

# Bridging Systems for Kinship Families in San Diego

## Toolkit to Help Raise Awareness



**GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP  
SUPPORT NETWORK**  
A National Technical Assistance Center



**LIVE WELL  
SAN DIEGO**

# Introduction

This promotion toolkit is designed for community organizations and service providers within San Diego County. Through this toolkit, we collectively seek to:

- raise awareness about kinship families,
- reach new kinship caregivers, and
- educate the community about the resources, services, and support available to the families.

This toolkit was created by a group working to “Bridge Systems for Kinship Families” in San Diego County. The group includes kinship caregivers, representatives of multiple County agencies and community-based organizations, and staff and partners of the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network (the only federally supported national technical assistance center on the families).

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# Script for Talking with Kinship Caregivers



## Are you a kinship caregiver?

If you're raising a grandchild, niece/nephew, sibling, cousin, godchild, neighbor, friend's child, friend of your child, or child you taught or coached, you're a kinship caregiver.

Your kinship family is not alone. There are thousands of kinship families in San Diego County and many agencies and organizations that want to help support you and the children you are raising.

Visit: [LiveWellSD.org/Kinship](https://www.LiveWellSD.org/Kinship)

Call: 877-YMCA-4-KIN (877-9622-4-546)

Email: [kinshipyfs@ymcasd.org](mailto:kinshipyfs@ymcasd.org)

# Script for Talking with Professionals and the Broader Community

Thousands of kinship caregivers raise grandchildren, other relatives, and close family friends throughout San Diego County.

They've stepped into this role because the parents are no longer able to raise the children. The parents may have died, or they may be unable to parent because they have substance use disorder, are in prison, have been deployed in the military, or were deported or detained. The circumstances that lead to the formation of kinship families can happen to any family, regardless of age, race, wealth, or education.

Unlike parents - who have automatic legal rights and responsibilities for their children - kinship caregivers do not. They have stepped up to raise the children, often at a moment's notice and during a crisis. As of that moment, they need authority to make decisions for the child, like enrolling them in school, and often need a court to grant a legal relationship - all of which takes time and money. Even with a legal relationship, the practical issues can be overwhelming. Like - where will the child sleep?

Despite these challenges, decades of research prove that children thrive with loving kin. Kinship caregivers keep children connected to their culture, identity, and family.

Help us spread the word about kinship families and services available in San Diego County to help them thrive.

Visit: [LiveWellSD.org/Kinship](https://www.LiveWellSD.org/Kinship)

Call: 877-YMCA-4-KIN (877-9622-4-546)

Email: [kinshipyfs@ymcasd.org](mailto:kinshipyfs@ymcasd.org)

# Key Kinship Resources

**We have prepared several key kinship resources for the San Diego community. Learn more about these resources on the following pages.**

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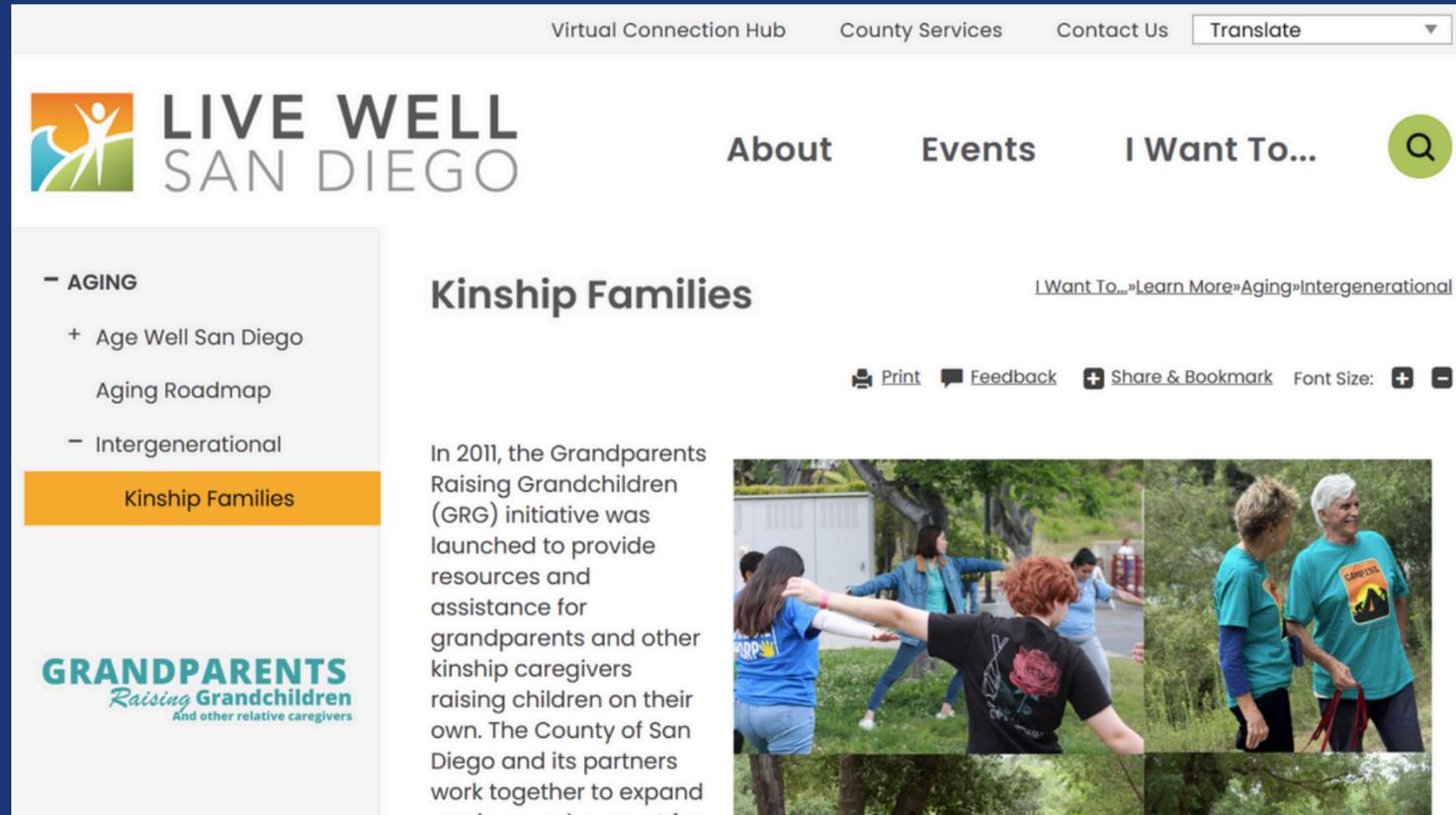
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# Central Kinship Website



We're proud to share our single-point entry hub for kinship families, which connects to many community resources, including 2-1-1 and the YMCA Kinship Navigator Program. Created by an array of County partners, with support from the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center, this hub will be useful to both kinship families and those who serve them.

**Use the URL [LiveWellSD.org/Kinship](https://LiveWellSD.org/Kinship) to access this site.**

# Road Map

## SAN DIEGO KINSHIP ROAD MAP

*Are you raising your grandchild, another family member's child, or a close family friend's child? This roadmap will guide you step by step through this journey. Check the back for resources to help you along the way.*

**Step 01** **Establish Caregiver Status**

If possible, work with the child's parents to get important documents. You will need the child's birth certificate and Social Security number. Try to get a "power of attorney" signed by the parents that spells out your role. If the parents are absent, consider completing a "caregiver's authorization affidavit."

\* If the child was placed with you by the County's Child and Family Well Being Department (CFWB), work with your case worker and they can help you get information needed to care for your child. Complete your Resource Family Approval process to care for your kin children in foster care and possibly long-term.

**Step 02** **Address Basic Needs**

Schedule health checkups, enroll the child in school, and connect with community resources. Consider applying for benefits such as Medi-Cal, CalFresh, WIC, CalWORKS child-only or family grants, and child care subsidies.

\* If the child was placed with you by CFWB, work with your caseworker on the child's health and education needs. Your caseworker can help you get resources such as foster care payments, child care, and more.

**Step 03** **Secure Other Support**

Consider joining a caregiver support group for advice and emotional help. If needed for the child, get counseling and/or help for developmental needs.

\* If the child was placed with you by CFWB, your case worker can help connect you to services for you and the child.

**Step 04** **Consider Permanent Legal Options**

Consider options, like adoption or guardianship, for creating a legally permanent family.

\* If the child was placed with you by CFWB and can't go back to their parents, think about permanent care through adoption or guardianship. These legal options provide stability for the child and possible financial supports for caregivers.



## ROAD MAP RESOURCES

*Find Help on Your Caregiving Journey*

Live Well San Diego GRG – Connect with local resources and support for kinship caregivers in San Diego – [www.LiveWellSD.org/Kinship](http://www.LiveWellSD.org/Kinship)



YMCA Kinship Support – Connect with a kinship navigator who can help you find tailored resources, including a kinship support group – [www.ymcasd.org/kinship](http://www.ymcasd.org/kinship); call 877-YMCA-4-KIN (877-9622-4-546) or email [kinshipyfs@ymcasd.org](mailto:kinshipyfs@ymcasd.org)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Establish Caregiver Status</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit to obtain the authority to enroll the child in school and get medical care – <a href="https://www4.courts.ca.gov/documents/caregiver.pdf">https://www4.courts.ca.gov/documents/caregiver.pdf</a></li> <li>Power of Attorney – <a href="https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/guardianship/other-options">https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/guardianship/other-options</a></li> </ul>  |
| <b>Address Basic Needs</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BenefitsCal – Information on applying for CalFresh, CalWORKS child-only or family grants, Medi-Cal, WIC, and other programs – <a href="https://benefitscal.com/">https://benefitscal.com/</a></li> <li>Child care eligibility information – <a href="https://childcaresandiego.com/">https://childcaresandiego.com/</a></li> <li>Feeding San Diego – Find food banks – <a href="https://feedingsandiego.org/">https://feedingsandiego.org/</a></li> </ul>   |
| <b>Secure Other Support</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>211 San Diego – Information on available support – <a href="http://bit.ly/4pxaAOf">bit.ly/4pxaAOf</a></li> <li>San Diego Access &amp; Crisis Line – Immediate help from experienced and multi-lingual counselors – (888) 724-7240</li> <li>Project KEEP – Support groups and training – <a href="https://shorturl.at/OvqH0">https://shorturl.at/OvqH0</a></li> <li>FAKCE/Grossmont College – Free training for all kinship caregivers – <a href="https://fakce.org">https://fakce.org</a></li> <li>San Diego Regional Center – Support for children with developmental disabilities – <a href="http://www.sdrcc.org/">http://www.sdrcc.org/</a></li> </ul>  |
| <b>Consider Permanent Legal Options</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on obtaining guardianship through probate court – <a href="https://sdcourts.ca.gov/sdcourt/probate2/guardianship">https://sdcourts.ca.gov/sdcourt/probate2/guardianship</a> AND <a href="https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/guardianship">https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/guardianship</a></li> <li>Information on adoption – <a href="https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/independent-adoption">https://selfhelp.courts.ca.gov/independent-adoption</a></li> <li>San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program – (619) 235-5656 – <a href="https://sdvlp.org/">https://sdvlp.org/</a></li> <li>Chart for kinship resource families that compares guardianship and adoption – <a href="https://shorturl.at/CbaP3">https://shorturl.at/CbaP3</a></li> </ul> |

Produced in partnership with the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center; for more information, visit [www.GKSNetwork.org](http://www.GKSNetwork.org)



**The Road Map is a new flier designed for kinship families.**

**It is available in English, Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Filipino, Korean, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.**

The Road Map has four practical steps, with website links and contact information for local organizations that can help grandparents and other kin on their caregiving journey. It was created by an array of County partners and community organizations, with input from kinship caregivers.

**Please share it widely.**

# 2-1-1 Tailored Resources for Kinship Families



We're pleased to roll out an updated 2-1-1 resource directory for kinship families. This directory, linked from our new County website hub at [LiveWellSD.org/Kinship](https://LiveWellSD.org/Kinship), contains information on organizations and agencies that are ready to serve kinship families.

The direct link is [bit.ly/4pxaAOf](https://bit.ly/4pxaAOf).

# YMCA Kinship Support



The YMCA of San Diego County has a long-standing Kinship Support Program that can help connect families with resources tailored to their needs. They offer navigation and case management, support groups, respite care, emergency funds, and family events. Their goal is to make sure caregivers have the resources and support needed for the kinship children in their care.

**Visit: [www.ymcasd.org/kinship](http://www.ymcasd.org/kinship)**

**Call: 877-YMCA-4-KIN  
(877-9622-4-546)**

**Email: [kinshipyfs@ymcasd.org](mailto:kinshipyfs@ymcasd.org)**

# Video



This two-minute video provides an overview of kinship families and the challenges they face. It features our website hub at [LiveWellSD.org/Kinship](https://LiveWellSD.org/Kinship), which includes information to help you support the families. Please widely share this video to raise awareness of kinship families and what we're doing in San Diego County to help them.

Watch and share the video [here](#).

# Other Learning and Outreach Opportunities and Resources

**The following pages contain additional items for your consideration and use.**

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# Presentations for Community Gatherings



Want to learn more about kinship families and the programs and resources available to support them? [Request a presentation today!](#)

The Kinship Speaker's Bureau offers informative presentations designed to raise awareness about kinship caregiving, the unique needs of relative caregivers, and the services available throughout San Diego County. A kinship caregiver is an individual—such as a grandparent, aunt, uncle, older sibling, or family friend—who is raising a relative or non-relative child, either formally within the foster care system or informally outside of it. Kinship caregivers may access support through various programs across San Diego.

Whether you're part of a community group, school, faith-based organization, or service provider, we invite you to complete [this form](#) to request a presentation tailored to your audience.

Presentations are typically one hour and include:

- An overview of what a kinship family is
- Data on grandparents and other relatives raising children
- Information on local programs supporting kinship caregivers (e.g., parenting classes, support groups, kinship navigation, and more)

# Newsletter Language

Over 18,000 children in San Diego County are growing up in kinship families—being raised by grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends when their parents cannot care for them. These kinship families provide stability, love, and cultural connection, but, too often, they do so without the recognition or support they deserve.

We're raising awareness, listening to kinship caregivers, and committing to work alongside them to build stronger systems of support. Right here in San Diego County, agencies, organizations, and kinship caregivers have been working together to "Bridge Systems for Kinship Families." Whether you yourself are a kinship caregiver or you are looking for information and resources to help support them, visit [LiveWellSD.org/Kinship](https://LiveWellSD.org/Kinship) to learn more.

# Virtual Backgrounds



[Download Virtual Background 1](#)



[Download Virtual Background 2](#)

# Thank you for helping us spread the word about kinship families and supports for them in San Diego!

The Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center (Network) helps government agencies and nonprofits in states, Tribes, and territories work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries to improve supports and services for families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children whose parents are unable to do so. For more information, please visit [www.GKSNetwork.org](http://www.GKSNetwork.org).

The Network is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$9,950,000 with 95 percentage funded by ACL/HHS and \$523,684 and 5 percentage funded by non-government sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.



San Diego County applied for and was selected to participate in Bridging Systems for Kinship Families, a two-year initiative of the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center that brings together professionals from multiple County agencies and organizations to improve collaboration, coordination, and supports for kinship families.

