

A. Children removed from their parents generally experience better outcomes when placed with kin, including:

2. Better mental health outcomes

- Heidi Redlich Epstein, *Kinship Care is Better for Children and Families*, 36 ABA CHILD L. PRAC. TODAY 77 (2017), https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_interest/child_law/resources/child_law_practice_online/child_law_practice/vol-36/july-aug-2017/kinship-care-is-better-for-children-and-families/

This review of social science research concludes that children have better mental health measures when placed with relatives than when placed in non-kinship foster care. First, placing children with kin caregivers minimizes the trauma that comes with removal. When children are removed from their homes, they often lose all prior attachments. Placement with a relative diminishes the loss that comes with removal from parents. Additionally, children who live with relatives have fewer school changes and a better relationship with their caregiver than children who live with unrelated foster parents. Moreover, children who live with relatives are more likely to live with or stay connected to their siblings.

- Jill Theresa Messing, *From the Child's Perspective: A Qualitative Analysis of Kinship Care Placements*, 28 CHILD. & YOUTH SERVS. REV. 1415 (Dec. 2006), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740906000673?via=ihub>.

This study focuses on seven focus groups that consist of forty children; thirty of them had caregivers who were legal guardians and the remaining ten were under informal kinship care. Questions were presented to the children regarding their transition into care, family relationships, stigma they faced in care, and placement stability. Many children were placed in kinship care when they were too young to remember the transition; for those who were not, the option to live with a relative caring for a sibling factored into their decision to live with the relative. Children overall adjusted smoothly and saw their caregiver as a constant source of support. Children did not feel ostracized from their peers due to their living arrangement and often had friends who could relate as they also lived with a kinship caregiver. Last, the children saw their placements as stable but not permanent because most sought to eventually live with their parents.

- Marc A. Winokur, et al., *Systematic Review of Kinship Care Effects on Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes*, 28 RES. ON SOC. WORK PRAC. 19 (2018), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288888726_Systematic_Review_of_Kinship_Care_Effects_on_Safety_Permanency_and_Well-Being_Outcomes

This review evaluates the effects of kinship care compared to foster care on factors such as safety and well-being of the children. The authors review and evaluate 102 quasi-experimental studies and extract outcome data for meta-analysis. Their findings show that children in kinship care have fewer behavioral problems and mental health disorders in comparison to children in non-kinship foster care. Children in non-kinship foster care are 2

times more likely to experience mental illness than children in kinship care. They also have less placement disruption; children in non-kinship foster care are 2.6 times more likely to experience three or more placements than children in kinship care. Children in kinship care also have similar reunification rates. Because there is a significant disparity between the mental health and the number of placements of children in foster care and children in kinship care, the researchers assert that kinship care should be a priority for children who cannot live with their parents.