



## Importance of Kinship Care

Sometimes grandparents, other relatives, or family friends care for children when their parents are unable to care for them. This arrangement, known as kinship care, can occur with or without the involvement of a child welfare agency, depending on the situation.

Kinship care is commonly defined as the full-time protection and nurture of children by relatives, members of their Tribes or clans, godparents, stepparents, fictive kin, or non-related extended family members. The definition is inclusive and respectful of cultural values and ties of affection. However, the idea of family members assisting and supporting each other is not new. This is a traditional practice in most cultures.

Whether formally through child protective services or informally through family arrangements, kinship care aims to reduce the trauma of family separation and provide cultural and community ties. Here are some of the benefits of kinship care:

**Minimizes the trauma.** When a child can no longer safely remain in their home, placing a child with family (as opposed to foster care with a family they do not know) diminishes the loss they feel because they have an existing relationship with those in the new home. Relatives are also more likely to take large sibling groups and often live in the same community the child is familiar with, sometimes allowing the child to continue in the same

school district. Overall, this minimizes the trauma for the child and improve outcomes.

**Improves well-being.** According to [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org), children in kinship homes fare better, as measured by several child well-being factors. Children in the care of relatives experience increased stability, with fewer placement changes, decreased likelihood of disruption, and not as many school changes. Relatives are more likely than nonrelatives to support the child through difficult times and less likely to request the removal of difficult children. Children tend to feel better about the placement and are less likely to run away.

**Increases permanency.** Children in kinship care experience less reentry into foster care and have higher permanency rates than children in traditional foster care. This is because relatives are more likely to provide a permanent home through guardianship, custody, or adoption.

**Improves behavioral and mental health.** Children in kinship homes have better behavioral and mental health outcomes. In fact, studies have shown that children in kinship care had fewer behavioral problems three years after placement than children placed into traditional foster care.

**Preserves children's cultural identity and community connections.** Family connections are important to healthy child development and a sense of belonging. Kinship care helps children stay connected to their families and therefore preserve their cultural identity and community connections in many cases.

## NEXT STEPS

There has been an increase in recent years of grandparents becoming kinship care providers. According to [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org), children thrive in grandfamilies, especially when they are well-supported by services. Much work needs to be done in the area of supporting kinship care, especially grandparents raising grandchildren. This is an area you will hear more about from Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance in the upcoming months and years.

## Interested in becoming a kinship caregiver?

Check out this fact sheet from [www.childwelfare.gov](http://www.childwelfare.gov) to get you started. Additional resources can be found through PA Kinship Navigator or by reaching out to your local county children and youth services.



**On November 29, PFSA is proud to participate in #GivingTuesday.** This day of giving invites you to give back and create change in your community. Together, we can continue to make a difference by keeping PA safe for all children! We are grateful to you and for you! Your support on **#GivingTuesday**, and every day, allows us to fulfill our mission to **#ProtectPAKids**. You can donate through our website at [pafsa.org](http://pafsa.org).





# Family Digital Wellness

## Check out our new Family Digital Wellness resource: PFSA's Digital Dialogue!

PFSA's Digital Dialogue is a weekly resource that provides parents and professionals with terminology and concepts important to digital safety and digital wellness. The goal is to increase awareness, educate families and professionals, and give tips you can implement quickly.

### HOW IT WORKS

Each month will have a designated topic specifically intended to increase awareness and offer education and quick tips to parents and professionals. PFSA will provide a brief description of the topic and release more detailed, weekly content related to that topic throughout the month.

### WHERE CAN YOU FIND IT?

PFSA's Digital Dialogue will be hosted on the Family Digital Wellness page on our website. Information about the monthly topic and weekly content will be posted on our website and social media pages.

**Visit our Family Digital Wellness webpage to check it out and learn more!**



## Join the CBCAP Network!

**PFSA is inviting community-based organizations to consider joining our Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Network!**

This is a diverse network of child-protective and family-serving organizations that make a positive statewide impact on the children and

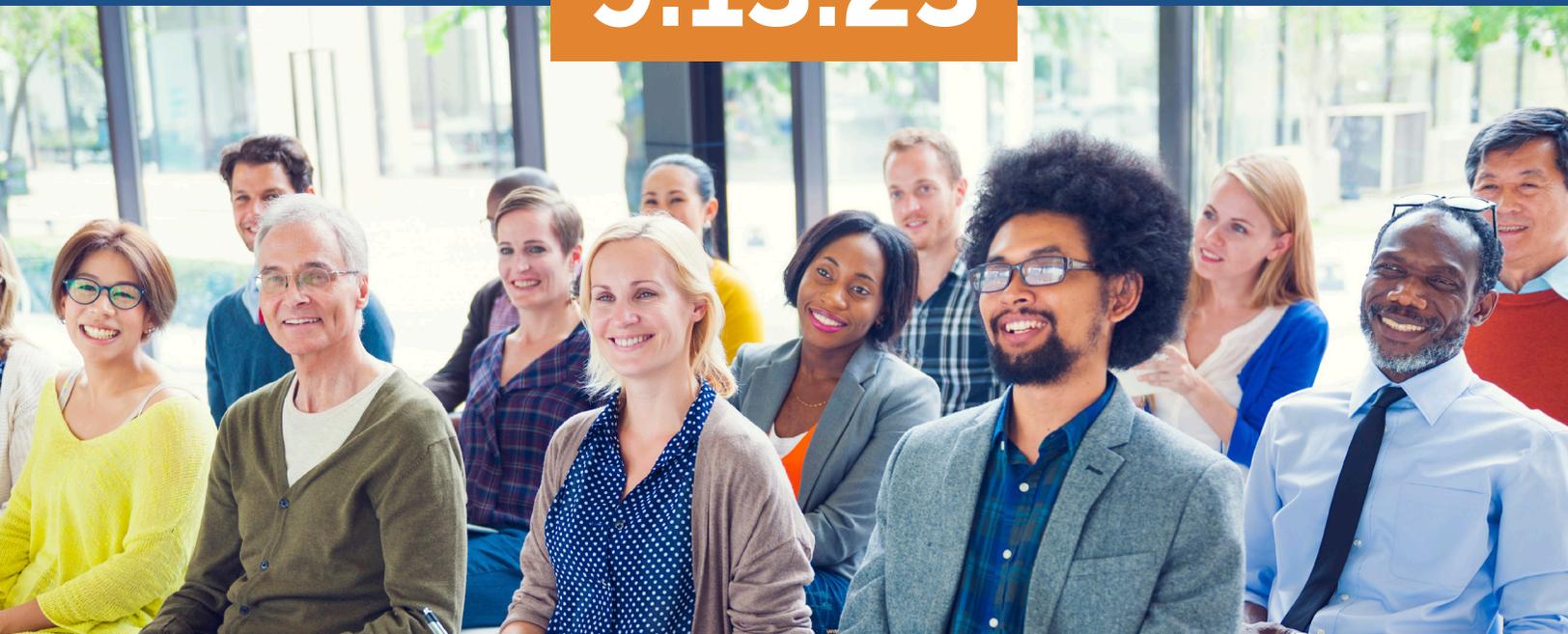
families throughout Pennsylvania. All CBCAP Network members receive benefits from PFSA, such as parenting and caregiver resources, educational materials, professional development opportunities for staff, discounts on training and materials, and so much more.

**If you are looking to join a network committed to preventing child abuse, supporting families, and working toward a brighter future, consider PFSA's CBCAP Network.** To learn more about the CBCAP Network, the benefits, or how to sign up, contact PFSA's Prevention Services Manager, Justin Donofrio, at [jdonofrio@pafsa.org](mailto:jdonofrio@pafsa.org).

# SAVE *the* DATE

## PA Child Abuse **PREVENTION SYMPOSIUM**

**9.13.23**



**Mark your calendar and plan to join us for PFSA's Annual PA Child Abuse Prevention Symposium!**

**September 13, 2023**

This all-day **virtual event** will feature acclaimed speakers and presentations on current topics and emerging trends relevant to a variety of professionals and organizations that provide services to children and families. Additional event details and information will be formally announced soon. In the meantime, keep an eye and ear out to learn more about the 2023 PA Child Abuse Prevention Symposium and early registration opportunities!

# UPCOMING PFSA TRAININGS

## Families in Recovery New Facilitator Training

This research-based program is a great resource for parents, guardians, and caretakers recovering from substance use disorder. The program aims to teach healthy coping and parenting skills while balancing the needs of recovery.

New facilitators of the Families in Recovery (FiR) program will be fully prepared to implement the program and provide training after attending a two-day comprehensive session consisting of content, education, and application instruction of the curriculum. FiR facilitators come together to share program implementation experience, ideas, and insights following initial training.

All organizations interested in implementing the Families in Recovery program are required to enter an agreement contract with PFSA and participate in the evaluation requirements of the program. FiR contracts include ongoing technical assistance, program development, facilitator calls, and assistance with data collection procedures.

**Dates:** January 24 & 25, 2023 (*virtual*) **OR**  
April 18 & 19, 2023 (*virtual*)

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
(*half-hour lunch break*)

**Cost:** Email Justin Donofrio, Prevention Services Manager, at [jdonofrio@pafsa.org](mailto:jdonofrio@pafsa.org) for the paperwork or to ask any questions.

## Mandated Reporter Training

PFSA has several options for mandated reporter training for staff and volunteers. Certificates are provided to the participants, and upon request, we will upload confirmation of your training to the Department of State or Education for CE fulfillments under Act 31 and/or Act 48. CLEs are also available for attorneys.

### LIVE IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL

**Cost:** Free

**How to register:** Find and register for a virtual session here: [pafsa.org/mandated-reporter-training](https://pafsa.org/mandated-reporter-training)

### INDIVIDUAL ONLINE, ON-DEMAND

**Cost:** \$30

**Take anytime:** [pafsa.org/on-demand-online-training](https://pafsa.org/on-demand-online-training)

### TRAIN-THE-TRAINER

This is an opportunity for organizations to develop their own quality, cost-efficient, in-house training program for employees on child abuse recognition and reporting.

**Dates:** January 10 & 11, 2023 (*virtual*) **OR**  
April 20 & 21, 2023

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
(*half-hour lunch break*)

**Cost:** \$1,000 per trainer, entering into a three-year contract with PFSA. Email Haven Evans, Director of Programs, at [hevans@pafsa.org](mailto:hevans@pafsa.org) for the paperwork or to ask any questions.