

# NJ Kinship Connections

A Publication of the NJ Kinship Legal Guardianship Resource Clearing House



A PROGRAM OF CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

Winter 2020

## Sesame Workshop to Support Children Affected by Parental Addiction

In October of 2019, Sesame Street introduced their newest character and their initiative to support children affected by parental addiction. In the United States, there are 5.7 million children under age 11, or one in eight children, living in households with a parent who has a substance abuse disorder - a number that doesn't include the countless children not living with a parent due to separation or divorce, incarceration, or death as a result of their addiction. One in three of these children will enter foster care due to parental addiction, a number that has grown by more than 50% in the past decade.

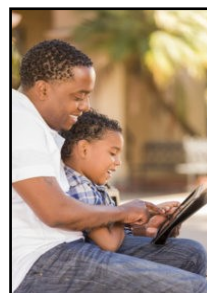
The trauma of parental addiction can have lasting impact on a child's health and wellbeing, but children can be incredibly resilient; the effects of traumatic experiences can be mitigated with the right support from caring adults like the parents,

caregivers, and providers this initiative targets.

Sesame Workshop, the non-profit educational organization behind *Sesame Street's* new initiative features Karli, a 6 1/2-year-old *Sesame Street* Muppet whose mom is dealing with addiction. In new videos and other content, favorite *Sesame Street* characters like Elmo and Abby Cadabby learn what Karli is going through and help their friend to cope.

The resources, which are part of the *Sesame Street in Communities* program and freely available on [www.SesameStreetinCommunities.org](http://www.SesameStreetinCommunities.org), deliver the words children need to hear most: *You are not alone. You will be taken care of. Addiction is a sickness and, as with any sickness, people need help to get better. And most importantly: It's not your fault.*

Created in consultation with experts in addiction and early childhood development, these engaging bilingual resources model strategies to help children overcome the trauma of parental addiction and build resilience, while providing age-appropriate messages and tools for caring adults to help children cope.



"Addiction is often seen as a 'grown-up' issue, but it impacts children in ways that aren't always visible. Having a parent battling addiction can be one of the most isolating and stressful situations young children and their families face," said Sherrie Westin, President of Social Impact and Philanthropy, Sesame Workshop.

(Continued on page 2)

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**No PC?**  
**No Problem!**

Contact a KinKconnect warm-line representative at 877-KLG-LINE ((877) 554-5463) to request a book or ask a question about statewide resources!

**FOR THOSE WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS**

**FEDERAL APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA) DEADLINES VARY BY COLLEGE**

**CHECK WITH THE COLLEGES YOUR CHILD IS APPLYING TO FOR THEIR DEADLINES.**

**CONTACT YOUR HIGH**



## NJ Kinship Connections

### Sesame Workshop (Continued from page 1)

#### DID YOU KNOW?

ARE YOU CARING FOR A CHILD/GRANDCHILD WHO HAS A BEHAVIORAL ISSUE, DEVELOPMENTAL OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY AND/OR NEEDS SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT SERVICES?

CONSIDER CONTACTING PERFORMCARE:

PERFORMCARE HELPS FAMILIES ACROSS NEW JERSEY BY OFFERING SERVICES TO ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SUCH AS:

- IN-HOME THERAPY
- FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES
- BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS
- MOBILE RESPONSE
- CARE MANAGEMENT
- OUT-OF-HOME TREATMENT
- SUMMER CAMP ASSISTANCE AND MORE

CALL  
1-877-652-7624  
24 HRS A DAY/ 7 DAYS  
A WEEK



“Sesame Street has always been a source of comfort to children during the toughest of times, and our new resources are designed to break down the stigma of parental addiction and help families build hope for the future.” Karli was first introduced in May 2019 as the face of the

*Sesame Street in Communities* foster care initiative. With today’s announcement, Karli’s storyline expands to include the reason she was placed in foster care: her mother had to go away for treatment, but now she’s in recovery. The new resources, which help children like Karli understand the situation

and cope with big feelings, as well as the full press release from Sesame Street can be found at:

<https://www.sesameworkshop.org/press-room/press-releases/sesame-workshop-launches-initiative-support-children-affected-parental>.

### Kinship Navigator Programs:

#### Dial 2-1-1

By dialing 2-1-1, eligible Kinship caregivers can get help addressing immediate problems, and they will also be referred to a local New Jersey Kinship agency which will work with caregivers to access additional services.

The local kinship agencies serve three functions. First, staff from the agencies help caregivers “navigate” other forms of government assistance. Secondly, Kinship agencies determine if the caregiver’s family is eligible for Kinship Navigator program benefits and help with short-term expenses for the relative child, such as furniture, moving expenses, and clothing. Finally, the Kinship agencies provide technical support and guide the family through the process of Kinship Legal Guardianship, if the caregiver wishes to make a legal commitment to the child.

*Have other Kinship-related questions? Call KinConnect at 877-544-5463.*

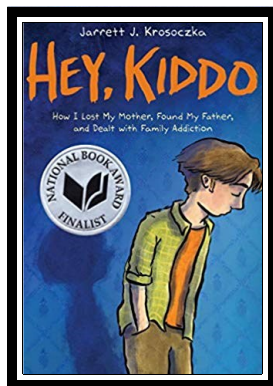
Thinking about summer camp for your grandchild or relative’s child(ren)? Late winter/early spring is the best time to start your research on local camps!

Log onto our website, [www.kinkonnect.org](http://www.kinkonnect.org) to see our camps listings and/or log onto the Kids Guide listing for a list of many NJ local camps in your area at:

<http://www.kidsguidenj.com/camps/camps.html> or the list of NJ State licensed youth camps by county at: <https://healthapps.state.nj.us/youthcamps/camplst/county.aspx>.

## Our Library “Kin” Korner, Book Review

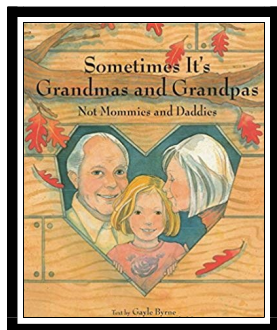
Welcome readers!



Hey, Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction by Jarrett J. Krosoczka is a graphic novel and memoir detailing the life of the author. A New York Times bestselling author and illustrator, in this memoir, Jarrett J. Krosoczka takes the reader on the journey of his life from birth through high school graduation. Born to a single mother battling heroin addiction and raised by his grandparents in a multigenerational home, Jarrett honestly portrays his childhood and coming of age story. His cartoon-style narrative enables the reader to empathize with his ever-changing feelings toward his grandparents, parents, and life situation. Jarrett J. Krosoczka’s depiction is honest and not always pretty, yet it

shows his growth and development as he establishes his own identity and comes to terms with his upbringing.

Hey Kiddo deals with relationships with grandparents, birth parents, and the support system of family and friends. Through his art, which became his key to survival, Jarrett’s story becomes relatable to anyone being raised in a kinship care relationship. This cartoon-style memoir is the perfect match for the teen and young adult reader and for the older reader, a chance to empathize and truly understand. As stated on the book’s back cover, Hey Kiddo is “A true story about how complicated the truth can be.”



Sometimes It’s Grandmas and Grandpas Not Mommies and Daddies by Gayle Byrne, illustrated by Mary Haverfield, is a beautiful children’s book. The main character is a

little girl who lives with her Nonnie and Poppy in a loving and supportive home. Each page is filled with beautiful photos of the little girl being loved and nurtured by her grandparents. She describes vividly the natural ways she feels her grandparents support and love. But she also wonders about her parents. Her grandparents realize this and help her to see that they can do all the things that Mommies and Daddies can do too. The author’s note at the end of the book details how she felt raising her granddaughter without books to describe their unique circumstances. She writes, “I knew the child cuddling in my lap had a valid and valuable story too. And that story was nowhere to be found in any of the books in the library or bookstore. It was a story that needed to be written and I knew from living in this different kind of family that I could write this different kind of story.”

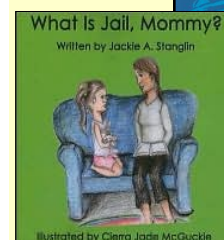
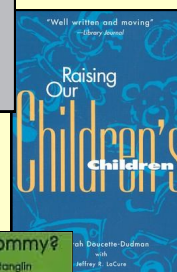
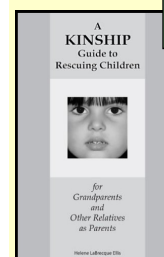
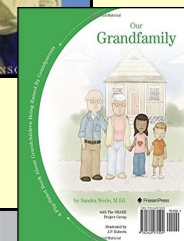
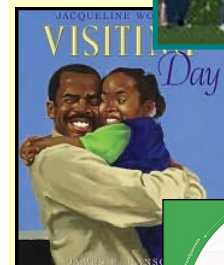
To borrow these or others books, please call or e-mail us at:  
[warmline@kinkconnect.org](mailto:warmline@kinkconnect.org).



### The KinKconnect Free Lending Library

Call us to borrow a book!  
1-877-KLG-LINE  
(1-877-554-5463)

[www.kinkconnect.org](http://www.kinkconnect.org)  
We have many Kinship books!





# NJ Kinship Connections

## Supports for Relatives Raising Relative's Children

### DID YOU KNOW?

IN ADDITION TO THE RESOURCES INCLUDED ON THIS PAGE, THE DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES NJ CHILDREN'S SYSTEM OF CARE (CSOC) ALSO SERVES:

- CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE CHALLENGES AND THEIR FAMILIES
- CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES
- CHILDREN WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE ISSUES AND THEIR FAMILIES

FOR INFORMATION CALL 1-877-652-7624.



Are you raising your grandchild, niece/nephew or other relative? The below services may help you find some emotional support and help answer some of your questions and gain additional confidence.

### embrella (formally Adoptive Family

**Services- FAFS):** Most NJ counties offer support groups for those who are adoptive parents, currently licensed foster parents and/or Kinship Legal Guardians (KLG) through the Division (DCP&P). To locate a group in your area, contact embrella at 1-800-222-0047 or visit their website at [www.embrella.org](http://www.embrella.org).

**Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Monthly Support Group:** Family Support Org. of Bergen County; Meetings in Englewood, NJ. 201-796-6209 Ext. 102.

**Grandparents Support Group** sponsored by the Family Partners of Morris and Sussex Counties. 973-940-3194.

**Kinship Legal Guardian Program,** Family Service Bureau of Newark, 973-412-2056.

**Family Support Organizations (FSO's) and/or Family Success Centers** may offer parent/grandparent support groups. Visit [www.state.nj.us/dcf/families/support/support/](http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/families/support/support/) or contact us at 877-KLG-LINE to find a support group near you.

**Caregiver Connections, A Program of Family Connections.** Free in-home counseling for Essex County seniors over 65 and caring for a relative. Contact Miriam at [mtaunean@familyconnections.org](mailto:mtaunean@familyconnections.org) or for more information visit [www.familyconnections.org](http://www.familyconnections.org).

**Rutgers Cooperative Extension—** Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program, Cape May. Meets monthly, 609-465-5115 Ext. 3609 for details.

If you obtained KLG through the Division (DCP&P) and need some counseling, consider contacting one of the following agencies and ask about their free KLG counseling services:

Bergen, Passaic and Essex Counties : Children's Aid and Family Services, 201-740-7124

Middlesex, Sub. Essex and Union Counties: Family and Children's Services, 908-352-7474

Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties: Oaks Integrated Care, 609-953-5714

Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset Counties: Children's Home Society, 609-695-6274

Hudson County: Catholic Charities, Dioceses of Newark Family Resource Center, 201-798-9900

Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties: Acenda Integrated Health, 844-422-3632

Family Intervention Services (FIS) serving these counties:  
Essex: 973- 324-7880  
Morris: 973- 586-5243  
Passaic: 973- 523-0089  
Sussex: 973- 940-0105

Need other resources? Contact the KinConnect Warm line at 877-KLG-LINE (877-554-5463) or log onto [www.kinconnect.org](http://www.kinconnect.org).

## Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) Update for 2020

Starting in January 2020, a 1.6 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) began with benefits payable to more than 63 million Social Security beneficiaries as well as over 8 million beneficiaries who receive Social Security Income (SSI) benefits. Some of the same people receive both Social Security and SSI benefits. The maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) increased from \$132,900 to \$137,700 in 2020.

The earnings limit for workers who are younger than "full" retirement age (age 66 for people born in 1943 through 1954) increased to \$18,240. (Social Security deducts \$1 from benefits for each \$2 earned over \$18,204.)

The earnings limit for people turning 66 in 2020 increased to \$48,600. (Social Security deducts \$1 from benefits for each \$3 earned over \$48,600 until the month the worker turns age 66.) There is no limit on earnings for workers who are

"full" retirement age or older for the entire year.

For more information on the Cost of Living Increase, please visit: <https://www.ssa.gov/news/cola/> and/or <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/COLA/cbb.html>.



## KLG or Adoption?

Deciding between KLG or adoption? Here are some of the differences to help in your decision process. In adoption, parental rights are terminated and adoptive parents have all the rights and responsibilities for the child. In KLG, birth parents rights are not terminated and birth parents retain the right to visit (subject to restrictions by the court), to consent to the adoption of the child, to consent to the child's name

change, and to petition the court to vacate the Kinship Legal Guardianship arrangement and seek custody back. The birth parents are also required to pay child support. In adoption, birth parents obligations for financial support stop upon adoption finalization and the child then has the right to inheritance from his/her adoptive parents. In KLG, the child has no right to inheritance unless outlined in the care-

giver's will. When a child turns 18, KLG automatically terminates while adoption is permanent and forever.

For more information and to read the full comparison outlined by "Perspectives on the Use of Kinship Legal Guardianship" sheet: [https://kinkconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/klg\\_at\\_a\\_glance\\_2013.pdf](https://kinkconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/klg_at_a_glance_2013.pdf) or contact our KinKconnect Warmline.



### SUICIDE PREVENTION

*Did you know . . .*

- \* 1 in 13 high school students have tried to commit suicide
- \* 1 in 6 high school students have thought about it
- \* Depression is a major cause of suicide attempts

*If you or your child is in crisis, help is available!*

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:  
1-800-273-8255*

*New Jersey Hopeline:  
1-855-654-6735*

*PerformCare:  
1-877-652-7624*





NJ KINSHIP LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP  
RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

WWW.KINKONNECT.ORG

A PROGRAM OF CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

WWW.CAFSNJ.ORG

Children's Aid and Family Services  
76 South Orange Avenue, Suite 209  
South Orange, NJ 07079

KLK Warmline: 877-KLG-LINE  
877-554-5463

E-mail: [warmline@kinkonnnect.org](mailto:warmline@kinkonnnect.org)  
Visit us at: [www.kinkonnnect.org](http://www.kinkonnnect.org)

Children's Aid and Family Services is one of northern New Jersey's leading non-profit human service agencies. Since 1899, we have built better lives for thousands of disadvantaged children who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned. For more information, visit our website: [www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org).

#### DISCLAIMER

While NJ Kinship Legal Guardianship Resource Clearing House (KinKonnnect) or Children's Aid and Family Services makes every effort to present accurate and reliable information, neither KinKonnnect nor Children's Aid and Family Services guarantees the completeness, efficacy or timeliness of such information. In addition, reference herein to any specific product, process, service, organization, or viewpoint does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation or favoring by KinKonnnect or Children's Aid and Family Services.



Affordable health coverage. Quality care.

### Affordable health coverage. Quality Care - NJ FamilyCare -

New Jersey's publicly funded health insurance program - includes CHIP, Medicaid and Medicaid expansion populations. That means qualified NJ residents of any age may be eligible for free or low-cost health insurance that covers doctor visits, prescriptions, vision, dental care, mental health and substance use services and even hospitalization. NJ FamilyCare is for people who do not have employer insurance. The entire application process can be completed online at <https://njfc.force.com/familycare/quickstart> or call 1-800-701-0710, multi-lingual operators are available. The number for hearing impaired individuals is 1-800-701-0720.

Easily navigate the **new** online NJ FamilyCare application with:

- ◆ New menus, subheadings and smart technology.

Applicants can register to:

- ◆ Save partially completed applications
- ◆ View submitted applications, and
- ◆ Receive future Medicaid notifications electronically.

### Who is Eligible?

NJ Family Care includes: children, pregnant women, parents/caretaker relatives, single adults and childless couples. Financial eligibility will be determined by the latest federal tax return which, when filed, will be electronically verified.

**Children 18 and under** are eligible with higher incomes up to 355% FPL (\$7,618/month for a family of four). Parents still need to renew the coverage each year. Children age 18 and under who are lawfully admitted can be eligible even if they have lived in this country fewer than five years.

**Parents/Caretaker Relatives** with income up to 138% FPL (\$2,962/month for a family of four) must have tax dependent children in their household in order to be eligible under this category. The dependent children in the household must be insured also. Immigrant adults must have Legal Permanent Resident status in the US for at least five years in order to be eligible for NJ FamilyCare.

**Adults without dependent children** ages 19-64 and with income up to 138% FPL (\$1,437/month for a single person and \$1,945/month for a couple). Immigrant adults must have Legal Permanent Resident status in the US for at least five years in order to be eligible for NJ FamilyCare.

**Pregnant Women up to 205% FPL** (\$4,399/month for a family of four). Pregnant women who are lawfully admitted can be eligible even if they have lived in this country fewer than five years. \*

\*[www.njfamilycare.org/income.aspx](http://www.njfamilycare.org/income.aspx)

**Aged, Blind, Disabled program including Long-Term Care** Individuals ineligible for NJ FamilyCare can find information on other insurance affordability programs at [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).