

HOW TO BECOME A KINSHIP CAREGIVER

Please contact Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions by phone or through our web page. Provide the identifying information for the child or youth. The worker may be limited in what they can initially share with you however will take your information for planning.

Whether caring for a child in a kinship service or kinship care arrangement the Ministry of Children and Youth Services requires child welfare agencies to conduct assessments on proposed caregivers to identify if the plan you are offering is safe and to note any potential support needs to make it successful. There are also Standards of practices regarding timing of face to face contact with the children/youth.

A home assessment minimally includes:

- Child welfare background checks
- Vulnerable Sector Police Checks
- Interviews of the proposed caregivers
- A home safety assessment

**Safe Kids.
Strong Families.
Collaborative Community.**

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familyconnexions.ca



Simcoe Muskoka
Family Connexions

Connexions Familiales
de Simcoe Muskoka

KINSHIP

**BECOMING A
CAREGIVER TO KIN**

Family Based Care
and Permanency for
Children & Youth





OTHER WAYS KIN CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN & YOUTH

- Maintaining or building family/community/cultural connections
- Providing information about family
- Having visits and holiday events
- Participating in planning meetings
- Attending appointments with them or driving them places
- Attending sports or school events
- Keeping siblings connected if they are not residing together

“The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely he will be to recover from trauma and thrive. Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love.”

Dr. Bruce Perry

KINSHIP:

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES WORKING TOGETHER TO PLAN FOR CHILDREN

Benefits of Kinship

- Increased stability and safety for children
- Ability to maintain family connections and cultural traditions which are critical to healthy child development, a sense of belonging, safety and security
- Sibling groups are more likely to remain together or to have frequent natural contact.
- Children experience less trauma and stigma than those placed in foster care
- It allows for families and communities to plan for children and youth
- Naturally supports the voice of the children or youth in planning

Challenges

- Kin often feel grief, loss, anger and other mixed emotions because of what has happened within the family
- There is often very little time to prepare for the addition of a child/ren to the home and may add financial strains
- Balancing expectations from the child welfare agency with their own family's needs
- Understanding how child welfare systems and the court system work
- Redefining roles and relationships within the family
- Developing trust with the child welfare agency, especially when there may have been difficult experiences in the past

What is Kinship

- Kinship Service and Kinship Care are two child welfare placement options, like fostering, for the small number of children and youth who need to leave their families for safety reasons. Kinship is a living arrangement in which a relative, community member, or someone who has a connection to the child or their family can provide care to the child either temporarily or permanently if required.

There are two types of Kinship arrangements: Kinship Service and Kinship Care.

- **Kinship Service:** applies to a child or youth who cannot safely live at home, who is placed with a member of his or her extended family or community but not admitted into the care of a child welfare agency.
- **Kinship Care:** applies to a child or youth who cannot safely live at home, who is admitted to the care of a child welfare agency and placed with a member of the child or youth's extended family or community. Kinship Care families become licensed Foster Homes which involves a more extensive assessment; PRIDE training and Foster Care Standards apply.



HOW SMFC SUPPORTS KINSHIP

- Kinship Department
- Family Finding Program
- Family Centered Conferencing
- Alternative Dispute Resolution such as Family Group Conferencing
- Linking you to Community and SMFC resources
- Parenting the Second Time Around Group Program and in-home Family Support Workers
- Episodic or Start Up Funding/Subsidies/Ontario Permanency Funding Guidelines
- Healthy Minds training series through the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies
- African Caribbean Connections (ACC) Black Affirming Consultation Panel
- Collaboration with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities and Indigenous Child Welfare Agencies
- French Language Services



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