PROGRESS REPORT JAN 2020

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition
Kaye Implementation & Evaluation, LLC
KeyBank Foundation
Mt. Sinai Healthcare Foundation
PolicyWorks, Ltd.
The NORD Family Foundation

LEARN MORE AT
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Cleveland, Ohio 44114
Phone: (216) 692-1161
30 Days to Family® is a short-term intervention that diligently searches for a child’s relatives and kin to identify potential placement options and support. This program was brought to Ohio through Kinnect partnering with The Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition, with support from then Attorney General, Mike DeWine. Support for the continued implementation of 30 Days to Family® Ohio has been made possible by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

In recent years, foster care in Ohio has faced a wave of children coming into care due to the effects of opioid use within families. Kinnect believes that these children have caring and capable extended families that are willing to help raise their kin. With the right tools and engagement, families can be united together to support one another through kinship care.

30 Days to Family® Ohio is demonstrating that children who enter foster care have incredibly large networks of kin who are able to support them. As a state, Ohio is proving that we can find and engage kin when we dedicate time, skills and resources to the effort. Children placed with kinship families are:

- More likely to stay connected to their siblings
- More likely to know and stay connected to their father
- More supported by a large kinship network

Kinnect is fully committed to the sustainable growth of 30 Days to Family® Ohio. Our 30 Days teams dedicate each day to helping enhance practice; working faster, engaging further, and serving more children and families. At the beginning of 2020 the 15th and 16th 30 Days to Family® Ohio counties were announced and plans are being developed to continue expansion.

We know we can do better for our children. Every child deserves to have a Family Specialist who will search to the end of the world to find someone to commit to keep them connected to their kin, their culture, and their community.
She (Family Specialist) helped us have very honest expectations throughout the whole process; it’s a roller coaster, up and down. I couldn’t even imagine doing this without her.

Kinship Caregiver
Taking on this role has changed everything. Having my first case has been remarkable, I have had the opportunity to provide this youth with connections he has missed out on for the past ten years.

ZOE MEETS GREAT AUNT RITA

Baby Zoe came into foster care after being born with a positive toxicology report. The 30 Days to Family® Specialist quickly searched for appropriate relatives to be caregivers of Zoe. Her maternal grandmother was unable to be the primary caregiver to Zoe, but she mentioned that her half-sister, Rita.

Rita had her own two children and could potentially be able to help care for Zoe. The Specialist reached out to Rita and her husband and found they were more than willing to be caregivers to Zoe. Rita is deaf, her husband is hearing impaired, and they are raising two children who have no hearing impairments. The Specialist found no issues with the family’s home or background checks and was eager to move Zoe from foster care to kinship care.

Even though this Aunt had to wait to be able to care for her niece, her belief in the healing power of family was clear from the start.

At the custody hearing for Zoe, concerns were raised that Great Aunt Rita’s hearing disability might inhibit her ability to care for Zoe, as she may not hear if Zoe is having difficulty breathing. Zoe has physical effects of drug exposure, including breathing problems. After the Specialist worked diligently with all involved parties, including getting expressed doctor approval for Rita’s ability to provide care, the court agreed to move Zoe with her Great Aunt.

Typically, bonding would have been lost due to the lengthy decision making process. In this case, Aunt Rita kept in contact with the child, attended medical visits, and did everything in her power to maintain a connection while the children were in foster care. Kinnect was able to help Rita and her family by purchasing a specialized baby monitor that was based on movement instead of crying to alert the caregiver with intense flashing lights. Even though this Aunt had to wait to be able to care for her niece, her belief in the healing power of family was clear from the start.

*Identifying information has been changed to protect confidentiality.
Two children came into foster care after their mother was incarcerated. Chege and Makena did not have any memories of living with anyone besides their mother, but vaguely remembered a man bringing them lunch from time to time and immensely enjoying his visits. The 30 Days to Family® Specialist quickly intervened to try to find family members who could care for the children.

During this time of searching, the Specialist spoke with the maternal side of the family. Most family members were unable to care for the children. The family had serious concerns about the father’s ability to safely care for the children, so Mom was reluctant to share information other than his name. The Specialist diligently searched for the father and found one person in Missouri with the same name around the same age.

**It was amazing to witness** the special bond that was already established between the children and their dad.

Within a matter of days, the Specialist was able to get in contact with the man in Missouri to learn that he was indeed the father of Chege and Makena and was the same man they children remembered having lunch with years ago. Dad had a very different story to tell about their family breakup. He said that he had not had significant contact with the children in over two years, as the mother and her family made it hard for him to locate them. The father was in tears over the phone and very concerned that his children were in foster care. He immediately booked a flight to be in Ohio for the children’s court hearing.

The father arrived in time for the court hearing and spent considerable time dispelling rumors that he was unfit to care for his children. When dad arrived for a visit, the kids immediately jumped in his arms and exchanged lots of hugs and kisses. It was amazing to witness the special bond that was already established between the children and their dad. The Ohio Court is currently seeking to give the Missouri Court jurisdiction of the children for them to remain not only together, but also in their father’s care.

"A JOURNEY ACROSS STATE LINES..."

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Children are placed **within 30 days** of entering foster care.

Both maternal and paternal sides are explored equally during family finding.

**GOALS**

1. At least **70%** of children served are placed with kinship caregivers by the conclusion of services.
2. Children are placed **within 30 days** of entering foster care.
3. Both maternal and paternal sides are explored equally during family finding.

**DATA & OUTCOMES**

- **70%** of children served are placed with kin
- Average case length is **45 days**
- **469** children served statewide as of 02.11.2020

Above is an actual photo of a 30 Days to Family® Ohio genogram created by Family Specialists to capture all of the unique relative and kinship relationships found and engaged while serving children.
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