



FAMILY CONNECTION NETWORK KINSHIP CARE PROGRAM

STARTING A LASTING JOURNEY



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A LOOK AT THIS ISSUE
OPEN HOUSE IDEAS FOR
YOUR MEETING

A DIFFERENT

FCN
PROGRAM
SERVICES

KIND OF

LOVE

- MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUP
(FAMILY MEAL, ADULT AND CHILD ACTIVITIES)
- CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
- CRISES ASSESSMENT AND REFERRALS
- EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION AND SUPPORT
- HELP TO FACILITATE PERMANENCY
- EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND SKILL BUILDING
OPPORTUNITIES
- YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTERED RESPITE
OPPORTUNITIES

INTRODUCTION TO THE FAMILY CONNECTION NETWORK

YOU ARE APPRECIATED

Thank you for being the support that the child(ren) in your care needs. You have taken the first important step in assuring the safety and stability of your kin-child(ren) by opening your heart and your home. You, as a caregiver, have taken on the role of parent, nurturer, provider and teacher ... being there in a way that their biological parent cannot, at this time. This toolkit was compiled based on the authentic voices of kinship caregivers, themselves.

As you review this toolkit, keep in mind that every situation is different. The tools and tips included are merely guidelines to help you create the best plan for you and your kin-child(ren).

Remember, right now you are the best option for your kin-child(ren)... but, you are not in this alone. The Family Connection Network is here to help!



This toolkit provides an outline of how to create and establish skills for you, as a kinship caregiver, to help you succeed with the right structure, resources, and procedures for your family through the following steps:

1. Establishing a Personal Mission & Vision
2. Understanding the Terms
3. Understanding the Challenges of Kinship Care
4. Connecting Your Future Goals to Your Present Actions
5. Connecting with Community Resources
6. Funding and Budgeting
7. Building Relationships, Partnerships, Establishing Trust

STEP 1 OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

Every problem has a solution, and understanding the problems can help you and your caseworker come up with the strategies and goals to create the solution.

Why is it important to understand the Challenge[s]?

- ☒ To understand the situation you are facing
- ☒ To learn about resources and get assistance
- ☒ To plan strategies and goals

Knowing the Challenges

- What are your personal challenges? (i.e. financial, legal, stress, etc.)

- What challenges are your kin-child(ren) dealing with? (school, behavior, disability services)

- What challenges are most important to you?

Knowing the Challenges

- ☒ Know where to get the resources and assistance you need to conquer the challenge[s]
- ☒ Know what family and friends you can depend on in this process
- ☒ Know what you need to be educated about to help your family be its best



TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

*Behaviors of a
traumatized
child can be...*

- Anxiety
- Trouble Sleeping (too little or too much)
- Eating (loss of appetite or eating too much)
- Anger (fighting or destroying property)
- Trouble Focusing
- Depression
- Defiance
- Clinginess or Withdrawal
- Bedwetting
- Acting younger than they are
- Nightmares
- Flashbacks



Trauma

A traumatic event is different from run-of-the-mill stressful or upsetting events in several ways:

FIRST, it threatens the life or physical integrity of the child or of someone critically important to the child (such as a parent, grandparent or sibling).

SECOND, it causes an overwhelming sense of terror, helplessness, and horror.

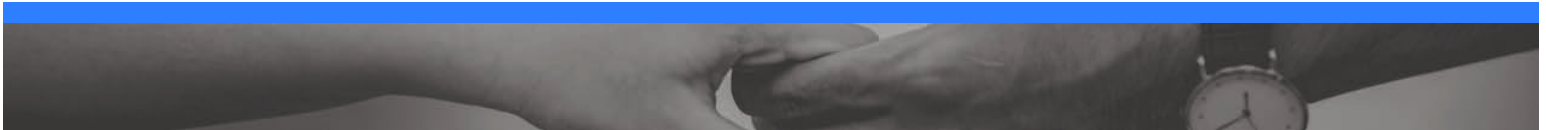
THIRD, the body may react to this threat automatically with an increased heart rate, shaking, dizziness or faintness, rapid breathing, release of stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol, and loss of control of the bowel or bladder.

THE CHALLENGE

Caring for children who have been through trauma can leave caregivers feeling:

- **Confused**
- **Frustrated**
- **Unappreciated**
- **Angry**
- **Helpless**

When you understand what trauma is and how it has affected your kin-child, it becomes easier to establish a healthy relationship with them.



Helping Traumatized Children

- > Don't be afraid to talk about the traumatic event.
- > Provide a consistent, predictable pattern for the day.
- > Be nurturing, comforting and affectionate, but be sure that this is in an appropriate context.
- > Discuss your expectations for behavior and your style of "discipline" with the child.
- > Talk with the child.
- > Watch closely for signs of re-enactment, avoidance, and physiological hyper-reactivity.
- > Protect the child.
- > Give the child "choices" and some sense of control.
- > Interact with the child based on his/her emotional age.
- > Model and teach appropriate social behaviors.
- > Have realistic expectations of these children.
- > Be patient with the child's progress and with yourself.
- > Take care of yourself.
- > If you have questions, ask for help.

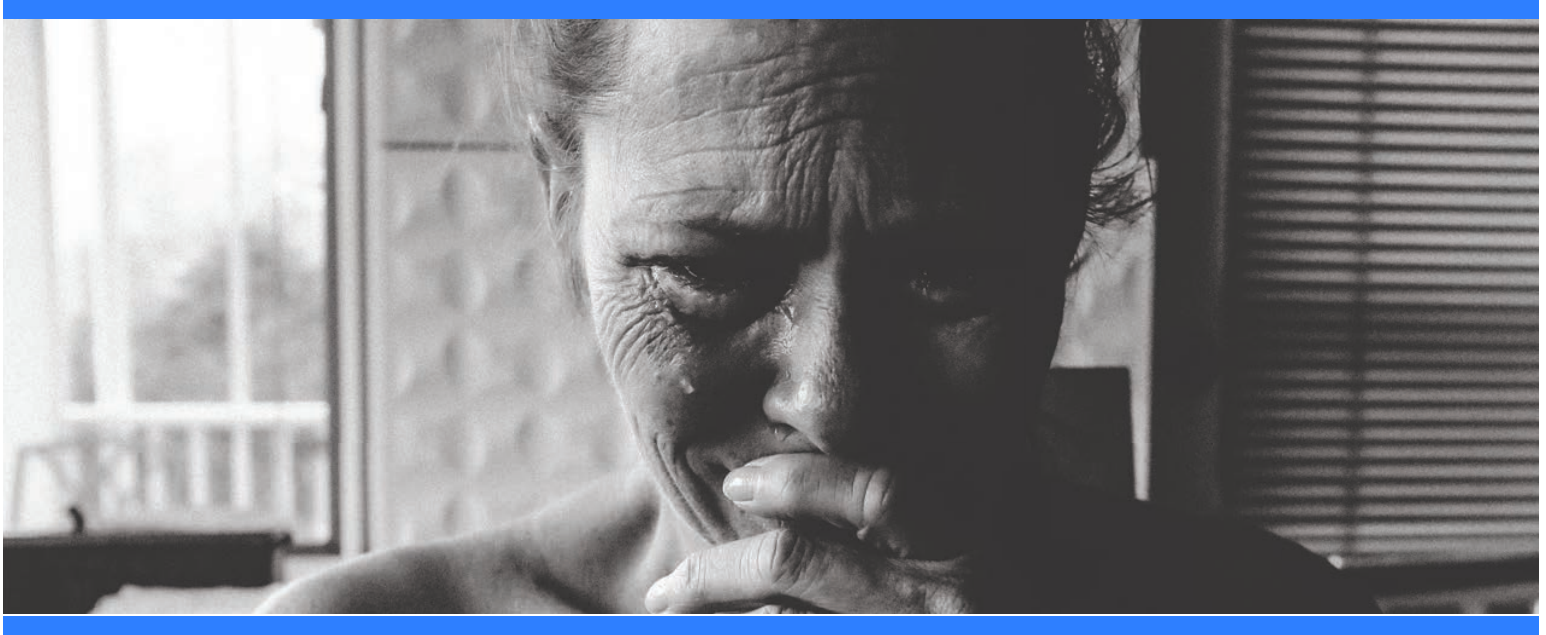
Myths to Avoid

- ❖ My love should be enough to erase the effects of everything bad that happened before.
- ❖ My child should be grateful and love me as much as I love him/her.
- ❖ My child shouldn't love or feel loyal to an abusive parent. It's better to just move on, forget, and not talk about past painful experiences.

SECONDARY TRAUMA

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Although your kin-child may be dealing with their own traumas, please be aware that you, too, can be dealing with your own emotional struggles from previous experiences, or with the issues stemming from the biological parent's inability to provide for their child.



Secondary traumatic stress is the emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another individual.

Each year more than 10 million children in the United States endure the trauma of abuse, violence, natural disasters, and other adverse events. These experiences can give rise to significant emotional and behavioral problems that can profoundly disrupt the children's lives and bring them in contact with child-serving professionals. For therapists, child welfare workers, case managers, and other helping professionals involved in the care of traumatized children and their families, the essential act of listening to trauma stories may take an emotional toll that compromises professional functioning and diminishes quality of life. Individual and supervisory awareness of the effects of this indirect trauma exposure is a basic part of protecting the health of the worker and ensuring that children consistently receive the best possible care from those who are committed to helping them.

Adapted from Peterson 2018

SECONDARY TRAUMA

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All families experience trauma differently. Some factors, such as a child's age or the family's culture or ethnicity, may influence how the family copes and recovers from a traumatic event. Trauma changes families as they work to survive and adapt to their circumstances and environment. While this adjustment may be smooth for some, for others the stress and burden cause them to feel alone, overwhelmed, and less able to maintain vital family functions. Traumas are frightening, often life-threatening, or violent events that can happen to any or all members of a family. Traumas can cause traumatic stress responses in family members with consequences that ripple through family relationships and impede optimal family functioning.



When families carry out routines, rituals, and traditions, they strengthen their connections and grow stronger together. Talking, laughing, sharing memories and feelings, as well as working together to solve problems, manage stress, and plan for each day and the future are necessary for resilience and recovery from traumatic stress.

What Can Be Done?

Healthy relationships are key to building resilience, which is the primary way to combat adverse childhood experiences (ACES). It is in the context of safe relationships that we can invite children to feel like they matter, which is critical for building resiliency.

Look for opportunities to connect. Connection can be thought of as “being present with” another person. This can be as simple as sharing a smile, speaking a word of encouragement, doing an activity together or sitting with a child who is upset.

Focus on encouragement. This is not the same thing as praise. Praise is focused on children’s accomplishments, while encouragement invites children to be their best selves by expressing belief in who they are. It is difficult to praise a child who is failing and this is when encouragement is needed the most. Some examples of praise and encouragement are below.

Adapted from “1-2-3 Care Toolkit.” 2019.

PRAISE

- I’m so proud of you.
- You did it just like I told you.
- You’re the best player on the team.
- You got an A!
- Good boy/girl.
- Your painting/project is beautiful.
- I’m impressed.
- You are so smart!

ENCOURAGEMENT

- You figured it out.
- You reached your goal!
- You are capable..
- I trust your judgement.
- You can decide for yourself.
- Can you tell me about your painting?
- You really stuck it out.
- Look how far you’ve come.

Adapted from Positive Discipline by Jane Nelson, Ed.D. 2006

LIFE AFTER TRAUMA



TRIGGERS

Triggers are all about one's perceptions experienced as reality. The mind/body connection sets in motion a fight, flight, or freeze response. A triggered individual experiences fear, panic, upset, and agitation. You can help your kin-child(ren) by learning what signals they exhibit when they are in danger of "triggering", based on historical traumatic experiences. These actions can be a set of emotional, physiological, and behavioral responses that arise in the service of survival and safety (e.g., sights, sounds, smells, touch).

RE-TRAUMATIZATION

When trauma survivors are exposed to people, places, events, situations, or environments, it may cause them to re-experience past trauma as if it were fresh or new.

Vivid re-experiencing of past trauma is prominent and terrifying because it returns trauma sufferers to the most painful moments of their lives, to memories of experiences that caused significant mental and emotional damage.

BENEFITS OF KINSHIP CARE

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Minimizes Trauma: Relocating is a difficult transition, but when you are going to the house of someone you know and someone you consider family, it can make moving easier than going to a stranger's house.

Less likely to reenter into foster care: A child who is in kinship care is less likely to become displaced again.

Improves behavioral and mental health risks: Children who are placed in kinship care often have less problematic behaviors.



Promotes siblings staying together: It is often more difficult to find placements for sibling groups in the foster care system. Kinship Care placements are more likely to keep siblings together while in out of home care.

Family Ties: Relationships are sustained with communication between other members of the family, not limited to your kin-child(ren)'s biological parents.

Cultural Identity: Kinship Care helps children continue to follow family traditions as well as the culture of their community. This makes it easier for a child to find a sense of purpose, as well as continuing the practices of customs that they are familiar with.

STEP 2: CONNECTING YOUR FUTURE GOALS TO YOUR PRESENT ACTIONS

How to start setting goals

1. Know the challenges and their relevance
2. Know where you want to be within a specified amount of time
3. Develop an Action Plan

Establish a Mission and a Vision Statement

Driving while blind folded will get you somewhere, but where? Having a vision removes the blindfold that day to day obstacles can create, and help navigate you to your vision. In order to be successful in this journey, you need to start with your personal vision.

- Envisioning your desired life outcomes, and outlining the steps needed to get there, helps ensure you move purposefully toward those goals.
- Once you've given thought to what you want to do and how you want to do it, you will find that your choices are more directed, and your decisions are made with greater confidence.
- Lastly, writing it down makes it real. It gives you a tool to measure your progress. And life with a plan in hand is better than hoping for the best by making it up as you go along!

In this section you will work on your vision, mission and your values.

Key Terms In This Section:

Vision: *WHAT* do I want to achieve?

Mission: *HOW* do I plan to achieve this vision?

Values: Help identify the paths, boundaries, and signposts that you want to honor as you make your journey.

TASK 1: CREATING A PERSONAL VISION AND VALUES STATEMENT

Start by identifying the values you wish to honor and demonstrate in your life. Make a list of your most important values.

MY CORE VALUES

These values are not negotiable in my life; they serve to guide my choices, my behavior, and my decisions. I will strive to live them consistently every day.

Once you have completed it, identify the 10 that are closest to your heart.

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

Review and then rank order them from one to 10, with one being the most important in your life. Finally, select the top 5 as those you will include in your statement.

1.	4.
2.	5.
3.	

Define what these values mean to you.

PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT TEMPLATE



You are now ready to draft your vision statement. Approach writing your vision statement with a clear mind. Think about the direction your life is going and where you want it to go. Use the following questions to help focus your vision statement. Be honest with yourself, think through each one carefully and record your responses. Add other questions and answers if they come to mind. Remember to check responses to align with the values you have identified.

Who am I?

What are the things I believe and actively seek to demonstrate in my home, my family relationships, in my community and on the job?

What am I passionate about?

What are the things that bring me joy?

How would I live my life if time and resources were not an issue?

PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT TEMPLATE



What are my greatest strengths (my gifts, abilities and talents)?

What are the habits I need to form in order to be successful personally, in my home, with my family?

What habits do I need to stop?

Other areas I want to include in my vision:

NEXT STEPS

Write about the core values and repeated themes your answers reveal in the following areas:

- **Personal growth and development**
- **Family relationships**
- **Friends**
- **Financial health**
- **Professional aspirations**

If some of your answers fall outside of these categories, create your own. Keep it brief – 3-5 sentences maximum.

What's your ultimate desire for your life?

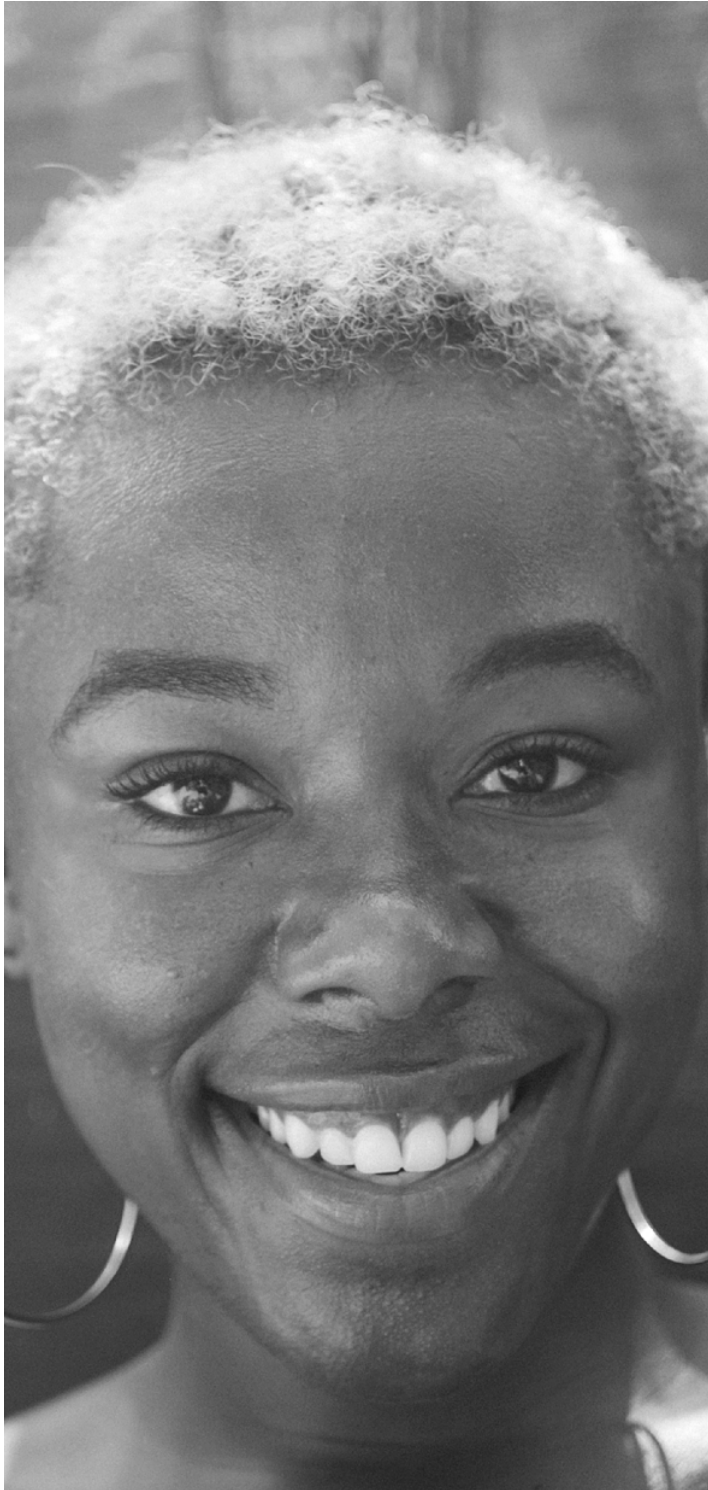
What do you wish to accomplish?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Now that you have completed your personal Vision Statement, how do you use it?

- Once your vision statement is complete and your values are identified, turn your attention to creating a mission statement – a plan that will help you accomplish the vision on a day-to-day basis. Use the steps on the next page to guide you.

BE VISIONARY



I can do anything I set my mind to do.

I am capable of creating the life of my dreams.

I am creative.

I am confident in my abilities.

I am always learning new things.

I am worthy of success.

I have what it takes to become successful.

I am successful in all that I do.

VISION BOARD

1) Create a list of goals you'd like to achieve in the next year. In order to visualize your goals, first you need to know what they are. Spend some time getting clear on exactly what you want your ideal life to look like, and what you need to accomplish in the next 12 months to launch you closer to your goals.

2) Collect a bundle of old magazines with beautiful pictures. If you're not a magazine reader or currently don't have any magazines at home, ask your friends to give you any they no longer want. You should also be able to pick some up for just a dollar or two per magazine at your local thrift store.

3) Find pictures that represent your goals and inspire you. Schedule a couple hours one evening or weekend to go through the magazines and cut out pictures that represent your goals and speak to your heart in some meaningful way. When looking for images in the magazines, look for those that immediately make you say, "Yes! That is what I want in my life!" They don't have to be physical objects or literal interpretations of what you want in your life. Instead, focus on how the images make you FEEL.

4) Make a collage out of your photos

Once you have collected enough photos, it's time to make your vision board! Go to your local craft or dollar store and buy a large piece of construction or poster paper. A cork board or large piece of paper would work as well. Then glue, tack, or tape your pictures to the paper or cork board in an arrangement that is visually pleasing to you.



YES! THAT IS
WHAT I WANT IN
MY LIFE!"



ADAPTED FROM JACK
CANFELD 2017

5) Add motivational “affirmation words” that represent how you want to FEEL!

Your vision of your ideal life shouldn't be focused on “stuff” so much as on how you want to FEEL. For this reason, I like to add words to my vision board that describe how I want to feel on a daily basis - such as:

Joyful

Abundant

Powerful

Fearless

Loved

Strong

Healthy

Caring

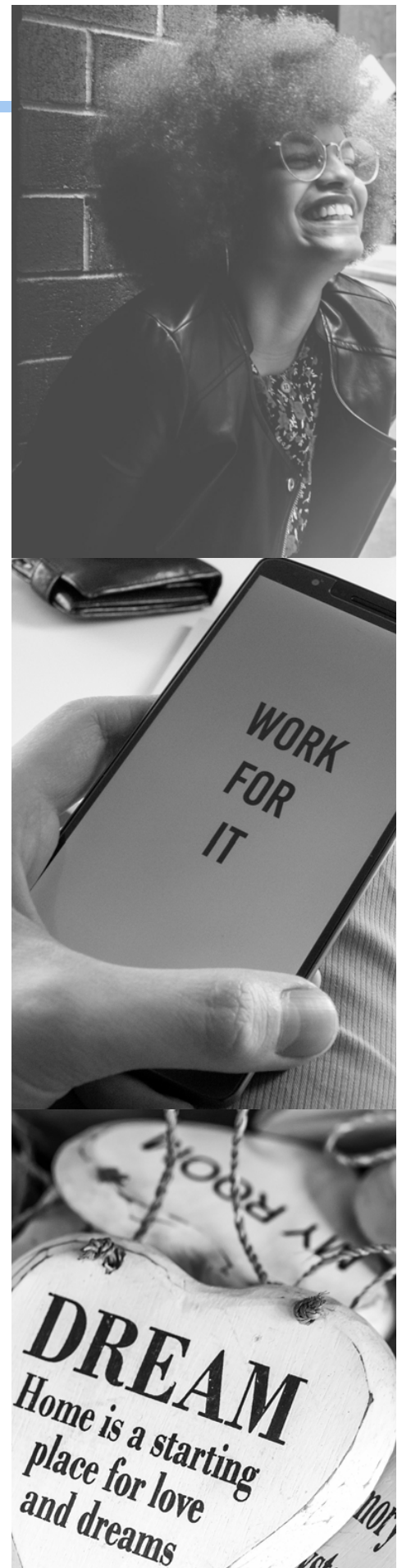
Stable

Independent

Capable

Financially Free from Worry

**BE WELCOMING
TO NEW
POSSIBILITIES!**



TASK 2: WRITING A PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT

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A personal mission statement is a brief description of what you want to focus on in order to accomplish your vision. Goals can then be identified for a period of one day to three years, and should be expressed in your mission statement. It is a way to focus your energy, actions, behaviors and decisions towards the things that are most important to you. Think of this as the detailed day-to-day road map. This exercise requires some reflective thinking, so it is best to set aside some quiet time without distractions or interruptions.



START THINKING

Think of your mission as that which powers your vision or makes the vision a reality. The first step is creating an outcome for each area of your vision statement.

- ➡ What steps will you need to take in life to accomplish your vision?
- ➡ What goals will you need to set and actively pursue?

MISSION TEMPLATE

For each of the areas you have identified in your vision (personal, professional, family etc.) record specific goals that will move you toward achievement of the desired end result.

CATEGORY: area of your vision – personal, professional, family, legal, etc.	SPECIFIC GOAL: Specific steps, action plan items, etc	TO BE COMPLETED BY:	DATE COMPLETED

GOAL SETTING

A goal without a deadline is just a dream. If you want to live your dream, you must choose to do so. Achieving your dream requires work, but is far less difficult when you are focused.

How to Get Started

1. Know the challenges and their relevance.
2. Know where you want to be within a specified amount of time.
3. Develop an Action Plan.



Setting concrete goals and clear action steps is the very foundation of reaching your goal successfully. Goals and action plans define what the family is trying to accomplish. Being mindful of what you want to accomplish is your first step to creating an action plan for all members of the family.

- Determining Objectives for You and Your Family
- Action Plan Template
- Organizing your Allies: School, FCN Case Manager, Family, Friends

WHEN REUNIFICATION IS THE GOAL

There are tools that can help you create a smoother transition for the child(ren) in your care when reunification with their parents is the desired outcome. This can be an emotionally and physically difficult transition for all parties involved; and may be mediated by the court, or may occur in an informal manner. Please understand that each situation is unique, and you should work closely with your Case Manager so they can help you through your particular circumstances.



Children who are in kinship care are often reunified with their parents at a slower rate than children in foster care. The average time of a kinship child's placement is around six years. This is something to think about when making plans for the prolonged care of your kin-child. Keep in mind that each circumstance is individual and most of the time, there is no expiration date for out of home care, but there are certain seeds that can be planted to expedite the process of the child returning to a healthy, loving home with their parents.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT



Understanding why the child was removed from their home.

Understanding why your kin-child was placed in out of home care can help you better understand whether reunification is something that can be expected. There are many different causes for children to be removed from their home. The number one cause is neglect. Since neglect is primarily a passive form of maltreatment, the welfare of the child is not endangered if he or she remains in contact with his or her biological parent. When the child is removed for sexual or physical abuse, there is a stronger need for protective separation between the parent and child.

What role am I willing to let my kin-child's parent have with them now?

Creating healthy boundaries that will allow your kin-child to flourish in your care is something that will take time, collaboration with others and rules for parental visitation, if allowed. Setting limitations and boundaries may be hard for all parties but sometimes may be needed. Think of these questions when you are considering contact with your kin child's parents.

- Are you willing to let them have visitation inside or outside your house?
- What type of involvement do you want them to have with their child while in your care?
- What are the expectations of visits and help with establishing healthy relationships with all parties?

What will be my role moving forward in my kin-child(ren)'s life?

The balance of no longer being the primary caregiver and surrendering your rights can be a difficult transition, as you have become accustomed to having the child be dependent on you. Learning to co-parent with the child's parent may be an abstract idea, but it can be a beneficial solution. Learning how to set common goals and boundaries for the child can ease the transition when they return to live with their biological parent.

COMMUNICATION

YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR
WORLD BY CHANGING
YOUR WORDS...
REMEMBER, DEATH AND
LIFE ARE IN THE POWER
OF THE TONGUE.

JOEL OSTEEN



COMMUNICATION LEADS TO COLLABORATION

This section is focused on building bridges between you and your kin-child. The terms that are defined are to help you start thinking of ways you can model these words for your kin-child.

Key Concept

NOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT OF TRAUMA, IT IS IMPORTANT TO THINK OF WAYS TO:

PREVENT RE-TRAUMATIZATION

1. Learn as much as you can about your kin-child's trauma histories.

****Use the De-Escalation Worksheet to help start the conversation.**

2. Grow your skill of empathy. That is, develop your capacity and the capacity of your kin-child to accurately read each other's body language and respond appropriately.

3. Look for the causes of behaviors. Seek to understand the reason of behaviors and what the behaviors are communicating. What you might view as a frustrating behavior may actually be a coping mechanism attempt. If your response is not trauma-informed, it could lead to causing your kin-child to feel less safe and even more disconnected.

4. Use person-centered, strength-based thinking and language. Instead of looking at how your kin-child is "a victim" or "damaged," you should view them as a survivor. Focus on what they can do, and not on what they cannot do.

5. Provide consistency, predictability, and choice-making opportunities. Meet your kin-child where they are, in a way they understand. Consistency and predictability provide feelings of safety for the individual, helping to reduce anxiety. By providing choice-making opportunities, you allow your kin-child to have control. All of this can go a long way towards making your kin-child feel empowered..

6. Always weigh the mental, emotional, and social risks of any disciplinary actions. Be sure to choose the least-severe option possible in every situation.

7. Communication is key. Prioritize communicating after any tantrums. This will help you find patterns and triggers—and prevent tantrums from reoccurring. It will also help you help your kin - child gain resilience and develop successful coping skills.

Adapted from Trauma-Informed Care Resources Guide - CPI

[illegible]

SETTING THE EMOTIONAL TONE

In this section you will need to take time to think and to be reflective in your responses. Answering these questions can help you make better choices in securing the future you want for yourself and the kin-child. Remember to be honest and truthful with your answers.



TERMS TO EMBRACE

Empathy

A healthy understanding of all voices at the table is important.
Ex: Your kin-child experience

Safety

Create a safe space by establishing clear rules and ensuring every person is heard.

Patience

Resist the tendency to rush or to control things. Plan enough time to allow 'slowness' where good thinking and reflection can take place. Give them time to think about questions.

Listening

Emphasize that everyone has something to contribute, so we must all be able to both hear, and be heard.

KNOWING YOUR INTENTION



Why did you decide to take care of you kin-child(ren)?

How has it been? Lists three good things and three struggles.

**What are your long terms goals with this child?
(Reunification with *their parent(s)* or *adoption of the child*?)**

What do you hope to accomplish with this child's placement with you?

A PENNY FOR THEIR THOUGHTS

Starting conversations with the child about how they are feeling may be difficult at first. The child did not decide to leave; they had to leave. Make sure you try to listen, not judge, and work together in understanding the child's feelings and emotions about the transition. Being open and clear that you are there for the child is key in gaining their trust and respect. These tools are meant to help prepare you to be knowledgeable about how to make this a meaningful and rewarding conversation.

Key Tools In this section:

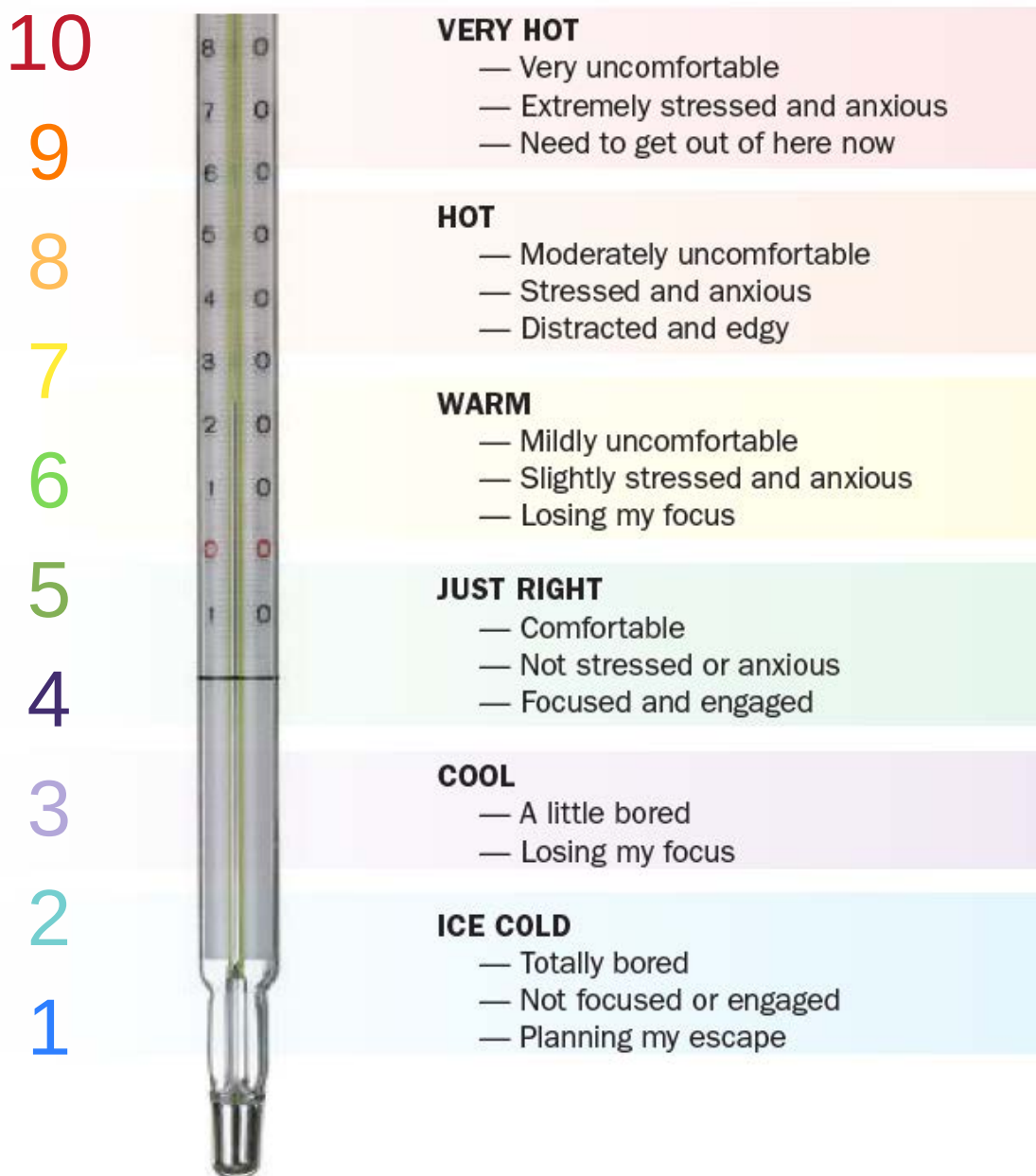
Here are some tools that you will need to be successful in building a bridge between you and your kin-child(ren)

- **Listen:** Don't assume you know everything about the situation. We do not know all sides of the story; approach this conversation with an open mind and try to understand where the kin-child is coming from.
- **Team:** Approach the conversation from the perspective of partners in this circumstance. Frame the conversation in terms of both of you working together to solve a common problem. Work to define the issues that are common.
- **Be Open minded:** If you find communicating to be difficult, you can always ask a caseworker to help you with this. Your Case Manager is trained to know how to deal with special situations, and can instruct you on how to best have these conversations.

(Rewards and Reflection)
- **Next Steps:** Listening creates expectations for action. A measurable set of next steps must be explained and applied as follow-up to the conversation. (This can be voicing ground rules, chores, expectations at school, etc.). These steps may need to be altered with time.

FEELINGS THERMOMETER

Use this worksheet to track your emotions and identify topics or activities that trigger uncomfortable feelings. Be aware of the specific topics or situations that cause discomfort. This scale can be a powerful and useful tool not only for you, but your kin-child as well. With this awareness, you can plan ahead for times that might “raise your temperature” and develop a plan for coping with those situations.



SAMPLE QUESTIONS



Code BLUE: These questions are safe to ask your child and should rate low on the feeling thermometer.

- Who are your friends?
- What do you like to do with your friends?
- What do you want to be when you grow up?
- What is your favorite food?
- What foods do you dislike?
- What's your favorite thing to do in school?
- What do you love to do more than anything else?
- What you like best about yourself?
- What is something you're proud of?
- What is your favorite TV show ?
- Who's your favorite band/singer?
- What is your favorite song of all time?

Code RED: You may need to develop more trust before asking these questions. They rate high on the feeling thermometer.

- What do you like about living here?
- What can I do to make it better for you here?
- What do you think would be an appropriate consequence for your behavior/action? (time out, taking away toys/cellphone, early bedtime)
- What chores would you like to assist with in the house?
- How should we decide on how much time you can use technology in the house?
- What do you do when you are angry?
- What do you like to do when you are sad?
- What do you struggle with in this home?
- Do you feel safe here?

OBSERVATION

Observation is key in truly understanding a child and though we may not always have time to sit down with a notepad and write down all the things they do. It is important to take notes on pattern of behaviors that are consistent to the child and their personality.

What makes your kin-child glow (happy?)

What way can your child grow?

What subjects are they struggling to learn? What is something they want to learn but need assistance learning? Understanding the things that can make a child frustrated in school, or in the home, can lead to better assistance going forward. If you know that your child struggles with reading, maybe working on it together would provide better results than having the child work alone. Allowing yourself to take on the role of cheerleader can help a child get through the toughest of academic, emotional or physical challenges. So, get your poms poms ready and warm up your vocal chords to give your kin-child lots of cheers!



BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

HOW TO EFFECTIVELY
DISCIPLINE YOUR KIN-CHILD
WITH OUT RE-TRAUMATIZATION.



De-Escalation Preferences

This worksheet is a guide to help you gather information and develop personalized de-escalation strategies. Child-centered, trauma-informed de-escalation strategies are powerful prevention tools to help you reverse difficult behaviors, and avoid harsh disciplinary actions. Use this form to develop strategies that are unique to your environment and to your kin-child. If you have any questions or concerns, please be sure to ask your FCN Case Manager.

BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

The following questions are modeled in ways to ask your child about their opinions and feelings towards previous methods that worked and didn't work for them. Remember to keep an open mind as you hear the child's responses.

Refer back to your terms pages to understand terminologies.

1. It's helpful for me to be aware of the things that can help you feel better when you're having a hard time. Have any of the following ever worked for you? I may not be able to offer all these options, but I'd like us to work together to figure out how we can best help you.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Listening to music. | ☐ Playing a computer game. |
| ☐ Reading a newspaper/book. | ☐ Using ice on your body. |
| ☐ Sitting by the nurses' station/principal's office, etc. | ☐ Breathing exercises. |
| ☐ Watching TV. | ☐ Putting your hands under running water. |
| ☐ Talking with a peer. | ☐ Going for a walk with staff. |
| ☐ Walking the halls. | ☐ Lying down with a cold facecloth. |
| ☐ Talking with staff. | ☐ Wrapping up in a blanket. |
| ☐ Calling a friend. | ☐ Using a weighted vest. |
| ☐ Having your hand held. | ☐ Voluntary time out in a quiet room. |
| ☐ Calling your therapist. | ☐ Voluntary time out (anywhere specific?): |
| ☐ Getting a hug. | _____ |
| ☐ Pounding some clay. | |
| ☐ Punching a pillow. | ☐ Other: |
| ☐ Physical exercise. | _____ |
| ☐ Writing in your diary/journal. | |

BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

2. What are some of the things that make it more difficult for you when you're already upset? Are there particular "triggers" that you know will cause you to escalate?

- ☐ Being touched.
 - ☐ Being isolated.
 - ☐ Door open.
 - ☐ People in uniform.
 - ☐ Loud noise.
 - ☐ Yelling.
 - ☐ A particular time of day (when?): _____
 - ☐ A time of the year (when?): _____
 - ☐ Specific scents (please explain): _____
 - ☐ Not having control/input (please explain): _____
 - ☐ Others (please list): _____
-

3. Is there anything that would assist you in feeling safe here? Please explain:



Behavioral Management

- **Teach Stress Management/Relaxation Skills: BREATHE!**
Teach breathing for relaxation.
- Provide child with a calm or quiet place to sit or talk.
- Watch the tone and speed of your voice/words—your kin-children are hypersensitive to facial expressions, volume of voice, and tone. They pick up on stress-related behaviors of adults.
- Teach positive self-talk to your kin-child and practice it before you need it.
“I am safe.”
“I can calm myself down.”
- Use music, exercise, movement, or stretching.
- Practice active listening with your child and demonstrate empathy.
- Use of specific praise like: “You did a great job helping with the dishes” vs “Good job today.”
- 10:1 (Ratio of positive to negative statements for traumatized children/adolescents).
- Active ignoring of negative behavior.
- Consistent expectations that are based on rewards systems, not punishment.

“

Discipline is the
bridge between
goals and
accomplishment
.- Jim Rohn



FAMILY TIME MEMORIES

ACCESS PASS

Any individual who is enrolled in one of the State Programs listed below is eligible for an Access Pass, which provides free or very low cost entrance to many Indiana attractions.

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- SNAP and Hoosier Works
- Hoosier Healthwise Insurance

If you take part in any these programs, make sure to ask your Case Manager for more information on applying for an Access Pass for your family.

Here are some of the fascinating places that you can explore with your kin-child:

- + Conner Prairie
- + The Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art
- + Indiana Historical Society
- + Indiana Repertory Theatre
- + Indiana State Museum
- + Newfields, a Place for Nature & The Arts
- + NCAA Hall of Champions
- + Terre Haute Children's Museum
- + The Children's Museum of Indianapolis

THE VILLAGES OF INDIANA

The Villages of Indiana is proud to offer fun and exciting respite opportunities throughout the year at no cost to families, as they become available, made possible by our generous donors and community partners.

Indy Eleven Soccer Games

Indianapolis Indians
Baseball Games

Indianapolis Colts
Football Games

Newfields "Winterlights"
Tickets



Routines are how families organize themselves to get things done, spend time together and have fun. Every family has its own unique routines. Routines help family members know who should do what, when, and how often.

For example, your family might have:

Daily Routines for getting everyone ready in the morning, bath time, bedtime and mealtimes, and goodbyes;

Weekly Routines for housework, like washing and cleaning; and

Other Routines involving holidays and extended family get-togethers.

Family life might be more chaotic without some routine, but there's more to it than that. Routines also let your children know what's important to your family. Highly meaningful routines, such as the ways you celebrate milestones or accomplishments can help strengthen your shared beliefs and values, and build a sense of belonging and cohesion in families.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE



Relaxation Skills for Children

AT SCHOOL

These coping skills can be used as a transition, maybe at the beginning of the day, after lunch/recess, or as an end of the day or end of the week activity. These can also be used when a child is starting to get anxious or worried or stressed to help them calm down and relax.

- **COUNTING**

I once worked with a child who would pick a random number, like 76, and count to it to help him calm down. Have your child pick a number and count to it.

- **5 4 3 2 1 GROUNDING**

Using your senses to help kids calm down and relax. Kids look for 5 things they see, 4 things they feel, 3 things they hear, 2 things they smell, and 1 thing they taste.

- **IMAGINE YOUR FAVORITE PLACE**

A child's imagination is a powerful tool to use to help them take a mini vacation to their favorite place, no matter where they are!



“

Live and work but do not forget to play, to have fun in life and really enjoy it.

- Eileen Caddy

AT HOME

You might want to try one of these before school, before sitting down to start homework or before bed. Here are a few coping skills that can be helpful when you want your child to calm their energy or get settled to do work.

- **TAKE A SHOWER/BATH**

Some children absolutely love to relax by taking a bath. Add bubbles, play some soothing music, or listen to an audiobook.

- **TAKE A MINDFUL WALK**

Taking a walk and getting out in nature is a great way for kids to calm down. Take a few minutes of the walk and make it mindful:

- Have them use their senses and focus on what they notice.
- What do they smell? What do they notice with their eyes? What do they hear?

It's a great way to introduce mindfulness to kids!

Adapted from Halloran 2018

LEGAL CONCERNS



IT IS IMPORTANT
YOU UNDERSTAND
WHAT ARE YOUR
RIGHTS AND
OPTIONS, LEGALLY,
GIVEN YOUR
CUSTODIAL
ARRANGEMENT

FAMILY CONNECTION NETWORK IS HERE TO HELP

The Family Connection Network is here to support you as you navigate the legal aspects of kinship care.

Please talk to your Case Manager about how to access legal assistance for your particular situation.



Life doesn't get easier or more forgiving, we get stronger and more resilient."

- STEVE MARABOLI

LEGAL TERMINOLOGY

Child In Need of Services (CHINS)

Abused and neglected children are called Children In Need of Services (CHINS) in Indiana law.

There are ten CHINS categories:

1. Neglect
2. Abuse
3. Victim of Sex Offense
4. Parental allowance of child's participation in obscene performance.
5. Parental allowance of child's participation in sex offenses.
6. Child endangerment of self or others.
7. Parental failure to participate in school disciplinary proceedings.
8. Missing Child
9. Child born with fetal alcohol syndrome or trace amounts of substance in system.
10. Child has injury or abnormal development or endangering condition caused by mother's use of substance during pregnancy.

Custodian Custodian is the person with whom a child resides.

De Facto Custodian A person other than a parent who has served as the primary caregiver and financial support of a child for one year, or six months if the child is under three years of age. Any time period after a legal custody proceeding has begun does not count toward the one year or six months time requirement. Foster parents are not de facto custodians.

Paternity Court The Court that hears and decides cases when a child is born to an unmarried woman. This Court has the authority to establish paternity.

Probate Court The Court that orders and terminates guardianships.

Putative father is the term used to refer to a man who is believed to be the father of a child. That man has not had actual paternity established but is believed to be the father because of some reason, like mother's statements.

Resource Home Foster homes, pre-adoptive homes, and relative homes that are resources for children in out of home placements or adoptions.

What is Kinship care?

There are two different types of kinship care in Indiana, formal and informal.

Formal kinship care occurs as a result of a Court hearing called a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) adjudication that results with the child being placed with a relative or other adult who has a relationship with the family. A CHINS adjudication often occurs when there is some reason to believe that the child is abused or neglected, and the Court needs to be involved to protect the child and ensure that the child is receiving appropriate treatment or care. This begins with a petition filed by the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS). The importance here is that this form of kinship care only begins after a formal ruling by a Court, naming you or someone you know as the child's caregiver.

As a formal kinship care provider, you will need to become a licensed Resource Family through DCS. If a child is placed with you in formal kinship care, you will be supervised by DCS. You will need to meet DCS requirements to become a licensed resource parent. DCS requirements include attending training, demonstrating financial and emotional stability, passing a home inspection, providing medical statements for everyone living in your home, and passing a background check of CPS history and criminal history. Contact your local DCS office for more information about becoming a Licensed Resource Family.

Informal kinship care occurs when an individual cares for a child, not his or her own, without a ruling from the Court appointing the individual as the child's caregiver. In informal kinship care, the caregiver may have initially believed that he or she would be caring for the child for only a short time. Yet for a variety of reasons, the parent(s) were unable or unwilling to resume care of the child. Although the kinship caregiver may provide the day to day care for the child, in the eyes of the law the parent is still in charge of the child. Most likely the caregiver has no legal rights or legal relationship to the child and cannot make legal decisions on the child's behalf. Informal kinship caregivers may be able to apply for financial assistance such as Hoosier Healthwise or TANF. Each governing agency for assistance has their own criteria to determine when they will and will not provide financial assistance.

Guardianship

A guardian is “a person appointed by a Court to have the care and custody of a child or the child’s estate, or both.” IC 31-9-2-49. You may become the guardian of a child through a probate proceeding under Title 29. You may also become a legal guardian as a permanency option for a child who has been adjudicated a CHINS in the Juvenile Court.

Potential Positive Aspects

A guardian will typically have all the rights and responsibilities of a parent. If you are Court appointed as the child’s guardian you can more easily make legal decisions for the child, such as enrolling the child in school and providing medical care for the child. A guardian may also sign legal documents on behalf of the child. For example, a legal guardian can sign an application for the youth’s driver’s training, driver’s license, or permit, as long as the Court approves this decision. It is important to remember that the guardian assumes full financial responsibility for any damage or injury caused by the youth while driving.

A guardianship may be terminated by a Court Order. This means that once the guardianship is established, the parent(s) of the child cannot remove the child from your care without a Court Order terminating the guardianship. In contrast, in an informal kinship care arrangement with no Court Order, the parents are still the legal guardians of the child and may remove the child from your care at any time. As a legally established guardian, you may have access to financial assistance to help you care for the child.

Potential Negative Aspects

If the parent(s) do not consent to you having guardianship of the child, then establishing a guardianship may be a difficult legal process for you. The Court will begin with the presumption that children should be with a parent. As the person petitioning to become guardian, you will need to overcome this parental presumption by proving that the child should not be with the parent.

Establishing a guardianship when the parent does not consent may be difficult emotionally. You will need to present the Court with negative information about the parent which may strain your relationship with the parent. A guardianship is not a permanent legal relationship. Unlike adoption, which is permanent, a guardianship terminates by operation of law when the child turns 18 years old. A guardianship may be terminated before the child turns 18 years old if it is no longer necessary.

Once your guardianship of the child terminates, you have no legal rights to the child as the child’s former guardian. This means if the parent contests your guardianship of the child and the Court terminates the guardianship, the Court cannot order the parent to allow you to see the child.

Third Party Custody

In third-party custody, a person who is not the child's parent may be granted custody by the Court to determine the child's upbringing, including the child's education, health care, and religious training. You may be appointed as third-party custodian of a child when there is already a paternity or divorce Court with jurisdiction. Third party custody is different from guardianship in that a child may be placed with a responsible person including: an adult sibling, a grandparent, an aunt, an uncle, or other relative who is able and willing to act as the child's permanent custodian and carry out the responsibilities required by the permanency plan.

Potential Positive Aspects

Third party custody shares many of the same positive aspects as guardianship.

A custody proceeding may be initiated by a person other than a parent. Third party custodians may be a family member such as a grandparent, aunt, or uncle. They may also be people who are not related to the child by blood. The parents can choose to consent to the third-party custodianship. If the parents do consent to the custodianship, the legal proceeding will be much easier for all the parties involved than if the parents do not consent.

Potential Negative Aspects

The custodian's rights and duties may be limited as agreed by the parties in writing or if the Court determines that the child's physical health would be endangered, or emotional development would be significantly impaired otherwise. This means that you may not be able to make some decisions for the child or raise the child a specific way if the parties agree or the Court so orders. For example, you may need to raise the child in a religion different from your own if the parents will only consent to the custodianship if you agree or if the Court orders you.

If a third party custodian is appointed for a child, the Court may order specific parenting time be provided to the child's parents. The Court will balance the parents' rights to parenting time with the child's right to safety and stability. You may need to facilitate the child's parenting time with his or her parent(s).

Also, like guardianship, third party custody may terminate. Custody may be modified from a third party custodian back to a parent. The burden to maintain the third party custodianship is on the custodian. The third party custodian must prove by clear and convincing evidence the natural parent's unfitness or acquiescence or demonstrate that a strong emotional bond has formed between the child and the third party. The third party custodian must present detailed and specific information that the custodianship is in the child's best interests. Once again, it may be emotionally difficult for you to show the Court evidence of the parent's unfitness. A contested third party custody proceeding may strain your relationship with the parents; however, this may be necessary to do what is best for the child.

Foster Care or Relative Placement through a CHINS Proceeding

In foster care or a relative placement as a result of a CHINS proceeding, DCS has legal wardship of the child and the child lives with the caregiver selected by DCS. A grandparent, relative, or non-parent may care for the child while a CHINS proceeding is pending, as a dispositional placement option, or as a permanency option. DCS is required to consider relative placements for children in many different stages of the CHINS proceeding, including in the case plan, detention, and disposition. The Court may order that the caregivers complete a relative home study and that DCS makes a recommendation to the Court before a child is placed with a relative.

If a child is placed with a relative as a permanency option through a CHINS proceeding, this arrangement is formal kinship care. In formal kinship care, the caregiver will need to become a resource parent licensed through the State. A person may have to invest time, money, and energy into becoming a resource parent. A resource parent is a licensed adult who meets the minimum requirements in place to be able to foster a child or be a formal kinship care giver. DCS has set these minimum requirements to help them establish a guideline that they will use to determine who they feel will be able to care for those children. It is important to remember that DCS is working to reunify the child with his or her parent(s).

Potential Positive Aspects

Once a caregiver becomes a licensed resource parent, the caregiver may be eligible for financial assistance from the State in the form of a foster care per diem. The per diem rates will vary according to the needs of the child and/or the agency that holds the license. The per diem rates are subject to change and should not be relied upon as an exclusive means to care for the child. Contact the DCS Family Case Manager for information about the current foster care per diem rate. As a licensed resource parent, you may find it easier to legally provide for the child. As a licensed resource parent, you have a legally recognized relationship with the child and may consent to things for the child, such as medical care or enrolling the child in school. Often a resource parent may be able to consent to medical treatment for emergency and routine procedures.

Adoption

With adoption, a new permanent parent-child relationship is created. An adoption forever dissolves the biological parent-child relationship and creates a new parent-child relationship. Once an adoption decree is entered, the biological parents have no legal duties or obligations to the child. Likewise, an adoption removes the biological parents' rights to the child. The parent-child relationship is terminated by operation of law. A new birth certificate may be issued for the child. Adoption may be a permanency plan for a CHINS. Indiana case law provides that relatives do not have a preferential legal right to adopt. Blood relationship is a material factor but is not controlling. Instead, the controlling factor in an adoption is the best interests of the child. DCS has requirements that must be met before a person may be an adoptive parent.

Positive Aspects

Adoption makes legally caring for the child very easy. Once the adoption is finalized you have full rights to the child, just as you would to a child who is biologically yours. The adoptive parents are permanently responsible for the child, until the child is emancipated.

Negative Aspects

If the caregiver was previously a foster parent to the child before adopting the child, the foster care per diem will stop after the adoption. It is possible that the foster care per diem may end before any adoption assistance payments begin. Additionally, post adoption financial assistance 16 has changed significantly in recent years and it is possible that there may not be post adoption financial assistance available, or that the assistance amounts may be reduced. Adoptions are also complex legal proceedings and often require the prospective adoptive parents to hire an attorney to navigate the legal process. The cost of the attorney's legal services may be paid by DCS as a Non Recurring Adoption Expense.



I love good and caring lawyers who are advocates, who are defenders, who are problem-solvers, and who are peacemakers.

- JANET RENO

LEGAL RESOURCES

Kids Voice

This organization can help you get the necessary legal documents needed for you and your family.

Phone: 317) 558-2870

<https://www.kidsvoicein.org/>



Access to Pro Bono (Free) Attorneys

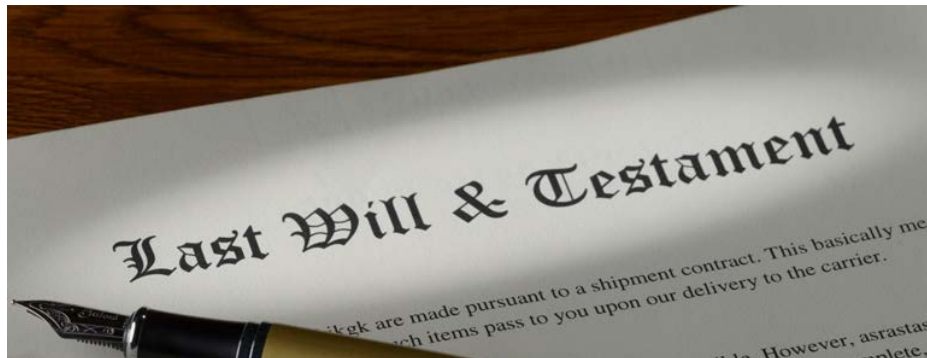
The Indiana Pro Bono Commission of the Indiana Supreme Court lists pro bono providers who provide legal representation to eligible people who lack funds to pay a private attorney. Indiana is divided into fourteen pro bono districts.

The names and telephone numbers for pro bono providers may be accessed through the Indiana Supreme Court website at <http://www.in.gov/judiciary>.

Click on “*Citizens*” on the left-hand side of the Indiana Supreme Court home page, then on “*Pro Bono Legal Services*.” Unfortunately, the pro bono legal providers have limited resources and cannot accept every eligible person who applies to them for services.

TIPS TO CREATING A WILL

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1. Find an attorney or legal consultant.
2. **Select your beneficiaries.** When you die, someone is going to receive your money, your house and other belongings. You probably won't have to think long about the beneficiaries you designate, but it's key to ensure that the list of people whom you select is up-to-date.
3. **Choose the executor for your will.** This person will be tasked with making sure the wishes in your will are carried out, so you'll want to choose someone who is responsible. You may end up choosing your bank or an attorney as your executor, in which case you can expect to spend 2 to 4 percent of your estate's assets. If you're designating a family member or friend, experts still say they should be compensated, either through an hourly rate or a percentage of assets. After all, closing an estate can be an difficult task.
4. **Pick a guardian for your children.** Do you need to get permission from your friend or family member before appointing them as guardian? According to experts, you do not, but you should at least ask them. But if you don't, consider naming three guardians in order of your preference. It's also a wise idea to name people to take over guardianship if a couple caring for your children were to die or divorce.
5. **Be specific about who gets what.** Do not be vague in your will. Do not hope that everyone will know what you want. This issue can be especially tricky if you have multiple children, and if you have grandchildren. This is the time to call or email your children and let them know that you are working on your estate planning. Let them know that if there is anything specific that they would like to have to remember you by, to let you know now, so that you can write that down and make sure they get the item at that time.

CREATING A WILL CONTINUED

6. **Final words:** If there's more you want to say, attach a letter to the will. In television shows and movies, there's often a reading of the will where heirs come together and hears who will receive what. That doesn't often happen in real life. Some estate planners report that clients attach personal letters, sometimes as a way to say goodbye, and to make wishes clear and personal.

7. **Other people need to sign the will.** In Indiana, you'll need two witnesses. The witnesses can't be people who stand to inherit anything in the will. Your witnesses also need to be at least 18 years old. Ideally, they'll be people who are likely to be around when you aren't. If something goes wrong, and your will is contested in court, the judge may want to call a witness to testify.

8. **Find a place for your will.** Don't write a will and then put it some place where it will be forgotten. What if the worst happens? You don't want family members wondering if you wrote a will, or not be able to find it. Make sure someone you trust knows where to find your will, as well as any other important papers. It's also a good idea to store the original copy somewhere secure, like in a fireproof safe.

9. After drawing up your will, you'll also want to work on a **power of attorney** and a living will in case you're ever incapacitated.

10. **Review and update your will.** Make sure to revisit and update the document every few years to reflect any necessary changes, and after any significant life event, to ensure your personal belongings are distributed according to your wishes. Otherwise, you may find that you've left your assets to your ex-spouse, and none of your money and belongings are left to your children.



**PLEASE THINK ABOUT YOUR LEGACY
BECAUSE YOU ARE WRITING IT EVERY
DAY. —**

GARY VAYNERCHUK

While you may be inclined to put off thinking about your mortality, taking the time to prepare a well-written document that indicates how you would like your possessions and assets to be distributed after you die is key to avoiding conflict among loved ones. And though you're acknowledging you won't live forever by drawing up a will, leaving behind a record of how you want your personal belongings and money to be allocated is important.



FINANCIAL PLANNING

THIS SECTION CONTAINS VALUABLE RESOURCES TO
HELP MAKE YOU FINANCIALLY STABLE

- 💰 Creating a monthly budget
- 💰 Obtaining Financial Assistance
- 💰 Savings for Retirement
- 💰 Saving for College
- 💰 Training them to Save
- 💰 Leaving a Legacy
for the ones you love



SECURING A GREENER FUTURE

The financial aspect of kinship care often puts loving families in a financially unstable position. However with the correct plans in place, it is possible to remain financially stable and still be able to provide for your needs, and the needs of those you are caring for.

CREATING A MONTHLY BUDGET

Use this worksheet to see how much money you spend this month. Then, use this month's information to help you plan next month's budget.

Some bills are monthly and some come less often. If you have an expense that does not occur every month, put it in the "Other expenses this month" category.

MONTH YEAR

My income this month

Income	Monthly total
Paychecks (salary after taxes, benefits, and check cashing fees)	\$
Other income (after taxes) for example: child support	\$
Total monthly income	\$ 0.00

Income

My expenses this month

	Expenses	Monthly total
HOUSING	Rent or mortgage	\$
	Renter's insurance or homeowner's insurance	\$
	Utilities (like electricity and gas)	\$
	Internet, cable, and phones	\$
	Other housing expenses (like property taxes)	\$
FOOD	Groceries and household supplies	\$
	Meals out	\$
	Other food expenses	\$
TRANSPORTATION	Public transportation and taxis	\$
	Gas for car	\$
	Parking and tolls	\$
	Car maintenance (like oil changes)	\$
	Car insurance	\$
	Car loan	\$
	Other transportation expenses	\$

CREATING A MONTHLY BUDGET

	Expenses	Monthly total
HEALTH	Medicine	\$
	Health insurance	\$
	Other health expenses (like doctors' appointments and eyeglasses)	\$
PERSONAL AND FAMILY	Child care	\$
	Child support	\$
	Money given or sent to family	\$
	Clothing and shoes	\$
	Laundry	\$
	Donations	\$
	Entertainment (like movies and amusement parks)	\$
	Other personal or family expenses (like beauty care)	\$
FINANCE	Fees for cashier's checks and money transfers	\$
	Prepaid cards and phone cards	\$
	Bank or credit card fees	\$
	Other fees	\$
OTHER	School costs (like supplies, tuition, student loans)	\$
	Other payments (like credit cards and savings)	\$
	Other expenses this month	\$
Total monthly expenses		\$ 0.00

Expenses

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \$ \quad 0.00 \\
 \text{Income}
 \end{array}
 -
 \begin{array}{c}
 \$ \quad 0.00 \\
 \text{Expenses}
 \end{array}
 =
 \begin{array}{c}
 \$ \quad 0.00
 \end{array}$$

Maybe your income is more than your expenses. You have money left to save or spend.

Maybe your expenses are more than your income. Look at your budget to find expenses to cut.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE



WE ALL NEED HELP ...

Asking for help is a humbling experience. Knowing the resources that are available to assist you in your transition as kinship caregiver will help alleviate some of the financial stress that you experience. Whether you are a formal or informal kinship care provider, you and your kin-child may now be eligible for government assistance such as :

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Food Stamps
- Hoosier Healthwise (Medicaid)
- Social Security benefits.
- Women, Infant and Children (WIC)
- Low Income Energy Assistance Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) – Child Nutrition
- Child Care Financial Assistance

You may want to check with the child's parent or previous caregiver to determine if the child was receiving government assistance. If the child was previously receiving government assistance, you will need to make sure that the necessary forms are completed so that the child, if eligible, may continue to receive the assistance while living in your care.

Contact the FSSA Division of Family Resources and ask what you need to do so that the child continues to receive assistance while living with you. If the child was not previously receiving government assistance, you may want to consider applying for assistance for the child.

For more information go to this link:

<https://childcare.gov/state-resources?state=19&type=202>

SETTING FINANCIAL GOALS

SAVING FOR RETIREMENT

It is never too late to start saving. It is recommended that you save 10-15% of your monthly income to a retirement plan.

In order to save for your retirement, you first need to budget your expenses. Looking at your previous worksheet look at what expenses are easy to remove from your spending. Keeping a detailed account of all your money will allow you to better judge what you are willing to sacrifice for a more comfortable retirement.

Many wonder how much is enough to retire with? Well the truth is there a simple calculation that you can do that can best be tailored to your financial needs.

- How many more years am I planning to work?
- What will my monthly expenses look like after this time period? (Will you still be paying mortgage, car payments, loans?)
- Expected Monthly expenses x 12 (months) = annual expenses.
- Now deduct any 401k, pensions, expected SSI or other financial residuals that you may receive after you retire.
- Now multiply this by 20 (years after retirement).

This is how much money you will need to save for 20 years of retirement.



TEACHING CHILDREN HOW TO SAVE

Teaching your kin-child how to budget money is a life-long skill that will help them make more sensible choices when they are adults. This requires giving them an allowance this can range to weekly or monthly it all depends on your financial means.



1. **Earning their allowance** can come from doing chores or helping with their sibling. Deciding the price of the service will be a great lesson on marketing their value later on. Assign prices on various duties that they will be required to perform.
2. **Create a wish list** of items they want and the cost for them. Let them know, in advance, that they will be responsible for purchasing this item.
3. **How long will it take to get it?** Make them do math based on the chores and how long it will take to make this purchase. Is it reasonable?
4. **Are you willing to invest in them?** Try to reward their efforts by adding interest into their money. This can be as much as matching what they saved completely or by adding on 5% or 10%.

This tip is especially beneficial for more expensive things, as a teenager may be tempted to save for more expensive items, such as a new car.

However, remember that children also need to learn the value of helping out because they are a part of the family, and that it is important that everyone work together to accomplish a goal. Not all chores should be expected to be rewarded with payment, or the child may learn to feel entitled to money for every task completed.

EDUCATION



In this section we will review the tools needed to ensure your child's educational success. It is important that you make sure that you build alliances with your child's school teacher, as well as school counselor, to ensure that your child has a team of caring adults who are cheering them on.

FCN SERVICES

- Help with school enrollment
- Partner with schools to improve behavior concerns
- Provide guidance with post High School plans
- IEP/ 504 Plan review
- Understanding the Response to Intervention (RTI) Process.
- Educational Surrogate Parent Assistance

VOCABULARY

IEP = Individualized Education Plan

RTI = Response to Intervention

BIP = Behavioral Intervention Plan

FBA = Functional Behavior Assessment

HSE = High School Equivalency (Must be 18 years old unless court approved.)

School Meetings

Know Before You Go

Your Rights: Becoming the child's education surrogate will allow you to make decisions for the best interest of your kin-child

The Curriculum : Each grade has a set of learning points they will cover during the school year. This can be found on this website: <https://www.doe.in.gov/standards>

What to Bring

- Previous Report Card
- Printed Out Curriculum
- Any Medical or Educational Assessments

Questions to Ask

- **Expectations** There should always be a goal whenever you have a meeting with a school official. Be clear and direct about what you want to accomplish in meeting them.
- **Individualized Education Plan** Knowing your kin-child's learning style can help make sure that the child gets the best learning experience in the classroom.
- **What you can do at home with with them?** Are you reading with them or learning new apps they can use on their electronic device? Teachers always have tips on ways you can make sure your child's learning doesn't stop at school.
- **What are your kin-child's strength and weaknesses in the classroom, and what are they currently learning?** Knowing how to help at home makes a difference!
- **What services are available for your kin-child to receive to help them succeed in school?** Whether it means assessments or meeting with the school counselor, the school has services that can help you and help your child be successful at school!
- **Who are your child's friends in the classroom?** Knowing who your child's friends are helps you know whether they are safe at school.

Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or in the same way.



Education Expectations

Alternative Programs and Services

Infants and Toddlers

- *Early Head Start/Head Start:*

Programs for children 0-5 years old that helps with mental, social, emotional and physical growth of children. Early Head start children receive medical assessments, mental health services and follow up services.

<http://www.in.gov./fssa/carefinder/2679.htm>

- *First Steps:* Early Intervention Service for children ages 0-3 years old, experiencing developmental delay and /or have a diagnosed condition with a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. Services are individualized.

<http://www.in.gov.fssa/4655.htm>

“

Family is not an important thing. It's everything.

- Michael J. Fox

High School Equivalency (HSE)

Who can take the HSE?

- Anyone living in Indiana for a minimum of 30 days before taking the test.
- Those who have not already earned a diploma from an accredited high school in the U.S.
- Students who are at least 16 years of age.

How do I sign up?

- In - person at a testing office. Bring ONE government-issued photo ID.
- Find the testing office nearest you at indiana.tacstest.com

Contact Indiana HSE: 1- 866-220 - 6675



Education Expectations

The Scholar Success Program includes annual activities that will help student stay on track for college and career success.

8th – 12th Grade (Ages 14–18)

- *21st Century Scholars:*

Earning the 21st Century Scholarship provides students up to four years of undergraduate tuition* at any participating public college or university in Indiana.

Apply online at scholars.in.gov/enroll before June 30th of your 8th grade year.

	 PLAN	 PREPARE	 PAY
09	Create Your Graduation Plan ¹	Participate in an Extracurricular or Service Activity	Watch "Paying for College 101"
10	Take a Career Interest Assessment	Get Workplace Experience ²	Complete the College Costs Estimator
11	Visit a College Campus	Take a College Entrance Exam (ACT/SAT)	Search for Scholarships ³
12	Submit Your College Application	Watch "College Success 101"	File Your FAFSA



HOW TO MAKE HOMEWORK WORK

What is it about homework that wears families out?

Even newbie grade-schoolers, who love doing it at first, often lose their enthusiasm and start stalling. And after a long day, you just want your child to "knuckle down", so you can get dinner on the table or start the bedtime routine.

But playing bad cop rarely works — micro-managing and nagging only make kids feel stupid or frustrated.

A better solution: Think of yourself as a coach and cheerleader. To help you get there, make sure to know the importance of collaboration with the teacher to ensure your child's academic success.

HOMework TIPS

1. Do It as Early as Possible: Best for Everyone

On days when there are no afternoon activities, give your child a time frame — say, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. — to get down to business. This gives her some control over her schedule (some kids need a longer break after school, and others need to start right away to keep the momentum going). The only rule is that 5 o'clock is the latest time to start. If you work, that means homework duties will fall to the after-school caregiver. This way, the bulk of it can get done before your kiddo's too pooped — and you can just review and wrap things up once you get home.

2. Create a Call List: Best for Forgetters

From kindergarten on, kids need a list of three or four classmates they can call on when they forget an assignment. The study buddy can read your child the spelling words over the phone, or his mom can snap a pic of the worksheet and text it to you.

3. Build Confidence: Best for the Intimidated

When kids don't get something right away, they may feel like they're stupid and start to shut down, says You can short-circuit negative thinking by sitting down and figuring out the first problem together. That alone can help him remember how to do the rest. Then heap on the praise: "You did a great job on that one! Try the next one now."

Another strategy: Have your child show you similar problems they worked on in class. That may jog their memory, so they can retrace the steps. Plus, it helps you see what they already learned.

4. Cut It in Half: Best for the Overwhelmed

That's right — you can make an executive decision to lighten your child's load for a night, if:

- They don't understand the assignment.
- The assignment is vague or touches on a topic they are not ready for.

What you can't skip is informing the teacher. Help your child write a note to the teacher to explain. If they're too young, write it yourself (with their input) and have them sign it. If you don't hear back from the teacher in a few days, or your child is still clueless on the next assignment, follow up with an e-mail. Most teachers will be understanding if a student does this once in a while, but if your child frequently fails to finish her assignments, there will probably be a consequence.

5. Your Way vs. The Teacher's Way

Your child is tearing up over a long-division worksheet and you actually remember how to get the answer. But the teacher's instructions are different. Do you show your child your method — so at least they'll have the correct answer? Your process may confuse them even more. You can help your child by talking about what they remember from class and steering them to the textbook. If they're still lost, encourage them to talk to the teacher and get extra help to understand it better.

HOMWORK TIPS

6. Keep the Positive Feedback Coming: Best for the K–2 Set

Small children need instant feedback, so it's okay for parents of young grade-schoolers to correct mistakes. Then emphasize what your child has done well. After they finish, take the paper and say "Hmm, I'm looking for something". After scanning it for a minute, say "Aha! Look how well you wrote your letters in this part!" or "This sentence is even better than the one you came up with yesterday!" If you praise specific improvements, your little learner will become more inclined to try to do a good job the first time around.

7. Leave the Room: Best for Whiners

Kids who drag things out are often doing so for your attention — they're enjoying the interaction on some level. Avoid joining in. And if you must stay in the room, have your child work in a spot that's farther away from whatever you're doing.

8. Beat the Clock: Best for Procrastinators

Sometimes a pint-size foot dragger just needs a jump-start. If that's true for yours, try Dolin's "Five Minutes of Fury": Set a timer for five minutes, shout "Go!" and have your child work as fast as they can until the timer goes off. At that point, they can take a short break or keep going — and many children continue. Racing against a timer gives kids an external sense of urgency if they don't have an internal one (besides, it's fun!). But it's not an excuse for sloppy work, so tell them to go over it before they put it back in the folder.

9. Plan, Plan, Plan: Best for 3rd- to 5th-Graders

Many teachers will break down big projects into a series of deadlines so that children learn to budget time. If your child's teacher doesn't, show your child how to "scaffold" the assignment yourself. Together, divide the project into steps, then help them estimate how much time each will take. Get a weekly or monthly calendar, and then write down which steps they'll tackle when — and for how long. To get the most out of your calendar, include everything — from basketball practice on Mondays, to the reading log every night ... so you both can plan realistically. If you know which nights are going to be a problem, ask for the week's assignments at once and figure out your own schedule for completing them. Teachers will often work with you on this, but most parents are afraid to ask.

10. Let Them Vent: Best for Everyone

When your routine is upended — and your child hasn't even started their homework — ease frustration by letting them complain. Listen, empathize ("Wow, that is a lot of work"), and state their feelings back to them ("You sound upset"). Once your child feels understood, says Dolin, they'll be more likely to accept your suggestions — and better able to focus on what needs to be done.

PREPARE FOR COLLEGE



Getting college ready by using these basics tips

If Possible, Enroll in AP Classes

Along with taking challenging courses, try to take Advanced Placement, or AP, courses. They can earn you college credit, which means fewer courses you'll have to take in college – which can mean more savings.

Meet With Your Kin Child's Guidance Counselor Regularly

Prepare for the SAT and/or ACT

Check out CollegeBoard.org, which offers free sample practice questions and other guides and courses for a fee. Visit Khan Academy's free SAT prep, which offers real SAT questions and tutorials. There are plenty of books that offer tips for success, practice questions, and what you'll need to know – check your local library.

Keep Grades Up

To keep your grades up, stay organized and create a schedule. If you're struggling, ask your teacher for recommendations or see if you can find a tutor. If you can't find a tutor at your school, find one through WyzAnt or another tutoring service.

Join a Team

Extracurricular activities make you stand out as an applicant to most schools, as well as any volunteer experience. The more you can show how versatile you are, the better you appear to college recruiters.

Apply for Scholarships

Talk with your high school counselor about scholarships.

Search online.

When it's time, search for scholarships online with the U.S. Department of Labor Scholarship Search and other search engines such as Fastweb.com and Scholarships.com.

Ask the schools.

When researching colleges, ask their financial aid departments about what types of scholarships they offer incoming freshmen.

Research Majors and Careers

<https://www.bls.gov/k12/home.htm>

Start Researching Colleges

Familiarize Yourself With Financial Aid and Student Loans. Another option is attending college online.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LEARNING ABOUT YOUR KIN-CHILD(REN)'S DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESS



All children are unique and are made with extraordinary potential. Learning to know when your child is ahead or behind the developmental standards for their age groups can help you nurture their strengths and weaknesses accordingly.

All growth depends upon activity. There is no development physically or intellectually without effort, and effort means work.

- CALVIN COOLIDGE



Developmentally Appropriate Expectations

Infants

Birth - 3 months

- Raise head
- Hold hand in fist
- Sucking and grasping
- Repeating body movements
- Smile in response to social situation

3 - 6 Months

- Roll over
- Reach for and touch objects
- Grasping and pulling things towards one self
- Laugh
- Pay attention to own name

6 - 9 months

- Show growing independence
- Starting sorting shapes and colors
- Follow two-part instructions (such as "drink your milk, then give me the cup")
- Point to things or pictures when they are named
- Say a sentence with two to four words
- Know the names of parents, siblings, body parts, and objects
- Show increasing defiance (doing things you told him not to do)

9 - 12 months

- Sit without support
- Stand unaided
- Walk with aid
- Use pincer grasp
- Draws circles and squares
- Throw object
- Anxious when separated from primary care giver

12 - 18 months

- Likes to hand things to others as play
- Knows what ordinary things are for; for example, telephone, brush, spoon
- Points to one body part
- Walks alone
- Independent: Drinks from a cup, Eats with spoon, can help undress themselves
- Can follow 1-step verbal commands without any gestures; for example, sits when you say "sit down"

“

Babies are amazing.
They begin each day
all warm and sleepy,
smelling of promise.

– Julia Roberts



Developmentally Appropriate Expectations

Toddlers and Preschoolers

18 months - 1 Year

- Uses simple gestures, like shaking head "no" or waving "bye-bye"
- Explores things in different ways, like shaking, banging, or throwing
- Uses pointing to direct another person's gaze (along with vocalization or word attempt)
- Attempts single words that are recognizable to familiar people (and some will be beginning to combine words at around two years of age)
- Able to follow simple instructions such as "go get your shoes"

Toddler (ages 2-3)

- Show growing independence
- Starts sorting shapes and colors
- Follows two-part instructions (such as "drink your milk, then give me the cup")
- Points to things or pictures when they are named
- Speaks a sentence with two to four words
- Knows the names of parents, siblings, body parts, and objects
- Shows increasing defiance (doing things you told them not to do)

Preschoolers (ages 3-4)

- More Independent: Goes upstairs and downstairs without support
- Speaks in sentences of 5 -6 words clearly
- Correctly names some colors
- Can copy Some Capital letters
- Draws circles and squares
- Understands the concept of counting and may know a few numbers
- Increasingly inventive in fantasy play

“

You can learn many things from children. How much patience you have, for instance.

- Franklin P. Jones



Developmentally Appropriate Expectations

Primary Elementary

Kindergarten (ages 5-6)

- Learning to sit at desk and follow routines
- Hand preferences established (pencil grasp, scissors)
- Plays make - believe
- Identifies numbers, letters and sounds
- May reverse letters/ numbers in writing (ex: "b" and "d", "p" and "q", "3", "5")

1st Grade (ages 6-7)

- Emerging reading skills (sounding out words when necessary)
- Uses descriptive language
- Growing more independent yet feels less secure
- Writes large, still needs guiding lines,
- May continue to reverse letters/ number in writing
- Focused on process vs. product

2nd grade (ages 7-8)

- Able to read and write
- Letter/number reversals may still occur
- Mastering basic Math (Addition/Subtraction)
- Relies on teacher for help - likes to work cooperatively
- Completion becomes more important
- Will listen, but so full of ideas cannot always recall what has been said
- Often exaggerates

“

Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.

- Albert Einstien



Developmentally Appropriate Expectations

Intermediate Elementary

3rd Grade (Ages 8-9)

- May reverse printed letters (until mid – year)
- Developing a longer attention span
- Age old negatives “I Can’t”, “I’m Bored”
- Actively seeks praise
- Learns about choices and consequences
- Smaller print
- Learning to read transition to reading to learn

4th Grade (Ages 9 – 10)

- Highly active
- Need to be part of a group
- Are typically NOT self-confident
- Seek Independence
- Begins making decisions
- Develops personal interests and abilities
- Mastery of basic math facts expected
- Reading Independently

5th Grade (Ages 10 – 11)

- Tendency to revert to childish behavior, especially when stressed
- May experiment with risk taking behaviors
- Demands privileges, but may avoid responsibilities
- Talks constantly
- Handwriting may become messy
- Clear, coherent writing with purpose is expected
- Frequently hungry and may tire easily, due to growth spurts

“

Learn from
yesterday, live for
today, hope for
tomorrow. The
important thing is to
not stop questioning.

– Albert Einstein



Developmentally Appropriate Expectations

Middle and High School

6th – 8th Grade (11- 14)

- Burden of academic responsibility places on child
- Higher level math skills required
- Socialization is top priority
- Hormonal imbalances
- Reading is totally independent (Basic reading competencies no longer taught)
- Extracurricular activities increase
- Sports become more competitive (tryouts)

9th – 12th Grade (Ages 14-18)

- Independence seeking:
Challenging authority, learning to drive, money is important
- Peer acceptance is essential
- Need more sleep than average due to growth spurts
- Grades count for credit towards graduation
- Beginning to structure academics to support career goals
- School communication with parent less frequent (unless there are major concerns)
- Youth become frustrated with adults questioning them
- Sports and clubs even more competitive/ selective



“

Education is the
passport to the
future, for tomorrow
belongs to those who
prepare for it today.

-Malcom X

THE HEALTHY FAMILY



IN THIS
SECTION YOU
WILL FIND

Sample Recipes and
Tips

Tasty Memories for a lifetime!

A family that eats together stays together. And the same can be said about cooking. Cooking can be a great way to bond as a family. Having children help with the creation of the meals reaches them valuable skills and helps them feel empowered. There are tons of quick recipes that can make the most hectic of nights end deliciously.

Make Meals that Steal their Hearts

Taco Night

Ingredients

1(1 ounce) package of Taco seasoning
1/2 lb of ground beef (turkey)
12 soft corn tortilla
1/2 cup mexican shredded cheese
Optional
Lettuce Bell peppers
Onions Sour Cream
Avocado 1 Frozen Sofrio Cube
Tomatoes

Directions

1. In a large nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium. Add onion and bell peppers; cook until crisp-tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Add 1 cup water; cook until water has evaporated and vegetables are softened, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Add garlic, tomato paste, chili powder, and cumin; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add beef. Cook, breaking up meat with a wooden spoon, until no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Season taco filling with salt and pepper. To serve, spoon filling onto tortillas, top with salsa and lettuce, and fold to enclose.



Hillshire Farm Sausage Alfredo

Ingredients

1 (14 ounce) package Hillshire farm smoked Sausage cut in 1/4 inch slices
8 ounces pasta, cooked, drained
2 cups heavy cream
2 teaspoons Cajun Seasoning
1/2 cup cup Parmesan Cheese

Directions

1. Prepared pasta according to the package directions; drain and set aside.
2. Saute sausage in a large skillet over medium high heat for 5 minutes, turning occasionally.
3. Add cream and cajun seasoning; bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer gently for 3 - 4 minutes or until mixture begins to thicken. Remove from heat stir Parmesan Cheese. Add pasta to sauce and toss.

“

It takes a lot of time to cut garlic and onion before each meal and seasoning powders don't always give you food the extra flavor you may like. A quick way to make sure your food stays fresh is by creating frozen seasoning cubes. It's fast and easy to do, and you have the flavors for weeks.

Step 1: Gather your ingredients:
 2 ripe tomatoes 1 green pepper
 4 cloves of garlic 1 onion
 1 table spoon of cumin
 1 table spoon of paprika
 1 bunch of cilantro
 1/8 cup of olive oil

Step 2: Heat the oil slightly and add the onions, garlic and tomato.

Step 3: Stir fry slowly 3-5 minutes and do not brown the ingredient.

Step 4: Add the spice mixture.

Step 5: Add the cilantro tied with butcher's twine. Cover and cook on low for 10-20 minutes.

Step 6: Remove the cilantro and cook uncovered until the mixture is thick.

Step 7: Allow to cook and freeze into and ice cube tray for future use.

A Flavor to Savor

Sofrito

Here are the visual steps to make your own sofrito at home.



FOOD PANTRIES



The Importance of Clean Eating

Having Access to Healthy Food may be a challenge as children's growing appetites compete with the financial resources you have for them. There are many local organizations that understand the importance of feeding a family on a tight budget.

Let your Case Manager know that you need assistance. They can help you discover where to find local food pantries, connect you to other resources, and help find other organizations that may provide healthy food options for your family.

RESPITE



INDIANA HAS ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR YOUR KIN-CHILD(REN). TALK TO YOUR CASE WORKER TO FIND OUT ABOUT PROGRAMS THAT ARE AVAILABLE IN YOUR AREA.

TEEN RESPITE

- Mentoring Programs
- Creating Independence by starting their JOB SEARCH
- Internships
- Volunteer Opportunities

CHILDREN RESPITE

- After School Programs
- Sport Teams
- Summer Camps
- Scouting Opportunities

TODDLER RESPITE

- Head Start Program
- Community Enrichment Activities

S A F E T Y

*Safety First is
Safety Always.*

FIRST

Creating a Safe environment is a skill that one needs to sharpen frequently.

Ask your Case Manager for more information and tips on the subjects below, to ensure that you are practicing the latest safety measures for your family.

- Home and Environment
- Safe Tots
- Technology
- Social Media
- Bullying
- Nurturing Healthy Relationships



Resource Page

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Developmentally Appropriate Expectations

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<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/positiveparenting/toddler-s2.html>

Dear Family Connection Network Kinship Caregiver,

The villages' Board of Directors, Leadership Team and Family Connection Network Staff are truly in awe of the phenomenal work that you, as a committed "Champion for Children" are doing to help calm, nurture and heal the kinship children in your care ... some of Indiana's most fragile children ... those who have been abused and neglected! Your energy, your passion and your enthusiasm are so very evident as we look at the extraordinary outcomes the children in your loving care are achieving!

Collectively, you are providing a loving, nurturing, FAMILY environment for these very special, yet very vulnerable children! These children represent such frightening "pasts"---a painful history that none of us can change! But, by teaming with The villages Family Connection Network, your faith community and your support system, YOU are changing their future...for the better!

Your "unsung" heroic efforts represent the very best that Indiana has to offer! Thank you, again, for being the truest heroes ... stars ... and champions for the very special children entrusted to your care!

Gratefully,
The villages Family Connection Network Team



**The Family Network Connection Kinship Care Program is funded,
in part, by the following community partners:**

Anonymous Donor

Casey Family Programs

CICOA, Central Indiana Council on Aging

Junior League of Indianapolis

United Way of Central Indiana

The Villages of Indiana, Inc. Foundation

**For more information, please visit our website
at VillagesKids.org or call 317.775.6500**



The Villages Child And Family Service Center | 3833 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46208