



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

ELIZABETH HERTEL
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Sept. 7, 2022

MEDIA CONTACT: Bob Wheaton
517-281-1701
WheatonB@michigan.gov

Michigan recognizes the important role kinship caregivers play for children who need loving homes

Gov. Whitmer proclaims September Kinship Care Month

LANSING, Mich. – In Michigan about 53,000 children are being raised by kinship caregivers – defined as relatives or others who are close to the youth and their families. That includes about 4,100 children in foster care and approximately 49,000 other children who are raised in kinship families.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has proclaimed September to be [Kinship Foster Care Month](#) in Michigan to recognize the important contributions of these families.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recognizes kinship caregivers for their commitment to caring for children and providing them with connections, security and ties to their cultural heritage, family and community.

Kinship care is the full-time care, nurturing and protection of children by family members, close family friends or other important adults in the child's life. This could include grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, family friends or members of their tribes or clans.

“MDHHS believes children who need placements should be placed with their relative whenever possible. Maintaining connections with relatives, friends, and communities they know and love is vital to their physical and emotional well-being,” said Demetrius Starling, executive director of the MDHHS Children's Services Agency. “Kinship care allows children dealing with the effects of trauma to be with people who know them best. I want to thank all the kinship families in Michigan who have stepped up to care for their relatives, family friends or fellow tribal members. The difference you make in the lives of the children you care for is immeasurable.”

In many cases, kinship families may not be aware of the resources available to them. MDHHS encourages them to call the Kinship Support Program to connect with a kinship navigator to learn about the resources available in their community. They also can reach the Kinship Support Program by calling 800-535-1218 or visiting www.kinship.msu.edu.

###