



Kinship Quarterly

Strengthening Families

Oct 2015

IN THIS ISSUE: RECENT CHANGES IN LAW

In this issue, you will find important information about new changes as a result of new federal law, the 84th Legislative Session, and new best practice.

Successor-Guardian

The federal Strengthening Families Act allows for the preservation of your child's eligibility for Permanency Care Assistance (PCA) payments in the event you die or become incapacitated if a PCA-Successor (a person appointed to permanently care for your child in the event that you are no longer able) replaces you as the child's legal guardian. PCA payments may continue to a PCA-Successor if all of the following conditions are met:

1. You (the kinship caregiver) complete an amendment to your Permanency Care Assistance Agreement to name a potential PCA-Successor to receive PCA benefits on the child's behalf in the event of your death or incapacitation, or the court names another individual to assume legal custody of the child.
2. The PCA-Successor submits to DFPS the required background check information and that information meets DFPS standards.

3. The PCA-Successor signs a Permanency Care Assistance Agreement with DFPS.
4. The PCA-Successor submits to DFPS proof demonstrating that he or she has been given legal custody of the child by the court.

For further information, please contact Permanency Care Assistance Program Specialist Debbie Bouldin at (512)438-4937.

84th Legislative Session

During the 84th Legislative Session, legislators passed many new laws that may affect you as a kinship caregiver. You should have received the Education Newsletter that discusses changes regarding your child's education. You can also find a link to it on page 4 of this newsletter.

Senate Bill 206

Once CPS places a child with a kinship caregiver after a background check, criminal history check and the preliminary assessment; SB 206 now requires us to initiate your full home-assessment process no later than 48 hours after placement. Once the home assessment contractor has accepted the referral, they have 10-15 days to complete the assessment.

Senate Bill 314

Senate Bill 314 requires CPS to submit proof to the court that you were provided an explanation of the differences between adoption and permanent managing conservatorship, which must also include the following important points:

1. The caregiver's appointment conveys only the rights specified by the court order or applicable laws instead of the complete rights of a parent conveyed by adoption.
2. A parent may be entitled to request visitation with the child or petition the court to appoint the parent as the child's managing conservator, notwithstanding the caregiver's appointment as managing conservator.
3. The caregiver's appointment as the child's managing conservator will not result in the eligibility of the caregiver and child for post-adoption benefits.

Due to this new requirement, if you are accepting permanency managing conservatorship of a child in your care you will be required to review and sign "INTENT TO ACCEPT PERMANENT MANAGING CONSERVATORSHIP (PMC)." You can find detailed information regarding the difference between Adoption and Permanency Managing Conservatorship (PMC) in the Kinship Manual, the ADO vs PMC Booklet or by visiting the [DFPS website](#).

Placement Summary Form 2279

In our ongoing efforts to provide continuity of care for the children in CPS custody, Placement Summary Form 2279 has recently been updated. The form now has an added emphasis on identifying the child's involvement in regular age-appropriate normalcy activities and on information regarding the child's social activities.

However, the biggest change in the form is not the content but in who will complete the form for subsequent placements. The purpose of the placement summary is to provide a transfer of information regarding the child from one caregiver to the next. Because the current caregiver has the most current, accurate, and pertinent information regarding the child's day-to-day functioning and needs, the current caregiver will now complete all areas of the form except where noted in the instructions.

The current caregiver must complete the form no later than at the time the child is picked up from the current placement with the exception of an emergency placement change. In an emergency situation, the current caregiver must provide the completed form to the caseworker no later than five calendar days of the date of discharge. Your kinship developer will be available to assist you with any questions.

Good to Know

Good nutrition is important for everyone, but especially for infants and toddlers. That's because good nutrition is needed for babies to be healthy, develop strong immune systems, healthy body functions, and new brain cells. Good nutrition is required for babies to achieve developmental milestones.

Providing needed nutrition is basic. Providing loving and responsive feeding gives babies the ideal environment for meeting nutritional needs, and also basic social and emotional needs. Meal times can be a special time for emotional bonding between families, children, and caregivers. Caregivers can lay the foundations of positive, stable, safe, and secure relationships during meal times.

Babies benefit from being held during bottle feeding, even when they are able to hold their own bottles. Bottle feeding is a wonderful opportunity for eye contact, loving touch, and a soothing voice. Maybe even a song or two. As a baby gets older, a

quick tickle can add laughter and joy to feeding time.

By 4-6 months, babies can begin eating soft, semi-solid foods. Soon after that they take an interest in what other people are eating and drinking. As their fine motor skills develop they learn to bring food to their mouths, and sometimes get it in! They also learn to hold and drink from an open cup.



This is a messy time, so a good supply of bibs will come in handy.

Self-feeding is an important developmental milestone. Another step in this process is dropping food, bowls, spoons and cups on the floor. Again, messy, but developmentally appropriate. In spite of how it may seem, they don't do this to make you angry or give you more work, it's just a part of how they learn. A tarp or towel under the high chair can make clean up easier.

Common Feeding Problems

Sometimes, even when you do everything right, a baby or toddler will experience feeding problems. It is estimated that 25 percent of children will experience some type of feeding problem.

Here is a list of things that might indicate a little one is experiencing feeding difficulties:

- Difficulty sucking, swallowing, or chewing
- Vomiting, reflux and excessive drooling and/or colic
- Partial or total food refusal
- Picky eater
- Inability to try and eat foods with more textured
- Delay in self feeding
- Little to no weight gain
- Tantrums in and around meal times

Posture and seating are often overlooked and can impact a child's successful feeding. An upright posture with a well-supported head, neck and trunk can help with swallowing. The head and neck should be tilted forward (flexed) slightly with the chin bent towards the chest so the head does not tilt backwards during feeding and swallowing. This ensures that food/fluids do not enter into the respiratory tracts.



Things You Can Do

Be alert and write down any reflux, frequent and/or large volumes of spitting and/or vomiting patterns and contact your child's pediatrician if these symptoms persist.

Encourage self-feeding by allowing your toddler to pick up food and hold a spoon while eating and make note of any pickiness, delays in self-feeding, refusal to eat and tantrums during meal times.

If you suspect your child is experiencing feeding difficulties, a referral to ECI may be appropriate. ECI services can assist your family with gaining the knowledge and skills to support you and your child with these difficulties.

To find a local an ECI program in your area, call the DARS Inquiries Line at (800) 628-5115 or search for a program at the [DARS website](#).

For additional information please visit the websites listed below:

[National Center for Biotechnology Information](#)

[Infant Nutrition and Health Resource List](#) at the Food and the National Agricultural Library Food and Nutrition Information

Andre Johnson Bowling Party



Jonathan Joseph was able to help the younger kids learn something new and experience a "normal" childhood and family experience.

Region 6: Thirteen of our children were invited to bowl with NFL football player Andre Johnson, former Houston Texan who is now with the Indianapolis Colts, and Houston Texan Johnathan Joseph.



All of them expressed how excited they were to do something that neat all together. This was the ultimate sibling visit!



NEW LEGISLATION – KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

EDUCATION

NEWSLETTER: LEGISLATIVE UPDATES AND BACK TO SCHOOL BEST PRACTICES

KINSHIP MANUAL

ADOPTION OR PERMANENT MANAGING CONSERVATORSHIP

PLACEMENT FORM 2279

KINSHIP POLICY

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS

RESOURCES

www.facebook.com/TexasKinshipCaregivers

[Star Health](#) (new enhancements include: Care Grants, Expanded Vision Benefit, Over-the-Counter Services, CentAccount / a2A, Boys and Girls Club, Sports/Camp Physicals, 7-day Follow-Up Incentives, Online Mental Health Resources)

[Halloween Safety Tips](#)

[CDC - Holiday Health and Safety Tips - Family Health](#)

[Caregiver Training](#)

[Resources for kids with disabilities and special health care needs by Navigate Life Texas](#)

[Texas Parent to Parent](#)

Kinship Worker Spotlight



Nora Munoz-Romo (Kinship worker) and Melissa Luman (Preparation for Adult Living), worked together along with the CVS worker regarding a set of twins, Taylor and Tenneil. The twins were about to turn eighteen in a few short weeks and unfortunate circumstances led to them being placed in foster care. They have had to overcome several obstacles on their own and with the help of some friends and adults, but somehow, have been able to

lead “average” lives. They both excel in sports and are good teens. In fact, Tenneil has been able to advance in shot put and compete at regionals. Taylor and Tenneil had some unpaid truancy charges in Dallas County from when they were living with their mother at age 13-14 and they pleaded guilty. Nora, Melissa, and the attorney/guardian ad litem began working to find a positive resolution to this as far back as January, since this

would prevent the youth from getting state identification or driver’s licenses and so forth. Not only did Melissa and Nora find resources and contact the presiding court, they actively worked above their duties to give these youth a “clean slate” for adulthood. I know that our jobs are fluid and we should always give our best to our children, but these two ladies spent quality time in making a difference in the twins’ lives. Nora sent in inquiries to Community Partners and the welfare board for financial assistance. These two wonderful and gracious boards agreed to pay the fines. I am truly overwhelmed at the payoffs for the work that Nora and Melissa put into this, not only financially, but also the joy of reaffirming that our jobs are emotionally rewarding. This would not be possible without employees like Melissa and Nora who don’t wait for others to get the job done, but instead, reach over their assigned job duties and do what is needed for our youth!! I know that they would not think it was a big deal all the energy and time they put into this.

Submitted by Amy Martinez-Cruz, FGC Specialist and Nicole Banire, Region 1 Kinship supervisor.

Kinship Quarterly Strengthening Families



TEXAS

Department of Family
and Protective Services

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, the elderly, or
people with disabilities at
(800) 252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org.