



**ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT
of CHILD SAFETY**

Mike Faust, Director
Douglas A. Ducey, Governor

November 1, 2019

The Honorable Douglas A. Ducey
Governor of Arizona
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85005

Re: Annual Supportive Resources Report (Kinship, Independent Living, Housing)

Dear Governor Ducey:

In 2018, the Arizona State Legislature passed Senate Bill 1518, which consolidated the Bi-Annual Kinship Report, and the Annual Independent Living/ETV, and Housing Reports. The new report is entitled the *DCS Annual Supportive Resources Report* and will cover state fiscal year 2019 and includes the following information:

1. The demographics and number of children placed with relative caregivers.
2. The demographics of kinship foster caregivers.
3. The number of relative children per kinship foster care family.
4. The department's success at maintaining kinship foster care placements.
5. The type and cost of services provided to kinship foster care families by licensed and unlicensed caregivers.
6. The cost of services provided to kinship foster caregivers compared to the cost of out-of-home placements.
7. The number of children and families, by district, receiving services through the housing assistance program during the previous fiscal year.
8. The total amount of money spent on the housing assistance program by region.
9. A programmatic and fiscal evaluation of the effectiveness of the housing assistance program that includes the amount of foster care expenditures avoided.
10. The number of children in the independent living program by age, county and education status.

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If you have any questions, please contact me at (602) 255-2500.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Faust".

Mike Faust
Director

Enclosure

cc: President Karen Fann, Arizona State Senate
Speaker Russell Bowers, Arizona State House of Representatives
Katie Hobbs, Arizona Secretary of State
Holly Henley, Director, Arizona State Library, Archives, and Public Records
Matt Gress, Director, Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting



DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY

ANNUAL SUPPORTIVE RESOURCES REPORT

State Fiscal Year 2019

Pursuant to Laws 2018, Second Regular Session, Chapter 110, Section 4, the Department of Child Safety (DCS) consolidated two annual reports and one bi-annual report into a single annual report. Senate Bill 1518 amended A.R.S. § 8-526 to include the reporting requirements for the Bi-Annual Kinship Foster Care report, the Annual Independent Living Program Report and the Annual Housing Assistance Report. In order to align these reports, data presented are based on State Fiscal Year (SFY). While the elements required for each report remained the same, one additional item is required for the Kinship Foster Care section; namely the “type and cost of services provided to Kinship Foster Care families for licensed and unlicensed caregivers.

A.R.S. § 8-526(E) states that DCS shall make available the following information on an annual basis:

1. *The percentage of substantiations upheld by the office of administrative hearings (found in the Semi-Annual Child Welfare Report).*
2. The demographics and number of children placed with relative caregivers.
3. The demographics of kinship foster caregivers.
4. The number of relative children per kinship foster care family.
5. The department's success at maintaining kinship foster care placements.
6. The type and cost of services provided to kinship foster care families by licensed and unlicensed caregivers.
7. The cost of services provided to kinship foster caregivers compared to the cost of out-of-home placements.
8. The number of children and families, by district, receiving services through the housing assistance program during the previous fiscal year.
9. The total amount of money spent on the housing assistance program by region.
10. A programmatic and fiscal evaluation of the effectiveness of the housing assistance program that includes the amount of foster care expenditures avoided.
11. The number of children in the independent living program by age, county and education status.

This report is divided into three sections:

<u>Kinship Foster Care</u>	1
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KINSHIP FOSTER CARE

Overview

In 2018, Senate Bill 1518 amended Arizona Revised Statute § 8-526 to require the Department of Child Safety (DCS) to make available on an annual basis, information on the Kinship Foster Care Program including:

- The demographics and number of children placed with relative caregivers.
- The demographics of kinship foster caregivers.
- The number of relative children per kinship foster care family.
- The department's success at maintaining kinship foster care placements.
- The type and cost of services provided to kinship foster care families by licensed and unlicensed caregivers.
- The cost of services provided to kinship foster caregivers compared to the cost of out-of-home placements.

This report is submitted in satisfaction of this requirement.

For generations, extended families have played significant roles in the rearing of children when parents otherwise cannot. Kinship caregivers provide love and nurturance in a familiar setting, allowing children to remain connected with their families. These children live with people they know and trust, thereby reinforcing the child's sense of cultural identity and well-being. Children living with kinship caregivers make and sustain extended family connections, promoting the continuation of lifelong family traditions and memories. The extended family provides opportunities that support the child in building healthy relationships within the family, ensures the child's safety and well-being, and creates a sense of stability in the child's life.

Arizona continues to utilize kinship foster care at a much greater rate than the national average of 32 percent¹. As of June 30, 2019, the percentage of children placed with a relative (licensed and unlicensed) was 45 percent, a two percent increase from SFY 2018².

Arizona Kinship Foster Care Program Description³

Arizona's Kinship Foster Care Program prioritizes relatives as the first placement preference for children in the custody of DCS who require out-of-home care. While kinship placements are generally a less costly option for a child in the custody of the state, they are the preferred placement because they maintain and promote lifelong family connections.

¹ Child Welfare Information Gateway, Bulletins for Professionals: Working With Kinship Caregivers, 2018, <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/kinship.pdf#page=2&view=Trends%20in%20kinship%20care> (accessed 20 October 2019).

² Data was extracted on 10-15-19 from the DCS case management system based upon an Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) data run for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.

³ *Ibid.*

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Kinship Foster Caregivers include adults related by blood and adults with whom the child has a significant relationship. With the overall decrease in Arizona's foster care population, the number of kinship foster caregivers (licensed and unlicensed) and children in kinship homes has proportionally decreased as well. The number of children less than eighteen years of age in out-of-home (OOH) care on June 30, 2017 was 15,803 compared to 13,418 on June 30, 2019, which represents a fifteen percent decrease. The number of licensed foster homes in June 2017 was 4,875 compared to 3,988 in June 2019, which represents an eighteen percent decrease. It is also important to note that the Department has been working to maximize available bed space and reduce costs by reviewing foster homes who became licensed but have chosen not to utilize their home to provide foster care. When appropriate, these licenses were allowed to expire.

Licensed Kinship Foster Care is when a child is placed with a relative/kin who becomes licensed as a foster care provider. As of June 30, 2019, there were 491 kinship foster caregivers licensed as foster parents. This is a nine percent decrease from the 539 licensed kinship foster caregivers reported in the previous annual report (SFY 2018). The current 491 licensed kinship caregivers provide out-of-home care for 887 related foster children.

Unlicensed Kinship Foster Care is when a child is placed with a relative with court approval and the relative is not licensed as a foster care provider. As of June 30, 2019, there were 3,173 unlicensed kinship caregivers providing homes to related children in foster care. This is a two percent decrease from the 3,222 unlicensed kinship caregivers reported in the previous, annual report (SFY 2018). The current 3,173 unlicensed kinship caregivers provide out-of-home care to 5,103 related foster children.

Services Available to Licensed and Unlicensed Kinship Foster Caregivers

There are many services available to kinship foster caregivers and the children for whom they provide care. These services include the following:

- *Case management services* - Regular contact and communication with the kinship caregiver occurs to assess and identify needs of the child and family and to assist in developing solutions.
- *Health care coverage* – A medical and dental plan is provided to children through the Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP), which is an AHCCCS (Title XIX Medicaid) health plan.
- *Parent aide services* – Training in family life skills is provided by contract agencies; parent aides may also provide transportation and/or supervise parenting time with birth parents and their children.
- *Parent skills training* - Training is provided for kinship foster caregivers to enhance their parenting knowledge and skills.
- *Mental health and other supportive intervention services* – Counseling and other services may be provided through referrals to agencies for kinship foster caregivers and children needing intervention.
- *Transportation services* - Transportation for children to and from medical appointments and other necessary services is available.
- *Child care subsidy* - Child care can be provided for children with local state-approved entities; payment for services is subsidized if these services are deemed necessary.

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- *Respite care* - Six days or up to 144 hours annually of respite care is available for kinship foster caregivers.
 - *Referrals to other state programs* - Programs such as the Family Assistance Administration, the Division of Developmental Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Service, and community resources for children and kinship foster caregivers are available through the Department of Economic Security (DES) and community agencies.
 - *Arizona Families Thrive E-newsletter* – This monthly e-newsletter replaced the Arizona Statewide newsletter and provides information about educational opportunities, services and other information that support kinship foster caregivers. Caregivers sign-up to receive the newsletter by enrolling directly on the DCS website or calling the Warm-line.
 - *Kinship Information Sessions (KIS)* – Meetings are provided in Phoenix and Tucson to kinship foster caregivers, to inform them about the court system, resources, policies and foster care licensing.
 - *Direct (1:1) assistance* – Support is provided to kinship caregivers through Central Office and region based staff to provide information, answer questions, provide guidance and general support, and to resolve payment and other issues. Caregivers who participate in the AZ Families Thrive conferences also receive education/training and the opportunity to meet with licensing agencies during this event.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance

Kinship foster caregivers are encouraged to apply for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Cash Assistance (CA) to receive financial assistance for children in their care. Of the 9,905 children in kinship foster care throughout FY 2019, 3,175 or 32 percent were CA recipients. Additionally, a total of 5,017 children in kinship care received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) throughout FY 2019. Of the children in kinship foster care through the fiscal year, 2,287 of these children received benefits from both programs.

Costs of Care Provided by the Department of Child Safety (DCS)

Financial assistance provided to kinship foster caregivers for the children in their care include foster care maintenance payments (for licensed kinship foster caregivers), personal and clothing allowances (for both licensed and unlicensed relative caregivers), diaper allowances (for unlicensed kinship caregivers caring for children under the age of three), and the Kinship Stipend (for unlicensed kinship caregivers).

The diaper allowance is \$62.50 per month/per child and the Kinship Stipend is \$75.00 per month/per child. The average monthly cost for personal and clothing allowances for children placed in kinship foster care (unlicensed) is \$70.59 per child. This compares to an average monthly cost of family foster care (licensed kinship and licensed non-kinship) of \$706.00 per child. The average monthly cost of foster care for a child placed in a congregate care setting, such as a group home, is \$3,499 per child. These average monthly costs do not include expenditures related to DCS case management, childcare, or other services provided to support the care of children in out-of-home placement.

Demographic Data about Children in Kinship Foster Care

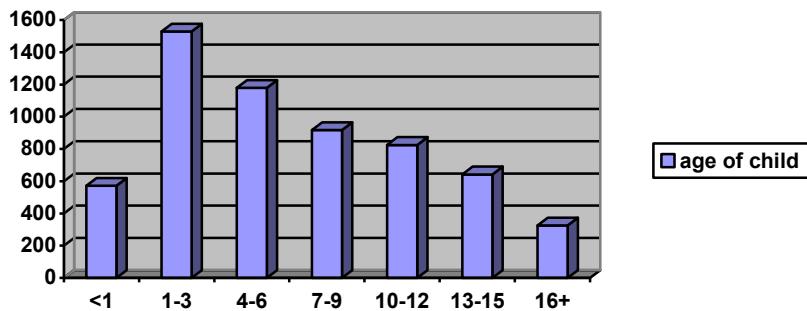
As of June 30, 2019, there were 5,990 children in licensed and unlicensed kinship foster care, which was 45 percent of the total out-of-home care population of 13,418 children. The average

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age for children in kinship foster care was 7.1 years (unchanged from SFY 2018). The largest percentage of children in kinship foster care, 26 percent (1,529) are between ages one and three.

Chart 1 displays the number of children in placement by age:

Chart 1
Kinship Care: Children in Placement by Age

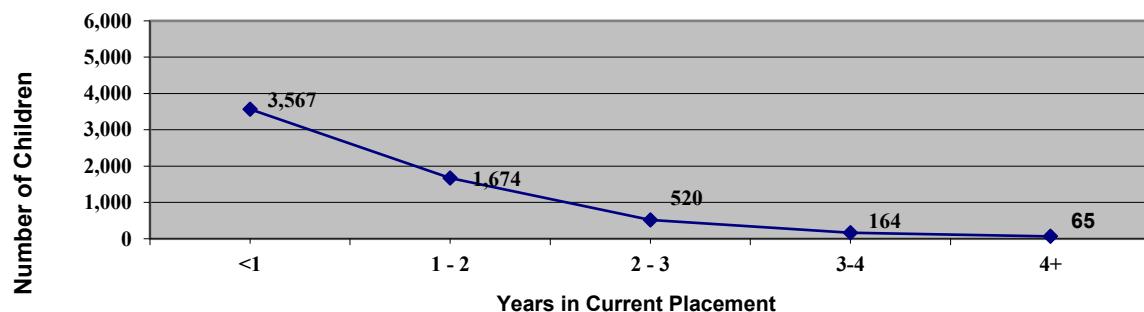


N= 5,990

Children residing in kinship foster care on June 30, 2019 spent 77 percent of their total time in out-of-home placement with their kinship foster care providers. This is consistent with the SFY 2018 data. Most children in kinship foster care, 60 percent, lived with their kinship foster caregiver for less than one year. This represents a six percent decrease over SFY 2018 data for this category. The average number of children residing in the same kinship caretaker home is 1.6 children.

Chart 2 displays time in current kinship home by years:

Chart 2
Kinship Care: Time in Current Placement by Years

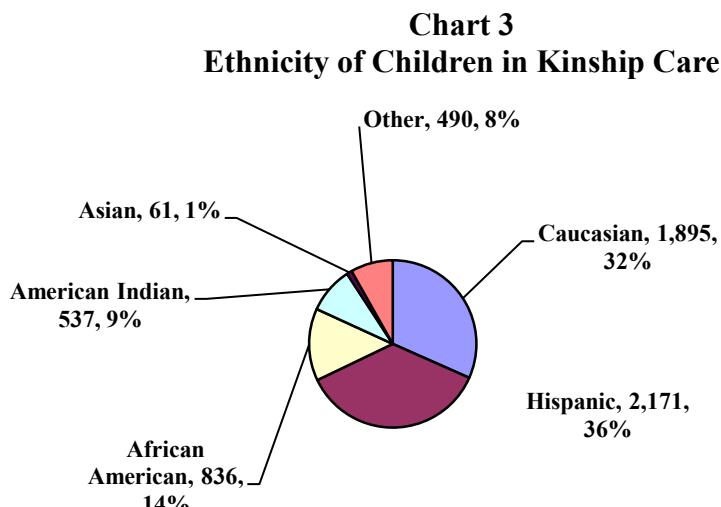


N = 5,990

Chart 3 displays the ethnicity of children in kinship foster care. Comparing SFY 2018 to SFY 2019, the percentage of Asian, African-American and children whose ethnicity is classified as

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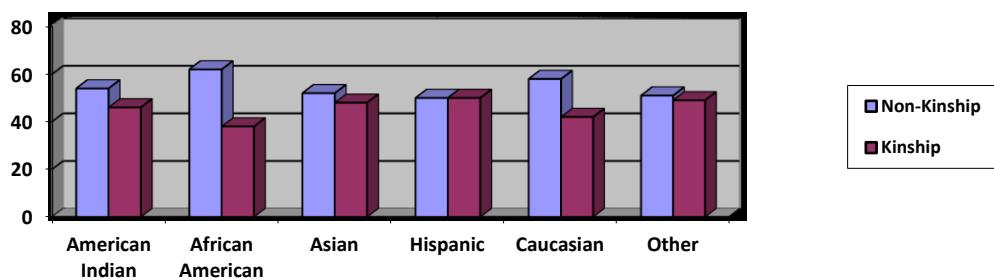
Other⁴ in kinship foster care increased by one percent. The percentage of American Indian children in kinship foster care remained the same. Hispanic children in kinship foster care decreased by one percent and Caucasian children by two percent. Fifty-one percent of children in kinship foster care are female and forty-nine percent are male.



N 5,990

Chart 4 compares the percentage of all children in non-kinship versus kinship care, by ethnicity. For children in kinship care, the highest percentage was Hispanic children (50 percent) and children categorized as Other (49 percent), followed closely by Asian children (48 percent). Slightly less, American Indian (46 percent) and Caucasian children (42 percent) and African American children (35 percent) were residing in kinship care.

Chart 4: Ethnicity of Children in Non-Kinship versus Kinship Care



⁴ "Other" ethnicity may include Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific, Unable to Determine, or Refused to Disclose.

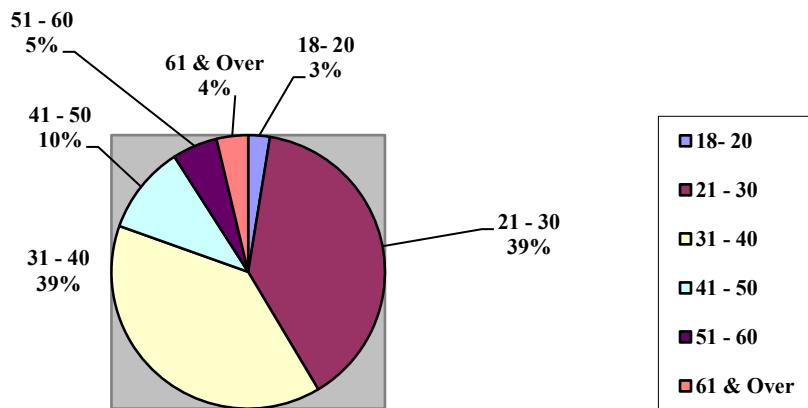
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Demographic Data of Kinship Foster Caregivers

As of June 30, 2019, there were 3,664 kinship foster caregivers. This represents a 2.5 percent decrease over the 3,761 kinship foster caregivers in SFY 2018. The total OOH population for youth under the age of eighteen decreased by 2.1 percent, from 13,651 to 13,361. Kinship foster caregivers under the age of 40 comprise 81 percent of all kinship foster caregivers.

Chart 5 displays the percentages of kinship foster caregivers by age brackets:

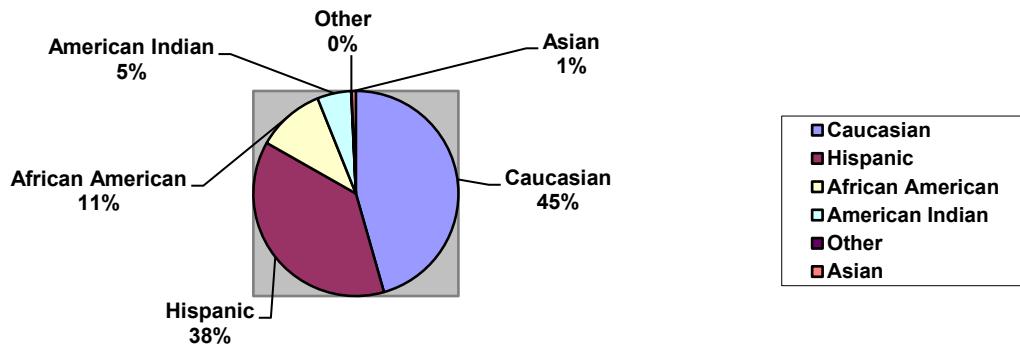
Chart 5
Kinship Caregivers' Ages



N = 3,664

Chart 6 displays the ethnicity of kinship foster caregivers.

Chart 6
Kinship Foster Caregivers by Ethnicity



N = 3,664

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Recommendations for Program Improvement and Report of Progress

The Department of Child Safety (DCS) values and supports our kinship foster caregivers. The Department has implemented or is in the process of implementing the following:

- DCS policy outlines the importance of diligent efforts to identify and notify all adult relatives of a child in out-of-home placement of the option to become a placement resource for the child within 30 days of the child's removal from their home. DCS continues to conduct searches for relatives prior to key decision points in the case. State policy directs staff to conduct searches at least once every six months.
- DCS continues to utilize Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings as a mechanism to identify prospective relative placements. From July 2018 through June 2019, 9,011 TDMs were held throughout Arizona. Of those, 85.2 percent of these TDMs were attended by at least one parent. 43 percent were attended by at least one relative associated with the case. The total number of children discussed at these meetings was 13,536. Of those children, out of home placement (including 90-day voluntary foster care agreements) was recommended for 5,568 or 41 percent of the children. Of the total number of children discussed during all meeting types (13,536), relative placements were identified for 24 percent, which is a 9 percent decrease from the prior fiscal year. (source: TDM database).
- As part of the Title IV-E waiver demonstration project, Fostering Sustainable Connections (FSC), Family Engagement Specialists, whose job duties include searching for relatives and kin, were given access to person search software, Lexus Nexus. From July 2018 to June 2019, 1,998 relatives or kin were discovered and actively engaged with children participating in FSC. During this period, 57 children were moved to a family like setting as a result of the relative and kin connections discovered. As of October 1, 2019, the program has expanded to serve children statewide. Other aspects of the waiver support relative and kinship identification as well, including:
 - hiring Family Engagement Specialists to identify and locate relatives and kin important to the children for emotional support and possible placement;
 - expanding the current TDM process to identify and transition youth who are placed in congregate care into family-like settings; and
 - increasing the availability of in-home, behavioral health, and other community services to assist with transitioning the children to less restrictive placements and support any kinship placements identified.

DCS continues to provide kinship foster care families with necessary information and resources to ensure that the child(ren) placed with kin are properly cared for and kin are supported, reducing the trauma to children entering out-of-home care and avoiding more costly placements. In the Phoenix area, kinship home studies are conducted by Southwest Human Development (SWHD) through a contract with the Department. Approximately 185 home studies are conducted per month. SWHD staff visit the kinship homes early in the placement process to conduct the home studies and provide information on resources

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available through DCS and community based agencies (including licensing, financial, social and educational resources).

- Department staff conduct outreach activities through phone calls, mailings, and in-person information sessions to inform kin about their role as a foster caregiver, and provide critical information on meeting the needs of the children in their care. CMDP continues its outreach to caregivers when children are placed in their homes, which includes assistance with appointment scheduling, follow up with specialty health care providers, referrals to other community/agency resources, and care coordination with caregivers and health providers for children/youth with special health care needs. Caregivers receive contact information so they may contact CMDP Member Services should any issues or concerns arise or simply need to know what their rights are in accessing services for the children in their care. In addition, the Kinship Foster Care booklet continues to be distributed and is available in English and Spanish. The booklet was revised in 2017 and provides extensive information for kinship caregivers, including DCS expectations for the care and supervision of children in DCS care, benefits and services available to children in their care, licensing process and waivers, and information about other pertinent subjects.
- The Statewide Kinship Specialist monitors regional efforts and provides support through technical assistance and training, statewide. Examples of current efforts include the following:
 - The Southeast Region continues to support kin placements with a designated case aide in each field office visiting each new kinship home to offer information on resources, available assistance, and the dependency process. The case aide meets with the families one week after initial placement, ten days after that, and then monthly as needed.
 - The Kinship Specialists under the DCS Placement Administration provide support to unlicensed kinship placements. The support centers on helping families to know what resources are available and how to access them. Additionally, the Kinship Specialists assist in setting up Fieldprint appointments to complete the fingerprint requirement. The assigned Kinship Specialist makes contact with the family to schedule an initial visit within five days of receiving the referral and conducts three follow ups visits or phone calls or combination of both (preference of the family).
 - The Guardianship Services Contract was also launched in 2018 to focus on providing information, education, consultation, training, support, and outreach to caregivers who are considering permanent guardianship as a permanency option. Kinship caregivers and youth receive education on all permanency options to make an informed decision regarding which option is best for their families. Caregivers that move forward with permanent guardianship are provided with support to complete necessary paperwork and connected with community resources to assist with future needs.
- The Statewide Placement Administration was formed in 2017. This administration coordinates requests for licensed placements for children in out-of-home care as well as supports kinship caregivers by providing or directing kin to tangible resources including

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emergency food, clothing, beds, infant care items, etc., and has provided assistance to struggling kinship caregivers to help resolve barriers to maintaining children in their homes. This administration has hired three Kinship Specialists who conduct outreach and support to kinship caregivers in Maricopa County with plans to expand this service as positions become available.

- The Arizona Council of Human Service Providers entered into a three-year partnership with Dr. Bruce Perry from the Child Trauma Academy to create a webinar series and an online resource library for foster parents and kinship families based on the Neurosequential Model in Caregiving. This program provides monthly webinars for caregivers such as foster parents, kinship, and adoptive families to train them to parent children who have experienced trauma. The webinars are archived for viewing at any time. The program is also training 35 child welfare and behavioral health staff who will become trainers in the Neurosequential Model. These trainers will be available to train foster parents and kinship families in this model in the future.
- DCS Specialists are encouraged to discuss the importance of foster home licensure with relative caregivers at the time of placement and subsequent to placement. On a case-by-case basis, the Department works with the Office of Licensing and Regulation and contracted licensing agencies to grant waivers of non-safety related licensing standards that would prevent kinship caregivers from becoming licensed. The waivers most often relate to some aspect of the sleeping arrangements to accommodate sibling groups. A smaller number relate to income requirements or certain flexibilities needed to complete necessary training. During this reporting period, 173 waivers were granted. Of those, 78 were granted to grandparents or great-grandparents, 68 were for single child placements, and the remaining 105 were provided to kin caring for sibling groups.
- The Department continues to partner with the Department of Economic Security's Family Assistance Administration (FAA) to troubleshoot TANF Cash Assistance applications. DCS and FAA maintain designated staff that coordinate and assist with applications, and the process for kinship families to apply for benefits has been improved to decrease errors and delays. A centralized eligibility determination process developed in 2016 continues and includes a unique e-mail address for applications. State legislation was passed to lift the TANF "benefit cap" that previously prevented a child from receiving TANF if his or her mother was receiving cash assistance at the time she gave birth to a child. This new law, which became effective August 6, 2016, removed the TANF cap for dependent children residing in the home of a qualified relative.

The Care Portal connects DCS families to local churches who want to serve their communities by providing basic goods and services to families in an effort to keep families together, reunify families, and support kinship placements. This is a secondary and tertiary prevention program, in as much as it serves all DCS families as well as young adults who are aging out of foster care. The Care Portal addresses a large range of needs, such as cribs, beds, furniture, home or car repairs, and assistance eliminating lice. The Care Portal program was expanded this past year and currently provides services and goods to families in Pima, Maricopa, and Yuma Counties.

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- In 2019, the Department also launched a Kinship Navigator Pilot program that is currently serving three offices in Maricopa County. The purpose of the pilot is to assist the unlicensed foster caregivers with navigating the many systems involved when a child is in the custody of the Department and placed in their home. DCS has engaged a contracted provider to deliver similar supportive services as those offered to licensed caregivers. The intended outcome is to keep children living with relatives in safe, stable, nurturing environments until their case plan goal can be achieved.
- In 2018, the Department expanded the DCS Warmline support to be available to all Kinship families. This assists with easier access to getting questions answered and receiving assistance with setting up benefits such as TANF, DES daycare and any questions with the Kinship Stipend Program.
- The Department is continuing active efforts to support kinship foster caregivers so foster children placed in their care thrive. The Arizona Legislature has expanded the “Kinship Stipend” to include all unlicensed kinship caregivers regardless of income. There is no longer an application process. Caregivers receive the funds automatically. As of July 1, 2019, this monthly stipend (\$75 per child) was being provided to kinship caregivers caring for 2,773 children.

Conclusion

Kinship foster care accounts for 45 percent of the children in out-of-home care in Arizona. This percentage continues to exceed the national average of 32 percent and is reflective of Arizona's commitment to prioritize kin as the first preference for children who require out-of-home care. Most notable is the change in the average age of Arizona's kinship caregivers over the last two years. The percentage of caregivers age 41 and older decreased significantly from 74 percent to nineteen percent. Conversely, the percentage of caregivers under the age of 41 increased from 26 percent to 79 percent. This shift gives cause to the Department to consider how to deliver information and services; potentially providing enhanced opportunities to use advanced technologies that may be more aligned with the needs and communication style of this population. The Department will continue to expand efforts to examine and provide for the needs of kinship caregivers through partnerships with local community agencies as well as other state agencies.

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INDEPENDENT LIVING

[A.R.S. § 8-521](#) establishes Arizona's Independent Living Program and the supporting Educational Case Management Unit within the Department of Child Safety.

The Independent Living Program and the Educational Case Management Unit provide important services that assist foster youth in setting and meeting educational and life skills goals and outcomes. These services are available to both teens that are currently in foster care as well as young adults ages eighteen to twenty years old who were in foster care when they were teenagers. Services include individualized assistance to remove barriers to high school graduation (such as interventions for credit recovery, expediting enrollment, etc.) and to identify and enroll in postsecondary programs, including accessing scholarship and grant opportunities. Young adults over seventeen years of age in the Independent Living Program may be continuing enrollment in a traditional or alternative secondary education program, enrolled in postsecondary education, or have completed graduation or attained a general equivalency diploma and chosen to work full-time rather than pursue secondary education.

As required by A.R.S. § 8-521 (J), the following information is provided for the 2018-2019 school year:

The number of youth in the Independent Living Program: On June 30, 2019, there were 1,641 youth in the Independent Living Program. The population of youth represented in this annual report are youth in out-of-home care age sixteen and older with a primary or concurrent permanency goal of Independent Living.

The number of youth in the program by age:

Age	Number of Youth
16	233
17	538
18	410
19	258
20	202
TOTAL	1,641

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The number of youth in the program by grade:

Grade	Number of Youth
Below 9	0
9	0
10	233
11	538
12	410
Secondary Programs ¹	111
Post-Secondary ²	246
Not in School ³	103
TOTAL	1,641

The number of youth in the program by county of residence:

County	Number of Youth
Apache	19
Cochise	7
Coconino	7
Gila	8
Graham	3
Greenlee	0
La Paz	0
Maricopa	1,057
Mohave	125
Navajo	6
Pima	218
Pinal	124
Santa Cruz	6
Yavapai	23
Yuma	38
TOTAL	1,641

Youth in the program who graduated from high school in 2018-2019: 235 youth

Youth in the program who received a general equivalency diploma in 2018-2019: 91 youth

Youth in the program that are enrolled in post-secondary education: 2018-2019: 246 youth

¹ Secondary Programs includes 19 and 20 year olds enrolled in secondary level alternative, credit recovery, charter schools and GED Programs.

² Post- secondary education includes youth enrolled in colleges, universities, community colleges, and trade/technical schools.

³ Not in school includes youth who have completed graduation, attained a general equivalency diploma, or chose to work full-time rather than pursue post- secondary education.

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HOUSING ASSISTANCE

[A.R.S. § 8-526\(E\)](#) requires the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) to make the following information regarding the Housing Assistance Program available to the public upon request and available on the Department's website:

- The number of children and families, by Region, receiving services through this program during the previous fiscal year.
- The total amount of monies spent on the program by Region.
- A programmatic and fiscal evaluation of the effectiveness of this program, which includes the amount of monies saved by reducing foster care expenditures.

To be eligible for the Housing Assistance Program, the following criteria must be met:

- At least one child is a participant in an open Department of Child Safety (DCS) case;
- Housing assistance is needed to expedite a permanent placement for the child;
- Lack of safe and adequate housing is a significant barrier to family preservation, family reunification or achievement of the permanency plan for at least one child;
- Family income, including entitlements, is insufficient to cover housing expenses;
- The family is willing to develop and participate in a time-oriented plan to maintain housing obtained through this program; and
- All other sources of assistance have been fully explored and used before considering this program.

Number Served

In SFY 2019, the Housing Assistance Program served 704 children in 297 families.

REGION	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	NUMBER OF FAMILIES
Central (East Maricopa and Pinal Counties)	234	100
Pima (Pima County)	133	59
Northern (Mohave, Yavapai, Coconino, Navajo and Apache Counties)	32	14
Southeast (Santa Cruz, Cochise, Graham, Greenlee and Gila Counties)	13	8
Southwest (Yuma, La Paz and West Maricopa Counties)	320	130
STATEWIDE TOTAL	704	297

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Effective July 1, 2019, DCS realigned and renamed its Regions. This project moved several counties and individual to different regions. All future reports will reflect these changes and, thus, future data cannot be compared to prior year regional data.

Cost of Service

The total amount expended statewide for the Housing Assistance Program in SFY 2019 was \$450,251.

REGION	TOTAL MONIES EXPENDED
Central (East Maricopa and Pinal Counties)	\$136,337
Pima (Pima County)	\$80,464
Northern (Mohave, Yavapai, Coconino, Navajo and Apache Counties)	\$21,307
Southeast (Santa Cruz, Cochise, Graham, Greenlee and Gila Counties)	\$10,821
Southwest (Yuma, La Paz and West Maricopa Counties)	\$201,321
STATEWIDE TOTAL	\$450,251

Results of Service

The Housing Assistance Program improves the ability of DCS to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for children who are the subject of a DCS report and investigation, or participants in an ongoing services case.

In a cost-effective manner, the Housing Assistance Program provides families who have open DCS cases with needed housing and utility assistance to meet their health, safety, and shelter needs, when such assistance is not available through other programs.

In SFY 2019, the average length of stay in out-of-home placement prior to reunification was 375 days (12.30 months). An estimated \$5,929,214 would have been expended by DCS for foster care maintenance payments (licensed foster home, personal and clothing allowance) at an average cost of \$684.73 per month/per child if the 704 children who benefited from the Housing Assistance Program during SFY 2019 had entered or remained in foster care for the average length of stay of 12.30 months. Based on the SFY 2019 Housing Assistance Program expenditures of \$450,251, there is potential cost avoidance of \$5,478,963.

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Table 2 displays the number of children who benefitted from the Housing Assistance Program and the average monthly cost of licensed foster care, which includes maintenance payment, and personal and clothing allowances.

Table 2: Number of Children and Average Monthly Cost

Total Number of Children Benefited	704
Licensed Foster Home Monthly Average	\$684.73

Table 3 displays the estimated expenditures DCS would have expended on foster care payments if the children benefitting from the program had been in foster for 12.30 months. It also displays the total expenditures for SFY18 for the Housing Assistance Program and the potential cost avoidance.

Table 3: Cost Avoidance

Estimated DCS Expenditures for 12.30 Months	\$5,929,214
Housing Assistance Program Expenditures	\$450,251
Program Potential Cost Avoidance	\$5,478,963