

How to become a Kin Caregiver

If you are interested in becoming a kinship caregiver, please contact Brant Family and Children's Services and ask to speak with a Family Service Worker. If a worker is not available, you can leave a message saying you would like to be considered as a caregiver for the child. The worker may not be able to provide information over the phone for confidentiality reasons.

Whether caring for a child through Kinship Service or Kinship Care, you will be required to participate in a home assessment so the agency can determine if your family is the best place for the child to safely be.

This will include:

- Individual interviews with caregivers
- Interviews with any children or other adults in the family
- Criminal record and child welfare background checks
- A home safety inspection

Some other requirements may include medicals, references, copies of drivers' licenses, car and home insurance, and financial reports. Kinship Care families must meet foster care licensing standards and attend PRIDE Training.

Other ways Kin can be involved

Children need connections with family. Kinship does not have to mean a full-time placement. You can stay connected in different ways such as:

- Going to watch their soccer games or taking them to their music lessons
- Going out for breakfast
- Taking the child for a weekend visit
- Sending birthday cards
- Phone calls or text messages
- Having 'normal' grandparent/aunt/uncle relationships, showing children you sincerely care about them

With appreciation for content collaboration to:
Family and Children's Services of Guelph & Wellington County

We are here to help 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with any child protection concerns you may have.

Office Hours: 8:30 to 4:30

Call us during business hours to learn more about our service programs, adoption, foster care and/or volunteering.

The Mission of Brant FACS

The well-being and safety of children and youth is our primary focus. Together with our community we strive to protect children and youth, and strengthen families.

Our Ten Year Vision

- All children, youth and families are valued.
- Together, with the entire community, we share the responsibility of nurturing, protecting, educating and guiding all children, youth and their families.
- Families possess the wisdom, abilities and resources to build a successful family plan. We support their journey towards self-determination, safety and care.
- Children and youth have a voice and are involved in decision-making; we ensure they have the necessary resources to be well supported for success.
- Mutual trust and understanding is built through listening and communicating with respect and compassion.
- Hope replaces fear and families are open to receive help early.



Welcome to our positive and anti-oppressive space, where every individual, regardless of age, is valued and respected whatever their culture, faith, ethnicity, race, ancestry, class, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity.



**Brant Family and
Children's Services**

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**Brant Family and
Children's Services**
Since 1894

Becoming a Caregiver to Kin

Family based Permanency for Children & Youth



Seven in a Series
Working with Brant Family
and Children's Services



Kinship: Families working together to plan for their children

Kinship

Kinship is the full time care and nurturing of a child or youth by a relative, community member, or other adult with whom there is a relationship significant to the child or youth. These are two types of kinship arrangements: Kinship Service and Kinship Care.

Kinship Service

Kinship Service applies to a child or youth who cannot safely live at home, who is placed with a member of his or her extended family or community but not admitted into the care of a child welfare agency.

Kinship Care

Kinship care applies to a child or youth who cannot safely live at home, who is admitted to the care of a child welfare agency and placed with a member of the child or youth's extended family or community. Kinship Care families become licensed Foster Homes.

Aunt • **Grandfather** • **Grandchild**
Coach • **Neighbour** • **Family Friend**
Uncle • **Niece** • **Teacher** **Cousin**
Brother • **Son** • **Grandmother**
Elder • **Community Leader**



Benefits of kinship

- Children experience less trauma, less stigma and are usually less frightened when moving to kin compared to children who are placed in regular foster care.
- Kin tend to have greater commitment to children and ability to stick it out if things become tough.
- Sibling groups are more likely to remain together.
- Is easier to maintain, culture, identity, sense of belonging and self-esteem.
- There is a potential for more natural access with parents and siblings.
- It allows opportunity for families to plan together in the short term and long term.
- Family stories and histories are maintained.



Challenges for Kinship Families

- Kin often feel grief, loss, anger and other mixed emotions because of what has happened within the family.
- There is often very little time to prepare for the addition of a child to the home.
- Balancing expectations from the child welfare agency with their own family's needs and schedules and the child's needs and schedule.
- Understanding how child welfare systems and court systems work.

- Redefining roles and relationships within the family, i.e. going from grandparent to full-time caregiving role.
- Developing trust with the child welfare agency, especially when there may have been difficult experiences in the past.
- Choosing the right long-term plan, such as adoption or custody.
- Financial strains.

All children have the right to be cared for safely within their own families

Support for Kinship Families

Support may be available through:

- Financial support through Ontario Works' Temporary Care Allowance and Child Tax Credit
- Financial support through a daily reimbursement
- PRIDE Training
- Episodic financial support from the child welfare agency
- Community groups and on-line support networks (GrandParenting Again, CAN-GRANDS)

While hurt comes from within the family, healing also comes from within the same family (Walker et al., 2000)

