



For Immediate Release

March 7, 2023

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**Ohio Legal Help Adds Information on Website to Help People
Providing Kinship Care**

New Kinship Care module features information about the juvenile court system, financial resources, temporary and permanent custody, social services support and more

COLUMBUS, Ohio — OhioLegalHelp.org, the web portal that provides free civil legal information and resources for all Ohioans, is now providing help specifically for the hundreds of thousands of people who are taking care of minor relatives in kinship care arrangements.

The new [Kinship Care module](#) features information about foster care, school enrollment, the juvenile court system, financial supports available to caregivers, the differences between custody, adoption and guardianship, and much more. The module also features an interactive “action-plan interview” — a series of questions that, once answered by users, will produce an overview of available benefits and suggested action steps.

“This centralized collection of resources for kinship caregivers is the only one like it in Ohio,” said David Edelblute, manager of the Children and Families Section of the Ohio Supreme Court, which provided the funding for the new module. “Having this type of easily accessible and understandable information is crucial for the thousands of grandparents, aunts, uncles, family friends and others who find themselves taking care of their minor relatives.”

Kinship care refers to both informal and formal arrangements in which a relative or non-relative is taking care of a child on a full-time basis because the parents are unable or unwilling to do so. About 227,000 children in Ohio are in kinship care. The majority of these kids — about 185,000 — are with grandparents. Thousands of others are with aunts, uncles, adult siblings, other family members or close family friends.

For the past 10 years, the opioid epidemic has fueled a dramatic increase in the number of children being removed from the custody of their parents and in need of care.

Placing kids with grandparents, extended family members or close family friends minimizes trauma, provides more stability, and facilitates connections with siblings and other family members. It’s the least disruptive option with the best results on children’s physical and emotional well-being.

“Caring for a child is hard enough, but trying to navigate the system can be overwhelming,” said Susan Choe, executive director of Ohio Legal Help. “These cases are so complex, so we want to do everything we can to help caregivers get accurate legal information, helpful resources and the tools they need to stabilize the child’s – and their own – situations.”

Users can access the [Kinship Care module](#) on OhioLegalHelp.org on their mobile phones or computers.

OhioLegalHelp.org contains robust self-help information, written in plain, easy-to-understand language, and provides steps that users can take to better understand and resolve their civil legal issues. The website, which gets more than 75,000 visits each month, also offers guided interviews to help users generate forms when appropriate.

Most of the content on OhioLegalHelp.org, including information on housing, family law, consumer matters, public benefits, domestic violence and the sealing of criminal records, has been [translated into Spanish](#), ensuring the state's Spanish-speaking population has equitable access to information about the civil justice system.

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***Ohio Legal Help** is a nonprofit organization launched in 2019 to help all Ohioans access the civil justice system. We provide plain language legal help information, interactive self-help tools and connections to local legal and community resources that can help people resolve their legal issues. In 2023, Ohio Legal Help is projected to help over 800,000 users access free legal information, court forms and other resources.*