



# Using Systematic Review Evidence to Implement an Intervention to Better Support and Strengthen Kinship Caregivers

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# Objectives

1. Summarize results and future research identified in kinship care systematic review
2. Describe implementation of kinship care systematic review findings in Colorado (CO), USA
3. Present implementation fidelity, service utilization, and child welfare outcome findings from a kinship supports intervention



# Systematic Review Results

- ❑ Children in kinship care experience:
  - ❑ Fewer behavioral problems
  - ❑ Fewer mental health disorders
  - ❑ Less placement disruption
  - ❑ No difference in reunification rates
  - ❑ Less incidence of institutional abuse
  - ❑ Less utilization of mental health services

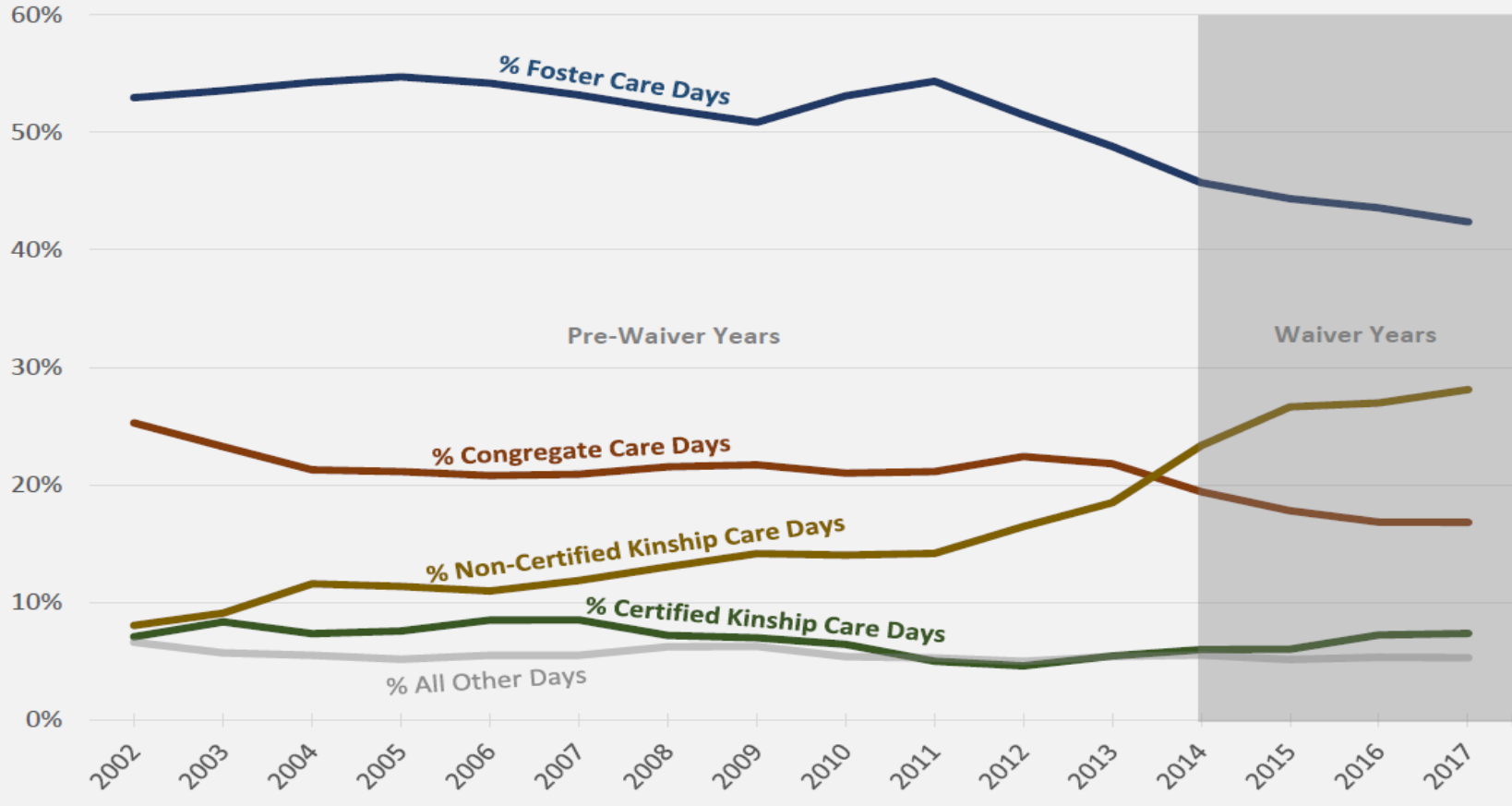


# Systematic Review Future Research

- Would kinship placements be even more effective with increased levels of caseworker involvement and enhanced service delivery?
- Should licensing standards be required for kinship caregivers?
- Should additional financial resources be made available to kinship caregivers?

# Trends in Placement Days in CO

Percentage of all Out of Home Removal Days by Care Type  
 Colorado Year One Waiver Counties (n=38) in State Fiscal Years 2002 – 2017





# County Utilization of Kinship Care

- ❑ “We have built our kinship support program from the feedback we received as part of the review, which shaped our thinking about how to design a program in-house that could better support kin providers.”
- ❑ “The kinship review prompted us to look more deeply at how we serve kin, and support them, even after having a kinship program for over a decade. We now support all kin who request assistance, whether they are an open case or not.”
- ❑ “Based on the review, we connect kin caregivers with community resources and triage small financial supports when necessary. This involves a higher level of blended and braided funding, as well as coordination of multiple division in our agency, as well as many community agencies.”



# Literature on Kinship Caregivers

- ❑ Unequal financial support (Brooks 2002) and service provision received by kinship caregivers compared with traditional foster parents (Dubowitz 1994).
- ❑ The licensing and certification of kinship caregivers is also a source of much disagreement and dissatisfaction (Gibbs 2000).
- ❑ Relatedly, the appropriate level of oversight of kinship caregivers by child welfare agencies is another area of discord (Cohen 1999).
- ❑ Cuddeback (2004) found that kinship care families receive less training, services, and financial support than do foster care families.





# Kinship Supports Intervention

- Targets all kin caring for children and youth for whom a referral has been made
- Complete a Kinship Supports Needs Assessment (KSNA) prior to placement and at placement end or case closure
- Coordination of corresponding services and supports for each need category in which the caregiver has a low to urgent need at the initial assessment



# Implementation Fidelity Outcomes

- Decrease in average overall need and need within each need category from the initial to closing KSNA
- Percentage of caregivers with no high or urgent needs at the closing KSNA
- Percentage of caregivers with at least one high or urgent need at the initial KSNA who no longer have any high or urgent needs at the closing KSNA

# Reach and Fidelity

Penetration Rate	Needs Assessment Completion and Timeliness				Needs and Services
% caregivers receiving at least one kinship supports service	% caregivers receiving a needs assessment	% caregivers receiving a kinship supports needs assessment within 10 days of kinship placement date	% caregivers receiving more than one needs assessment	% caregivers receiving a placement end or case close needs assessment	% caregivers indicating a low to urgent need in one or more need categories who received at least one corresponding support service for each category of expressed need
69% (4,665/6,784)	79% (3,660/4,665)	53% (1,955/3,660)	49% (1,774/3,660)	17% (625/3,660)	29% (383/1,321)



# Service Needs

- ❑ 81% of kin caregivers served through the intervention received services corresponding to most (50 percent or more) of their assessed needs.
- ❑ 29% of kin caregivers received services corresponding to all of their identified needs.
- ❑ 77% of kin caregivers indicated that they would choose to care for their kin children again because of the support they received from child welfare.



# Intervention Outcomes

- ❑ Children/youth whose caregivers received kinship supports had significantly longer mean stays in kinship care.
- ❑ Children/youth whose caregivers received kinship supports had significantly lower rates of subsequent founded/inconclusive reports of abuse or neglect.
- ❑ Children/youth in families who received family engagement meetings and kinship supports were significantly more likely to reunify with their parents.



# Lessons Learned

- ❑ Rise in non-certified kinship care placements followed the publication of the original systematic review.
- ❑ Kinship supports intervention was developed in response to literature on caregiver needs highlighted in the review.
- ❑ Kinship supports are enhancing the resources and services available to caregivers in CO.
- ❑ Kinship navigator program is next intervention designed to activate future research identified in systematic review.



# Contact Information

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