



## Ohio Grandparent/ Kinship Coalition

Ohio's Statewide Kinship Navigator  
"Since 1998"

*Where Your Voice is Heard!*

### Ohio Grandparent Kinship Coalition September 9, 2024, Kinship Advocacy Day Event

Across Ohio, countless kinship families— relatives and non-relatives, are doing everything to keep families together. These families are the unsung heroes, providing stability, love, and support in times of need. However, they often face immense challenges without adequate resources, putting their ability to stay together at risk.

In recognition of September as Grandparent/Kinship Month, the Ohio Grandparent Kinship Coalition strives to create an environment that empowers and supports these families. Beginning September 9, 2024, and after OGKC will provide the opportunity for individuals to advocate for critical changes that will provide kinship families with the resources they need to thrive.

On September 9, 2024, a mass email will be sent, with a prewritten letter of support, highlighting these essential policy changes that can be sent automatically to your individual legislators by providing your name and address and hitting the send button. The more letters that are sent will amplify the voices of kinship families and demonstrate to our state leaders the urgency of addressing these needs. We are specifically requesting the following changes to be made to policies that affect kinship families:

1. **Culturally Responsive Resources:** Ensure that the resources provided meet the cultural needs of caregivers, recognizing the diversity of kinship families.
2. **Investment in Kinship Support Programs:** Promote the creation and expansion of programs and policies that support both informal and formal caregivers in their efforts to keep children out of the formal foster care system.
3. **Education and Training for Caregivers:** Develop and provide opportunities for caregivers to receive education and training to better support the children in their care.
4. **Removal of Income Eligibility Requirements for Child Care:** Make child care more accessible by removing income eligibility requirements for caregivers.
5. **Increase in "Child Only" Ohio Works First Cash Assistance:** Raise the amount of the "Child Only" Ohio Works First cash assistance payment, ensuring equal payments per child in the case.
6. **Affordable Housing Support:** Provide adequate and affordable housing options for kinship families.

7. **Expansion of Legal Protections:** Extend the Grandparent Power of Attorney and Caregiver Affidavit to all caregivers, ensuring they have the legal support they need.
8. **Financial Support for Kinship Care Programs:** Develop a caregiver assistance program, similar to foster care and adoption assistance, that includes both formal and informal caregivers.
9. **Address Substance Abuse and Mental Health Needs:** Ensure adequate investments are made to address the substance abuse and mental health needs of children, parents, and kin caregivers.
10. **Statewide Collaboration for Kinship Care:** Direct state policymakers to foster collaborations between local, regional, and statewide groups to expand the use of kinship care and the availability of resources for all kinship families, including affordable recreational activities, support groups, and other vital services.