Know Your Options:

**Kin Caring for Children**

This pamphlet is an introduction to ways to support a family during a difficult time. Discuss these options with the caseworker, your family and anyone else who may help you make a decision regarding caring for a child.

If you have questions about kinship care, visit [ocfs.ny.gov/kinship](http://ocfs.ny.gov/kinship)

Select the "Helpful Resources" button to access Having a Voice and a Choice: New York State Handbook for Relatives Raising Children and Know Your Options: Relatives Caring for Children.

OR

Call 1 (800) 345-KIDS (5437)

The following kinship resource will also provide you with more information: [www.nysnavigator.org](http://www.nysnavigator.org)

OR

Call 1 (877) 454-6463

OR Email navigator@nysnavigator.org

"...promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of our children, families, and communities."

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Office of Children and Family Services will make this material available in an appropriate format upon request.

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**LONG TERM OPTIONS**

**Adoption From Foster Care**

**What is it?** After undergoing a background check, home study, and training, you adopt the child through Family Court or Surrogate Court. At that time, there is no longer supervision by the local child welfare agency or Family Court.

**Parental Involvement:** The parents’ rights are terminated or surrendered. You assume all rights and responsibilities relating to the child. In some cases, there may be court approved post adoption contact by the parent.

**Financial Help:** You may qualify for adoption subsidy and other supports.

**Future Options:** This is a permanent legal arrangement.

**Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP)**

**What is it?** You agree to support the child through adulthood. This option only becomes available after adoption and reunification have been ruled out, and the child has lived with you in a foster care arrangement for six consecutive months.

**Parental Involvement:** The parents could maintain their rights and may have visitation. They could petition the court to get the child back.

**Financial Help:** KinGAP payments and other supports may be available.

**Future Options:** With this option, adoption from foster care is ruled out.

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**Questions**

Now that you have read the options available to you, there are several important questions to consider before making your decision:

1. Are you prepared to take the child into your home right now?
2. Do you have enough money and space to care for the child?
3. How long can you care for the child?
4. Will caring for the child affect your relationship with the child’s parents?
5. Which of the kinship care options is best for you and the child?
6. How well can you work with the local department of social services and other agencies?
7. How much support do you need?

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**Contact Information**

Caseworker: ________________

Phone number: ________________

Supervisor: ________________

Phone Number: ________________

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**Office of Children and Family Services**

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**Kin can be family members like grandparents, aunts or uncles, and also friends of the family.**
Informal Care
What is it?: You are caring for the child on a temporary basis. You do not have legal custody or guardianship of the child.
Parental Involvement: The child may return to his or her parents at any time.
Financial Help: You may be eligible for a number of social service programs and supports.
Future Options: You may seek legal custody or guardianship in court. If you later seek to adopt the child, you will not be eligible for subsidy payments.

Direct Placement (Article 10)
What is it?: After the local child welfare agency removes a child from their home, the family court places the child in your temporary legal custody. You will care for the child under supervision of the local child welfare agency and family court.
Parental Involvement: The parents may be allowed to visit the child, but they cannot regain custody without a court order.
Financial Help: You may be eligible for a number of social service programs and supports.
Future Options: If you later seek to adopt the child, you will not be eligible for subsidy payments.

Legal Custody or Guardianship (Article 6)
What is it?: You petition Family Court to become the child’s legal custodian or guardian.
Parental Involvement: The parents may be allowed to visit the child, but they cannot regain custody without a court order.
Financial Help: You may be eligible for a number of social service programs and supports.
Future Options: If you later seek to adopt the child, you may be eligible for adoption subsidy payments.

Kinship Foster Care
What is it?: After the child is removed from his/her home, and the local child welfare agency takes legal custody, the child is placed with you in a foster care arrangement. You must undergo foster parent training, background checks, and approval or certification.
Parental Involvement: The parents may be allowed to visit the child, but they cannot regain custody without a court order.
Financial Help: You are eligible for a foster care stipend and other supports.
Future Options: If you later seek to adopt the child, you may be eligible for adoption subsidy payments.

Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) which includes KinGAP payments.