



Kinship Quarterly Strengthening Families

Kinship Quarterly Strengthening Families January 2021

Welcome to 2021

May the upcoming year be full of beautiful inspirations for you, to help you achieve all your goals and dreams. Wishing you a wonderful and blessed New Year.

ECI Article: Social Emotional Resources

During such unprecedented times, it is important to recognize that children’s social, emotional, and mental health may be affected directly and indirectly. There are many resources and supports available to parents as they help navigate the challenges children could experience through the pandemic. Check out these resources:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed a [COVID-19 Parental Resource Kit: Ensuring Children and Young People’s Social, Emotional, and Mental Well-being](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/parental-resource-kit/index.html) to help support parents, caregivers, and other adults serving children and young people. www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/parental-resource-kit/index.html
- It’s hard not to feel stressed or anxious in these unprecedented times. [Healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-19-Youth-with-Special-Health-Care-Needs.aspx) provides a message of “Coping & Staying Strong” which provides tips and ideas for managing anxiety for parents and caregivers and ways they can monitor their child’s mental health. www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-19-Youth-with-Special-Health-Care-Needs.aspx
- Parents of children with developmental delays or disabilities may need extra assistance and resources for their child. [Read Dr. Jennifer Poon’s](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/ask-the-pediatrician/Pages/How-can-I-help-child-developmental-disability,-cope-COVID-19.aspx) response to a parent’s question on how the parent can help their child cope during COVID-19. www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/ask-the-pediatrician/Pages/How-can-I-help-child-developmental-disability,-cope-COVID-19.aspx



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services



Kinship Quarterly Strengthening Families January 2021

Kinship Collaboration Group

The statewide Kinship Caregiver Collaboration Group provides support and technical assistance to the regions in the state to further expand regional Kinship Caregiver Support Groups. Kinship Caregiver Collaboration Group provides opportunities to obtain input from Kinship Caregivers regarding how to improve safety, permanency and well-being for children receiving CPS services, as well as opportunities for meaningful engagement of Kinship Caregivers and families.

Objectives of the group are to: Provide Kinship Caregiver feedback to CPS to improve child welfare services. Develop structure for CPS – Kinship Caregiver partnerships in policy and practice components that will become a vital element of local, regional, and state operations. Distribute the message to the staff and Kinship Caregivers regarding the value of the family voice. Improve the skills qualifications, knowledge and awareness of individuals providing services to children and families. Institute the KCG Support Group throughout the state. Provide a link between CPS and Kinship Caregivers.

Kinship support groups are an integral part of The Kinship Program. If you would like to be personally involved, please consider becoming a Kinship Advocate and apply for membership on the Kinship Collaboration Group. For more information on kinship support groups or becoming an advocate, please contact **Stephen Martinez at (512) 960-9254**.

Adoption Highlight

Tucked in between his grandfather's knees, 3-year-old Tony Edward Longoria sat on the couch alongside his older sister and grandmother as his grandparents officially adopted him.

Erin Smith, a Child Protective Services specialist for adoption preparation, who was able to join the family in person on Monday, said the bond that Tony has with his grandparents is special.

"This is something so new for us, and it's a good thing, but at the same time it's not," Wilma Longoria said. "It's hard for me because children belong to mothers, and mothers should never leave their children behind. But I am their grandmother and I will be here for them as long as I can."

The full story can be found here: www.statesman.com/story/news/local/2020/11/23/central-texas-families-take-part-in-virtual-adoption-day/115037220/

Resources

- [Unemployment Benefits](http://www.twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/applying-unemployment-benefits)
www.twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/applying-unemployment-benefits
- [Housing/Utility Assistance Programs](http://www.needhelpayingbills.com/html/get_help_paying_rent.html)
www.needhelpayingbills.com/html/get_help_paying_rent.html
- [Your Texas Benefits](http://www.yourtexasbenefits.com/Learn/Home)
www.yourtexasbenefits.com/Learn/Home
- [2-1-1 Texas](http://www.211texas.org/)
www.211texas.org/
- [PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION \(PEI\) PROGRAM LOCATOR](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp)
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Prevention_and_Early_Intervention/Programs_Available_In_Your_County/default.asp
- [Kinship Manual](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Kinship_Care/documents/KinshipManual.pdf)
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Kinship_Care/documents/KinshipManual.pdf
- [Texas Kinship Caregivers Facebook Page](https://m.facebook.com/TexasKinshipCaregivers)
m.facebook.com/TexasKinshipCaregivers
- [Kinship Care](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Kinship_Care/default.asp)
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Kinship_Care/default.asp

"We are abundantly grateful for our kinship caregivers. We are working to ensure we do everything possible to preserve the family and lessen the trauma on our kiddos. We obviously could not do that without our kinship caregivers. I want to say Thank You for being a blessing to us and the children. Family is where children thrive and it is where they want to be."

DFPS Commissioner, Jaime Masters