

Safety and Stability: The Protective Factors of Kin Raising Children Exposed to Trauma

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Overview

- ▶ Introduction to ACEs
- ▶ Understanding the ramifications of ACEs
- ▶ Protective Factors
- ▶ Kinship Care
- ▶ Supports and Services Available for Caregivers



Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences

- ▶ Adverse Childhood Experiences is the term given to describe all types of abuse, neglect, and other traumatic experiences that occur to individuals under the age of 18.
- ▶ The ACE study (done by Kaiser and the CDC) examined the relationships between these experiences during childhood and reduced health and well-being later in life.
 - ▶ Study done in the mid-90's was mostly done with Middle Class, Majority White Families

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

— looking at how ACEs affect our lives & society —



Types of Trauma

- ▶ Physical Abuse
- ▶ Sexual Abuse
- ▶ Emotional Abuse
- ▶ Physical Neglect
- ▶ Emotional Neglect
- ▶ Intimate Partner Violence
- ▶ Mother Treated Violently
- ▶ Household Substance Abuse
- ▶ Parental Separation or Divorce
- ▶ Incarcerated Household Member

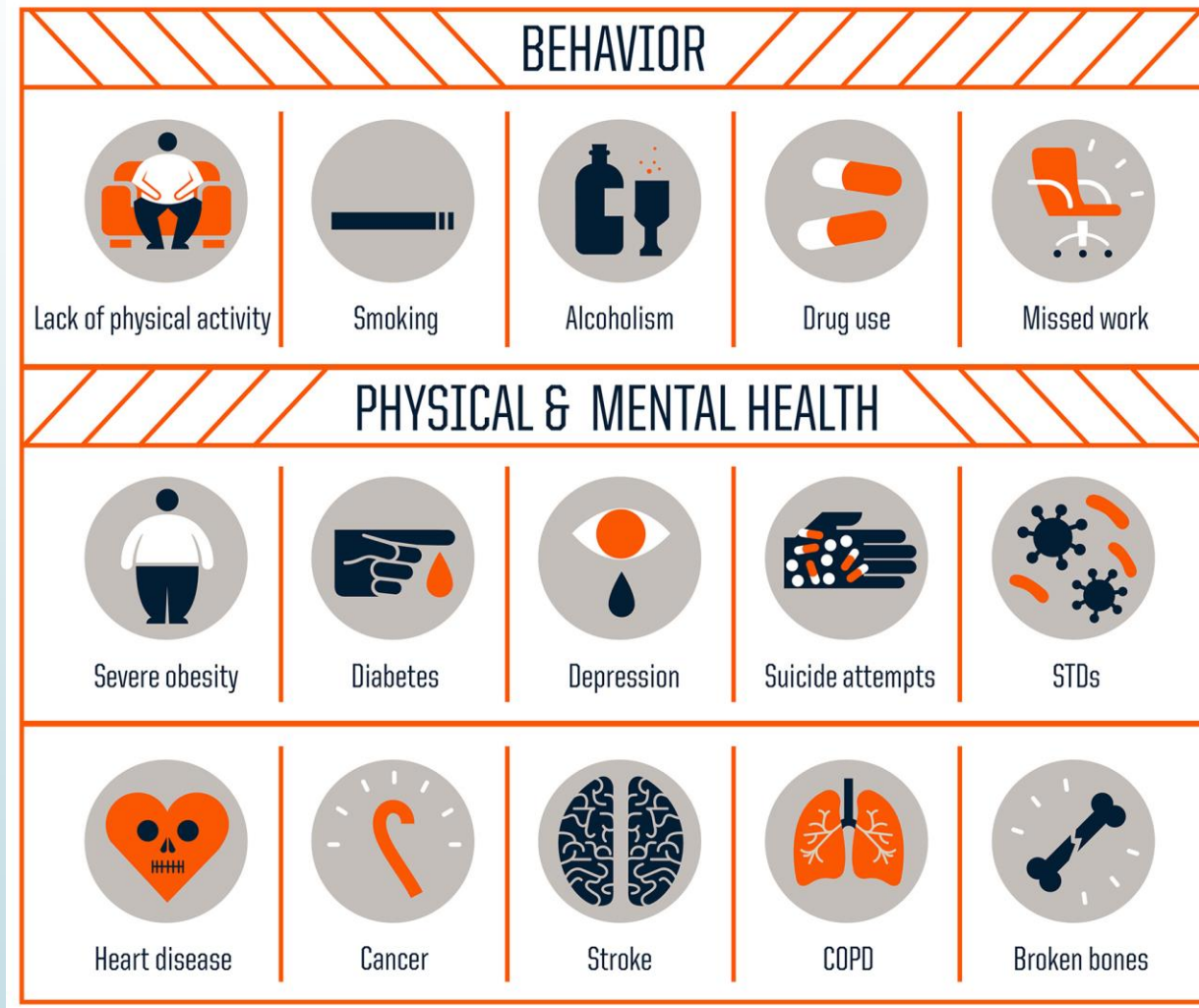


Take the Test

See handouts and spend a moment to take the test yourself

Long Term Outcomes

The Higher an individual's ACE score, the more likely they were to experience negative health outcomes in:



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Credit: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Retrieved from: npr.org

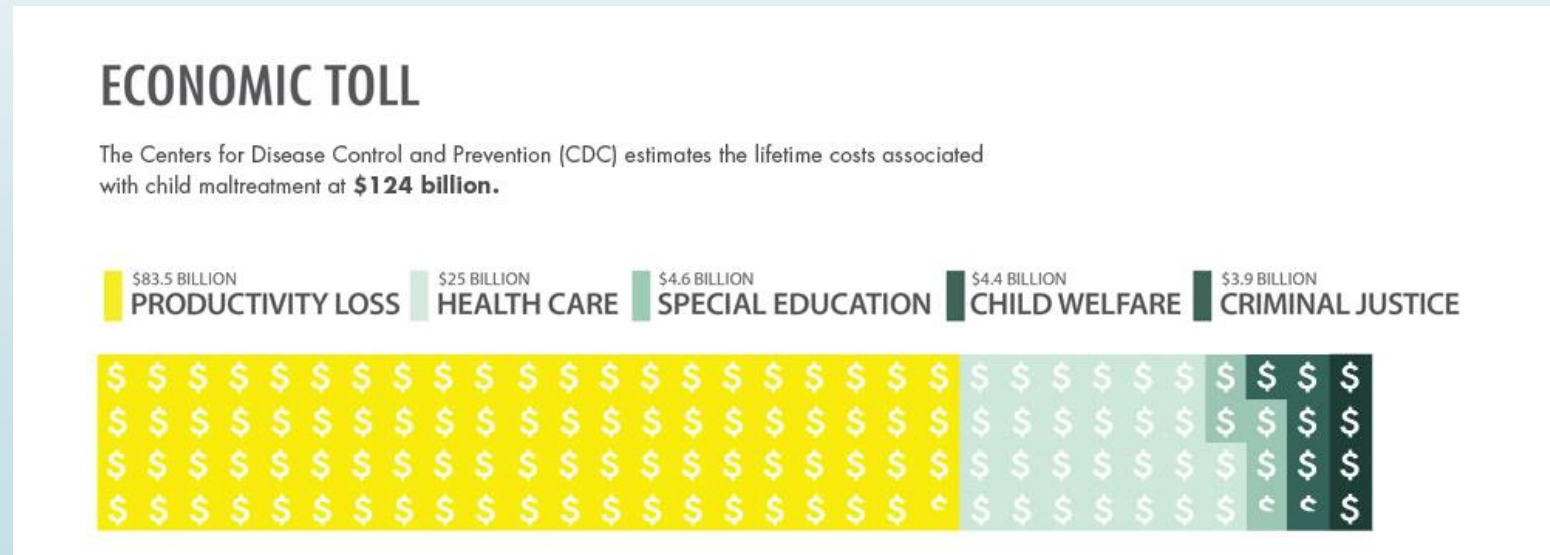


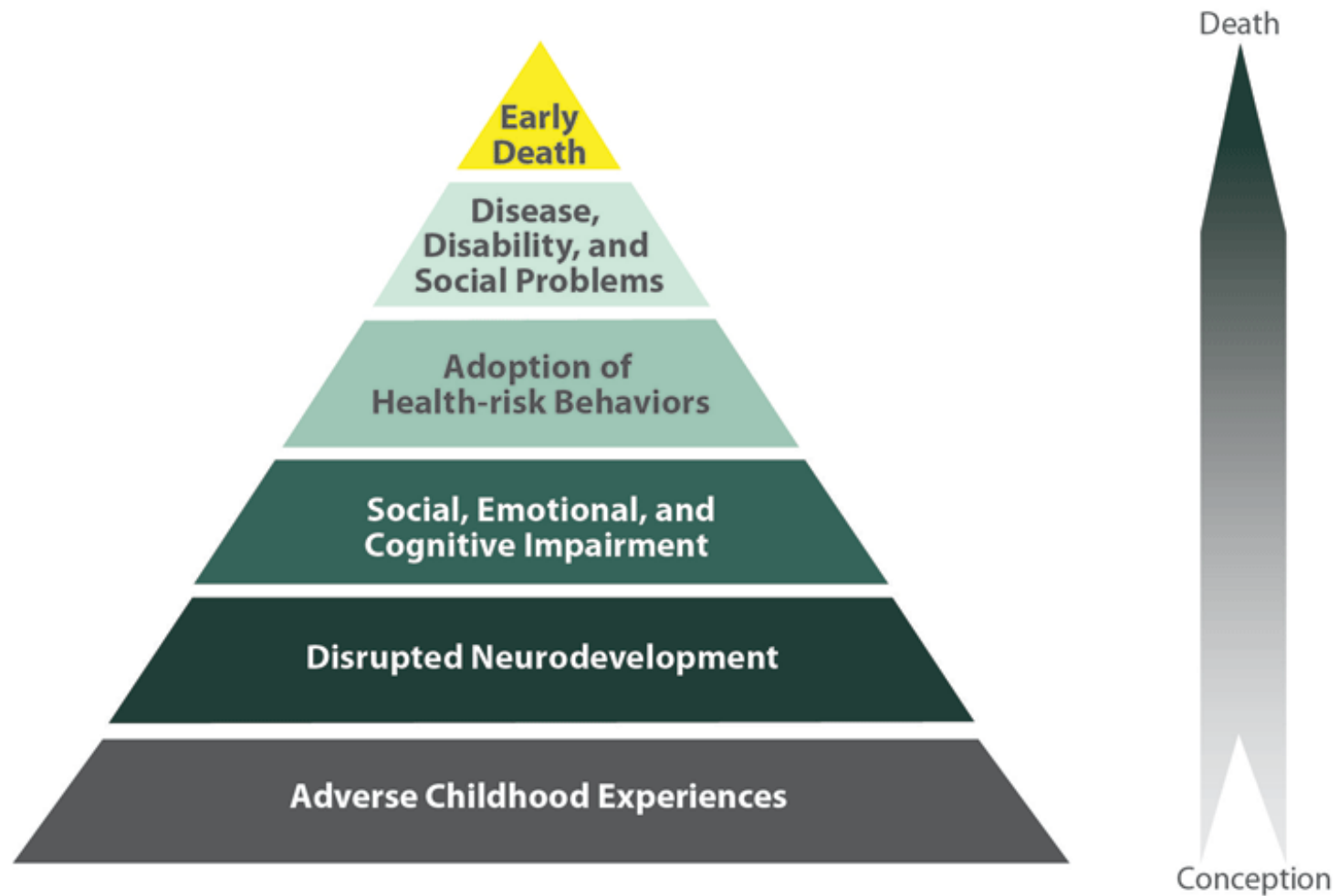
What does this mean for children?

- ▶ Exposure to ACEs can manifest itself in children through screaming, poor verbal skills, fear of adults, sadness, anxiety, acting withdrawn, and other symptoms.
- ▶ Exposure to high stress releases stress hormones, initiates the fight or flight responses (increased adrenaline), and can increase heart rate and blood pressure.
- ▶ Persistent exposure to adversity can negatively impact the development of the brain, its structure and function, the development of the immune system, and the development of the hormonal system in children, increasing the risk for disease and hindering cognitive brain development.
- ▶ Children with **four or more ACEs are 12 times more likely** to have serious negative health outcomes in adulthood than children with fewer experiences.

ACEs and Children in Foster Care

- ▶ More than half (51%) of the children in the child welfare system have four or more ACEs
 - ▶ 38% of children in foster care under 3 years old have four or more ACEs
- ▶ Children in foster care are 5 times more likely to have anxiety, depression, and behavioral problems compared to children not in foster care





Mechanism by Which Adverse Childhood Experiences Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan



Protective Factors

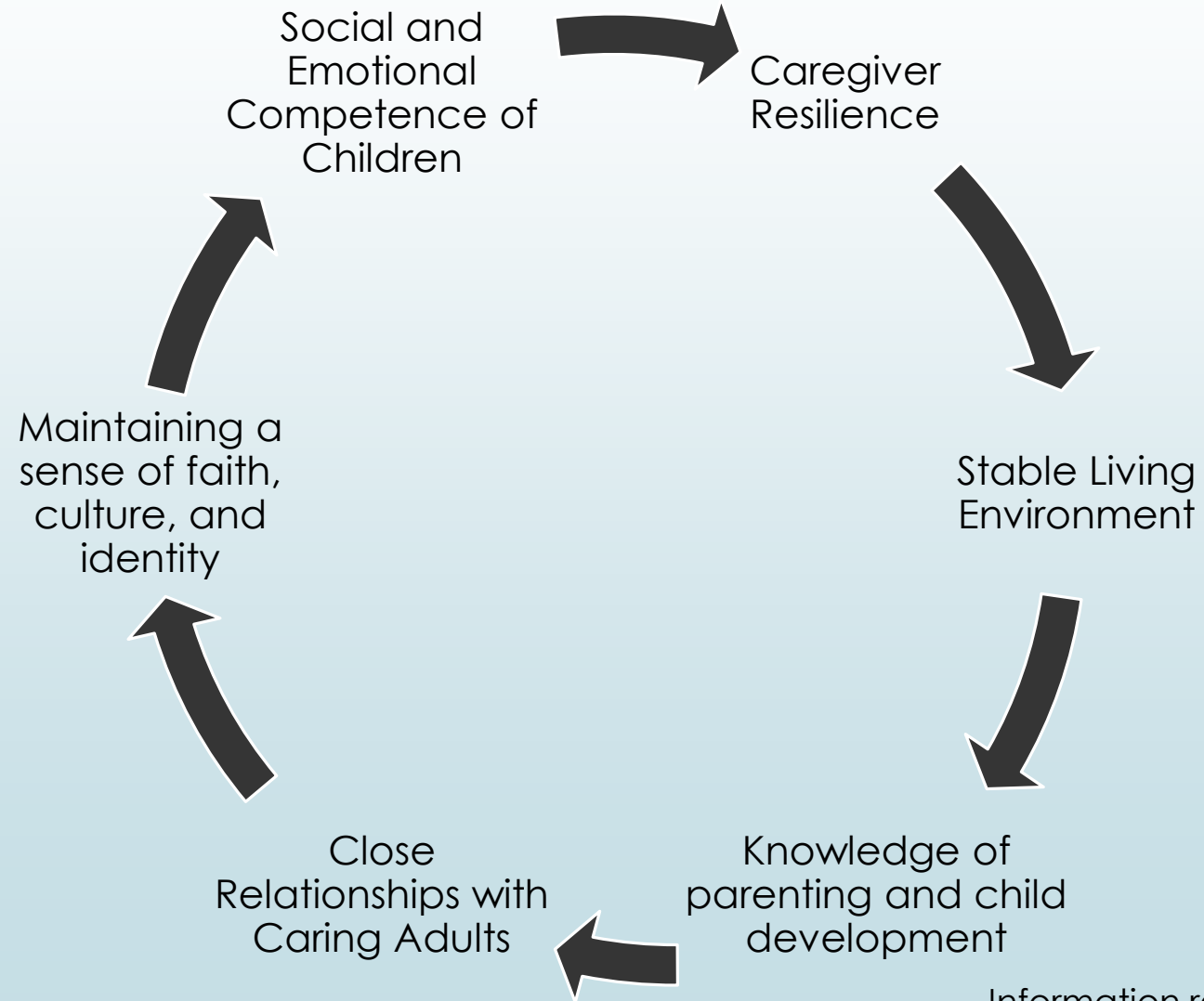
Research shows that protective factors help mitigate the impact of ACEs and promote resiliency in children



Protective Factors

- ▶ Nurturing families and supportive networks can reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. Other conditions are promising protective factors, such as
 - ▶ Stable Family Relationships
 - ▶ Supportive Communities
 - ▶ Access to health and social services

Protective Factors: Mitigating Risk





Kinship Care: Safety and Stability

- ▶ Research shows that children who live with kin experience better outcomes
- ▶ Kin are well-equipped to provide
 - ▶ Emotional support
 - ▶ Placement stability
 - ▶ Maintenance of family identity
 - ▶ Placement of sibling groups



Kinship Care and Protective Factors

Comparing Kinship Foster Care to Non-Relative Foster Care

Compared to children living in foster care with non-kin foster parents, children in foster care living with relatives have:

1. Greater likelihood of achieving permanency

1. Recent study = 90% of teens in relative foster homes achieved permanency

2. Experience fewer school changes

3. Better behavioral and mental health outcomes

4. More likely to report “feeling loved”

5. More likely to keep connections to sibling groups, extended family, and loved ones

6. Less likely to re-enter foster care after returning to birth parents



Challenges for Kinship Families

- Kin who are asked to care for children typically have not anticipated having to care for children, and quickly experience the financial, health, and social/behavioral challenges associated with children who have experienced trauma
- Research indicates that kinship caregivers tend to be poorer, older, and less educated compared to families with at least one biological parent present
- Financial burdens include caregivers on fixed incomes (retirement, disability) or being unprepared for child care expenses due to current job schedules or income levels
- Children who enter kinship care through foster care tend to have more behavioral and emotional challenges
- Caregivers have to deal with complex family relationships



Supporting Families

- ▶ Kinship caregivers may receive children in a multitude of ways:
 - ▶ **Foster Care** (30% of NYS FC is children living with relatives)
 - ▶ **CPS facilitated** (N-Docket/Safety Plans) – over 2000 placements per year and growing
 - ▶ **Private Care** (no CPS involvement) – research says 50% of children living with kin have no prior CPS contact
- ▶ The caregiving arrangement determines the amount of support a family is eligible for, both from Child Welfare (FC) and/or from other community supports



Supporting Families

What supports are available?

- ▶ **Foster Care** allows for families to have support to deal with trauma and the fall-out from adverse childhood experiences. Ensuring supports for families is a protective factor that will help mitigate ACEs. Foster Care subsidies also ensure financial stability.
- ▶ **KinGAP and Adoption**, both available post-foster care, they also have a number of services available through:
 - ▶ Permanency Resource Centers funded throughout the state, offering respite, support groups, and case management to post-permanency families.
 - ▶ Subsidies ensure financial stability.
- ▶ **Custody cases (N-Docket, V-Docket) and Private Cases** have limited resources available to them.
 - ▶ Twenty-two counties have OCFS Kinship Care Programs, while 40 counties rely only on the NYS Kinship Navigator for services. PRCs are unable to service this population of families.
 - ▶ The TANF Child Only Grant is available to children without income, but is hundreds less than a FC subsidy.



Supporting Families

- ▶ Research shows that when kinship caregivers receive services and support, children have better social and mental health outcomes than children who live with caregivers who receive no such supports. Examples of services that help support families include:
 - ▶ Support groups
 - ▶ Mental Health Services
 - ▶ Case Management
 - ▶ Kinship Navigator
- ▶ Families receiving such supports experienced increases in:
 - ▶ Permanency and Stability
 - ▶ Safety
 - ▶ Lower rates of foster-care re-entry
 - ▶ Lower rates of behavioral problems in children



Kinship Navigator Supports and Services

Offering information, referral, education, and advocacy for all kinship caregivers

NYS Kinship Navigator

► Information

- Legal Fact Sheets
- County Resources
- Helpline

► Referral

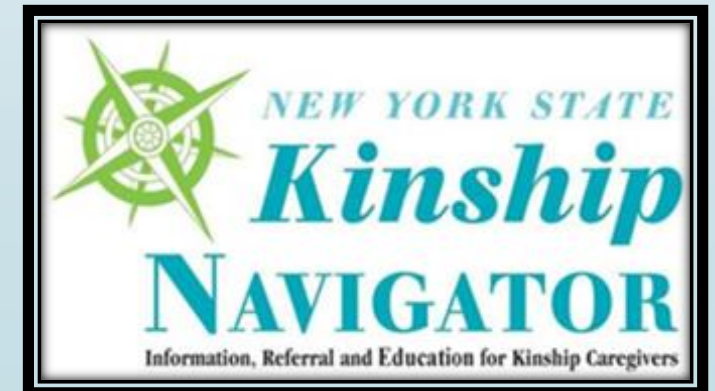
- Case Management Programs
- Support Groups
- Legal Referral Network

► Education

- Statewide Presentations
- Online Video Archive
- Legislative education

► Advocacy

- Case by case advocacy
- Statewide advocacy





NYS Kinship Navigator

- ▶ Statewide resource
 - ▶ Only OCFS funded resource available in 40 counties
- ▶ Primary Purpose:
 - ▶ Family Stability
- ▶ Strategies:
 - ▶ Connections to available financial assistance and legal advocacy
 - ▶ Partnering with local kinship services and departments of social services
 - ▶ Centralized information database

Website:
www.nysnavigator.org

Helpline:
877-454-6463

➤ **Need Assistance?**
Call Today: (877) 454-6463



*Helping Non-Parent Caregivers
Achieve Success All Across New York*

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Help for Kinship Caregivers in all of New York's 62 Counties

The NYS Kinship Navigator is an information, referral and advocacy program for kinship caregivers in New York State. A kinship caregiver is an individual that is caring for a child that is not biologically their own. In New York State, there are an estimated 200,000 caregivers, 131,000 of whom are grandparents. Many others are aunts and uncles.

The Navigator seeks to assist these caregivers by providing information on financial assistance, legal information and referrals, and other types of issues that caregivers face when raising children in order to provide stability and

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Online

Connecting Kin to Services

- ▶ Permission to Contact (PTC) form
- ▶ Local outreach
- ▶ Online Training



KINSHIP CARE

keeping our kids connected

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Permission to Contact Form

- ▶ Makes it easier for kinship families to have contact and receive services from kinship programs
- ▶ Allows client to indicate when it is preferred to contact them
- ▶ Takes the extra responsibility off of families in crisis/struggling

PERMISSION FOR KINSHIP NAVIGATOR TO CONTACT CAREGIVER

Please check, sign and complete permission and contact information below,
and then return to your staff person

Permission for Kinship Navigator to call you: Yes No (If No, Stop here)

Signature: _____ Date _____

1. Name of Primary Caregiver _____

2. Mailing Address: _____ Apt Number: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

3. Home Phone: Area code: _____ phone: _____ - _____

4. Cell Phone: Area code: _____ phone: _____ - _____

5. Other Phone: Area code: _____ phone: _____ - _____

6. Email Address: _____

7. What language do you prefer? English Spanish

8. Preferences for contact (check all that apply)

Time of day: Morning (9-12) Lunchtime (12-1) Afternoon (1-4) Evening (4-6)

By Email Mail Home Phone Cell Phone

Instructions for Staff: Please complete the information below, and fax this form to 585-456-1676 or email to navigator@nysnavigator.org. Please store all completed forms for pick up by Kinship Navigator project coordinator.

County _____ Staff Person _____

Child Welfare Staff Only: Types of Placement:

"Temporary" (No Article Ten); Article Ten "direct"; Article Ten into Article Six;

KinGAP; Other _____

Organization/Agency _____ Unit/Supervisor _____

Does the client have a Safety Plan in place? Yes No

Date fax/email sent ___/___/___

If caregiver declined to be contacted, please check box.

(Please fax the form even if caregiver declined to be contacted; this is important for our records).



Contact



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