

Delivering **positive** **outcomes** for kinship families

Kinship Connected
and **Kinship Reach**



For family or friends who
step up to raise a child.

We are Kinship

Since 2001, we've been supporting kinship carers - friends or family who step up to raise a child when their parents aren't able to. We support, advise and inform kinship carers. Connecting them so they feel empowered. We are made by, and for, our community of kinship carers. And together we develop research, campaigns and policy solutions – creating positive change across society.

We're changing lives and changing the system.

Why work with Kinship?

With a thriving community of more than 12,000 kinship carers, a network of over 160 peer support groups, and a Professionals Network comprising more than 2,000 members – we are the leading kinship care charity in England and Wales.

We work alongside kinship carers to develop campaigns, policy solutions and groundbreaking research with academic partners, getting to the heart of what matters to their families through our surveys and reports, local Campaign Champions network and engaged social media following.

Our website is the only independent hub for kinship families and has specialist online resources for kinship carers and professionals, as well as guides for local authorities.

Our vision is a society in which kinship carers and the children they care for are recognised, valued and supported.



1 in 8

kinship carers are concerned they may have to stop caring for their kinship children in the next year if their situation doesn't improve.

For the majority of kinship children the alternative would be mainstream foster or residential care, with devastating consequences for children's experiences and outcomes, as well as significant additional costs to local authority budgets. Kinship Connected and Reach can provide kinship families with the support they need to prevent them reaching breaking point.

Our independent evaluation highlights how Kinship

Connected can reduce the likelihood of families requiring other costly child welfare intervention, saving local authorities money which can be spent on supporting families elsewhere.

Source: Starks Consulting independent review (2020)



More than

141,000

children are in kinship care in England and Wales*



Kinship carers are four times more likely to have had a direct debit, standing order or bill they weren't able to pay in the last month. 8% of kinship carers were using food banks because of the cost of living.**



Nearly

1 in 5

kinship carers feel lonely often or always**

**Source: Forgotten: Support for kinship children's education and mental health. August 2024.*

***Source: Make or Break: Annual survey of kinship carers 2024.*

Commissioning our services is an investment

When you commission our programmes, you will be offering the best possible support to kinship carers in your local authority. And better outcomes for kinship families also means reducing the need for placing children in foster care. Helping you save money in the long term.

New statutory guidance from the Department for Education aims to drive forward practice improvements in support for kinship carers across England. This new guidance requires local authorities to publish a kinship local offer, providing visible, accessible and up to date information for kinship carers on support available. Our pioneering programmes, **Connected** and **Reach**, will enable local authorities to meet the requirements of the guidance, deliver high quality support, and significantly improve the lives of kinship carers.



Kinship has supported our local authority by delivering a regular support group...there is now a lovely group of guardians who not only get support but offer support to each other. This has allowed the authority to progress with future plans, to support the families and build up relationships. Being able to refer individuals to Kinship for support straight away when issues arise or they need some advice, helps our guardians feel listened to and appreciated. And the authority is able to concentrate on supporting the most complex cases with the knowledge our families are in safe hands.

Walsall Local Authority



Our impact

392 kinship carers took part in Kinship Connected in 2023/24. **90%** achieved, or partly achieved, their goals on the programme. **100%** rated the quality of support as 'excellent' or 'good' and **100%** were likely to recommend Kinship Connected to other kinship carers.

83% more able to manage family relationships

82% increased confidence accessing advice services

80% reduced financial concerns

80% increased confidence in advocacy

78% more able to manage children's behaviour

77% reduction in concern for children's educational needs

76% increase in confidence in caring role

76% increased sense of wellbeing

75% increased confidence accessing legal advice

74% reduction in concern for children's wellbeing

71% reduction in housing concerns

Local authorities commissioning Kinship Connected or Kinship Reach include: Bradford Children and Families Trust, Birmingham Children's Trust (England), Leeds City Council, London Borough of Bromley, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, Surrey County Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Ealing Council (London Borough of Ealing), Hammersmith and Fulham Council, London Borough of Hounslow, Nottinghamshire County Council, Walsall Council, Sunderland City Council.

Kinship Connected

Kinship Connected is our flagship programme for special guardians and kinship carers, delivered in collaboration with local authorities.

This intensive support model is underpinned by person-centred and trauma-informed approaches. It uses a goal-oriented process to achieve positive outcomes for kinship families.

Three key elements of the **Kinship Connected** model:

1. one-to-one support
2. social connection
3. advocacy and service access

Kinship carers are offered **one-to-one support** from specialist Kinship Family Workers for up to 6 months each. The support is tailored to each kinship carer's needs and circumstances.

We create **social connection** through our Connected Support Groups. These are spaces and facilitated networks for kinship carers to share their stories, listen to each other, offer advice, and provide mutual support.

Kinship Family Workers help kinship carers to navigate the system and **access the services** and resources they need. Such as individual grants to support carers with the cost of living and access to Kinship's 'Someone Like Me' peer buddying service.

Through consistent support, compassion and understanding, Kinship Family Workers build trust with kinship carers. They support kinship carers to express their views and wishes and **empower them to advocate** for themselves and their families once support from Kinship Connected has finished.

Kinship Family Workers are independent. They act as a conduit between kinship families and the local authority, facilitating strong communication and improved relationships.



"We're all in the same boat and we all know what we're going through...a lot of us relate to our stories, and how our children have been affected...we all understand and try to help each other."

Kinship carer

Impact of Kinship Connected

Kinship carers who took part in Kinship Connected had:

increased access to support

improved mental wellbeing

increased confidence in their parental role

a **decrease in concerns** about their child's behaviour, health and wellbeing and educational transitions

a **decrease in concerns** about their child's relationship and contact with their parents

Source: Starks Consulting independent review (2020)

Kinship Reach

Kinship Reach is an award-winning programme that offers all kinship carers up to 6 virtual support sessions, over 3 months, from a specialist Kinship Family Worker.

Support is tailored to each kinship carer, and their circumstances, and delivered via telephone, video calls and attending virtual meetings to provide advocacy and support to carers.

Local authorities have told us that Kinship Reach adds extra capacity to their teams, frees up social worker time, and provides a crucial service to kinship families who live out of the local authority area.

“ ***Kinship Reach have been an integral part of supporting carers and indeed adding additional capacity and flexibility to the support we can offer... I would definitely recommend the service to other authorities.***

Local Authority Team Manager

Commission our programmes

Kinship Connected and **Kinship Reach** are evidence-based programmes which are designed to meet local needs.

Please contact Jo Denoris at commissions@kinship.org.uk to discuss your requirements.

An investment in our programmes is an investment in kinship families.

Impact of Kinship Reach

Data from our Kinship care surveys show that of the kinship carers that took part in Kinship Reach:

93% felt more confident in their caring role

68% were better able to manage family relationships

92% reduction in concerns about their child's wellbeing

78% were less lonely

79% felt less isolated





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We are Kinship

Kinship is the leading kinship care charity in England and Wales.
We are made by and for our community of kinship carers.

Like family, relationships run deep. And we hear their experiences;
for too long they have been isolated without the help they need.

We support, advise and inform kinship carers. Connecting them so
they feel empowered.

Because a child needs the love and warmth of a thriving family.

We develop research, campaigns and policy solutions. Creating
positive change across society.

Because for kinship families, love alone is not enough.

Through our work we harness frustrations to fuel passion for change.
And tough experiences to inspire ideas that transform lives.

And as we see momentum building, we keep using evidence to
demonstrate the value of kinship care. Helping kinship carers
navigate challenging circumstances. Believing in a child's potential.

Join us. Together, let's commit to change for kinship families.

www.kinship.org.uk



kinship.org.uk



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