



## NYS Kinship Navigator

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Dear Educator,

It is estimated that there are nearly four hundred thousand children who are living with grandparents or other relatives New York State. Kinship care providers are the fastest growing group of caregivers, outside of parents, who have children enrolled in your school. These children are not in foster care. However, they live in kinship families for many of the same reasons that children enter foster care, and they have many of the same problems. Yet, despite the similarities, kinship families are on their own, with few specialized resources.

The kinship care givers and their schools, often face special challenges that consume legal resources, finances and a range of social services. Assistance is available to the families who know how and where to access it. And so my intention is to inform school personnel, who may not be aware of the resources available to this population, of the Kinship Navigator.

The Kinship Navigator's task is to provide information and referrals for kinship caregivers across all of New York State. We are a New York State funded-program, administered by the Office of Children and Family Services, and operated by Catholic Family Center in Rochester, New York. Our services are strictly non-denominational and available to all of New York's kinship families.

New York's kinship families need to know about the Kinship Navigator Program in order to access the services available to them. Already we've contacted many networks, including such diverse organizations as the Salvation Army, local departments of social services, pediatricians, libraries, correctional facilities, family courts, and youth bureaus. We are currently expanding our outreach to include the public education system, and are asking for your assistance in telling grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other educators about our services.

Please visit our web site to view the legal fact sheets, resources, and other information. You may download our flyers and posters (we also can mail them to you). Please go to:

- [http://www.nysnavigator.org/files/sf/flyers/client\\_flyer\(8x11\).pdf](http://www.nysnavigator.org/files/sf/flyers/client_flyer(8x11).pdf)
- [http://www.nysnavigator.org/files/sf/flyers/client\\_flyer\(11x17\).pdf](http://www.nysnavigator.org/files/sf/flyers/client_flyer(11x17).pdf)
- [http://www.nysnavigator.org/files/sf/flyers/kinship\\_navigator.pdf](http://www.nysnavigator.org/files/sf/flyers/kinship_navigator.pdf)

If you have any questions regarding the Kinship Navigator, please contact us by phone at 1-877-454-6463 or by email at [navigator@nysnavigator.org](mailto:navigator@nysnavigator.org). A Kinship Specialist will be available to assist you Monday through Friday between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

We hope that you find this information useful. It's greatest use will become apparent as you observe that the problems diminish among those who made use of the Kinship Navigator. Please share those successes with your colleagues and with us.

Sincerely,

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