



Kinship Provisions of the Supporting America's Children and Families Act (HR 9076)

The [Supporting America's Children and Families Act](#) (HR 9076), also referred to as the Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act was signed into law by President Biden on January 4th, 2025. This new law reauthorizes and updates Title IV-B of the Social Security Act, a critical child welfare law that provides funding to states, territories, and tribes to create and operate coordinated child and family services programs. The new law includes new provisions to support kinship families.

The Title [IV-B program](#) is often seen as the most flexible source of dedicated federal funding for child welfare. The program offers flexible support to establish, expand, and administer coordinated systems for child and family well-being. It emphasizes prevention of child abuse and neglect and provides funding for family preservation, family support, family reunification, and adoption promotion and support, stability, permanency, training for child welfare professionals, monthly caseworker visits, Regional Partnerships Grants, and the Court Improvement Program.

While administered by child welfare agencies, program funds can be used for services to support and strengthen families inside or outside of the child welfare system, including kinship families.

The Supporting America's Children and Families Act includes the following key provisions impacting kinship/grandfamilies that go into effect starting October 1, 2025, with some exceptions as noted below in the summary:

Clarifies that Title IV-B funds can be used for kinship families and peer-to-peer support programs:

HR 9076 clarifies that kinship caregivers are eligible to receive all IV-B funded services available to foster parents. While most states have interpreted the law to count kin caregivers as foster parents, because of ambiguity in the statute, some states have declined to provide these services to kin caregivers. This clarification will help ensure that kin caregivers receive the support to which they are entitled.

Title IV-B is home to the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program which provides funding to states, territories, and tribes for community-based services to prevent child maltreatment, keep families safely together, and achieve permanency for children in foster care. HR 9076 also explicitly allows states to use funding from the Promoting Safe and

Stable Families program for peer support and peer mentorship programs for youth, caregivers, and parents. Learn more about the [value of peer supports](#).

Requires states to consult with people with lived experience, including kinship caregivers and youth, in developing their plans:

Child welfare agencies have been required to consult with other state agencies and service providers in developing their Child and Family Services Plans (CFSP) however, they have not been required to consult with those whose lives are impacted by those plans. The CFSP is a strategic plan that sets forth a state's or tribe's vision and goals to strengthen its child welfare system. It outlines initiatives and activities that the state or tribe will carry out over the next 5 years to administer and integrate programs and services to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families.

This legislation represents the first time that states will be required to consult people with lived experience as they create their state's IV-B plan that guides their state's child welfare system. To ensure consultation is meaningful, states will be required to publish reports outlining how they have implemented the suggestions of the children and youth they've consulted. HR 9076 will also require states to make their plans publicly available and allow for comparison between state plans.

Provides \$10 million per year for five years of funding for Kinship Navigator Programs:

In the [Family First Prevention Services Act](#), Congress recognized the vital importance of Kinship Navigator Programs, which connect kinship/grandfamily caregivers to resources available in their communities, and established a pathway for federal entitlement funding. However, kinship navigator programs lack the resources to perform the multi-year evaluations needed to qualify for long-term funding. By offering multi-year development and evaluation grants, HR 9076 will allow Kinship Navigator Programs the ability to sustainably access funds made available in Family First.

- Kinship navigator program funds will be provided through a competitive grant program, which will be open to nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher education, in addition to state, local, and tribal child welfare agencies;
- The Children's Bureau may issue up to 30 new grants per year. Grants may be one to three years in length. The Children's Bureau is expected to release more information about the timing and process of applying prior to the start of the federal fiscal year.
- Grantees are required to provide a 25% match
- Application requirements:
 - Applications must include a description of how the entity will directly fund, or provide data to the Secretary for, an evaluation which will publish and submit information to the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse or a description of how the funds will be used to help the State transition to a

program for which the State will seek reimbursement through the Title IV-E Program.

- If the entity is a private organization (such as a nonprofit) the application must include documentation of support from the relevant local or state child welfare agency; or a description of how the organization plans to coordinate its services and activities with those offered by the relevant local or state child welfare agency; and
- If the entity is a state, local or tribal child welfare agency, the application must include documentation of support from a relevant community-based organization with experience serving kinship families when applicable or a description of how the organization plans to coordinate its services and activities with those offered by the relevant community -based organizations.

Provides \$5 million per year for five years of funding to support evaluation of prevention services and kinship navigator programs, through a competitive grant program.

The Family First Prevention Services Act allowed federal funds to pay for evidence based kinship navigator programs and certain other evidence-based services and programs to prevent children from entering foster care. However, few programs have been able to meet the rigorous evidence standards required to access sustainable funds. Unique in design from other forms of prevention programs, Kinship navigator programs face inherent difficulties with applying the evidence-based requirements requiring multiple years and additional resources to design and implement qualifying evaluations. These evaluation grants will help fill gaps in allowable prevention services so that children and families can be supported by a wider range of tailored services to meet their unique needs.

Increases Title IV-B funding by \$75 million annually.

There have been no new permanent investments in the Title IV-B program since 2005. This increase in mandatory funding is paid-for with cost savings from more efficient administration of child support enforcement, so this increased investment will not increase the deficit. This investment will allow states and tribes to provide more prevention, family strengthening, reunification, and adoption promotion and support services.

For more information on the Supporting America's Children and Families Act:

[Congress.gov Bill Text & Summary](#)

[Topic-by-Topic Summary](#)

[Title IV-B of the Social Security Act Program Overview](#)

If you have any questions, please reach out to Generations United at gu@gu.org or (202)289-3979.