



Kinship Care: Making the Most of a Valuable Resource (Urban Institute Press)

Rob Geen

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Since the early 1980s, states child welfare agencies' use of relatives as foster parents has grown rapidly, yet little information is available on this practice. This lack of information has made it difficult to evaluate how well kinship care ensures children's safety, promotes permanency in their living situation, and enhances their well-being—three basic goals of the child welfare system. *Kinship Care: Making the Most of a Valuable Resource* sheds light on this changing issue. Using a study involving focus groups of child welfare workers and kinship caregivers, in addition to interviews with local administrators, advocates, and service providers, the authors describe frontline kinship care practices in today's system. They also examine how and when child welfare agencies use kin as foster parents, how their approach to kinship care differs from traditional foster care, and how kinship care practices vary across states. The book also features the experiences of actual kinship foster parents, their challenges, and their interaction with agencies and the courts. Finally, the book provides recommendations for policy development, worker and caregiver training, and issues for further research.

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