



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

The **Peer** Post

Stronger together



**Edition 1
September
2025**

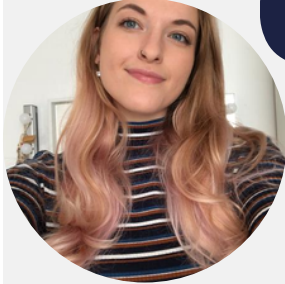
Meet the Hub team



Janice - National Peer Support Connector

Email: janice.santos@kinship.org.uk Tel: [07398 474 879](tel:07398474879)

If your group is facing a challenge, I'm on hand to support you. Whether it's offering insights from Kinship or connecting you with another experienced group, together we'll find the solution.



Ellie - Peer Hub Coordinator

Email: ellie.dunstall@kinship.org.uk Tel: [07949 999 309](tel:07949999309)

If you email the peer support email I'll direct you to the support you need. I write the monthly email and this magazine so contact me if you have content you'd like to share. I can make changes to your page on the website and help with any resources you need.



Laura - Peer Community Innovation Lead

Email: laura.desouza@kinship.org.uk Tel: [07949 055 120](tel:07949055120)

I manage the Hub so if your group has a concern, query, idea or top tip please get in touch: you influence the support we offer. I host our monthly online meets and connect groups with services in Kinship to ensure you have the resources and platform you need to thrive.



Daniel - Associate Director of Peer Support and Community

Email: daniel.lyons@kinship.org.uk

I lead Kinship's work in developing new peer groups and ensuring existing groups flourish through our Hub. Come to me with your suggestions, successes, or challenges that span both teams or that can't be resolved within the Hub.

Group network meets

Each month we host 2 Zoom meets for group leaders to come together and share recent updates, challenges and successes from their groups. They are usually on the **second Wednesday** of the month during term time - you can choose between **12:30 to 2pm** or **7:30 to 9pm** on the same day.

It's your space, so if there is ever a topic you'd like to discuss, email us at peersupport@kinship.org.uk

Scan the QR code to find out the date of our next meets, or visit kinship.org.uk/groups/group-leader-network-meet

How to scan: Open your phone camera, hover over the code, and a link should appear for you to click.



From strength to strength

We wanted to kick off with a story every group could relate to - one of perseverance, passion and resilience: values you all possess in abundance. Finding new members is a challenge for lots of groups and when numbers are low, doubts might creep in, but Carl's experience in Hull proves there is a reason to persist.

“

I've been running our group for about 2 years now. I wanted to provide kinship carers with a safe space to have a coffee and a chat, and get help from other carers who get what they're going through. In the early days, there was only 3 of us at the local Costa. It's been a long and at times hard journey, thinking 'am I doing the right thing?', and thoughts of giving up when I'm sat on my own.



One moment which stands out was when a member asked if I was running the group just for the 3 of us. My answer was no, I'll not give up! Our numbers slowly increased, especially after the local Kinship roadshow. **Now there are around 15 members who attend as and when they can.**

”

Outreach

September can be a great time to find new members, and working as a group could help you cover more ground. Together, **map out all the local community spaces** you know: the places you go with your children, venues free for carers, etc. Would they put up a poster promoting your group or even put on a coffee morning promoting your group?

Here are some places peer support groups have had success:

- school noticeboards
- school uniform shops
- churches
- libraries
- The Post Office
- supermarkets
- doctors' surgeries
- social prescribers
- hairdressers
- community boards
- Citizens Advice
- community centres
- sports centres
- foodbanks
- solicitors
- parish council



Each member of the group could take 5 posters each and ask in the places they visit

You may have **local charities** who could help promote your group, mental health services or a Home-Start hub. Many groups use **Facebook** to find members, posting on local forums. If everyone posts in 1 or 2 groups it will lighten the load and allow you to keep track of where you're posting.

Think of **people who could help**: family, friends, people you've worked with, services you use. Could they help spread the word? For anyone who wants to help but doesn't know how, this could be a great way.

Outreach events

Chesterfield - Andy and Janet have attended multiple community events, including an armed services day and a primary school fete, using tombolas as a way to bring in much needed funds while raising the group's profile and meeting kinship carers. As a result, their group has gained 2 new members, and raised enough money to take their Kinship families to the seaside by train.

"We were unsure of doing this at first, but after the first couple, we came to really enjoy it. We've gained offers of support from other organisations we met at the events, like the Rotary club. To any groups thinking of doing such an event, I would say go for it! You have so much to gain and little to lose."



Eastbourne, Hailsham and Heathfield - Wendy's groups have been very active, with 1 group attending their local Rotary club's skittles championship event, through which they were given £250.



They have also:

- attended a wellbeing event with the local foodbank and council
- hosted a kinship picnic every year, which keeps growing in numbers and is paid for by donations throughout the year
- started planning 2 Kinship Care Week events, to ensure both MPs can attend
- started planning a Christmas lunch and bowling event

Harrogate and Knaresborough - Aileen and Angela attended a local community fair and set up a stall with Kinship bunting and leaflets, and posters for their peer support group. They used a giant tub of bubble mix, colouring pencils and paper to attract people to the stand.



Want to do some outreach but don't know where to start?

Supermarkets often let community groups set up stalls to promote their meets, or you could look out for local community events on social media including Christmas fairs.

Check out page 8 for details on how to aid your efforts with Kinship merchandise.

Making changes to overcome challenges

In Shipley, West Yorkshire, James' group is running strong since some vital changes were made. Now, they're working with their local authority on the local offer for kinship care, and had guests visit their group including the BookTrust, their MP, the head of children's services, and their virtual school head.

“

I joined my peer support group 3 years ago - the group had already been running about 10 years before that. When the previous group leader took on a new job, the group unexpectedly put my name forward to take over the reins. We used to meet in a pub, with people having to sit on separate tables. I was worried about people missing out, and that the venue wasn't comfortable for everyone. So we moved to the library, changed the meeting time to 10:30am, and arranged the tables in a circle. Now, I've had people say how much better the group is, and we've started getting members from different backgrounds. **When we first moved, I sat there and wondered how many people would turn up. I was thrilled that 30 people showed for our guest speakers.**



Could your venue be impacting how many people attend your group?

Is it private, accessible and inclusive?

Finding free venues isn't always easy but groups have found spaces in: fire stations, supermarket community rooms, church halls, The Salvation Army, libraries and schools.

Guest speakers at groups

You've had an impressive range of guest speakers attend your groups to speak about their services, and in return learning from you about kinship care. If your group is curious about inviting guests, here's what others have tried:

- virtual school heads
- MP
- children's services
- fostering and adoption services
- solicitors/legal advice
- local authority welfare department
- local charities
- mental health and wellbeing services, including [MIND](#)
- local authority [SENDIASS](#) service
- youth services like career advisers, job centre, local organisations - to help kinship teenagers
- wills and estate planning

There are different ways to structure a guest speaker session. Together, try to find what **works best for everyone**. You could dedicate the first half of the group to the speaker, and keep the rest of the time free for peer support after they've left. Or, you could arrange a dedicated guest speaker session outside of your usual meets.

Funding and grants

The power of peer support really shines when groups secure grants and donations. It shows these organisations truly believe in the importance of support groups in communities, and that they are worth investing time and resources into. Remember, your group may not be interested in raising money or applying for donations, and that's okay! As long as they're getting what they need from the group, that's all that matters. But if you are interested, our network has some great experience and advice to share.

Most fundraising and grants require your group to be constituted. It sounds very formal, but with support from the Hub and your fellow groups, it could end up being easier than it sounds. **If you're a constituted group and would like to help others get there, please let us know.**

Funds could be used for:

- resources for the group, like venue, chairs, snacks/food, beverages, a kettle, pens and a flipchart, arts and crafts materials, printing group posters, other outreach materials like a table and stand
- your group venue
- a nice meal e.g. Christmas dinner
- a subscription or membership for everyone to share
- a day out
- gifts you could send to group members in the post, especially if your group is online
- a party

Julie's
top tips

Applying for funding and grants - Julie from Sheffield recommends:

- **applying locally** for funding rather than nationally, because grant funders like to fund local grassroot organisations
- starting with an application to your **local community foundation** (search the web to find yours) - every area in the UK has a community fund
- getting on your local **funding advice service's mailing list**, where they produce a weekly email of grant funders
- be prepared to **apply quickly** in case of short deadlines or applications closing early
- do a search with your district's name and words like "grants/carers/families/children/low income"
- apply to the **National Lottery Awards For All** - you can apply for up to £20,000
- ensure to **check what they like to fund**, for example activities specific to your group's aims
- be willing to **adapt your application** to the funder's objectives, but don't chase funding which will take your group in a direction you don't want
- apply to **fund your group's core costs** first, like venue costs, marketing, transport
- **grab their attention** immediately - don't assume they know what kinship care is, use facts and figures, and tell a story briefly
- **keep records** of your spending - you could use a spreadsheet or Word doc
- **be honest** - if you are successful with 2 applications, tell them and try to negotiate, for example to defer a grant until next year

Your recommendations

We've brought together all the great monetary suggestions you've shared with our peer support network over the past year, so you have them all in 1 place.

Finding freebies

It's always worth asking **local shops, businesses, and supermarkets** for anything they can donate, either for a party or generally for kinship carers. There are also websites like **Freegle** and **Freecycle**, as well as social media marketplaces, where items are given away.

We've heard great success from social media posts asking for donations!

Try reaching out to these places to apply for their funding pots:

- supermarket community champions
- [rotary groups](#)
- [Freemasons](#)
- the Mayor's fund
- local Dunelm about their Christmas present scheme

Some carer discount suggestions:

- [mymaxcard.co.uk](#)
- [discountsforcarers.com](#)
- [thebreadandbutterthing.org](#)
- local independent places like cinemas
- [carerscard.co.uk](#)
- [accesscard.online](#)
- [ceacard.co.uk](#)
- [kidspass.co.uk](#)

Free grant and funding finder:

There's loads of useful info on [charityexcellence.co.uk](#) about grants and funding.

Find more financial guidance for kinship carers on our website: [kinship.org.uk/finance](#)



We value your feedback

As this is our pilot edition, this magazine will change and grow based on feedback of what you want to see. We'd love to hear from you about:

- whether you liked the content
- if you have any tips you'd like to share
- whether you have an ally making an impact you'd like to shout out
- your peer support group's story, challenges and wins
- how peer support has helped you

To submit your feedback and ideas, email peersupport@kinship.org.uk

Media recommendations

We'd love to build a library of your favourite media - whether it's a book, TV show, movie, podcast, or other, which has helped you in some way and that you'd recommend to another kinship carer.

For now, here's a link to our **Kinship Together Podcast**, which features real-life stories, experiences and advice from kinship carers.



[kinship.org.uk/kinship-together-podcast](#)

Kinship's Peer Support Network Agreement

To better support your outreach, fundraising and sustainability, we've introduced a [Network Agreement \(click here to view\)](#) which allows us to provide deeper, more tailored support for every peer support group, existing and new — whether developed with the Kinship peer support team or independently.

Created in consultation with peer groups, the agreement outlines key areas such as safeguarding, safety, collaboration, and data management. It sets out a clear framework for how we can work together to strengthen your group, while respecting your autonomy and local priorities.

By aligning around shared values, the [Network Agreement](#) helps ensure that all groups in the network are supported, trusted, and promoted with confidence — both to kinship carers in your area and to peer groups across the country.

Signing up to the [Network Agreement](#) gives you access to:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ♥ safeguarding guidance | ♥ buddying |
| ♥ the Kinship logo | ♥ 1-to-1 Kinship support |
| ♥ Kinship merchandise and posters | ♥ online resources and templates |
| ♥ training and guest speakers | ♥ in-person workshops in your area |
| ♥ outreach to your community | ♥ Kinship's Public Liability Insurance |

Groups who have signed the Network Agreement can ask the training team to deliver a **workshop of their choice** in their local area. A full list of topics can be found on page 18.

You need a minimum of 15 attending but if your group is smaller we could partner you with another local group. Open to all kinship carers in the area, we hope they serve as great opportunities to promote your group too.



The peer support team have created **6 new training modules** to help with group facilitation.

They can be delivered in person or online:

Introduction to running your group

Active listening

Making your group inclusive

Safeguarding

Dealing with challenges

Confidentiality and trust



For more information email:
peersupport@kinship.org.uk

Interacting with schools



It's likely there are lots of kinship carers for children attending schools near you who are in need of support. They may not even know the phrase “**kinship carer**” or that it applies to them. Some groups in the Hub community have managed to **build positive relationships** with their local schools, engaging them in supporting kinship carers and **promoting their support group**. Teachers Dionne and Amy, who organise a kinship peer support group at their school, give their suggestions for interacting with schools as a kinship carer.

“

If you are a kinship carer and need support, reach out to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead** or **Designated Teacher** at school. They can signpost you to services offering advice and help, and could also connect you with other kinship carers within the school community.

Think about setting up a **coffee morning** where you can share experiences and support each other. Encourage your school to raise awareness of kinship families by **organising an event or celebration** - we had an “Other's Day” to celebrate ALL of those that care.

Remember you are not alone and are doing an amazing job! ”

Raising awareness

Dionne and Amy are doing a fantastic job of championing kinship care by running a **webinar** for headteachers within the academy trust, to encourage other schools to do the same.

During the webinar, they will be sharing some information about how their school has been **working effectively** with kinship families.

The aims of the session are to:

- **raise awareness** of kinship care
- showcase their approach, highlighting **what works in practice**
- explore the impact of this on **children's learning and wellbeing**

We hope this work has a lasting impact by encouraging the schools to put support in place and ensure their staff have a thorough understanding of kinship care and the needs of kinship children.

Shout out to the wonderful Harrow group!



School support

We've seen many groups building relationships with the **virtual school head (VSH)** in their area. The VSH is responsible for helping schools support looked after and previously looked after children, including how to spend pupil premium funding.

Once you identify your local VSH (scan the QR code below or head to kinship.org.uk/compass to use our **Compass tool**), try **inviting them to your support group** to talk about what they do, and see if they can share the details of your group with local schools and carers.



We have some **advice guides** on our website which kinship carers can be signposted to:



- How schools can support children in kinship care
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
- Pupil premium plus
- Finding a school
- Help with school costs
- Financial support with childcare costs
- Childcare as a kinship carer

Or head to kinship.org.uk/advice-and-information and filter by topic - childcare and education.



The Department for Education have recently refreshed the **statutory curriculum guidance** for religion, sex and health education. In that guidance, it states:

"Schools should be sensitive to pupils' circumstances, recognising that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children, and can include single parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, young carers, kinship carers, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers. Teaching should illustrate a wide range of family structures in a positive way, and care should be taken to ensure that children are not stigmatised based on their home circumstances."

Working with your local schools could be a great way to ensure this guidance is being met and your group is being signposted by the school. Andy from Chesterfield has been working with Outwood Academy Newbold, who recently wrote a letter which was sent to all parents.

It resulted in the school identifying **5 kinship carers** they weren't yet aware of! We've created a template based on this letter for you to share with your school.

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Identification and support for students in kinship care

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. At XXX we are committed to ensuring that every child receives the support and understanding they need to thrive in both their education and wellbeing.

In line with the Department for Education's Statutory Guidance on Kinship Care (October 2024), we are working to improve how we recognise and support children who are living in kinship care arrangements. You can read this guidance here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670d3ed5e84ae1fd8592f2fa/Kinship_Care_-_statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities_October_2024.pdf

Kinship care describes situations where a child is being raised by a relative, family friend, or other connected adult because their parents are unable to care for them. These arrangements can be formal or informal, and may involve grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, or close family friends.

As part of our inclusive approach, we are currently undertaking a data capture to help us identify any students who are living in a kinship care arrangement. This will enable us to offer tailored support to those young people and ensure we are meeting their needs both pastorally and academically. It will also help us provide appropriate information to carers and ensure that staff are aware of, and sensitive to, the specific circumstances of students in kinship care.

I would be grateful if you could let me know via email XXX if your child is currently in a kinship care arrangement. Any information shared with us will be treated in strict confidence and will only be used to ensure appropriate support is in place.

I would also like to take this opportunity to make kinship carers aware of a local support group, XXX, who you can contact via email XXX if you wish to attend. For advice and further information, the national charity Kinship (www.kinship.org.uk) offer free advice, training and additional online peer support, in addition to campaigning for change. You can also join the Kinship Community for regular updates.

If you are unsure or would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Share this letter with your schools to see if they could send the same. If you'd like to download this template, and to see the original letter, contact us via email: peersupport@kinship.org.uk

Kinship Care Week: 6 to 12 October 2025

Kinship Care Week is a national week of awareness, recognition, and celebration of kinship families across England and Wales.

This year we are celebrating our **Kinship Community** – a strong, supportive national network of **over 15,000 kinship carers and their supporters** that helps families heal, grow, and thrive, and make connections that last a lifetime.

Whatever you are planning - from tea parties with your local group to marking the week with family - **we are raising a teacup to you!** Thank you for supporting Kinship Care Week.

Your digital toolkit

This toolkit, including **Your Complete Guide to Kinship Care Week 2025** is packed full of ideas to help you get planning and raise awareness of kinship care during the week.

The resources include logos, social media posts, posters, press releases and template letters and emails. It also includes our **4 calls to action**:

- 1** Raise awareness by sharing information about kinship care and support in local libraries, local authority websites, local shops etc.
- 2** Host a tea party for kinship carers or kinship families in your local area.
- 3** Engage with your MP or local councillor. Invite them to your peer support group, or ask them for a meeting with our template letter. Contact local media about it and any other activities you get up to!
- 4** Follow Kinship's social media and share the information we post about #KinshipCareWeek:



@KinshipCareCharity



@Kinship



@KinshipCharity



@Kinship_Charity

Join us for our special Kinship Care Week masterclass on **Tuesday 7 October from 7pm to 8:30pm**, offering simple tools to help you look after your wellbeing, handle tricky emotions and manage changing family relationships: kinship.org.uk/kcw-masterclass



Scan or visit kinship.org.uk/kinship-care-week to download your **toolkit**, along with our toolkits for local authorities, virtual schools, partners and organisations.

Celebrating Kinship Care Week

Every year we love seeing how your groups celebrate **Kinship Care Week**.

While it's a great opportunity to promote your group and campaign, the most important part is to help the kinship carers in your group and local community feel **appreciated, celebrated and valued**.



Peer support and pamper session



Marisa, from the West Norfolk group, made a Facebook post asking for complementary therapists in the local area to **donate 2 hours of their time** to pamper the kinship carers in the group, as a treat alongside their usual meet.

“

I wanted to do something special for them. We had loads of offers, as therapists tend to be caring, generous people who'd love to do something nice for people who give so much for others. Depending on the size of your group, you'd only need 1 or 2 people. We had some reflexology, small massages, and they brought all their own products - **it cost us nothing!** The treatments took place in the corner of the room, so we could still have our usual group without being overheard. It was so easy to arrange - I just posted on local village community groups. **We might even do it again this year.**

”

More donation ideas...

- **Group workshops** hosted by local organisations or qualified individuals could donate a session - it could be wellbeing, arts and crafts, cooking, whatever you can find that your group would enjoy!
- **Tea party** with donations from local stores/cafes/catering - you could also ask around for the donation of a venue for an hour or so.
- **Tickets** to a local show, attraction, or cinema.
- **Raffle prizes** - not just food, but could be self-care products and toiletries, homeware, books, vouchers.

We've put together a **letter and email template** for you to use when asking for donations for a Kinship Care Week event.

Email peersupport@kinship.org.uk to get your copy!

Local media

We've been blown away by the amount of local media features you've been involved in this year. On top of joining Kinship campaign events like the trolley march in Westminster in February, you have also made appearances on **local radio, television and newspapers**.

In March, we invited **Gemma**, our **Associate Director of Communications, Campaigns and Marketing**, to the group network meeting to give some guidance on interacting with local media. We discussed how it's possible to promote your groups without telling your story, if you'd rather not share personal details.

Top tips from the session:

- **Articles need a hook.** If you're working with another community organisation, have a visit from your MP or Mayor, or it's near Kinship Care Week - use these. You could even use the figure of how many kinship carers are in your area (use our constituency map: kinship.org.uk/constituency-map), the challenges your members are facing, or link it with a news story affecting kinship carers.
- **Be clear about what you want shared.** Consider changing names, using vague locations, no photos, and think about how people involved could be affected. If you're being interviewed, ask for the questions in advance, or see if you can set the questions yourself.
- **Direct people to your group via the Kinship website** if you'd rather not give out the location or your contact details. Consider which details you want on the website, and contact peersupport@kinship.org.uk to update them.
- **You don't need to answer questions about the Kinship charity or our stance on anything.** Make it clear you're a volunteer or part of our network to ensure the focus remains on informing people about kinship care and your group.
- **If you want support, for example if you're not sure how to get started, please get in touch - we'd be happy to help.**



View our local media toolkit:

kinship.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Campaign-Champions-toolkit-Local-media-A5.pdf



Media training coming soon!

We'll be running free media training – look out for more information in the coming months.



Working with your local authority

“

Hi, I'm **Tim Fisher**, Practice Lead at Kinship.

I'm working with our campaigns team to keep a close watch on developments across the country as local authorities shape their kinship local offers.



The local offer is, in essence, a single place where information about support for kinship families is brought together - but more than that, it's also about how that support is presented, understood, and accessed.

Like any offer, it's worth asking: is it fresh, clear and welcoming? What's in the package and who packed it? Was it created with kinship families, or delivered top-down? All of these are questions that together we need to be asking our local authorities – and **Kelly in our campaigns team is here to support you** to do that.

The local offer is something local authorities must put together and they really should do that in partnership with kinship carers. They should set out support across all relevant services, and keep it regularly reviewed and updated. Kinship carers like you are experts by experience and you're central to making sure the final package reflects what families actually need.

Kinship will be sharing regular updates about progress being made by councils right across the country at the **online group network meets** – and our campaigns team are here to support you to ask your local authority the right questions. They're running **workshops in September** to kick things off – more details on those are on our website.

Together we can all keep an eye on local authorities and what their local offer looks like. It's not just about how it's delivered - it's about how it's shaped, shared and sorted.

If you'd like any more information, let us know. I really look forward to meeting some of you in the near future.

Tim



”

Become a Campaign Champion

kinship.org.uk/campaign-champions



If you're ready to get started, email Kelly in the campaigns team:
kelly.taylor@kinship.org.uk

Different approaches to peer support

Peer support comes in all shapes and sizes, and is delivered in many different ways. Not all groups take place in person, or even indoors! And some are spaces just for people in similar circumstances.

Men's group

kinship.org.uk/groups/mens-kinship-carers-group



This online group is a space for male kinship carers to come together each month. Ian and Kieron, who organise the group, say that being online helps open up accessibility, allows more carers to join from different areas rather than just local, and sometimes it can help people to open up more than they would in person.

*"Male kinship carers have been overlooked and ignored for many years. Men often take a backseat in caring roles, due to work commitments or societal pressure. Having a group for male kinship carers lets men know they matter, and feel heard, which is vital. The group has evolved into a **band of brothers** who get each other's troubles, woes and struggles, and support each other. To anyone unsure about joining - do not be afraid, you are not alone, we understand. Nobody here will judge or criticise you. It's a great friendly space."*

“

Coventry Walk with Me

Walk with me started because we had no support in the area. I put together a group by asking the local authority to promote it to kinship carers, then asked the group what they'd like. We all agreed a walk would be a nice way to let off steam and talk at the same time. Without an agenda, the conversation just flows, and you find yourself getting things out and feeling refreshed by the end. We don't have to worry about a venue either.

I also run an online group using the **free version of Teams**. I'm not very tech savvy but it's quite easy to use. To anyone who is thinking of starting an online group - just go for it! What's the worst that could happen? There are people out there like me who need support. And **even if you've only got 2 people to join, if they get something out of it, then it's worth it.**

-Laurie

”

Try our online groups

If you're looking for support between your meets, Kinship's online peer support groups are a great place to meet other kinship carers. Visit kinship.org.uk/groups
If you don't know how to use Zoom, get in touch and we can help.

We currently run groups on the following:

- Kinship carers with teenagers
- Kinship carers with young children
- Grandparents
- Aunts and uncle
- Kinship and adoption
- Caring on your own
- Drugs and alcohol
- Bereavement
- Diverse families
- Life changes and my life now
- Time for me Thursdays
- Book club

View all
our online
groups



Signposting

A common challenge in peer support groups is **maintaining boundaries**.

Peer support doesn't mean fixing someone's problems - it's being a **listening ear**, and **sharing relatable experiences**. It can also help to share services you've used or been recommended. Knowing where to direct someone who needs help is a wonderful skill that is built over time - often without you even noticing - so **don't pressure yourself** if you're not sure yet. **You are doing enough just by being there, being kind and listening.**



Group network meets are a great place to hear about organisations other groups and carers have used.

Previous suggestions include:

- **Kinship Compass** tool: kinship.org.uk/compass
- **Kinship Advice Service**: kinship.org.uk/advice
- **Coram's Child Law Advice**: childlawadvice.org.uk
- **Ridley & Hall**: ridleyandhall.co.uk/our-services/child-care-adoption-kinship
- **Family Rights Group**: frg.org.uk
- **Hub of Hope**: hubofhope.co.uk
- **Citizens Advice**: citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Independent Provider of Special Education Advice**: ipsea.org.uk
- **Cerebra** (helping children with brain conditions): cerebra.org.uk
- **Adfam** (for families affected by alcohol, drug use or gambling): adfam.org.uk
- **Families Anonymous**: famanon.org.uk
- **Beacon House** (creative therapeutic service): beaconhouse.org.uk
- **Carers' Resource** (support for carers): carersresource.org
- **Winston's wish** (bereavement support for children): winstonswish.org
- **MINDJAM** (emotional & SEN support for young people): mindjam.org.uk
- **KOOTH** (online support for young people): kooth.com



Scan for
[helpful organisations](#)
on the Kinship website

Words of comfort from group members:

"It is not your responsibility to have all the answers, and often someone in the group has been through something similar and could point them in the right direction."

"The biggest help is that they can talk about the situation openly, and be able to express their true feelings in a safe space without judgement, where they may not usually be able to do this in other areas of their lives."

"You can't know everything and be everything to everyone. But building up a collection of signposting services and contacts can help."

"It's important to be clear in our own minds how much time and energy we have to give to this, and protect ourselves from burnout."

Additional support from Kinship

Advice

The Kinship advice team are specialists in supporting kinship carers across England and Wales. We can support you wherever you are in your kinship journey. From thinking about becoming a kinship carer to supporting you as you care for your kinship child or children – we're here for you.

We also have a whole host of online advice guides on topics such as financial support and benefits; health and wellbeing; childcare and education; relationships and parenting and many more. Visit kinship.org.uk/advice-and-information

Contact the advice line:

Our phone line is open from **Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 2pm**

You can call us during these hours for free on **0300 123 7015**



Training

To help navigate the often overwhelming and confusing system for kinship carers, Kinship offers a range of [free workshops and events](#) both online and in-person on:

- behaviour as communication
- dealing with emotional challenges
- drugs and alcohol
- fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)
- financial support
- supporting your kinship child at school
- SEND and EHCP process
- trauma and attachment
- working with children's services
- formalising kinship care
- life story work
- introduction to kinship care
- managing challenging behaviour
- managing contact
- online safety
- sensitive conversations with children

The training team also hold **roadshow events**, to help you connect with other kinship carers, and get vital information on how to navigate the system and make choices that work for you.



Upcoming Roadshows

- 10 September: Cornwall
- 17 September: Peterborough
- 2 October: Leicester
- 14 October: Leeds



Join our community

Sign up for emails to keep up to date with the information that's important to you, from support and advice for kinship carers, to our latest news, events and campaigns.

kinship.org.uk/Community

The value of peer support: in your words

Whether or not you have the capacity to do outreach, fundraise or run events, **the magic in groups is found in the peer support** - the connection with someone who truly understands how you feel.

Having a space people know is there for them is enough. We hear the difference you make.

"We had no one to help us as we went through our journey. Having seen the same issues occurring years later, I vowed to do all I could to make sure it didn't happen to others, or at least support them through it. I had a lady come to our meeting, absolutely distraught, looking after 3 generations of people and shell-shocked. I listened, gave encouragement, and supported her over 2 years along with the other group members. The high point was seeing her coming into the meeting with a huge smile, happy and excited for the future. **Yes, she still has things to go through, but she's no longer feeling alone.**"

"Peer support is a lifeline. Having someone to talk to - people in similar circumstances, was so comforting, when we felt so bewildered ourselves."

"We laugh together, cry together, and we're always there for each other."

"A true value of peer support is the empathy and how people pick up what you're saying between the lines. Being given the space to talk sometimes means moments of silence, which can be hard, but people often need it to then share when they are ready."

"Our group nearly closed because the local authority didn't have the funds to continue it. I said I would lead the group, and since then it's been growing steadily. I was worried I didn't have the knowledge to help others, but we've found within the group everyone has something to offer and share. The best moments are when a new member arrives and they are made welcome by everyone in the group. They soon settle in and feel like they belong."

"I volunteered to lead a group to connect people, and to connect myself. The highlight is seeing new people come to group a little nervous and frightened, but obviously hiding a huge burden. Then they discover there are others with the same burden which they share with the group, so the person shares too, and the relief is amazing."

"There's no shame or embarrassment, no matter how shocking your story may seem to you - just friendly support, which we truly value."

"Peer support is a lifeline. Having someone to talk to - people in similar circumstances, was so comforting, when we felt so bewildered ourselves."



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

“

Going to group was the **end of loneliness** for me.
Realising you're not on your own and there are others in
the same boat. I could speak openly and offload,
knowing I wasn't being judged.

It's changed me - I'm more confident. I lost all my
friends becoming a kinship carer because they moved
on and didn't understand.

Now, I have a whole new group of friends. We're part of
a **kinship family**.

We're united and draw strength from each other.

”

Korreena, Newton Aycliffe



peersupport@kinship.org.uk



[Kinship.org.uk/peer-support-resources](https://kinship.org.uk/peer-support-resources)

Kinship is the working name for Grandparents Plus, which is a
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