



30 Days to Family[®] Ohio

a program
implemented by

Kinnect


Kinship placements
for youth in
foster care

Interim Report — August 2018

Note from the Project Director

Opioid addiction is depleting Ohio's communities and driving up the number of children entering foster care. These children depend on the child welfare system to keep them physically safe and to help them maintain relationships with the people in their lives—grandparents, siblings, teachers, uncles, and other kin—who can help mitigate the trauma of being removed from their homes.

Recognizing this tremendous need, Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine's office committed two years of Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding to Kinnect to implement 30 Days to Family® Ohio. The program is a short-term intensive intervention that moves children from foster care to safe kinship placements in the shortest time possible. 30 Days to Family® Ohio uses extensive family finding to identify kinship placements and create a network of support to ensure children's wellbeing and placement stability.

This report outlines the implementation progress made since October 2017. We began by selecting Ohio counties through a rigorous two-month evaluation of their needs, readiness, and capacity. Next, we partnered with each of the selected counties to hire staff, provide training, and secure office space and other needs. I am incredibly honored to share that all nine Ohio counties will officially be serving families and children as of August 2018.

Thirty-one staff work on 30 Days to Family® Ohio throughout the state, with 17 of those positions fully funded by the VOCA grant. Several of our county partners have chosen to allocate additional staff to the program beyond grant funding; this demonstrates the incredible need for innovation in this field, as well as our partners' commitment to the 30 Days to Family® model. It is a privilege to lead this work across the state and to see our monthly Learning Communities helping to break down barriers and celebrate successes.

I'd like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all of our contributing partners and staff. As we move from initial start-up to full implementation, I look forward to the opportunity to provide child and family outcomes in the coming months. I believe that the 30 Days to Family® Ohio program will act as one of many important child welfare puzzle pieces that when put together ensure that all children achieve safety, permanency, and wellbeing throughout the state of Ohio.

Sincerely,

Maria Roehrkasse, MSSA, LSW



Ohio Partners

- Allen County
- Clark County
- Cuyahoga County
- Fairfield County
- Stark County
- Summit County
- Highland County
- Montgomery County
- Hamilton County



National Partners



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Success Story: The Sawyers

When Kayden, Kylee, and Shawn Sawyer* were taken into child welfare custody, the teenagers repeatedly asked if they could live with their Uncle Jesse. However, based on previous legal charges, child welfare workers discredited Uncle Jesse's ability to provide support, and placed the siblings in foster homes. Jesse still maintained a supportive connection with his niece and nephews.

When the Sawyers' case was transferred to the 30 Days to Family® Ohio program, Anna, the 30 Days to Family® Specialist noticed the strength of this bond. Rather than let old case files guide her decision-making, she conducted records investigations and home visits to explore placing the children with their uncle. "The more I kept hearing the kids, interviewing the family, and conducting home visits, it was clear that these charges were things he took seriously, addressed, and resolved. He's a stable parent of two teenagers now. He showed proof of treatment and relapse prevention."

Anna presented this perspective to county agency staff, and the children were placed with their Uncle Jesse and his significant other, Lauren. Anna also uncovered 313 kinship connections that could provide additional support to the children.

This story is a perfect example of what a difference the 30 Days to Family® Ohio program makes! The teenagers are now thriving in their new home, where they are supported by loving relatives and able to maintain connections to other family members as well. And, when Jesse and Lauren were unable to afford to take their expanded family on an annual trip to an amusement park, several extended family members—who had been identified as part of the 313-person family tree—stepped in to help cover the costs.

**All names and identifying information have been changed*



“Every child deserves to grow up in a safe and stable home... Kinship care and the resources that 30 Days to Family® helps provide can increase stability and support for children when they are struggling the most.”

— Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine

“Everyone in our family knows that without the 30 Days to Family® Ohio program, my niece and nephews would most likely still be in foster care”

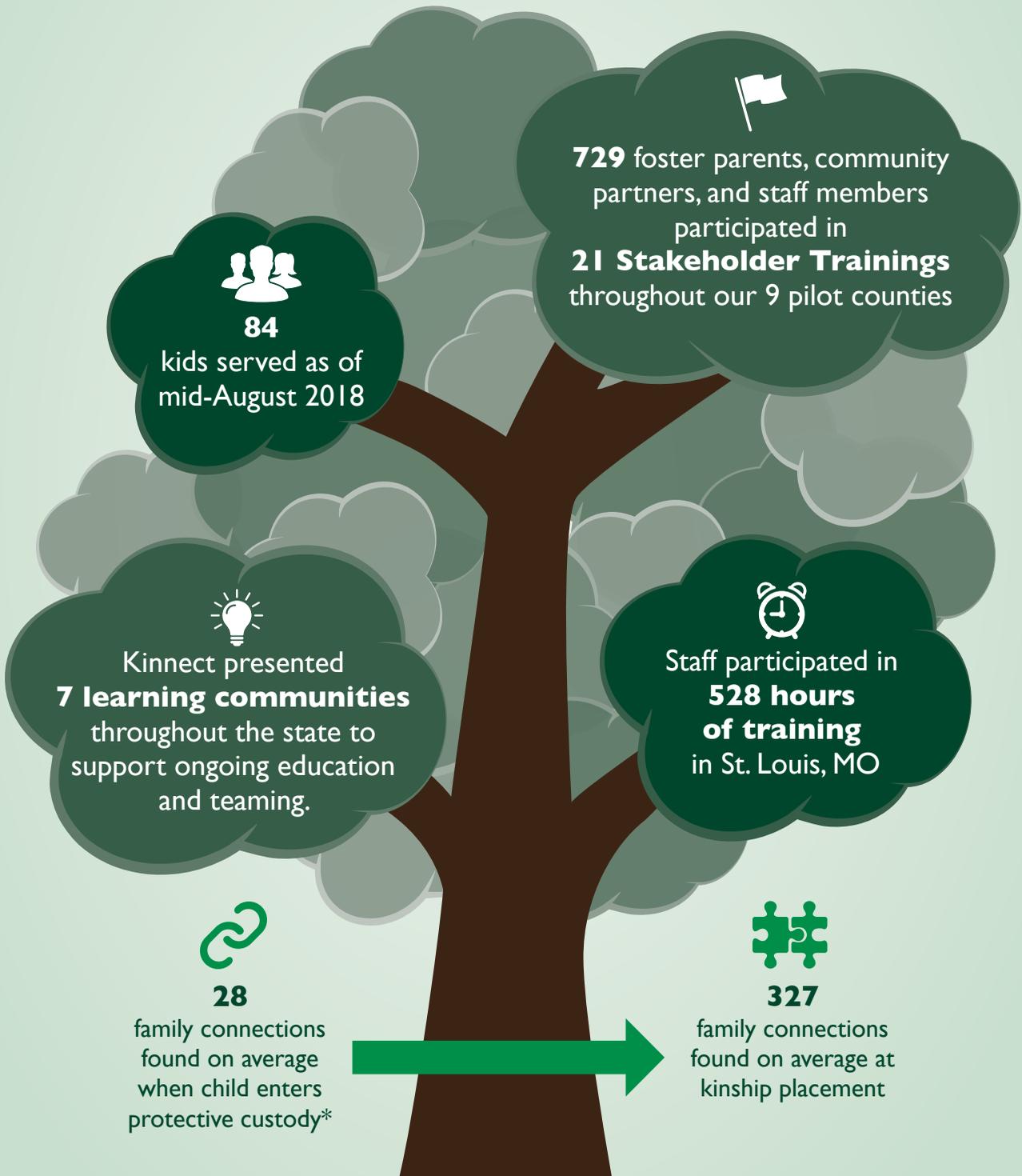
— Kinship parent

“We truly value every family’s unique strengths and identity. We believe that every family has the ability to love and to change, and we listen to every family’s voice.”

— 30 Days to Family® Ohio Supervisor

30 Days to Family® Ohio

Start Up and Implementation Progress to Date



*Cases eligible for 30 Days to Family® Ohio have been identified as having "no approved relative or kinship option for immediate placement." The significant contrast between the number of contacts at the beginning of the case and the time of placement demonstrates why the 30 Days to Family® Ohio program is so impactful in finding permanency for children in foster care.

Success Story: Charlie

Charlie* is one of a growing number of babies born with drugs in his system. He could not safely go home from the hospital with his birth mother. After being discharged from the hospital, Charlie entered foster care.

Neither of Charlie's older brothers was in their mother's custody. Charlie's 30 Days to Family® Ohio specialist, Sarah, contacted his siblings' custodians about placement for Charlie. Neither had the capacity to take Charlie into their home, but they wanted to connect this baby boy to his brothers.

Sarah launched the 30 Days to Family® Ohio program model, an intensive approach that identifies at least 80 kin within 30 days. Within 72 hours, Sarah met with Charlie's immediate family. Based on interviews with Charlie's mother, father, grandparents, and sibling custodians, Sarah identified a list of family to find Charlie a home.

On day 4, Sarah contacted Megan, a close friend of Charlie's extended family who lives locally. She and her husband Tom agreed to take placement of Charlie. Sarah facilitated an immediate background check and home inspection, and Charlie moved in with Megan and Tom. Because of Megan's close relationships with Charlie's family, she has easily facilitated introducing Charlie to his brothers and extended family. Sarah found 108 kinship connections for Charlie at the time of his placement with Megan and Tom. On her most recent home visit to check on Charlie and the family, Sarah found Megan and Charlie cuddling in the living room.

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Looking Ahead

Pilot Years 1 and 2: October 2017-September 2019

During the remainder of the pilot period, Kinnect will build on the significant work that has been achieved to date. By mid-August 2018, nine (9) Ohio counties will be staffed, trained, and have the infrastructure in place to accept 30 Days to Family® Ohio cases. Kinnect will provide ongoing education and professional development for all staff engaged in the program. Children served through this program will be more likely to have found foster placement with kin, will be more likely to have reunified with their birth families, and will have spent an average of 91 fewer days in foster care.

Kinnect anticipates that the 30 Days to Family® Ohio program will serve over 300 cases by October 2019. At the end of the pilot period, Kinnect will partner with each county to calculate the savings of having supported children to spend fewer days in foster care. Public children service agencies in Ohio are projected to save an average of \$10,000 to \$20,000 per child served by this program. Kinnect will collaborate with each pilot county to develop its unique reinvestment strategy for this savings.

Year 3 and Beyond

Looking ahead, Kinnect will expand 30 Days to Family® Ohio to serve additional Ohio counties that are heavily impacted by the opioid epidemic and that don't have as many resources to meet this growing need. Kinnect will provide these counties the intensive training and support necessary to maintain program fidelity and ensure positive outcomes for children. In addition, through facilitated learning communities, Kinnect will leverage the expertise of the nine pilot counties to support the expansion of the program into these additional Ohio counties. Ultimately, Kinnect will continue to collaborate with its partners throughout the state to connect children involved in the foster care system to loving families that support their lifelong success.



Kinnect convened 30 Days to Family® Ohio staff from throughout the state to engage in an all-day joint learning community.



Mission

Our goal is to develop partnerships that transform beliefs, values, and actions to achieve permanency for all children in the shortest time possible.

Vision

We believe that childhood is a fundamental human right and that every day in foster care is a day in crisis.

We envision a world where families, agencies, resources—and children—work together so that every child is loved and nurtured in a permanent chosen family.

Values

We are committed to strengthening families directly impacted by the foster care system.

We embrace hope, possibility and innovation in all situations.

We believe all resources are valuable.

We believe there is always more to learn.

We treat everyone we meet with dignity and respect.

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