

# Kinship Care

## Overview briefing

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### **Key point: More support must be given to kinship families**

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Scotland must ensure that children living in kinship care get the support they need to thrive. Kinship must be actively explored as a positive place for children to be cared for.

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### **What did The Independent Care Review hear around support for kinship families?**

The Independent Care Review heard from many kinship families about **the lack of support** they had in caring for children, and **the fear they sometimes had** of asking for help, in case they were seen as not being able to help.

If they did ask for help, it could feel punitive. They worried about what might happen as a result.

### **What does the promise say about support for kinship carers?**

The principles for intensive family support that wrap around a family must be as accessible to kinship families as they are to families of origin.

Kinship family decision making must be supported by - and characterised by - **family group decision making** to explore the breadth and consequences of decisions about where children should live

Support must recognise the particular challenges that can exist for kinship carers.

There must be a recognition that kinship carers may be caring for deeply traumatised children, and that they may experience their own pain at the consequences of family breakdown.

Support must also be offered freely, without kinship carers having to fight for it. Kinship carers shouldn't feel the need to professionalise their role in order to access support.

But there must be a consideration of kinship carers as part of the wider workforce, so that they have access to:

- ongoing supervision,
- space for reflection, and
- support to continue to care without becoming overwhelmed.

Financial support to kinship carers must match that of foster carers.

But there must also be recognition of the tension and complications that money can add to decision making about children, particularly when wider family groups are living in poverty.

Decisions about where children live must follow their best interests.



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