

Part I. Executive Summary

On February 9, 2018, the federal government signed into law the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) as part of Division E in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (H.R. 1892). Under FFPSA, states can receive federal matching funds for the provision of prevention services implemented by a federally approved Kinship Navigator Program. The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) immediately began to plan how to develop a statewide Kinship and Adoption Navigator Program. Ohio has experienced a dramatic increase in kids entering foster care because of the opioid epidemic. Important to note is there are about 100,000 grandparents raising their grandchildren in Ohio (PCSAO). That number is probably much higher as there are many aunts, uncles, cousins, stepparents and fictive kin raising their relatives.

Kinnect utilized an Implementation Science Approach to develop the framework for the Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator Program (OhioKAN). During **Assessment**, Kinnect reviewed research on ten national and statewide Kinship and Adoption Navigator programs, conducted a survey of caregivers and professionals in Ohio, and reviewed multiple data sources about Ohio's needs and available resources. During **Teaming**, Kinnect convened almost 90 Stakeholders to develop a program recommendation for ODJFS, and presented the initial design in community town hall meetings throughout the state. During **Design**, Kinnect considered stakeholder recommendations with requirements defined in Ohio Revised Code for the navigator program, and FFPSA requirements.

OhioKAN will operate in 10 regions in Ohio that include all 88 counties. OhioKAN will have three tiers of service; inform, connect and support. The implementation plan identifies the activities that will occur in the **Exploration, Installation, Initial Implementation** and **Full Implementation**. The Implementation plan outlines what is needed to inform how the regions will identify services and readiness for the Navigators as well as the refinement of what the inform, support and connect intervention will be to meet evaluation and eligibility requirements for Title IV-E Prevention Services reimbursement. A staged evaluation design will be developed to follow best practices in intervention research to systematically prepare the OhioKAN model for rigorous evaluation.

The Stakeholders worked tirelessly to develop OhioKAN with the mission to be a statewide program that utilizes a flexible and responsive approach to meeting the needs of kinship and adoptive caregivers. Evaluation of the assessment, teaming and design process indicate that stakeholders felt actively engaged in the process and believe that the recommended model and implementation strategies will meet the needs of children and families in Ohio. Responses from the initial town hall meetings around the state gave communities the opportunity to learn more about the OhioKAN model and ask questions about what to expect, and how they can be involved.

Stakeholders across the state agree that OhioKAN will provide needed supports. Positive momentum that came from this design process will be built upon in the next phase of implementation. Families and professionals are ready to get to work on supporting Ohio's children and families.

*“Changes are not happening at the pace the trauma is happening to our families.”
-Crystal Turner, Kinship Caregiver and OhioKAN Stakeholder*