address stress or family dynamics, 13.4 percent reported needing respite care (breaks from caregiving) and 7.7 percent reported needing education about caregiving skills or health conditions.

The health risks for kinship caregivers can be debilitating. With limited resources for caregiver's, the health and safety of children in their care could be compromised. The Kinship Care Oversight Committee continues to advocate for kinship caregivers and have several recommendations to the Legislature in 2009.

Kinship Care Oversight Committee 2009 Recommendations

The Kinship Care Oversight Committee's highest priority is to maintain the existing Navigators, the Kinship Support program, relative search and support and the 2008 TANF grant increase. It is important to continue moving forward, advocating for services and supports for relatives caring for children.

Recommended service improvements include:

Expansion of the Kinship Navigator Program

There are currently 7.5 Navigators around the state. The goal is to have at least one Navigator in every Area Agency on Aging geographic area. There are 13 AAAs, leaving 5.5 without a Navigator. *The 2009 Navigator Expansion* recommendation is an additional 2.5 - 3.5 Navigators: $\$85,000/\text{Navigator} \times 3.5 = \$297,500 \times 2 \text{ years} = \$595,000 + \$40,000 \text{ for administration at the state level} = \$635,000$.

Respite

Many caregivers need time to go to medical appointments, take care of daily tasks or simply get a break from caring for their children. Many do not qualify for Working Connections Child Care as they are not currently employed. Finding 'respite' can be extremely challenging and at present funds are not available for this purpose. *The 2009 Respite* recommendation is to fund a competitive grant process administered through the Kinship Care Support Program for communities to develop 'respite' opportunities for Kinship Caregivers. Funds could be used for temporary child care, the development of the Mockingbird Model, Crisis Nursery programs or other 'respite' programs that meet the needs of caregivers in individual communities. The cost of respite programs will need further research.

Legal Resources

Many Kinship Caregivers have legal issues related to the care of their children that can be complex and costly. Discussions are underway to determine if there are better ways to use existing legal resources and if some of the legal processes can be simplified.

Subsidized Guardianship

The recent passage of HR6893, which was signed by the President on October 7, 2008 creates the opportunity for states to implement subsidized guardianship programs. This would allow some relatives to become legal guardians through the dependency process and receive an on-going subsidy payment at the foster care level for youth ages 18 - 21. Efforts are currently underway to fully understand the population for whom the subsidized guardianship would be an option. *The 2009 Subsidized Guardianship* recommendation has not been determined.

Support Groups

Efforts to obtain a small portion of the relative search and support allocation for the purpose of funding Kinship Caregiver support groups will continue. However, there is no recommendation in 2009.

Attachment 1

2002 Kinship Care Report Recommendations and Status Report

High Priority/Short-Term	Status
Provide full TANF payment for second child in kinship family	TANF grant was increased by 3 percent in 2008; however, we do not have full payment for second child in kinship family.
Strengthen relative search process	The 2007 budget included funds for increased relative search. There are currently 11 CA FTEs dedicated to relative search utilizing state of the art family locator data bases.
Create Kinship Navigator positions	We currently have 7.5 Navigator positions funded by the State. The goal is one Navigator per AAA, or 13 Navigators statewide. The recently-passed federal legislation HR 6893 (Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption Act) includes a section funding competitive grants for kinship navigator services.
Implement aggressive public education and awareness campaign on kinship care issues	The <i>Voices of Children</i> award ceremony provides a great opportunity to bring attention to kinship care, as do other events taking place around the State. There are no dedicated funds for public education and awareness, so efforts are generally local and tied to a specific event.
Improve the delivery of TANF benefits to relative caregivers	<p>The DSHS Kinship Care webpage was released and provides a plethora of information about various services available to kinship caregivers.</p> <p>Additionally, there is an effort underway to reinstate the DSHS internal work group focusing on kinship care issues, which in turn could address issues that arise with the TANF delivery system.</p>

High Priority/Short-Term	Status
Create an education/medical consent waiver	The medical/mental health waiver is in place; however, there is not an education waiver in statute. The Oversight Committee continues to assess whether a statute related to education is warranted.
Establish a legal services pilot project	<p>In addition to the King County Legal Services project, a subcommittee of the Oversight Committee has begun to bring legal services people to the table to discuss what is available to caregivers in various parts of the state and to develop recommendations regarding improving the availability of legal resources.</p> <p>One of the challenges in providing legal services to kinship families is that the rules and procedures vary so much from county to county.</p>
Create a statewide respite care inventory	The survey has been completed by the Respite and Crisis Care Coalition and the Kinship Care Oversight Committee is developing a proposal to take to the legislature in 2009 regarding respite care services for kinship caregivers.
Establish a support services fund for relative caregivers	The Kinship Care Support Program continues to receive \$2m per biennium (DSHS/ADSA).
Support Lifespan Respite Act and position state to receive funding	The Lifespan Respite Care Act became law in 2006 but despite authorizing \$53.3 million for respite care, it has never been funded. We continue to support the full funding of this Act. The recently-passed HR 6893 does include a section related to kinship caregivers, but none related to respite care.

High Priority/Long Term	Status
Provide full TANF payment for all multiple-child kinship families	The recommendation has not been implemented, in great part due to budget constraints.
Promote systems collaboration	Collaboratives have been developed in various parts of the state and a request is being made to reinstate the DSHS internal workgroup. ESA and the CA have worked closely on implementing the new child temporary absence policy and concurrent TANF benefits in support of family reconciliation.
Provide GAL/CASA services	The CASA budget was increased substantially in 2007; however, no formal action steps have been taken to address this issue specifically for kinship families.
Provide respite care services for relative caregivers	The Kinship Care Oversight Committee is prioritizing the provision of respite dollars as part of the 2009 priorities
Provide Training Opportunities for all Caregivers	CA offers training sessions to foster parents and relative caregivers each month.
Medium Priority/Short-Term	Status
Increase oversight and accountability for non-parent caregivers on TANF	This recommendation was tied to the recommendation to increase the multiple-child grant level. Given that that has not occurred this recommendation has not been relevant.
Incorporate kinship families in Special Children Health Care Needs pilot	No formal action steps have been developed to address this.

Medium Priority/Short-Term	Status
Fund legal information packet and website	The legal resources guide continues to be published and distributed. Additionally, a DVD and other materials are available on legal options for caregivers. The Oversight Committee has a subcommittee working to bring folks from the legal community together to identify and implement ways to improve access to legal resources. Finally, a kiosk dealing with resources for kinship families has been established in the Thurston County Courthouse.
Educate judges and attorneys about kinship care issues	This is an ongoing effort and is happening around the state in various ways. The local collaborations have partnered with many folks in their communities, including judges, attorneys and other service providers. Judges and attorneys sit on task forces, advisory committees and such with kinship caregivers, which provide opportunities for education and collaboration.
Support statewide Unified Family Court	No formal action steps have been developed to address this; however, many members of the Oversight Committee supported recent legislation that moved in the UFC direction.
Federal Recommendation	Status
Amend National Family Caregiver Support Program/Older Americans Act	Recommendations have been made; however, no changes have been implemented.

Federal Recommendation	Status
Subsidized Guardianships	Provision addressing subsidized guardianships for kinship caregivers is included in legislation recently passed by the U.S. Congress (HR 6893). DSHS is currently analyzing the legislation with regard to its implementation in Washington State.