



# Kinship Orientation Training (KOT)

## Course Description

When children or youth need to be removed from family care, Children and Family Services recognizes the many benefits of placing children with someone they already have relationship. Kinship caregivers play an important role in the lives of the children and youth they care for. As a kinship caregiver you may have had to step into this role with little time to prepare. In this eLearning series we discuss the many benefits of Kinship care. We also look at the reason that children and youth come into care which includes the experience of trauma. We examine the impact of trauma, how to support children and youth to heal and continue to be connected to their culture and community. We offer learning around topics of child rearing, how to access supports in the system and the importance of self-care. We recognize the unique challenges of the kinship experience and as such, the special needs of the kinship caregiver that require support.

## Learning Objectives

At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explain the role and unique needs of Kinship caregivers.
- Summarize the relationship between Kinship caregivers and Children and Family Services.
- Demonstrate the importance of self-care and personal wellness.
- Describe how child development, attachment, and stress, including toxic stress, impacts a child's success.
- Recognize the impact of loss and grief on children.
- Determine how to best support children through loss and grief.
- Describe how discipline and punishment affect children and understand Children and Family Services policy does not allow the use of punishment for children/youth in Kinship care.
- Determine how you can support connection and healing by keeping children connected to where they come from (family, community, culture).
- Identify the unique permanency options for children and youth in Kinship care.

## Guided Discussion Questions

1. Especially if it is different than yours, what do you do in your home to support the child or youth's culture while they are in your care?
2. What are some things that you are doing to manage the changes within your home environment? How can I support you with this?
3. What did you learn about maintaining relationships and connections for the child or youth? How do you support the interactions between children and their family?
4. What types of things do you do to connect and build relationship with the child or youth placed in your home?
5. How does knowing that FASD is a "lifelong disability" shift your thinking? What could you do to understand and support a child through a disability lens?
6. What are some types of positive discipline strategies that you use? Have you found some that work better for the child or youth in your care?

## Resources

- Alberta Foster and Kinship Association (AFKA) <https://afkaonline.ca/>
  - Equipping foster and kinship caregivers with knowledge, tools, and a support system.
  - Telephone: (780) 429-9923 Toll Free (within Alberta): 800-667-2372
  - Email: [info@afkaonline.ca](mailto:info@afkaonline.ca)
- Caregiver Support Program <https://afkaonline.ca/programs/caregiver-support-program/>
  - The Caregiver Support Program Provides:
    - Community Building
    - Systemic Navigation Assistance
    - Guidance During Complex Times
  - Contact: The Caregiver Support Program through AFKA
- Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act (CYFEA)
  - <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/c12>
- Enhancement Policy Manual
  - <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/3607542>
- Kinship Care Handbook: A Toolkit for Kinship Caregivers
  - <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/kinship-care-handbook-a-toolkit-for-kinship-caregivers>