

**REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Review of Current Policies Governing
Facilitation of Placement of Children in
Kinship Care to Avoid Foster Care
Placements in the Commonwealth and
the Recommendations for Regulations
Governing Kinship Care Placements
(Chapter 530, 2014)**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



SENATE DOCUMENT NO. 9

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
2016**



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Office of the Commissioner

Margaret Ross Schultze
COMMISSIONER

January 1, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Terence R. McAuliffe
Governor of Virginia

Members, Virginia General Assembly

Members, State Board of Social Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Margaret Ross Schultze".

FROM: Margaret Ross Schultze

SUBJECT: Report on Kinship Care to Avoid Foster Care Placements

I am pleased to submit the Department of Social Services' facilitation of placement of children in kinship care to avoid foster care placements in the Commonwealth, pursuant to Chapter 530 of the 2014 Acts of Assembly. If you have questions or need additional information concerning the report, please contact me.

MRS:kc

Attachment

REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF CURRENT POLICIES GOVERNING FACILITATION OF PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE TO AVOID FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGULATIONS GOVERNING KINSHIP CARE PLACEMENTS

Preface

In the 2014 Legislative Session of the Virginia General Assembly (Acts of Assembly, Chapter 530, Item 384(I), p.353), the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) was directed to review its policies regarding placement of children in kinship care and report its recommendations. The legislation provided the following study guidance:

That the Department of Social Services shall review current policies governing facilitation of placement of children in kinship care to avoid foster care placements in the Commonwealth and shall develop recommendations for regulations governing kinship care placements, which shall include recommendations related to (i) a description of the rights and responsibilities of local boards, birth parents, and kinship caregivers; (ii) a process for the facilitation of placement or transfer of custody; (iii) a model disclosure letter to be provided to the parents and potential kinship caregivers, including information about the differences between kinship care and kinship foster care, the impact of transferring custody from the birth parent to the kinship caregiver, the birth parent's role following transfer, and the plan requirements for custody to be returned to the birth parent; (iv) a process for developing a safety or service plan for the family, which shall include gathering input from birth parents, potential kinship caregivers, and other community and family supports; (v) a description of funding sources available to support safety or service plans; (vi) a process for gathering and reporting data regarding the well-being and permanency of children in kinship care; and (vii) a description of the training plan for local department of social services workers. The Department shall also review the fiscal impact of proposed regulations. The Department shall report its recommendations and findings to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Board of Social Services by January 1, 2016. (2015 Virginia Acts of Assembly, Chapter 530, Item 384(I), p.353)

This study was prepared by VDSS Division of Family Services staff. VDSS extends special appreciation to the members of the established Advisory Group for their assistance and cooperation on this study. The Advisory Group included representatives from the following agencies and organizations: state, regional, and local departments of social services, Consortium for Resource, Adoptive, and Foster Family Training (CRAFFT), Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), FACES of Virginia Families, Office of the Attorney General (OAG), Office of Children's Services (OCS), Supreme Court of Virginia, Virginia Poverty Law Center, and Voices for Virginia's Children.

The definitions and terms used in the study are provided in Appendix B.

**REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF CURRENT POLICIES GOVERNING FACILITATION
OF PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE TO AVOID FOSTER CARE
PLACEMENTS IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
REGULATIONS GOVERNING KINSHIP CARE PLACEMENTS**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Study Activities	2
1. Research and Analysis	2
2. Technical Assistance	3
3. Advisory Group	3
Background and Key Issues	4
Findings and Recommendations	7
Conclusion	18
Appendices	
A. Legislative mandate, 2015 Virginia Acts of Assembly, Chapter 530, Item 384(l), p.353	20
B. Definitions	21
C. Advisory Group Membership	27

REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF CURRENT POLICIES GOVERNING FACILITATION OF PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN IN KINSHIP CARE TO AVOID FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGULATIONS GOVERNING KINSHIP CARE PLACEMENTS

Executive Summary

In the 2014 Legislative Session of the General Assembly, VDSS was directed to review its policies regarding kinship arrangements and report its recommendations and findings by January 1, 2016. As part of its charge, VDSS must develop recommendations regarding regulations governing kinship care, which will include recommendations related to: a description of the rights and responsibilities of local boards, birth parents, and kinship caregivers; a process for the facilitation of placement or transfer of custody; a model disclosure letter to be provided to the parents and potential kinship caregivers; a process for developing a safety or service plan for the family; a description of funding sources available to support safety or service plans; a process for gathering and reporting data regarding the well-being and permanency of children in kinship care; and a description of the training plan for local departments of social services (LDSS). VDSS will also review the fiscal impact of proposed regulations. To accomplish this task, VDSS established an Advisory Group in order to help identify, refine, and prioritize issues of the study. Members of the Advisory Group met to discuss the need to formulate clear and consistent guidance for LDSS with regard to foster care diversion practice, to articulate findings, and to provide recommendations.

Over the last several years, VDSS has strongly encouraged family participation in case planning and the involvement of extended family in the care and protection of children. VDSS recognizes and values the importance of developing best practice strategies to prevent or eliminate the need for foster care placement by engaging identified kin and/or fictive kin who can provide short term or long term care for children and youth to prevent abuse and neglect or entry into foster care. While LDSS have embraced the use of foster care diversion, practice varies widely from community to community. LDSS have different approaches to safety assessments of a kin caregiver's home, the types and duration of services provided to the family, post-diversion supervision and case management, the transfer of legal custody, and other interventions . Furthermore, VDSS has become increasingly concerned about problematic practice and barriers to good practice in foster care diversion that have come to VDSS' attention through constituent complaints, department reviews, and advocacy group communications.

In response, VDSS seeks to develop clear and consistent best practice guidance to LDSS concerning diversion. Issues to be addressed include defining the role of LDSS,

birth parents, and relatives in the development of meaningful permanency plans; appropriate assessment of kin caregivers; finding, preparing, and supporting kin caregivers; and helping families to assess their options and collaborate in the decision making process. Without a comprehensive approach to the enhancement of guidance and practice in this area, VDSS cannot adequately determine the impact on important goals and benchmarks relating to child safety, permanence, and well-being. Thus, VDSS has identified specific programmatic and practice recommendations that will seek to improve outcomes for children and kin caregivers involved with the child welfare system. Those recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation 1: VDSS should develop and implement a state supported kinship care program that would provide appropriate financial assistance, services, safeguards, and permanency planning for children and kin caregivers.

Recommendation 2: VDSS should exercise the option to implement the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KGAP) as a permanency option for children in foster care who cannot be reunified with the family from which they were removed and when adoption has been ruled out.

Recommendation 3: VDSS supports the development of a Kinship Navigator program in Virginia, which will provide information, resource, and referral services to children and kin caregivers.

Study Activities

The findings and recommendations of the study are based on the following research activities.

A. Research and Analysis

VDSS staff reviewed data, reports, and statutes in order to research kinship care in Virginia. Specifically, staff analyzed sections of the Code of Virginia pertaining to kinship care, applicable regulations and policies, federal kinship care laws (e.g., Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008), and state and local foster care diversion and kinship care practice guidance. To provide a broad perspective on the arrangement of children with kin caregivers, staff analyzed data and reports presented by the Virginia Commission on Youth, Child Trends, Child Welfare League of America, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Child Welfare Information Gateway, Journal of Family Social Work, Partners For Our Children, and the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. Lastly, staff reviewed

other states' definitions of kinship care; the definition of kin, fictive kin, and relative as it pertains to child welfare programs; and other states' guardianship provisions.

B. Technical Assistance

VDSS received technical assistance provided by the National Resource Center Network, now the National Capacity Building Center for Public Child Welfare Agencies (The Center for States). Specific assistance was rendered by Gary Mallon of the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections and Mary Jo Pankoke of the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services. Gary Mallon is the Julia Lathrop Professor of Child Welfare and Executive Director of the National Center for Child Welfare Excellence at the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College in New York City. Mary Jo Pankoke is the President and CEO of Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFE).

Technical assistance consisted of research of existing legal options and best practices in other states, the development of draft diversion definitions to provide a foundation for a common and consistent language around foster care diversion practice in Virginia, and the development of a draft decision tree to bring forth a clearer understanding of specific decision points encountered in foster care diversion practice. Technical assistance was made available to VDSS from April 2014 – September 2014.

C. Advisory Group

In April 2014, VDSS established an Advisory Group in order to help identify, refine, and prioritize issues of the study. Members of the Advisory Group met to discuss the need to formulate clear and consistent direction for LDSS with regard to kinship and foster care diversion practice, to articulate findings, and to provide recommendations.

A smaller stakeholder group, comprised of a subset of Advisory Group members, was also convened. This subgroup was tasked with identifying and establishing reasonable standards and parameters for foster care diversion practice in the field.

The Advisory Group established by VDSS included representatives from the following agencies and organizations:

- Alexandria Division of Human Services.
- Charlottesville Department of Social Services.
- Chesterfield/Colonial Heights Department of Social Services.
- Consortium for Resource, Adoptive, and Foster Family Training (CRAFT).
- FACES of Virginia Families.

- Fairfax County Department of Family Services.
- Hanover County Department of Social Services.
- Henrico County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).
- Henrico County Department of Social Services.
- James City County Department of Social Services.
- Norfolk Department of Human Services.
- Northumberland County Department of Social Services.
- Richmond City Department of Social Services.
- Richmond County Department of Social Services.
- Roanoke City Department of Social Services.
- Shenandoah County Department of Social Services.
- Office of the Attorney General (OAG).
- Office of Children’s Services (OCS).
- Supreme Court of Virginia.
- Virginia Department of Social Services.
- Virginia Poverty Law Center.
- Voices for Virginia’s Children.
- York/Poquoson Department of Social Services.

A detailed list of the Advisory Group membership is provided in Appendix C. The Advisory Group met five times on the following dates: April 29, 2014; June 13, 2014; August 8, 2014; October 22, 2014; and May 27, 2015. The smaller stakeholder group met three times on the following dates: December 1, 2014, February 20, 2015, and March 27, 2015.

Background and Key Issues

Foster care diversion in Virginia is defined as: “a strategy to prevent foster care placement by engaging caregivers in a process to identify relatives who can provide short term care for their children.”¹ In a survey conducted by VDSS in 2010, ninety-four percent (94%) of the 113 agencies responding noted that they diverted children from foster care, indicating that foster care diversion is a widespread prevention practice in Virginia.² However, once diverted, the case is often closed and no additional tracking of the child occurs. If the child or family encounters further issues, in most cases VDSS

¹ Virginia Department of Social Services. (2012). Child and Family Services Manual – Overview of Prevention for Practice and Administration. Retrieved from

http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/dfs/ca_fc_prevention/early_prevention/manual/section_01.pdf.

² Virginia Department of Social Services - Office of Research & Planning. (2011). Local DSS Prevention Survey Executive Summary. Retrieved from

http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/dfs/ca_fc_prevention/early_prevention/studies_survey/summary_analyses_final_review.pdf.

would not be aware unless another formal complaint is made to Child Protective Services (CPS) or if the family approaches the LDSS again for additional support. LDSS report that due to staffing shortages, they are not monitoring foster care diversion cases and cannot fully demonstrate if this practice is effective in preventing entry into foster care over time. As a result, these types of cases are often closed prematurely and meaningful permanency may not be established for the child.

In some instances, temporary foster care diversion arrangements may transition into permanent custody transfers. While this outcome may be potentially beneficial for the child, the question whether parent rights are adequately considered under this circumstance has been raised. When a child enters foster care, federal law³ requires VDSS to provide reasonable efforts towards reunification. In contrast, when custody is transferred to a kin caregiver, VDSS has no further legal obligation to the parent in terms of reunification. Additionally, there may be no ongoing case management services, continued court oversight, or connections to community-based services. Finally, when inadequate attention is given to assessing the appropriateness of a foster care diversion arrangement, the arrangement can be disrupted, resulting in additional separation and trauma for the child.

Although kin caregivers value the emotional fulfillment of caring for kin, they also experience significant need when accepting the full-time care of a child. Kin caregivers who are given the unexpected responsibility of caring for a child may experience financial, health, and social challenges. Many kin caregivers raising children also struggle with feelings of guilt and shame about the family circumstances that led to the foster care diversion arrangement.⁴ These challenges are even more demanding when caring for a child who has experienced trauma, and are further complicated by navigating complex and sometimes adversarial court and government systems.⁵ Additionally, most kin caregivers lack the necessary legal authority to make basic medical, educational, and daily life decisions on behalf of the child in their care. As a result of this “legal limbo,” some kin caregivers struggle to access other needed benefits, including Medicaid and Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), “Child Only” Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), child care assistance, or services available through Virginia’s Children’s Services Act (CSA).⁶

³ The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997; Public Law 105-89. (1997).

⁴ The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2012). Stepping Up for Kids - What Government and Communities Should Do to Support Kinship Families. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/resources/stepping-up-for-kids/>.

⁵ The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2014). The Kinship Diversion Debate. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/pdf/KinshipDiversionDebate.pdf>.

⁶ Code of Virginia § 2.2-5200 et. seq.

While these challenges do not lessen the positive impact that kin caregivers can have on a child, they do emphasize the need for comprehensive programming and supports to address the common barriers facing kin caregivers. How LDSS engage kin, and more specifically how LDSS utilize kin as an alternative to foster care, can significantly affect a kin caregiver's access to services. Some stakeholders contend that LDSS cannot adequately ensure a child's safety, protect parent rights, or provide appropriate interventions without the full range of protections and supports that are accessible through foster care. Furthermore, when considering child safety, VDSS' responsibility to intervene and family autonomy, many LDSS struggle when considering foster care as the ideal option for a child who can no longer remain safely in their home. This struggle is particularly relevant when a kin caregiver with an established relationship to the child has been identified as a safe and stable alternative to foster care.⁷ Other stakeholders maintain the position that, when a kin caregiver is willing and able to care for a child safely, all parties fare better without the uncertainty and potential disruption of ongoing LDSS involvement.

For LDSS that utilize diversion, policy and practice vary considerably. These LDSS have different approaches to safety assessments of a kin caregiver's home, the types and duration of services provided to the family, post-diversion agency supervision and case management, the transfer of legal custody, and other interventions. While acknowledging the existing work of LDSS in placing children with relatives to divert children from entering foster care is important, VDSS is tasked with recommending substantive statutory provisions or regulations that support clear and consistent best practice guidance to LDSS concerning foster care diversion and kinship care. Therefore, issues to be addressed are:

- Prevailing negative philosophies and attitudes about kinship care.
- Identification and notice of prospective kin caregivers early in their involvement with the LDSS.
- Appropriate assessment of identified kin caregivers to ensure child safety, including the legal authority to conduct National Criminal Background checks.
- Meeting the full continuum of needs of the child, the parent, and the kin caregiver.
- Helping families to assess accurate information about their legal options and available resources.
- Meaningful collaboration and engagement of children and families in the decision-making process.

⁷ Gerard William Wallace & Eunju Lee. (2013). Diversion and Kinship Care: A Collaborative Approach Between Child Welfare Services and NYS's Kinship Navigator. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 16:5, 418-430.

Furthermore, data regarding practices and outcomes must be collected to better determine how foster care diversion impacts the well-being of children and families over time. Additionally, VDSS seeks to identify effective means to address organizational climate and culture in support of kin caregivers.

Findings and Recommendations

VDSS recognizes that children and families will benefit from LDSS receiving additional guidance, training, and resources to support quality practice in the prevention of foster care through the use of diversion. VDSS also agrees that provisions which standardize practice among LDSS is needed, thus ensuring child safety; requiring that parents, kin caregivers, and children are fully informed; protecting parent rights; and facilitating reunification. For many foster care diversion situations in Virginia, no service plan or LDSS oversight exists to promote a permanent and secure living arrangement for the child. Permanency planning laws and guidance relate only to children in foster care, as LDSS do not have the requisite legal authority to ensure safety, stability, and permanence for diverted children and their families. Specifically, LDSS do not have the authority to conduct National Criminal Background checks when assessing the kin caregiver; offer services and financial support to the child, parent, and kin caregiver; or ensure that a parent has a meaningful and legally protected “way back home” to resume care of their child. Consequently, foster care diversion practices vary significantly among LDSS.

While some LDSS offer ongoing services and supervision, others provide minimal if any follow up support to the parent, the kin caregiver, or the child. Also, many kin caregivers are unduly pressured into foster care diversion arrangements without a full understanding of their other options (e.g., including the option to become an approved foster parent) or without the appropriate legal authority to make decisions on behalf of the child. Moreover, with a lack of data collection and tracking of outcomes for children who are diverted, little is known about the experience of children living with a kin caregiver outside of foster care.

In sum, the solution to the barriers and issues outlined throughout will require either a statutory provision and/or the issuance of regulations that align with the authority given under existing Preliminary Protective Order, Preliminary Removal Order, Child in Need of Services (CHINS), or child custody statutes in Virginia. However, reliance on these statutes in their current form prove to be inadequate as the court cannot mandate the provision of reunification support for the parent or access to services available through CSA in all foster care diversion cases. These legal constraints pose a significant barrier

to best practice in foster care diversion as both federal⁸ and state⁹ law require that reasonable efforts are made by LDSS to prevent or eliminate the need for removal of the child from the home and to make it possible for the child to be returned home.

Therefore, as increased attention in Virginia shifts to the safety, well-being, and permanency needs of all children, VDSS has identified specific programmatic and practice recommendations that will seek to improve outcomes for children and kin caregivers involved with the child welfare system. Those recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation 1: VDSS should develop and implement a state supported kinship care program that would provide appropriate financial assistance, services, safeguards, and permanency planning for children and kin caregivers.

A state supported approach to kinship care and foster care diversion would honor family connections while at the same time providing families with the guaranteed supports and protections of foster care. If a child can no longer remain safely in their home, even temporarily, LDSS would have the responsibility to carefully assess the needs of the child, the parent, and the kin caregiver and provide them with appropriate services and supports.

LDSS would be expected to apply sound practice principles to achieve desired outcomes in providing services to the child, parent, and kin caregiver. The following principles are inherent in Virginia's Children's Services System Practice Model¹⁰ and will be central to the service delivery partnership and relationship:

1. Believe that all children and communities deserve to be safe.
2. Believe in family, child, and youth-driven practice.
3. Believe that children do best when raised in families.
4. Believe that all children and youth need and deserve a permanent family.
5. Believe in partnering with others to support child and family success in a system that is family-focused, child-centered, and community-based.
6. Believe that how we do our work is as important as the work we do.

⁸ Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, Public Law 96-272. (1980).

⁹ Code of Virginia § 16.1-251, 16.1-253, and 16.1-278.

¹⁰ Virginia Department of Social Services. (2015). Virginia Children's Services Practice Model. Retrieved from https://www.dss.virginia.gov/about/cs_pm.pdf.

Elements needed to implement a state supported kinship care program:

- Rights and responsibilities of local boards, birth parents, and kin caregivers

LDSS will be responsible for discussing each permanency option with the child, parent, and kin caregiver. The purpose of these conversations is to ensure that involved parties are fully informed of all legal options available to them. To support this informed decision making, VDSS should develop a model disclosure letter that will promote candid conversation in the following areas:

- The child's health and safety – which are the highest priorities in all decision making.
- The primary goal to support the parents or prior custodians so the child can return home as soon as possible.
- The value of pursuing several options concurrently to determine the option that meets the child's best interests, if the child cannot return home, and to ensure timely decisions given the urgent situation for the child.
- The specific strengths, needs, resources, and supports for the child and family.
- The roles, benefits, rights, and responsibilities of the child, kin caregiver, and LDSS when serving as a permanent placement for the child, including the process for:
 - Becoming a foster parent.
 - Adopting.
 - Transferring custody from LDSS to the kin caregiver.
- How reunification with the child's family and adoption into a permanent family are more permanent alternatives for the child.
- The advantages of adoption for the child when he or she cannot be returned home, including that adoption:
 - No longer requires the child to be totally separated from birth parents.
 - Provides the most permanent legal relationship for the child.
 - Provides permanent family connections throughout the child's life, not just until the child becomes an adult.

Kin caregivers who receive assistance under the kinship care program should be capable, as determined by a home study and required background checks, of providing

a physically and emotionally safe environment and a stable and supportive home for the child in their care. Additionally, the kin caregiver must assure that the child's well-being is met, including the provision of medical, mental health, and educational services as needed.

- Family Engagement, Diligent Search, and Kin Notification

Family engagement is a relationship focused approach that provides structure for decision making and that empowers both the family and the community in the decision making process. Therefore, meaningful opportunities for family voice and choice should be supported. The use of Family Partnership Meetings (FPM) will help LDSS ensure that kin caregivers are not unduly pressured into kinship arrangements.

A FPM is a team approach for partnering with kin and other partners in decision making throughout the family's involvement with the child welfare system. The meeting is facilitated by a trained individual who is not the service worker for the child or family. The team builds upon the strengths of the child, family, and community to ensure safety, a permanent family, and lifelong connections for the child. A FPM should be held prior to the child's removal from home and prior to placement changes to engage the family, other significant adults, and community members in the decision making process.

Family engagement also involves notifying relatives that the child is or will be placed in foster care, searching for extended family and community networks, aggressively pursuing leads, discussing roles and resources the family members and significant adults can provide, engaging them in the child's life, and establishing permanent supports and lifelong connections for the child. Therefore, LDSS would diligently search for kin and other individuals who have significant relationships with the child, including adult kin suggested by the child, birth parents, or prior caregivers. Diligent search is the technical term used to describe all the strategies used to ensure that identification of family resources is as thorough as possible. LDSS may use a variety of tools to conduct diligent searches for family resources, including diligent search checklists, ecomaps, genograms, family interviews, mobility mapping, connectedness mapping, school contact information, neighbors, notice letters, person locator tools, online search engines, and social media networks.

- Training of LDSS staff

LDSS recognizes that there are training requirements that do not address the unique needs of kin caregivers. The uniqueness of a relationship between a kin caregiver and a child can present challenging situations that will require specialized training. Most LDSS agree that training is needed for both service workers and kin caregivers on issues such as permanency planning, child traumatic stress, parenting someone else's child, and

managing contacts between parents and children. Training should be designed to address the dynamics of kinship families and be easily accessible to kin caregivers. VDSS staff are currently working to develop a competency-based kinship curriculum for training service workers in this area. The curriculum will incorporate the use of a Kinship Family Assessment Guide that provides a structure for conducting an ongoing assessment with a prospective kin caregiver. The curriculum will also seek to address the corrosive myths and prevailing attitudes about kinship care. Specifically, notions such as “the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree” or “families have the moral responsibility to take care of their own kin,” and/or “families do not want government involvement” are negative perceptions that can alienate or deter prospective kin caregivers.

- Data collection, reporting, and fiscal considerations

VDSS will have the responsibility to gather and report data regarding the safety, well-being, and permanency of children in kinship care. After kin have been located who can provide care for the child, local staff will visit the potential kin caregiver’s residence to conduct a safety assessment. In addition, any needs or special needs of the child requiring services of the LDSS would have to be documented. It is estimated that it would take a service worker an average of five hours per child to complete these plans.

Data from the 2010 survey estimates the length of time that a child would reside in a kin caregiver’s home ranged from thirty days to two years. VDSS conservatively estimates that at a minimum: 1) the average time that a child would spend in kinship care would be nine months; 2) based on home visits similar to CPS on-going cases, service worker visits to kinship care homes will be required at least once per month; and 3) the estimated average number of hours it takes to complete each home visit is 2.5 hours, which includes travel time to and from the home. Therefore, VDSS estimates it would take 22.5 hours (9 visits x 2.5 hours) to complete home visits for each child in kinship care.

There are other miscellaneous functions associated with tracking and documenting a child in kinship care. Those costs include data input, filling, copying, working with the family, researching, etc. VDSS estimates an additional five hours would be needed for miscellaneous functions. Based on these estimates, it would take a total of 32.5 (5+22.5+5) additional hours of staff time for each child in kinship care for a total of 52,000 hours (1,600 children¹¹ x 32.5 hours per child).

¹¹ VDSS estimates, based on the 2010 survey, that 1,600 children are annually diverted into kinship care.

VDSS reports that the average annual cost of employing (salary, benefits, non-personal services, etc.) a local service worker is \$70,946. Local governments are required to cover 15.5 percent of these expenses, so the state share of the estimated local service worker cost would be \$59,949. Assuming 1,500 annual productive hours per full-time employee, the state reimburses localities \$39.97 per hour for local case workers. Therefore, the state cost of requiring 52,000 additional hours of work would be \$2,078,245 each year. The statewide local share would be \$381,217.

LDSS are reimbursed by the state based on the actual cost of delivering required services. These costs are then allocated to the appropriate source of funding (i.e. general, federal, etc.). There is no current estimation as to how the increased costs associated with this proposed program will be distributed across LDSS. Further analysis will be required to determine the impact of any additional responsibilities being placed on LDSS and service workers. Therefore, this fiscal review uses the above assumptions, as to the added time required to meet the program's provisions, and historical workload data to estimate the fiscal implications at the state level. This statewide estimate of increased costs would be allocated to localities based on actual annual experience.

Print and on-line informational brochures would be needed to implement the use of a model disclosure letter. This brochure would be provided to parents and potential kin caregivers and would include; 1) the difference between kinship care and kinship foster care; 2) the impact of transferring custody; 3) the birth parent's role following transfer; 4) the requirements for return of custody to the birth parents. VDSS estimates it will initially need 8,000 of these brochures at a one-time cost of \$6,660.

Potential barriers to implementation:

- Approval standards for kin caregivers

To increase the availability of approved foster family homes with kin, VDSS would have to establish a separate approval process for kin caregivers who are identified to participate in the kinship care program. Current VDSS guidance requires that kin caregivers meet the same standards as non-relative foster parents. Accordingly, to identify and remove barriers to placements with kin, VDSS should examine LDSS reports of difficulties in recruiting kinship foster homes due to "red tape" of the non-relative foster home approval process (e.g., non-safety requirements and restrictive barrier crime provisions¹²).

¹² Code of Virginia § 63.2-1721.

Recommendation 2: VDSS should exercise the option to implement the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KGAP) as a permanency option for children in foster care who cannot be reunified with the family from which they were removed and when adoption has been ruled out.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008¹³ provides Virginia with an option to offer KGAP under the federal Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program¹⁴. This option would allow for the payment of assistance to kin caregivers who meet the conditions of this program and assume custody of a child in foster care. The purpose of KGAP is to facilitate placements with kin caregivers and ensure permanency for a child for whom adoption or being returned home are not appropriate permanency options.

The KGAP option is consistent with the principles of Virginia's Children's Services Practice Model. One of these principles states, "We believe that all children and youth need and deserve a permanent family." This option has the potential to benefit the children and families in Virginia in the following ways:

- Increase permanency, especially for older children, an area in which Virginia falls behind other states.
- Increase the pool/types of families to target for foster family home recruitment.
- Increase the number and rate at which youth in foster care move into permanent family arrangements.
- Devote more resources to community-based care.

Research on other states' KGAP programs demonstrates significant positive outcomes for children who are provided with this permanency option.¹⁵ These outcomes include:

- Significantly higher net permanency rates – children with access to KGAP achieved permanency more often than children without access to the option.
- Substantially less time in placement – children in KGAP placements spent fewer days in out-of-home care than children in other types of foster care settings.
- Strong placement stability – KGAP placements did not disrupt any other forms of permanency.

¹³ Fostering Connection to Success and Increasing Adoption Act of 2008, Public Law 110-351. (2008).

¹⁴ Children's Bureau – Office of the Administration for Children & Families. (2015). Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance. Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/title-iv-e-guardianship-assistance>.

¹⁵ Children's Bureau – Office of the Administration for Children & Families. (2010). Summary of Subsidized Guardianship Waiver Demonstrations Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/summary_sg2010.pdf.

- Safe placement settings – KGAP placements do not increase the risk of a substantiated report of abuse or neglect.
- Stable or enhanced child well-being – children in KGAP placements fared as well, if not better, than their peers in other placements in the areas of school performance, physical/mental health, and family functioning.

Lastly, custody transfer to a relative through KGAP is considered a permanency outcome, and is expected to provide permanency, especially for older youth who might refuse adoption and who would otherwise remain in foster care until they “age out” at 18 years of age.

Elements needed for implementation of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KGAP):

As with the implementation of any new initiative, KGAP will require changes in many areas, including:

- Training for LDSS service workers, attorneys, courts, and community partners.
- Review and revision of existing foster care regulations and state and local guidance.
- Development of state protocols to evaluate, reevaluate, or terminate KGAP placements.
- Modifications to VDSS’ statewide automated data system (OASIS).

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increase Adoptions Act does not require that states pass legislation to take advantage of the federal Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program, but some states may need to enact new legislation or amend existing laws. Virginia laws have established “placement with relative, with a subsequent transfer of custody” as an allowable goal.¹⁶ Currently, the only financial assistance that may be available to these families is Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Child-Only grants. KGAP would be a payment option greater than TANF.

Existing foster care regulations will need to be amended to set out the requirements for KGAP. Notwithstanding these changes, a KGAP permanency option supports a shift that focuses on children achieving permanency and continuity of family connections.

¹⁶ Code of Virginia § 63.2-906.

- Fiscal considerations

Estimated Participants

On January 1, 2016, there were 294 children in relative foster homes. There are four eventual exits or outcomes for these children. A three year average outcome chart is detailed below.

Exits from Foster Care				
	2012	2013	2014	Ave.
Return home	29%	28%	30%	29%
Custody to relative	17%	20%	22%	20%
Adoption	25%	28%	25%	26%
Emancipation	25%	21%	20%	22%
Other	4%	3%	3%	3%

The three (3)-year average emancipation rate of 22 percent represents children who stay in a relative’s home under the custody of the LDSS and eventually “age-out” of foster care without a permanent placement outcome. Because KGAP requires that the return home, custody to relative, and adoption outcomes be exhausted before any child qualifies for the program, VDSS estimates a 22 percent participation rate or 65 (294 x .22) children who would qualify under KGAP. Since these children currently receive service and maintenance payments, there would be no change in funding needs. Additionally, it is estimated that a small number of children who would exit foster care to the custody of a relative without guardianship assistance payments may now exit to the custody of a relative through KGAP. VDSS estimates that this number of children will be small, as many of the relatives of children in foster care may choose not to complete the approval process or will not qualify under the requirements of KGAP. Therefore, an estimated 5 percent or 3 (294 x .20 x .05) of those children are included in this analysis.

The 2016 first quarter foster care statistics show 52.82 percent of all children in foster care qualify for federal Title IV-E funding. Therefore, 1.58 (3 x .5282) children would qualify under the federal Title IV-E program and the remaining 1.42 children would be state funded by the Office of Children’s Services (OCS). Additionally, KGAP requires that a sibling of the qualified child would now also qualify for KGAP. VDSS anticipates that the number of siblings who would qualify for KGAP would not be significant. The total number of children who would qualify and enter this program is estimated to be 68.

Maintenance and Service Payments

Currently foster care households receive basic maintenance payments paid by VDSS for children who qualify for federal Title IV-E participation. If the child does not qualify for federal Title IV-E, the maintenance payments are paid by the OCS. In addition, payments for special services are also paid by OCS if needed. Funding from OCS is composed of state general funds and local matching funds. Under KGAP, these payments and current funding percentages would not change. Therefore, maintenance and service costs for both VDSS and OCS would remain the same for the estimated 65 children in emancipation who would qualify for KGAP since they currently receive these payments until 18 years of age.

However, the three (3) additional children who would have exited foster care to the custody of a relative without an assistance payment were it not for KGAP, would require new funding for maintenance and service payments. The average annual maintenance cost for children in foster care is estimated to be \$19,543 per case. Total maintenance cost would be \$58,629 (3 x \$19,543). Of this amount, \$30,968 ($\$58,629 \times 52.82\%$) would be funded by VDSS using the federal Title IV-E program, which has a 50% federal financial participation rate. This would require federal Title IV-E funds of \$15,484 and general funds of \$15,484. In addition, the remaining \$27,661 ($\$58,629 - \$30,968$) would be funded by OCS. Funding for OCS is \$17,980 or 65 percent general funds and \$9,681 or 35 percent local match.

The average annual service costs for children in foster care is estimated at \$5,997 per case or a total of \$17,991 (3 x \$5,997). Service costs do not qualify as a federal Title IV-E allowable expense, therefore all service costs would be paid for by OCS. This would require 65 percent general funds or \$11,694 ($\$17,991 \times .65$) and a 35 percent local match or \$6,297 ($\$17,991 \times .35$).

Summary

Total funding of KGAP would be an overall cost increase of \$76,620 (\$15,484 federal funds, \$45,158 general funds, and \$15,978 local match). This includes the additional cost that OCS would incur.

Summary

	Cases	Total	Federal	General	Local
<u>DSS Costs</u>					
KGAP Maintenance Cost	1.58	\$30,968	\$15,484	\$15,484	\$ -
Total DSS Cost		\$30,968	\$15,484	\$15,484	\$ -
<u>OCS Costs</u>					
KGAP Service Costs	3	\$17,991	\$ -	\$11,694	\$6,297
KGAP Maintenance Cost	1.42	\$27,661	\$ -	\$17,980	\$9,681
Total OCS Costs		\$45,652	\$ -	\$29,674	\$15,978
Totals		\$76,620	\$15,484	\$45,158	\$15,978

Administrative Impact

Implementation of KGAP would require slight adjustments to VDSS’ statewide automated data system (OASIS). OASIS is Virginia’s primary information system for child welfare and supports the delivery of services by LDSS. In addition, there would be a need for training for LDSS staff and for informational brochures. VDSS anticipates that these costs will be minimal and can be absorbed by current appropriation.

Potential barriers to implementation:

- Federal (Title IV-E) Funded and State Funded Foster Care Children

Currently, KGAP is not a mandated service for OCS under Virginia law. Virginia could proceed with KGAP for only those children funded by federal Title IV-E. However, this practice is not consistent with VDSS’ provision of services to both federal and state funded children and would not provide the financial support for the permanency outcome of placement with relatives for children who are state funded. VDSS supports this permanency option not just for federal Title IV-E eligible children, but also for children funded by OCS. Therefore, Virginia law would need to be amended to address the purpose and requirements of KGAP.

Recommendation 3: VDSS supports the development of a Kinship Navigator program in Virginia, which will provide information, resource, and referral services to children and kin caregivers.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 established discretionary grants to fund kinship navigator programs, which “connect children involved with child welfare to grandparent or relative caregivers, and they help

those caregivers identify and access needed services.”¹⁷ This program can also serve as a resource for all kinship families regardless of the role of child welfare and the state custody relationship with the child.

Elements needed for implementation of a Kinship Navigator Program:

A Kinship Navigator Program in Virginia would develop comprehensive access for kin caregivers to community-based and government services, such as access to stable housing, affordable legal representation, and financial assistance. This effort would likely involve collaboration between VDSS, the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, LDSS, local health departments, Virginia’s Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), Virginia Community Action Partnership (VACAP), Community Services Boards (CSBs), local school divisions, and private organizations. This partnership would address the dissemination of information to kin caregivers and other community-based responses for kinship families.

It is anticipated that the implementation of a Kinship Navigator Program in Virginia would require a combination of state and federal funds to provide statewide coverage, as well as case management in targeted communities. As in other states, the Kinship Navigator Program would likely operate and maintain an informational and referral “warm-line”, a website providing information on how to apply for benefits, including legal aid and fact sheets, and maintain a referral network in which to refer kin caregivers to local programs in their respective localities.

Potential barriers to implementation:

Funding for kinship navigator programs is contingent upon the extension of federal competitive grant funding made available through the Administration for Children and Families’ Family Connection Grants Program. Grantees are also required to meet a non-federal share of the total approved project costs, in accordance with Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act.

Conclusion

With the passage of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act in 2008, kinship care arrangements have become a more formal route to permanency. The research confirms that kin caregivers continue to play a critical role in achieving positive outcomes for children. Nevertheless, kin caregivers are less likely to receive services and supports, including financial assistance and targeted training. With increased attention in Virginia on safety, well-being, and permanency needs of all

¹⁷ Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2015). Kinship Navigator Programs. Retrieved from <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/outofhome/kinship/support/navigator/>.

children, this study has identified specific programmatic and practice recommendations that will seek to improve outcomes for children and kin caregivers involved with the child welfare system. Furthermore, this analysis intends to assist Virginia policy makers as they consider how best to provide the full continuum of supports and services to kinship care families, while also acknowledging the costs and benefits associated with the programmatic assumptions. If policy makers intend to adopt the recommendations provided, the subsequent regulatory authority and structure needed for program implementation will be identified accordingly. With this comprehensive approach to enhancing system supports and continuity of family connections, VDSS will be better positioned to determine the impact on important goals and benchmarks relating to child safety, permanence, and well-being.

Appendix A:

**VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2014 SESSION
CHAPTER 530**

An Act to require the Department of Social Services to make recommendations for regulations governing kinship care placements.

[S 284]

Approved April 3, 2014

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That the Department of Social Services shall review current policies governing facilitation of placement of children in kinship care to avoid foster care placements in the Commonwealth and shall develop recommendations for regulations governing kinship care placements, which shall include recommendations related to (i) a description of the rights and responsibilities of local boards, birth parents, and kinship caregivers; (ii) a process for the facilitation of placement or transfer of custody; (iii) a model disclosure letter to be provided to the parents and potential kinship caregivers, including information about the differences between kinship care and kinship foster care, the impact of transferring custody from the birth parent to the kinship caregiver, the birth parent's role following transfer, and the plan requirements for custody to be returned to the birth parent; (iv) a process for developing a safety or service plan for the family, which shall include gathering input from birth parents, potential kinship caregivers, and other community and family supports; (v) a description of funding sources available to support safety or service plans; (vi) a process for gathering and reporting data regarding the well-being and permanency of children in kinship care; and (vii) a description of the training plan for local department of social services workers. The Department shall also review the fiscal impact of proposed regulations. The Department shall report its recommendations and findings to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Board of Social Services by January 1, 2016.*

Appendix B: Definitions

For the purposes of this report, the below definitions and terms have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Birth Parent	The child's biological parent and, for purposes of adoptive placement, means parent(s) by previous adoption. (Code of Virginia § 63.2-100)
Caretaker	Any individual having the responsibility of providing care for a child and includes the following: (i) parent or other person legally responsible for the child's care; (ii) any other person who has assumed caretaking responsibility by virtue of an agreement with the legally responsible person; (iii) persons responsible by virtue of their positions of conferred authority; and (iv) adult persons residing in the home with the child. (Virginia Administrative Code 22 VAC 40-705-10)
Child Well-being	Child well-being can be conceptualized as social and emotional function of a child that promotes healthy development, resiliency, relational competency, and protective factors. (VDSS Prevention Guidance, Section 1 (1.8))
Child Protective Services (CPS)	Means the identification, receipt and immediate response to complaints and reports of alleged child abuse or neglect for children under 18 years of age. It also includes assessment, and arranging for and providing necessary protective and rehabilitative services for a child and his family when the child has been found to have been abused or neglected or is at risk of being abused or neglected. (Code of Virginia § 63.2-100)
Children's Services Act (CSA)	The legislation that created a collaborative system of services and funding that is child-centered, family-focused, and community-based to address the strengths and needs of troubled and at-risk youth and their families in the Commonwealth. (Code of Virginia § 2.2-5200 et. seq.)
Connectedness Mapping	Connectedness Mapping is a technique typically used to graphically illustrate the loneliness of a child in foster care by showing family members and others connected to a child, or the lack thereof. (Child Trends: http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Child_Trends2011_12_01_RB_FamilyFindingTips.pdf)

Diligent Search	The ongoing process of examining the extended networks of people who have been involved with the child over the course of the child's life. It involves reconstructing the child's relationships historically over time and currently to identify family members and other individuals who have been significant and positive for the child for the purposes of finding family and lifelong connections for the child. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 1 (1.2))
Diversion Family	Related or non-related family (kin or fictive kin), identified by a caregiver, who provides short term care for a child not in foster care, and who is not serving as an agency approved foster family for this particular child. (VDSS Prevention Guidance, Section 1 (1.8))
Ecomap	A pictorial representation of a family's connections to persons and/or systems in their environment. The purpose of an ecomap is to support classification of family needs and decision making about potential interventions. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 5 (5.8))
Family Engagement	A relationship focused approach that provides structure for decision making and that empowers both the family and the community in the decision-making process. (VDSS Prevention Guidance, Section 1 (1.8))
Family Partnership Meeting (FPM)	A team approach for partnering with family members and other partners in decision making throughout the family's involvement with the child welfare system. The meeting is facilitated by a trained individual who is not the service worker for the child or family. The team builds upon the strengths of the child, family, and community to ensure safety, a permanent family, and lifelong connections for the child. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 1 (1.2))
Fictive Kin	Persons who are not related to a child by blood or adoption but have an established relationship with the child and/or the family system. (VDSS Prevention Guidance, Section 1 (1.8))

Foster Care	Twenty-four-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the local board has placement and care responsibility. Placements may be made in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, pre-adoptive homes, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, and child care institutions. Foster care also includes children under the placement and care of the local board who have not been removed from their home. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 1 (1.2))
Foster Care Diversion	A strategy to prevent foster care placement by engaging caregivers in a process to identify relatives and non-relatives who can provide short term care for their children. (VDSS Prevention Guidance, Section I (1.8))
Foster Care Prevention Services	A full range of casework, treatment and community services, for a planned period of time to a child who is abused or neglected as defined in § 63.2-100 or in need of services as defined in § 16.1-228 and his family when a child has been identified as needing services to prevent or eliminate the need for foster care placement. (Prevention Guidance, Section 1 (1.8))
Full Disclosure	Respecting parents by providing them with complete information about their rights, responsibilities, expectations, the importance of staying connected to their children, and the consequences of not following through on the service plan. It is a process that facilitates open and honest communication among the service worker, the biological parents, and extended family members, caregivers, and the court. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 1 (1.2))
Genogram	A tool that helps map out relationships and traits in the family. Most genograms include basic information about number of families, number of children of each family, birth order, and deaths. Some genograms also include information on disorders running in the family, such as alcoholism, depression, diseases, alliances, and living situations. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 5 (5.8))

Guardianship

Caregivers can assume legal guardianship of a child in out-of-home care without termination of parental rights, as is required for an adoption. Legal guardianship is more durable but more complex than transfer of custody to caregivers. Guardianship is most frequently used by relative caregivers who wish to provide a permanent home for the child and maintain relationships with extended family members. (Child Welfare Information Gateway: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/permanency/guardianship.cfm>)

Virginia does not have a guardianship option for children at this time.

Kinship Care

The full-time care, nurturing, and protection of a child by relatives. (Code of Virginia § 63.2-100)

Formal: All living arrangements in which children are cared for by relatives of the children's parents who have been approved as foster parents.

Informal: Living arrangements in which parents, or whoever is the primary caretaker for a child, have placed children with relatives who are not approved as foster parents for these children. These substitute caregivers are providing voluntary informal care for the original caregivers.

Kinship Foster Care

Refers to living arrangements in which children are cared for by relatives of the children's parents who have been approved as foster parents. In kinship foster care, the LDSS retains the legal custody of the child and is in control of the placement decisions. The relative will receive foster care payments and services, but does not have the right to retain the placement without the consent of the LDSS.

Pursuant to § 63.2-900.1, the LDSS shall first seek out kinship care options to keep children out of foster care and as a placement option for those children in foster care and shall determine whether the child has a relative who is eligible to become a kinship foster parent.

(Child Welfare Information Gateway: https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubpdfs/f_kinshi.pdf and Code of Virginia § 63.2-900.1)

Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KGAP)	Permanency option that provides an ongoing financial subsidy to eligible children who exit the child welfare system into the permanent care of a legal guardian, often a grandparent or other relative. (Child Welfare Information Gateway: https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/permanency/guardianship/guard-sub/)
Kinship Navigator Program	Program that connects children involved with child welfare to grandparent or relative caregivers, and help those caregivers identify and access needed services. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 established grants to fund kinship navigator programs. (Child Welfare Information Gateway: https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/outofhome/kinship/support/navigator/)
Legal Custody	(i) a legal status created by court order which vests in a custodian the right to have physical custody of the child, to determine and redetermine where and with whom he shall live, the right and duty to protect, train and discipline him and to provide him with food, shelter, education and ordinary medical care, all subject to any residual parental rights and responsibilities or (ii) the legal status created by court order of joint custody as defined in Section 20-107.2. (Code of Virginia § 16.1-228)
Mobility Mapping	Described as “a child’s mental picture of his or her life before separation translated onto paper” (De Lay, 2002). The main goals are to stimulate the child’s memory to uncover clues about missing family, and to encourage discussion about the child’s past. (Child Trends: http://www.childtrends.org/wpcontent/uploads/2011/12/Child_Trends-2011_12_01_RB_FamilyFindingTips.pdf)
OASIS	The Online Automated Services Information System, used to record all child welfare services data for children in foster care.
Permanency	Permanency for children means establishing family connections and placement options for children in order to provide a lifetime of commitment, continuity of care, a sense of belonging, and a legal and social status that goes beyond the child’s temporary foster care placement. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 1 (1.2))

Person Locator Tool	A web-based search program that allows people searches, address searches and phone number searches in real-time. Specifically it provides a comprehensive view of public records; an individual's associations and relatives; help for localities to connect children/youth with living relatives or other potential caregivers or mentors; and a means to meet the diligence requirements specified by the Fostering Connections Act of 2008. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 1 (1.2))
Prevention	Services provided to any caregiver and child to strengthen families and enhance child well-being, to prevent child abuse/neglect from ever occurring or reoccurring and to eliminate the need for out of home care. (VDSS Prevention Guidance, Section 1 (1.8))
State Pool Funds	The pooled federal, state and local funds established by the Children's Services Act and used to pay for services authorized by the Community Policy and Management Team, including foster care services. (VDSS Foster Care Guidance, Section 1 (1.2))
Title IV-E	The title of the section of the Social Security Act that authorizes federal funds for foster care and adoption assistance. (United States Code § 601–687, Subchapter IV, Chapter 7, Title 42)
Trauma	An event or situation that causes short-term and long-term distress and/or family disruption and can create substantial damage to a child's physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing. (VDSS Prevention Guidance, Section 1 (1.8))

Appendix C: Advisory Group Membership

Alexandria Division of Human Services

Doug Brown
Jennifer Cann

Charlottesville Department of Social Services

Jenny Jones

Chesterfield/Colonial Heights Department of Social Services

Kiva Rogers

Consortium for Resource, Adoptive, and Foster Family Training (CRAFFT)

Gardenella Green

FACES of Virginia Families

Cate Newbanks

Fairfax County Department of Family Services

Nannette Bowler
Oriane Eriksen
Jill Forbes
Josephine Rutledge
Ramona Simmons
Brenda Washington

Hanover County Department of Social Services

Tamara Temoney

Henrico County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

Barbara Herzog

Henrico County Department of Social Service

James Carey

James City County Department of Social Services

Rebecca Vinroot

Norfolk Department of Human Services

Mattie Satterfield
Pamela Wong

Northumberland County Department of Social Services

Jackie Clayton

Richmond City Department of Social Services

Brinette Jones
Cheryl Williams

Richmond County Department of Social Services

Vanesa Livingstone

Roanoke City Department of Social Services

Jenny Alexander
Kristin Rickman

Shenandoah County Department of Social Services

Carla Taylor

Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

Eric Reynolds

Office of Children's Services (OCS)

Scott Reiner
Carol Wilson

Supreme Court of Virginia

Lori Battin
Lelia Hopper

Virginia Department of Social Services

Chad Alls
Sandra Bell
Dawn Caldwell
Tommy Casteel
Tammy Curl
Denise Dickerson
Chasity Fitzpatrick
Judy Gundy
Flora Harris
Joi Harris
Monica Hockaday
Lavinia Hopkins
Jane Joyner
Alex Kamberis
Rita Katzman
Phyl Parrish
Em Parente
Craig Patterson
Zandra Relaford
Mary Walter

Bragail Williams-Brown

Virginia Poverty Law Center

Christie Marra

Voices for Virginia's Children

Amy Woolard

York/Poquoson Social Services

Cynthia Bauer

