



Ohio Children's Trust Fund

Ohio's Prevent Child Abuse America Chapter

The Ohio Children's Trust Fund: Investing In Strong Communities, Healthy Families, and Safe Children

Ohio Families In Crisis

Nearly 9 percent of all children in the state of Ohio are being raised by a kinship caregiver*. This staggering statistic from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services brings into sharp focus a somber consequence of the opioid epidemic that has ravaged the state in recent years. This is also likely a conservative estimate considering that many of these caregivers, mostly grandparents who find themselves unexpectedly raising their grandchildren, are underreported because they are simply "doing the right thing" in caring for their loved one's child. Many of these caregivers do not seek help or are even aware that assistance is available to them.

Help Is Available

But help is available to these caregivers through Kinship Connections, a support system from Beech Acres Parenting Center dedicated to providing assistance with financial resources, navigating confusing and complex paperwork, and connecting with other families experiencing similar circumstances. Funded in part by the **Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF)**, Kinship Connections is providing **hope** for vulnerable families who find themselves in unfortunate and unexpected circumstances.

A Mission To Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

Founded in 1984, the **Ohio Children's Trust Fund** is Ohio's sole, dedicated public funding source for child abuse and neglect prevention. **The mission of the Trust Fund is to prevent child abuse and neglect by investing in strong communities, healthy families and safe children.** "OCTF is dedicated to helping children and families thrive. Through our efforts, we aim to increase the funding spent on universal prevention, promote the healthy development of children, and prevent child abuse before it occurs," said Nicole Sillaman, Program Manager of the Ohio Children's Trust Fund.

"I'm a 56-year-old grandmother raising my 8-year-old grandson because of his parent's opioid overdose. The Kinship program has provided me with both financial and emotional support. My youngest child is 29, so it's been quite a long time since I was a parent. They have been absolutely comforting in guiding me down the new path of parenthood. My grandson is diagnosed with PTSD and ADHD. They have helped with services I didn't even know existed."

Keeping Families Together

The Ohio Children's Trust Fund is interested in kinship care as a means of preventing [further] trauma to children. "Relatives are the preferred resource for children who must be removed from their birth parents because it maintains the children's connections with their families and other familiar aspects of a child's life," said Jane Dockery, Coordinator of the Southwest Ohio Regional Prevention Council of the OCTF. The top concerns facing kinship families are the need for kinship navigation, the need for peer support, and the need for parenting education/parenting support. "Beech Acres is working on all three of these fronts," Jane said.

Thank you to the Ohio Children's Trust Fund for their dedicated support in preventing child abuse and neglect through their investment in strong communities, healthy families, and safe children. To learn more about Ohio Children's Trust Fund visit [OCTF.ohio.gov](https://octrf.ohio.gov).

*<https://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/KinshipCare.pdf>