

# Kinship Legal Toolkit

## THE ROLE OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS IN SUPPORTING KINSHIP FAMILIES

Research is clear - when children can't stay with their parents, they do best with kin. Kinship families offer greater stability and permanency, stronger connections to cultural identity, and deeper community ties than non-kin foster families. This kinship legal toolkit was created to assist judges and attorneys understand the value of kinship, the federal laws impacting kin, and their role in supporting kin who open their hearts and homes.

Each topic contains practical **tips to assist in day-to-day practice**, a downloadable **quick guide** which summarizes the key points, and helpful **resources**.

Included in this toolkit is a printable judicial **bench card** and **videos** to help legal professionals embrace kinship care as not just a placement, but also a relationship rooted in love, resilience, and connection.



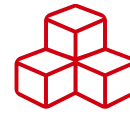
**Background: Kinship Laws & Resources**



**Placement with Kin**



**Identification, Notice & Engagement of Kin**



**Building Blocks for a Kin-Friendly Courtroom**



**Permanency with Kin**



**Judicial Bench Card & Videos**



CASEY ORG - CHILD WELFARE CONVENING - OCTOBER 2025

**Access the Toolkit**

[www.grandfamilies.org/Resources/Kinship-Legal-Toolkit](http://www.grandfamilies.org/Resources/Kinship-Legal-Toolkit)



**More Information**

For information on how to work with ABA staff to tailor this toolkit to meet your jurisdiction's needs or for training on this toolkit please contact Heidi Redlich Epstein at [heidi.epstein@americanbar.org](mailto:heidi.epstein@americanbar.org)



Dave Thomas  
Foundation  
for Adoption



AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION  
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and the Law

This resource was developed with support of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. Visit [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org) for the Kinship Legal Toolkit and more resources.

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