



KINSHIP CONNECTED - WEST YORKSHIRE

EVALUATION – INTERIM REPORT FOR GRANDPARENTS PLUS

by

Starks Consulting

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SCL

Sharing Knowledge

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been produced for the five local authorities in West Yorkshire (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield) by Starks Consulting Ltd, who is carrying out the independent evaluation of Kinship Connected nationally on behalf of Grandparents Plus and the Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS) and Nesta.
- 1.2 Findings presented here include an analysis of quantitative baseline and review data generated by Grandparents Plus from 24 kinship carers. This is matched data generated from registration and review meetings carried out by Grandparents Plus project workers.
- 1.3 The report covers the period October 2018 – September 2019 and only contains analysis of kinship carers with complete baseline and review data. 78 kinship carers have received one-to-one support to date but have not all completed reviews yet. A full analysis will be completed in April 2020.
- 1.4 Two project workers were recruited in October 2018. One project worker had to leave in January due to personal circumstances and a replacement was recruited in March 2019.
- 1.5 Interviews with five kinship carers receiving support have been completed to provide additional detail on kinship carers' family circumstances, their needs, and the support provided by the local authority and Grandparents Plus.
- 1.6 When reading this paper, the reader should keep in mind:
 - the information contains initial findings on Kinship Connected for the West Yorkshire area only;
 - the views on the support provided and the outcomes presented here are interim findings and may not be representative of the findings of the wider evaluation.

2 FINDINGS FROM THE DATA ANALYSIS

Demographics

- 2.1 Kinship carers with complete baseline and review data are drawn from the five local authorities as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Kinship Carers' Local Authority

Local Authority	Count	% of all local authorities
Bradford	4	17%
Calderdale	3	12%
Kirklees	8	33%
Leeds	3	12%
Wakefield	6	26%
Grand Total	24	100%

Grandparents Plus database

- 2.2 All but one (23) of the kinship carers have a special guardianship order (SGO) for the child(ren) in their care. Of these 23, 21 receive a local authority allowance for the care of their child(ren).
- 2.3 Age profiles of the kinship carers are mixed with the majority (75%) being 45 or older and 45% being aged 55 or over.

Table 2.2: Age of Kinship Carers

Age	Count	Count of Local Authority
25-34	1	4%
35-44	5	20%
45-54	7	29%
55-64	9	38%
65-74	2	8%
Grand Total	24	100%*

Grandparents Plus database

*Numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding

- 2.4 Data shows that 22 (92%) were white British. This is somewhat surprising given the ethnic mix of the population in the local authorities (two did not record their ethnicity.)

Background to becoming a kinship carer

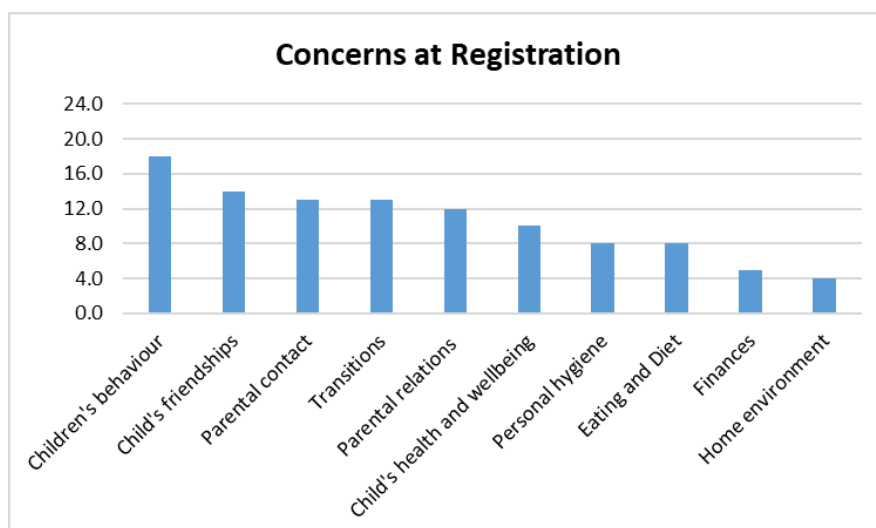
- 2.5 From the data, the majority (58%) of kinship carers supported through the Kinship Connected programme in West Yorkshire have been a kinship carer for five years or more. None were new kinship carers. Therefore, many of the initial uncertainties around being a kinship carer had already been experienced, although as the case studies revealed, many had significant ongoing issues.
- 2.6 Reasons why the parents could no longer look after their own children included safeguarding concerns relating to: substance misuse (6, 25%), concerns over parents' capacity to care for their children (24, 100%), domestic abuse (3, 13%), and parents' mental health (1, 4%) which ultimately led to children being removed from the care of their parents by social services.

2.7 The five qualitative cases evidenced the complexities around becoming a kinship carer.

- The first case is of a kinship carer who, together with her husband had taken on the care of their grandson when he was five years old in 2012. Social services had removed the child from his parents' care with safeguarding concerns related to neglect. This led to him being placed with his grandparents under a Residence Order. The family has experienced considerable challenges over the years with their grandson's behaviour due to attachment issues.
- The second case is of a kinship carer who took on the care of her six-month-old granddaughter after concerns were raised that her mother was neglecting her. The kinship carer was also caring for her husband who died shortly after being awarded an SGO for her granddaughter. She has considerable and ongoing concerns over contact issues with the baby's mother - her own daughter, and over the years has had abuse and threatening calls and messages from her daughter. This has caused considerable stress and affected her own mental wellbeing.
- The third case was of a kinship carer, who, together with his wife, has taken on the care of a severely disabled granddaughter. Concerns were raised of the ability of their parents to care for their disabled daughter and social services asked the grandparents if they would become a kinship carer. They were awarded an SGO two years ago and have been managing the care of their granddaughter since then.
- The fourth kinship carer had taken on the care of her sister's two children after social services became concerned about the ability of their mother to care for her children due to mental health and addiction issues. Contact arrangements were not put in place from the beginning and this has resulted in the kinship carer having to endure significant threats and abuse, having to move house, and changing jobs to get away from the level of abuse.
- The fifth case was a kinship carer who had taken on the care of her two grandchildren after her own daughter was failing to keep her safe from sexual exploitation. Her grandchildren were born in different local authorities and as a result, the kinship carers were having to liaise with two different Connected Families teams, which they found very difficult. Children had physical disabilities and learning difficulties and attachment issues. The stress of the situation had caused the kinship carer to have a breakdown due to stress she was enduring.

2.8 Kinship carers in West Yorkshire had a range of concerns relating to their role as a kinship carer and the wellbeing of their children.

Figure 2.1: Concerns of kinship carers



Source: Grandparents Plus database

- 2.9 Although most kinship carers had been caring for their children for several years, many still had concerns regarding:
- children's behaviour (18, 75%)
 - their child(ren)'s ability to maintain friendships (14, 58%)
 - parental contact with children (13, 54%)
 - concerns over transitions relating to education (13, 54%)
 - concerns with parental relations (12, 50%).
- 2.10 Interviews between project workers and kinship carers provide a little more detail on the nature of kinship carers' concerns.

Figure 2.2: Kinship Carers Concerns

"[Name of kinship carers] feels he [their grandchild] may have attachment disorder. He worked with a play therapist when he was younger, and the issues listed for attachment disorder matched his behaviour."

"[Name of kinship carer] is concerned about [name of child's] behaviour as she feels she is struggling to behave in an acceptable manner. She is accessing various support agencies through social services."

[The kinship carers] have concerns about destructive behaviour, breaking mirrors in the wardrobe and damaging blinds."

"[Name of child] struggles to make friends and once he does make friends, he struggles to keep them. His behaviour is erratic, ranging from very loving and trusting to aggressive."

[Name of kinship carers] has ongoing health concerns for [name of child]."

Source: Project worker baseline registration data

- 2.11 Nine kinship carers (37%) stated their child was diagnosed with a physical or learning disability and an additional five (20%) were in the process of being assessed for a learning difficulty. These statistics reveal the high levels of need among these families for support.
- 2.12 All five kinship carers interviewed for this report spoke about having to give up employment, despite all being under the age at which they draw a state pension. In the case of the kinship carers looking after their disabled daughter, they had received a high level of support, both financial, practical and emotional support from social services over the years. The other cases were very critical of the level of support they had received from their local authority, although, according to one kinship carer their local authority had more recently improved their level of support to kinship carers.
- 2.13 Two case studies revealed the challenges kinship carers had faced in trying to bring up their children where parental contact was difficult. Both reported they had received very little or no support from the local authority from the time they received their care order.

Figure 2.3: Kinship carers' view of local authority support

"Social services were not particularly very clear about anything. I would have to say the support was zero. When we came out of the court after we had got him permanently, the social worker asked if she wanted me to explain it, and she did and then it [the support] just stopped. We asked for help with the contact but were told we had to pay £60 per contact. We couldn't afford it and we've struggled on though." (Kinship Carer of seven years)

"At the time the judge gave me the SGO, there was supposed to be a year's support. She [the judge] had noted the aggravation between me and my daughter, so social services were supposed to give me a year's support. I didn't get that support. The social worker came every month to see [name of daughter], but she wasn't there for me, wasn't interested in me....she just came to see if I was keeping a house tidy." (Kinship Carer of six years)

Source: Telephone interviews, August 2019

- 2.14 Kinship carers continue with their caring role despite enduring considerable challenges and stresses with their circumstances. In these cases, both kinship carers stated the lack of support has had repercussions on their children's behaviour, due to attachment issues and the kinship carers not understanding how to deal with the symptoms. As a result, one child has struggled to cope with mainstream education and is moving into alternative provision.
- 2.15 Kinship carers revealed that they felt they were not being listened to, and no-one, at the time of them receiving their orders, was there to help them navigate their way through the complex situation they had found themselves in.

"When this happened [being awarded an SGO], I knew nothing about it at all, it's been so difficult." (Kinship carer of six years)

- 2.16 It seems there was a lack of support from local authority services, at a time when kinship carers needed to be able to understand where they could go to for support, what support they were entitled to. None seemed to have been put in touch with other kinship carers who were experiencing the same thing.

Support from Grandparents Plus

Peer-to-peer support groups

- 2.17 The setting up of local support groups is an effective way of reducing isolation and provides an opportunity for kinship carers to exchange experiences and receive information and advice about their role and the care of their children. There are 12 peer support groups operating across West Yorkshire. Four of these groups were set up by local authorities – two of which receive Grandparents Plus support and one will become independent in September. Three of the 12 are independent groups – two in Leeds and one in Bradford. The Bradford group has requested support from Grandparents Plus to help it to continue. There are five Grandparents Plus groups/ coffee mornings (one in Calderdale, which was previously run by the local authority, two in Kirklees and two in Wakefield). There are plans to set up four more peer support groups in September and October (two in Bradford, one in Calderdale and one in Leeds). These groups provide a lifeline for many kinship carers who experience isolation and high levels of stress.
- 2.18 Over one half (n=13, 54%) of the sample attend the local groups across West Yorkshire and seven (29%) attend regularly. These groups are a mix of kinship carer-led/independent support groups and Grandparents Plus-led support groups.

"I love going to my groups, I actually go to two groups, one is more formal, where we have guest speakers and one is just sitting around having a cup of coffee."

(Kinship carer)

- 2.19 All kinship carers received a visit from the project worker at the start of their support. The total number of visits carried out to date, according to Grandparents Plus is 78 visits for 78 kinship carers.
- 2.20 When project workers visit kinship carers in their home, they take background detail regarding their circumstances and needs and offer information, advice and support early on. Goals have been agreed, which allow the support to be tailored to kinship carers' needs.
- 2.21 There were 39 goals identified across the 24 kinship carers. A review of the data suggests that most goals related to:
- Getting involved with a local support group and sharing experiences
 - Receiving advice and support on particular issues relating to their circumstances, for example, housing or schooling for their child
 - Reducing a sense of isolation
 - Gaining skills and training through volunteering
 - Applying for a grant/accessing some financial support for furniture or other goods
 - Improving levels of confidence.
- 2.22 Evidence from interviews with kinship carers reveal how project workers have carried out advocacy on behalf of kinship carers, have assisted kinship carers to access local welfare grants and have provided emotional support and advice.
- 2.23 All kinship carers have also been signposted to their advice line or to other services. Five kinship carers have joined Grandparents Plus online support group as a way of keeping in touch with others virtually.
- 2.24 The perceptions from all but one kinship carer were that the support is either of excellent or of good quality.

Figure 2.4: Kinship carers' view of the quality of Grandparents Plus support

General rating of support	Count	%
Excellent	12	50%
Good	11	46%
Satisfactory	1	4%
Grand Total	24	100.00%

Source: Grandparents Plus database

- 2.25 Specific feedback from kinship carers gathered by project workers is included below.

Figure 2.5: Kinship carers' feedback on the quality of Grandparents Plus support

"I don't necessarily need to access a lot of support but knowing that it's there is good and being contacted to be involved in the media side of Grandparents Plus as a case study/being on a video is positive.

"10 out of 10 – [we] need someone else to talk to and have someone to help you through."

"[I have a] very helpful Project Worker"

"[My project worker has] opened up so many possibilities for me"

"[My project worker] has done everything that has been asked and has been willing to support and advocate for me."

"If it wasn't for the support I got from [name of project worker] and the kinship support group at [name of LA] I would still be sat here making no progress. The help has been invaluable."

"I wouldn't have coped without the support."

"My project worker is really supportive and helpful, and I have made greater progress with her support than years on my own."

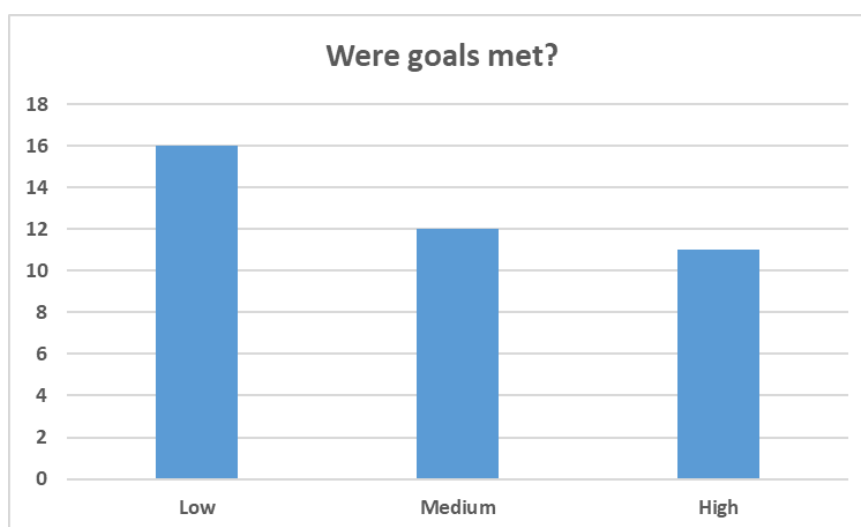
Source: Feedback generated from review forms completed by project workers interviewing kinship carers.

Impact of the Support

Impact on individual needs/goals

2.26 In terms of measuring whether or not kinship carers' goals have been met (e.g. attending local support groups, developing skills and confidence in being a kinship carer, gaining advice about an issue), project workers asked kinship carers to rate to what extent they feel they have met their goals. Data shows that most goals were considered to have been met to a medium extent or to a high extent (33), but 16 goals were not met (low).

Figure 2.6: To what extent were goals were met?



Source: Project workers' outcomes data

2.27 Whether goals were met varied according to each kinship carers' circumstances (e.g. some attended support groups and some did not). Goals that had been met included:

- Attending a support group
- Improving knowledge and keeping up to date with policies that impact on their caring role
- Growing in confidence
- Having a voice and feeling part of something
- Managing anxieties
- Learning about how to support their child better

- Eligibility for support

2.28 Goals that had not been met included:

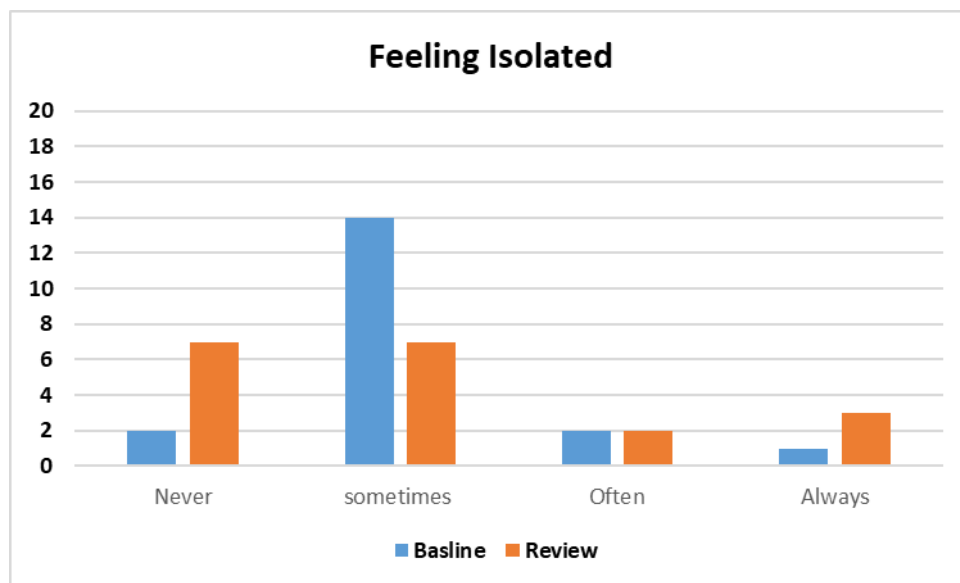
- Help with housing situations
- Reducing a sense of isolation
- Joining a support group.

2.29 Feedback from project workers suggests that some kinship carers struggled to get involved in support groups due to the location and/or timing of the groups conflicting with school pick-ups. Resolving housing issues is also likely to be beyond the responsibility of the project worker and may need additional support from the local authority.

Feelings of isolation

2.30 Most agreed that attending a local support group helped them feel less isolated. Kinship carers were especially asked about their sense of isolation at the registration/baseline and review stages. Data shows that the support has had a positive impact on the frequency with which kinship carers experience a sense of isolation.

Figure 2.7: Changes in perception of isolation from baseline to review



Base: 19 kinship carers completing wellbeing data

2.31 This shows an increase in the number of kinship carers who stated they never experience a sense of isolation from 2 at baseline to 9 at review and a decrease of 7 kinship carers. However, three kinship carers reported 'always feeling a sense of isolation' at review stages. Data shows that two of these did not attend the local support groups and one attended just a few times. It would seem that for some kinship carers local support groups are not the type of support they feel able to become involved with.

Impact on mental wellbeing

- 2.32 Grandparents Plus has adopted the use of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, a validated tool for measuring mental wellbeing (See Annex A). Mental wellbeing is important as an indicator of quality of life¹. Mental wellbeing is not just the absence of mental ill-health; it includes the way that people feel about themselves and their lives. Therefore, measuring mental wellbeing was considered an important factor as a way of understanding the impact of additional support for people living with potentially challenging family lives.
- 2.33 The maximum available score across the 14 questions is 70 (5 being the highest rating individuals could give themselves on a scale of 1-5, where 1 equals 'none of the time' and 5 equals 'all of the time').
- 2.34 Surveys have been completed at the point of registration and a review three to six-months later. An analysis of 19 kinship carers' baseline and review data has been completed to compare changes in their wellbeing². The table below provides a summary of the matched scores.

Figure 2.8: Kinship carers' change in WEMWBS from baseline to review

Kinship carers' individual wellbeing scores at baseline and review			
KC ID	Baseline	Review	Difference
KC01	30	51	21
KC02	49	30	-19
KC03	43	51	8
KC04	29	43	14
KC06	48	44	-4
KC08	66	65	-1
KC09	24	50	26
KC10	49	51	2
KC11	28	42	12
KC12	33	53	20
KC14	34	48	14
KC16	37	48	11
KC17	64	53	9
KC18	38	43	5
KC20	46	57	11
KC21	48	58	10
KC22	42	54	12
KC23	34	24	10
KC24	38	52	14
Totals	780	917	137
Average Scores	41	48	

Total scores from 19 special guardians

¹ Department of Health. Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England. Department of Health, 2010.

² Currently we have matched data for 19 kinship carers as not all kinship carers referred for support have completed a review form.

- 2.35 The majority of kinship carers (n=16, 67%) experienced an increase in their mental wellbeing. However, for three kinship carers, their mental wellbeing reduced according to how they have scored themselves. Two of those had low scores at outcome (30 and 44). A closer look at their circumstances shows that:
- The kinship carer who scored 30 at outcome is aged between 65-74yrs and has had three children placed with her three years ago. She receives no financial support from her local authority. There are no services involved in her support and she reported having a range of concerns including parental contact; parental relations with children; children's behaviour; children's health and wellbeing; children's eating and/or diet. She has attended the local support groups and stated the support was excellent. However, she appears to be struggling with the behaviour of one child in particular who has physical and social and emotional development needs.
 - The second kinship carer who scored 44 is aged between 55-64 and is unemployed. She has been looking after one child for nine years. Other services were involved but she still had concerns with child's behaviour; child's health and wellbeing; maintaining friendships for her child and her home environment (space, privacy, carpets, doors, white goods etc). She was moving property and put the added stress down to that. She was very grateful for the support she had received from her project worker, but her situation meant she was still struggling to cope with her stress levels.
- 2.36 The average WEMWBS score at baseline across 19 kinship carers was 41.0 out of a possible 70. At the review stage, the average score had increased to 48.3 These scores are slightly below national average of 49.8. These scores show an increase in the total average scores and an overall statistical significance of P=0.008 when applying the student t-test. **This indicates the change is statistically significant across the population of kinship carers.**
- 2.37 Two studies have looked at the WEMWBS in relation to two measures of depression and psychological distress and found that a WEMWBS score of fewer than 40 could indicate a high risk of major depression, and scores between 41 and 45 could indicate a high risk from psychological distress³.
- 2.38 **Twelve (63%)** kinship carers had scores below 45 at baseline and **ten (53%)** had scores below 40. This is a concern and indicates high levels of mental and psychological distress which could have a long-term impact on their wellbeing. At review, six **(31%)** kinship carers had scores below 45 and **two (10%)** had scores below 40. This shows a drop in 14 cases of those kinship carers with high-level mental wellbeing concerns, which may lead to longer-term positive impacts on kinship carers' health if this continues.
- 2.39 The two vignettes provided below show how challenging being a kinship carer can be and how important it is that support needs to be put in place as early as possible to prevent deterioration in both the mental health of kinship carers and the behaviour and wellbeing of the children they are looking after.

Figure 2.9: Case Study One

Background

This kinship carer has had significant challenges with her sister who suffers from very poor mental health and substance misuse. Her sister had three children - in 2005, a primary school raised the alarm with social services about one of the children. The child, who was eight at the time, was not communicating with others, would not engage and was very emotionally disturbed.

³ Taggart, F., Stewart-Brown, S., & Parkinson, J. (2015). Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) User Guide, Version 2. NHS Health Scotland

The original intervention in 2005 from social services did not result in any formal care order, but the kinship carer was asked to take the children on a temporary basis. This informal arrangement continued for a number of years until the kinship carers herself raised alarms with social services and the children were placed under child protection. The sister's health has continued to deteriorate.

The support the kinship carer has received from the local authority has been very limited. She was awarded an SGO in 2013 for the care of two boys and has been receiving financial support since then but no other practical support relating to contact with the boys' mother/her sister.

"This has been the biggest concern, I have had to move house and change jobs because of the level of harassment and still I don't get any support with contact arrangements."

Support from Grandparents Plus

She has had a project worker now for a year and has developed a very good relationship with her. The project worker has accompanied her to meetings with school to liaise about the children's education and care.

She spoke very positively about the emotional support she received from the project worker:

"I really admire her, she listens to everything I say, and she remembers things, and texts me to make sure she's okay. It's very positive support." (Kinship carer)

Unfortunately, she is not able to go to the local support groups as she works shifts. She would like to be able to attend and share her experiences with others as she feels she would be able to draw strength from their stories, but the timing of the meetings means she is unable to attend.

She has, however, trained to become a Kinship Carer Champion and promotes awareness of the charity by handing out leaflets in the community. She has enjoyed moving into her voluntary role and stated it has been good for her sense of wellbeing. She admitted that she suffers with her health and her mental health as a result of her circumstances.

The one thing she would like Grandparents Plus to be able to do would be to support kinship carers with contact arrangements. *"This would make a real difference to me to have someone who could liaise between me and my sister."*

Source: telephone interview with kinship carer by Starks Consulting Ltd

Figure 2.10: Case Study Two

Background

This kinship carer and her husband, who are both in their 50s look after their daughter's two children: one girl aged nine and one boy aged two. They have been awarded an SGO for both children after their daughter was failing to keep them safe from sexual exploitation. One child has physical disabilities and learning difficulties and has been diagnosed with global development delay. The other child has behaviour and emotional problems and attachment issues.

Since taking on the care of the children she has had to give up her full-time work as a teaching assistant in a school and financially struggles. *"Financially we're not in the best place at all."*

Due to the children being born in two different local authorities, the kinship carers have to deal with two social services. This affects the effective coordination of support. For example, having to

complete two sets of paperwork for financial assistance and having to liaise with two Connected Persons teams. She was very critical of the support from both local authorities initially.

Since May 2010, we had no support. We had such a rough time with social services, it was very 'airy-fairy'. For a long time, we didn't have anything to do with them, but then I found out about their Connected Person's team and I rang them straight away." [Kinship carer]

They needed support to learn about how to talk to their daughter who was beginning to display very challenging behaviour.

From one local authority helping coordinate her granddaughter's support, they now receive an immense amount of support. *"They have done life story work with them and my daughter looks on her [name of practitioner] as a real friend."* [Kinship carers].

They have also benefited from a range of training to help cope with their granddaughter's behaviour.

However, the stress of their family life has taken a toll on the kinship carer's health and she had a nervous breakdown in 2012. She went to the doctors who sent her for some cognitive behavioural therapy which has helped develop her resilience and ability to cope.

Support from Grandparents Plus

She described the support from Grandparents Plus as *"absolutely fabulous"*. She found out about them on the internet in the early hours of the morning when she couldn't sleep.

The project worker has done considerable liaising with school on her behalf. Her school was determined not to see the behaviour issues as the result of attachment disorder but were labelling her daughter as a naughty child and this was affecting the relationship between herself and her school. The Grandparents Plus project worker has liaised with the school to ask how they are using the Pupil Premium money to support [name of child] in her education.

She has signposted the kinship carers to organisations such as Family Rights Group where she has accessed free legal advice and called the Grandparents Plus advice lines on several occasions to get advice about support for the children.

She has also been to conferences to speak about her experiences.

"It has given me my self-esteem back, made me feel like me again. They have listened to me and taken on board my opinion...You've no idea how this feels when you've not been listened to for years. It eats away at you." (Kinship carer)

She feels she is finally on the right path with her granddaughter as she has been referred for play therapy, which is helping her understand her better and parent her better. She wishes that the local authority had put in place training years ago for her to understand her daughter's behaviour.

"All these children have such needs, such issues relating to attachment. We just want this to be acknowledged as we struggle to maintain their normality."

Source: Telephone Interview with kinship carer by Starks Consulting Ltd

Summary

- 2.40 This report has revealed the very complex and challenging circumstances that kinship carers find themselves in when they take on the parental responsibility of their kin children. Many experienced family breakdowns due to children being removed and placed with family members. When kinship carers receive an SGO they often have a considerable need for support and advice regarding contact arrangements. In most cases, the local authorities appear not to be supporting kinship carers in this and kinship carers struggle without this form of support. There is evidence that this leads to a highly stressful situation and kinship carers suffering with their own health.
- 2.41 Another unmet need appears to be around understanding their child(ren)'s behaviour and how it has been affected by their removal from their parent(s).
- 2.42 In these contexts, Grandparents Plus provides a vital source of support. In some areas, the local authority has improved their level of support and has set up Connected Families teams and local support groups.
- 2.43 Grandparents Plus staff are able to reach out to more kinship carers and provide additional support, either by establishing new groups, or coordinating existing groups. Either way, those kinship carers that are able to attend the support groups, reported they provide a vital opportunity to share experiences and access information and advice.
- 2.44 Grandparents Plus project workers provide a key source of advice, advocacy and emotional support to kinship carers. Without this, some kinship carers would have struggled to cope. They have also signposted kinship carers to various organisations, including their own helpline for information and advice.
- 2.45 This support is having a positive and statistically significant impact on kinship carers' mental wellbeing and sense of isolation.
- 2.46 More reviews with carers receiving support as part of the programmes – 78 have received one-to-one support to date – in order to be able to report with greater levels of confidence on the impact of the support on the wider kinship carer community.

ANNEX A: BASELINE AND REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES

Project Worker: *Confidentiality Policy discussed*

Use of personal information:

I understand that in order to access the services provided by the Kinship Connected programme, the information I give will be used by Grandparents Plus staff to understand my needs, what support was received and how this has made a difference to myself and my family. In addition to Grandparents Plus seeing the data, Starks Consulting Ltd in partnership with Ecorys has been commissioned to carry out an evaluation of Kinship Connected. They will have access to all **anonymised** data and will use this for the purposes of evaluating Kinship Connected only. They will not share this with anyone outside of Grandparents Plus. This data will be analysed to understand the impact that Kinship Connected has had on all those who have been involved in the programme. All data collected and shared with Starks Consulting and Ecorys will hold no personal data (relating to names, dates of birth or addresses) and no reporting of findings will reveal yours or your family's identity.

Do you agree to your data being used in this way?

Yes

No

- If no, do you require any additional information regarding how your data will be used in order for you to give consent?

Name: _____

Signed _____ Date: _____



Kinship Connected: Registration Form

KC No: **Today's Date [dd/mm/yyyy]:**

Project Worker:

Local Authority

We'd like to ask you a few background questions. We will keep the information you provide confidential and anonymous.

Please provide the details below, so we can get back in touch with you:

Preferred method of contact: email or mobile telephone:	
First Name	
Surname	
Telephone number	
Mobile number	
Email address	
Address	
Postcode	

1. Do you currently look after a relative's or friend's child(ren)?

Yes

No

2. How many relative's or friend's child(ren) do you look after?

1

2

3

4

5

3. Question 3 (this is landscape on the next page).

4. Are you receiving any local authority allowance related to the order for the kinship children?

Yes

No

5. Do you also currently look after your own children, who live with you?

Yes

No

6. How many of your own child(ren) do you look after?

1

2

3

4

5

(If yes), please tell us more about your children or anyone else in household

Name	Gender	Date of Birth

3. Pleased provide details on each child.

Name	Gender	DoB [dd/mm/yy]	Age 0-4) (5-9) (10-14) (15-19) (20-24)	Date child came to live with you mm/yyyy	Relationship to kinship carer: - Grandchild - Niece/nephew - Sibling - No relationship - Foster - Cousin - Other	Care Order - RO - CAO - SGO - SO - CO - ICO, - Foster Care - Informal	Circumstances that led to them living with you? - LA Safeguarding - Parental capacity to care - Substance misuse - Parents mental health - Incarceration - Domestic abuse - Parental absence - Other/.....

Interviewer Note: Please complete by writing in one of the choices as laid out above

PLEASE RETURN TO QUESTION 4 ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE.

6. Has your role as a kinship carer impacted on your own child(ren)?

Yes

No

6a.(If Yes) In what ways have the children being impacted

7. Is there anybody else living in the house?

Yes

No

8. If relevant, please provide details about any statutory support and educational needs for each child in the table below

Name	Prior to you taking on the care of the child, was there any children's services involvement? - No - CIN - CP - LAC - Don't know	Prior to you taking on the care of the child, was there any concerns regarding the child's school attendance?*	Has the child ever been excluded from school either temporarily or permanently? - Yes - No	Are there any concerns you have relating to the children's development needs? - Physical development - Speech and language development - Social and emotional development - Cognitive development	Has the child been diagnosed with a special learning difficulty or disability or physical disability? - Yes - No - In the process of being assessed

* Attendance concerns are based on a 90% or less attendance (this is one half day each week or 1 full day every two weeks or 20 days off in a school year)

9. Thinking about your support needs, do you have any concerns with the kin children relating to: (tick all that apply)

Parental contact

Parental relations with children

Child(ren's) Behaviour

Children's health and wellbeing

Maintaining child(ren's) friendships

Transitions

Personal hygiene

Eating / diet

Finances

Home environment (space, privacy, carpets, doors, white goods etc)

Other

Description.....

.....

10. Are there any other services, agencies or informal sources of help/advice you have accessed for the children?

Yes Which agency(ies).....

No

11. If No, was help sought but not received?

Yes

No

12. Have you been feeling isolated or lonely over the past 6 months? (please tick one only)

Never

Sometimes

Often

Always

13. How would you like to be involved in Kinship Connected?

(Please tick all options that apply to you)

Join a face to face support group	
Join a virtual support group	
Join the Grandparents Plus support network	
Access the Grandparents Plus advice service	
Access the Someone Like Me service	
Apply for a grant	
Access one-to-one case support (to review my circumstances)	
Volunteer for Grandparents Plus	
Get a signposting/referral to another organisation	
Would you like to be involved in any other ways?	

14. Thinking about all the above, do you have any additional support needs or referrals you would wish us to consider that you think might be helpful for your children?

Question 15 is printed on a separate sheet – this should be completed by the kinship carers and you can probably continue with this questionnaire or wait until the end to hand it out.

15. Now we are going to ask you to complete this short set of questions on how you are feeling and your confidence in your role as a kinship carer. **Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks.**

Statements	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
1. I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
2. I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
3. I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
4. I've been interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
5. I've had energy to spare	1	2	3	4	5
6. I've been dealing with my problems well	1	2	3	4	5
7. I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
8. I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
9. I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
10. I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
11. I've been able to make my mind up about things	1	2	3	4	5
12. I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
13. I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	5
14. I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5
15. I've been feeling that I have appropriate support when I need it*	1	2	3	4	5
16. I've been feeling confident in my parenting role*	1	2	3	4	5

*Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) © NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and * denotes additional questions relating to Kinship Connected.*

16. How did you learn about Kinship Connected? (tick all that apply)

Event <input type="checkbox"/> Please state:	Social Worker <input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Centre <input type="checkbox"/>	Another Kinship Carer <input type="checkbox"/>
Social Media (Facebook/Website) <input type="checkbox"/>	School <input type="checkbox"/>
Friend <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/> Please state:

17. What would you like to achieve by being engaged in the programme? Include training requirements. (These should be outcomes focused and be expressed for example as 'reduce my sense of isolation', 'socialise a little more', 'learn about being a kinship carer', 'learn about my rights' etc) and not 'join a group'.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Demographics: Now we need to collect some statistical information about you to review our engagement and to monitor whether our services reach all sectors of the population

18. Are you: (Please tick **one**) Male Female

19. What is your date of birth?

DD	MM	YYYY
----	----	------

(Please tick what age category they fall in to for analysis purposes)

20-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75-84 85 +

20. What is your family's ethnic group? (Please add KC for kinship carer, C1 for child 1, C2 for child 2, etc)

White		Asian or Asian British	
British		Indian	
Irish		Pakistani	
Gypsy/Roma/Traveller		Bangladeshi	
Other White background		Other Asian background	
Mixed Heritage		Chinese	
White and Black Caribbean		Black or Black British	
White and Black African		African	
White and Asian		Caribbean	
White and Chinese		Other Black background	
Other Dual Heritage background		Other ethnic background	
Other			

21. What is your main language? (Please tick **one** box)

English Other If Other, please specify.....

22. What is your religion? (Please tick **one** box)

Christian <input type="checkbox"/>	Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu <input type="checkbox"/>	Jewish <input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish <input type="checkbox"/>	Sikh <input type="checkbox"/>
Muslim <input type="checkbox"/>	Muslim <input type="checkbox"/>
No religion/Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>	Other religion <input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>	

23. Do you have any long-standing physical or mental illness, or disability?

(By 'long-standing', we mean anything that has troubled you over a period of at least 12 months or that is likely to affect you over a period of at least 12 months.)

Yes if Yes, can you tell us about this.....)

No

24. How did you learn about Kinship Connected? (tick all that apply)

Event <input type="checkbox"/>	Social Worker <input type="checkbox"/>
Please state:	
Children's Centre <input type="checkbox"/>	Another Kinship Carer <input type="checkbox"/>
Social Media (Facebook/Website) <input type="checkbox"/>	School <input type="checkbox"/>
Friend <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
	Please state:

25. Our evaluation includes doing some face-to-face discussion groups and one-to-one interviews with kinship carers and their children if possible. This is to better represent your needs and the impact of the service in our research findings.

These will be arranged at a suitable time and are completely voluntary. Your name and the name of your children will not be divulged in the research. Are you happy to be contacted to participate in the research? [You may not be contacted but we need to ask your permission before we do so].

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
------------------------------	-----------------------------

If yes, do you give permission for your contact details to be passed on to our evaluators for them to contact you directly once we have agreed our sample?

Yes

No

Thank you for providing this information



Kinship Connected: Outcomes Form

Please help us understand how the programme has supported you by completing the form below:

Key Details			
Kinship Carer Name			
Kinship Carer ID Code		Date dd/mm/yyyy	
Local Authority			
Your Experience of Kinship Connected			

Firstly we'd just like to understand how you were involved in the Kinship Connected Programme

1. Did you ever attend a Local Support Group?

Yes (Go to 1b)

No (Go to 1a)

1a. (If No) why not?

- Did not want to attend a group
 - Could not physically get to the group
 - There was no group in my area
 - Other
-

1b. (If Yes) How frequently did you attend?

- Once
- Regularly (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
- Just a few times

1c. (If Yes) What impact did attending the local support group have on you and your role as a kinship carer?

- It improved my capacity to cope with the child(ren)
- It provided me with an opportunity to share my experiences/concerns
- It gave me ideas on how to improve my child(ren)'s behaviour
- It helped me feel less isolated
- I made new friends and improved my circle of support
- Other

Please comment

- None of the above
- I did not like attending the groups
 - They were not well run/organised
 - They were too far away
 - Other

Please comment

2. Did you participate in a virtual support group?

Yes

No

2a) If Yes –

What are your views of the value of the virtual support group? (what support did get from it?)

Please comment

3. Did you access the wider Grandparents Plus Support Network?

Yes (Go to 2a)

No

3a. (If Yes) Why and what did you achieve?

.....
.....

4. Did you access the GP+ Advice Service? (Please tick if Yes)

4a. (If Yes) What advice were you seeking?

- Advice about financial support
- Advice about legal orders
- Advice about children's services' decisions
- Other

.....
4b. Did this advice meet your needs?

Yes

No

If not, why not

5. Did you access the Someone Like Me Service? (please tick if Yes)

6. Did you receive a grant? (please tick if Yes)

a. What did you use the grant for?

- Purchasing furniture/white goods
- Purchasing soft furniture
- Improving the home (carpets, doors etc)
- Going on a short break
- Other

.....
7. Did you become a KC Champion? (Leading Peer Support Groups) (please tick if Yes)

a. How long have you been a KC Champion?

- i. Less than 3 months
- ii. Less than 6 months
- iii. Over 6 months

b. During this time, did you organise / lead groups

- i. Yes

ii. No

c. Do you think you will continue to organise/lead groups for a while?

i. Yes

ii. No

Please comment on your experience of being a KC Champion (e.g. skills gained, confidence in leading a group)

.....
.....

8. Other volunteering (Other roles)(If yes please tick)

a. What other roles were you volunteering for? (e.g. admin, social events)

.....

9. Did you receive training to become a volunteer? (If yes please tick)

a. Did this training meet the needs of your volunteering role?

o Yes

o No (Go to Q9a)

9a. (If No) Why did it not meet your needs?

.....

10. Were you signposted/referred to other services (please tick if yes)

o GP

o Health clinic

o Local support group/network

o Local activities group

o Addiction services

o Children's Services

o Early Help (Children's Services)

o Other

.....

a. Did you access this service?

o Yes

o No

11. Were you involved in Kinship Connected in any other way?

.....

Now we'd like to ask you a little about your experience of the support.

12. In your Registration Form you indicated things that you wanted to achieve by being involved in the programme. To what extent have you achieved these? (Please check back with the planning form)

- | | Low | Medium | High | N/A | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

13. In general, how would you rate the quality of the support and services you received from Kinship Connected?

- 1. Very poor
- 2. Poor
- 3. Okay
- 4. Good
- 5. Excellent

Please comment

14. What suggestions, if any, do you have for improvements of the programme?

Now we'd just like to recap on any services involvement and school attendance and how this may have changed **since you have been caring for the child(ren).**

Name	Are children's services currently involved with your children? - No - CIN - CP - LAC	What is the legal order status of your child(ren) Residency Order Care Arrangement Order Special Guardianship Order Supervision Order Care Order Interim Care Order Foster Care	Has there been any concerns regarding the child's school attendance?* - Yes - No - N/A - Don't know	Had the child been excluded from school either temporarily or permanently in the last 3 school terms? - Yes - No

15. Do you have any concerns with the kin children in relation to: (tick all that apply)

Parental contact

Parental relations with children

Child(ren's) Behaviour

Children's health and wellbeing

Maintaining child(ren's) friendships

Transitions

Personal hygiene

Eating / diet

Finances

Home environment (space, privacy, carpets, doors, white goods etc)

Other

16. Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks.

Statements	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
17. I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
18. I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
19. I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
20. I've been interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
21. I've had energy to spare	1	2	3	4	5
22. I've been dealing with my problems well	1	2	3	4	5
23. I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
24. I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
25. I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
26. I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
27. I've been able to make my mind up about things	1	2	3	4	5
28. I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
29. I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	5
30. I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5
31. I've been feeling that I have appropriate support when I need it*	1	2	3	4	5
32. I've been feeling confident in my parenting role*	1	2	3	4	5
33. I've been feeling optimistic about my financial situation*	1	2	3	4	4

6. Have you been feeling isolated or lonely over the past 6 months? (please tick one only)

Never

Sometimes

Often

Always

What is your current employment status? *(Please tick **one** box only)*

Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employed: Full-time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employed: Part-time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other status <i>(Please describe below)</i>	