

# OhioKAN Program Manual

## Chapter 1 : Introduction

# Introduction

Understand the historical context and unique challenges that Kinship and Adoptive families face that inspired the development of OhioKAN.

## OhioKAN Program Manual Overview

Image



OhioKAN is a flexible and responsive kinship and adoption navigator program designed to support children, youth, and their families. OhioKAN partners with families to strengthen their networks and connect them with programs and services that meet their unique needs. Building on the premise that families are inherently capable of finding solutions to the circumstances and challenges they face, the OhioKAN program takes an inclusive, engaging, and genuine approach to strengthening families and their networks. The OhioKAN program takes a holistic approach to supporting families by focusing on both needs at the family and community level.

OhioKAN aims to address these needs by providing navigation services to kinship and adoptive families to build confidence and connections, while also building the capacity of communities and systems. Macro-level systems change is designed to support and reinforce navigation services while the network of partnerships involved in systems change efforts are expected to benefit families because a more connected system that is aware of the unique needs of kinship and adoptive families will be better equipped to meet their needs.

## Background

Kinship and adoptive families face unique challenges that have been neglected in the traditional service systems designed to support foster families. Kinship navigation programs and post-adoption programs have attempted to meet the gaps but have done so with mixed success. Moreover, due to low rigor in the research design of evaluations of kinship navigation programs<sup>1</sup>, the field lacks robust evidence about these programs' effectiveness. The demand for evidence-based programs to support kinship families has been exacerbated by rising kinship placements as a result of the U.S. opioid epidemic<sup>1</sup>. In the state of Ohio, nearly 9% of all children are being raised by kinship caregivers<sup>2</sup>.

Federal directives that impact funding have opened new opportunities for the development and evaluation of kinship navigation programs. In February of 2018, the Family

First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was enacted, allowing states to receive federal matching funds for the provision of prevention services implemented by a federally approved kinship navigator program. To qualify for approval, these programs must be evaluated according to rigorous criteria established by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse and demonstrate positive outcomes in specified domains<sup>3</sup>. As of March 2022, three kinship navigator programs have been rated by the Clearinghouse, including Ohio's Kinship Supports Intervention/ProtectOHIO which has been rated as "promising," and therefore is eligible for federal Title IV-E funding. In addition, the Clearinghouse rated both the Children's Home Society of New Jersey Kinship Navigator Model and the Kinship Interdisciplinary Navigation Technology-Advanced Model (KIN-Tech) as "does not currently meet criteria"<sup>4</sup>.

In response to the increased demand for kinship and post-adoption services and to the new legislation, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) set out to develop a statewide kinship and adoption navigation program that would be well-positioned for a rigorous outcome evaluation according to FFPSA standards. Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator (OhioKAN) is the result of this initiative, which was established in partnership with over 90 stakeholders. These stakeholders collaborated extensively to identify gaps in kinship and adoptive families' access to support and services in the state of Ohio and to generate strategies to address these gaps.

- 1 Waite, D., Greiner, M. V., & Laris, Z. (2018). Putting Families First: How the Opioid Epidemic Is Affecting Children and Families, and the Children Services Policy Options to Address It. *Journal of Applied Research on Children*, 9(1), 4.
- 2 Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). (2019, March). Fact Sheet: Kinship Care. Retrieved from <https://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/KinshipCare.pdf>
- 3 Wilson, S. J., Price, C. S., Kerns, S.E., Dastrup, S. R., & Brown, S. R. (2019). Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse Handbook of Standards and Procedures, v1.0. OPRE Report 2019-56. Retrieved from [https://preventionservices.abtsites.com/themes/ffc\\_theme/pdf/psc\\_handbo...](https://preventionservices.abtsites.com/themes/ffc_theme/pdf/psc_handbo...)
- 4 Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse. Retrieved from [https://preventionservices.abtsites.com/program?combine\\_1=&prograting%5...](https://preventionservices.abtsites.com/program?combine_1=&prograting%5...)

## Kinship and Adoptive Families

Kinship caregivers include relatives or close friends that become responsible for a child in their extended family or social network and, collectively, they account for the care of more than 2.5 million children in the United States. The circumstances leading to the caregiving arrangement can vary significantly but often follow a family crisis, during which there may be little to no preparation prior to bringing the child into the new home. The majority of these placements are "informal" meaning that the arrangement was made voluntarily, with or without the involvement of child welfare services. In addition, over 1.5 million children in the U.S. are living in adoptive families, and these two populations overlap. Of U.S. children adopted in FY 2018, 36% were adopted by relatives, while another 52% were adopted by foster parents, some of whom were likely relative or non-relative kin<sup>5</sup>. Historically, kinship care has been especially prevalent among communities of color affected by colonization, slavery, and mass incarceration<sup>6</sup>. Currently, in the U.S., Black and Latino, refugee, immigrant, and non-English-speaking families are overrepresented in kinship care<sup>7</sup>. While these placements reflect the strength of family ties and the resilience of these communities, they also point to the intersectionality of challenges<sup>8</sup>. For instance, the poverty rates for kinship families are double the U.S. average, underscoring their need for support services, such as financial and social services. Moreover, the child's transition into the new home often puts added pressure on limited household resources and creates the need to navigate a host of new service systems related to the child's needs (e.g., legal, medical, mental health)<sup>9</sup>. Adoptive families tend to have higher incomes than kinship families on average, but many are also in need of material resource and specialized supports to address changes in family dynamics over time.

- 5 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau (2019). The AFCARS Report. Retrieved from: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport26.pdf>
- 6 Rodríguez-JenKins, J., Furrer, C. J., Cahn, K., & George, K. (2020). Kinship navigator program development: Listening to family, youth, and advocate voice. *Journal of Public Children Services*, 1-23.
- 7 Bailey, S. J., Letiecq, B. L., Visconti, K., & Tucker, N. (2019). Rural native and European American custodial grandparents: Stressors, resources, and resilience. *Journal of Cross-cultural Gerontology*, 34(2), 131-148. doi:10.1007/s10823-019-09372-w
- 8 Barrio, C., & Hughes, M. J. (2000). Kinship care: A cultural resource of African American and Latino families coping with parental substance abuse. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 4(4), 15-31. doi:10.1300/J039v04n04\_03
- 9 Pew Research Center. (2013). At grandmother's house we stay. One-in-ten children are living with a grandparent. Retrieved from Washington DC: <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/09/04/at-grandmothers-house-we-stay/>

## Kinship and Adoptive Families in Ohio

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services estimates that there are 227,862 (9%) children living in kinship households in the state<sup>10</sup>. Almost 100,000 grandparents in Ohio are the primary caregivers for their grandchildren, often caring for multiple children in the household<sup>11</sup>. Of these grandparents, 67% are under the age of 60, 58% are in the workforce, 22% are in poverty, and 27% have a disability<sup>12</sup>. Additionally, well over 4,000 adoptions were processed through Ohio's probate courts in 2018, and more than 3,000 permanent custody cases were disposed in the state's juvenile courts that same year.

Given that informal kinship families may have little to no contact with the courts, less is known about their circumstances. However, of the informal kinship caregivers that received information and referral services from four rural sites in Ohio in a span of six months, 76% were white and 86% were female<sup>13</sup>. The median age was 54 years, but caregivers ranged from 19 to 74 years of age. Most had a high school education or lower and lived in low-income households<sup>14</sup>. As for children living in formal kinship households that received kinship support services in Ohio in recent years, about a third were under the age of 2 years, whereas another third were adolescents<sup>15</sup>. Of these youth, 59% were white, 29% were Black, and 4% were Hispanic. The vast majority (75%) were living in low-income households, as indicated by their eligibility for Title IV-E provisions.

Considering these national and local patterns, Ohio stakeholders met to discuss various sources of information to identify the most pressing needs faced by kinship and adoptive families. These sources included review of the research literature, national and Ohio-based kinship and adoption navigator programs, and data from caregivers and

professionals in Ohio. Based on this information, stakeholders identified five primary needs that would be targeted by OhioKAN. The following section describes the national research literature regarding the identified needs.

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- 10 Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). (2019, March). Fact Sheet: Kinship Care. Retrieved from <https://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/KinshipCare.pdf>
  - 11 Burroughs, V. & Dinehart, S. (2019, November). OhioKAN Design Workgroup Sessions. Presented at the OhioKAN Design Team meeting, Columbus, Ohio.
  - 12 Burroughs, V. & Dinehart, S. (2019, November). OhioKAN Design Workgroup Sessions. Presented at the OhioKAN Design Team meeting, Columbus, Ohio.
  - 13 Scale Strategic Solutions. (2019) Kinship navigator program evaluation: Year one final evaluation report.
  - 14 Clone, S. (2019, November). Overview of Ohio Kinship Navigator Evaluations. Presented at the OhioKAN Design Team meeting, Columbus, Ohio.
  - 15 Human Services Research Institute, Westat, & Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago. (2016). ProtectOHIO Final Evaluation Report: Ohio's Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project Covering the Third Waiver Period, 2010-2-15. Retrieved From <http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/ProtectOHIOThirdWaiverPeriod2010-2015FinalEvaluationReportFebruary2016.stm>

## The Problem: Needs at the Family-Level

Children face caregiving disruptions as a result of family adversity, often related to poverty, neglect, maltreatment, or contact with the criminal justice system<sup>16</sup>. The disruption in the caregiving placement constitutes an additional source of acute stress, and sometimes trauma, for the child and the family. Relatives responding to the need to care for the affected child take on new roles and responsibilities that they were unprepared for and often struggle with the resulting complexities of these new roles. For instance, kinship families experience issues with generational gaps, family loyalty, guilt and conflict regarding contact with birth parents<sup>17</sup>. In addition, kinship caregivers may underplay the behavioral difficulties of the children in their care<sup>18</sup>, potentially due to lack of trust of service providers or fear that further involvement with the child welfare system may jeopardize the placement<sup>19</sup><sup>20</sup>. Underreporting behavioral difficulties can result in missed opportunities for early intervention, which are particularly important given the multifaceted needs faced by children in kinship care<sup>21</sup>.

On the other hand, adoptive families often face a different set of complex dynamics. Difficulties may not emerge until specific developmental periods that fall outside the range of post-adoption support services. Conflicts in adoptive families are more likely to arise when the child reaches adolescence, which may be years after the finalization of the adoption<sup>22</sup>. Discerning differences in normative adolescent conflict from adoption-related issues can be of particular importance in these scenarios, yet families struggle to find providers that are specialized in issues of adoption<sup>23</sup>. This is a significant missed opportunity, given that adoptive parents stand to benefit substantially from understanding and learning to manage the child's difficult behaviors, even if the behaviors themselves do not change<sup>24</sup>.

Despite the prevalence of these complex family dynamics, kinship caregivers lack information about services available to address them<sup>25</sup><sup>26</sup>. Kinship caregivers may not be aware of their eligibility for certain programs and have lower expectations of assistance from child welfare compared to unrelated caregivers, especially when these families were formed via informal arrangements. Research has shown that kinship caregivers' lack of knowledge about resources moderates their children's access to needed mental health services, even when child welfare caseworkers are involved. Accordingly, recent initiatives have emphasized family engagement as a critical feature of programs for kinship families and recommended using public media campaigns, school-based programs, and health care and community professionals to promote engagement. Moreover, psychoeducation and navigation services can be especially effective to connect families with mental health services<sup>27</sup>.

Similarly, many adoptive families lack knowledge of the services that they are eligible for post-adoption<sup>28</sup>. Whereas pre-adoption services are often expected and available, families' need for services may not emerge until specific developmental periods or the occurrence of stressful events that may take place years after the adoption is finalized, after the connections to services have dissipated<sup>29</sup>. Therefore, researchers and practitioners have advocated for programs that provide a continuous model for follow-up and maintained connections to providers<sup>30</sup>.

Another long-recognized barrier that keeps both kinship and adoptive families from services is social stigma, particularly regarding mental health services. For instance, kinship caregivers may worry that the child's emotional or behavioral difficulties may be interpreted as a personal failure of the caregiver and may prompt increased involvement with the child welfare system or compromise the child's placement<sup>31</sup><sup>32</sup>. Adoptive caregivers also report feeling stigma, albeit in different forms. Weistra and Luke (2017) report that adoptive caregivers felt misunderstood by non-adopters and misrepresented as "heroes" or "desperate" by the media<sup>33</sup>. Normalization of these families' unique dynamics and difficulties and of seeking services to address them can facilitate improved service access<sup>34</sup>.

Additionally, systemic issues can exacerbate barriers to accessing services for families of color and of lower socio-economic status<sup>35</sup>. Studies have repeatedly shown that Black and Latino youth with both kinship and non-related caregivers are less likely than White children to receive recommended mental health services<sup>36</sup><sup>37</sup><sup>38</sup>. Moreover, kinship caregivers of color and of lower socio-economic status are less likely to access needed medical and mental health services for themselves, even though they experience greater need for these services than their white and higher income counterparts<sup>39</sup>. Although the intersection of race, socio-economic status, and geographical location makes it difficult to disentangle the reasons for lower service utilization, studies suggest that negative and stigmatizing experiences with services providers may be, at least partly, responsible for these disparities<sup>40</sup><sup>41</sup>. Importantly, Schneiderman and colleagues found that when Black kinship caregivers faced difficulty with access to services, they sought help from their social networks<sup>42</sup>. Understanding how cultural factors influence the use of formal and informal services among kinship families of color is essential to increasing their access to adequate supports. Moreover, assessing the presence and magnitude of providers' stigma towards the families they serve may be useful to identify and address areas for organizational training and service improvement<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Smithgall, C., Mason, S., Michels, L., LiCalsi, C., & George, R. (2009). Intergenerational and interconnected: Mental health and well-being in grandparent caregiver families. *Families in Society*, 90(2), 167-175. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.3869>.

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- 20 Berrick, J. D., Barth, R. P., & Needell, B. (1994). A comparison of kinship foster homes and foster family homes: Implications for kinship foster care as family preservation. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 16, 33-63.
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- 25 Children Services Information Gateway (2019). *Children's Bureau Grantee Synthesis: Kinship Navigation Programs*. Retrieved from <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/kinshipnavigator.pdf>
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## The Problem: Needs at the Community Level

While families benefit most from services provided by specialized professionals, finding providers with these competencies is often difficult. Lack of infrastructure for service coordination among providers and organizations that specialize in serving kinship and adoptive families may limit their visibility within the community 44 .

Communities have also struggled to strengthen interagency collaboration due to a number of organizational barriers, ranging from differences between organizational cultures and values, to practical and legal limitations regarding the release of client information with partnering agencies, to staff turnover that destabilizes interagency relationships 45 46 47 . In addition to increasing service uptake, agencies themselves stand to benefit from such collaboration, as it increases their legitimacy, credibility, and financial resources 48 . Therefore, recommendations for facilitating interagency collaboration include the development of practical information sharing protocols (such as electronic forms for exchanging information about clients) to enable more effective communication between agencies, as well as the creation and maintenance of state-level directories of available and specialized services for kinship and adoptive families.

Perhaps the greatest barrier to both kinship and adoptive families' access to services is the lack of available service agencies and providers in some communities, particularly in rural areas. Material resources and financial assistance are often among the most frequent needs for of kinship and adoptive families both in Ohio, and nationally, but direct cash assistance is not a typical component of most family-serving agencies 49 . Moreover, there are stark disparities in the distribution of other human services needed by kinship and adoptive families, including limited specialized mental and behavioral health providers in rural regions of the U.S. 50

Informed by extensive stakeholder engagement and the forgoing review of research literature, ODJFS issued an RFP for the design, implementation, and evaluation of a statewide kinship and adoption navigator program. Kinnect, a statewide nonprofit organization, was selected by ODJFS to lead the development of the OhioKAN program. The following section describes the core components of the OhioKAN program model as developed, implemented, and evaluated by Kinnect in partnership with ODJFS.

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## Chapter 2 : Core Components

# Core Components

Read about the OhioKAN core components to understand the essential program elements, functions, and associated activities.

## Core Components Overview

Image



The OhioKAN program model core components are the essential program elements, functions, and associated activities. The core components are the Features that describe an effective OhioKAN program and highlight the key Fidelity requirements necessary to produce the desired outcomes for Kinship and Adoptive Families.

**Target Population**

- Both Formal and informal kinship caregivers and adoptive parents inclusive of public or private and domestic or international adoptions.

**Voluntary Program**

- Available to families as many times as they need until the child reaches adulthood
- Dosage and intensity determined in partnership with families based on their needs and desires

**Theory of change and programmatic activities to address both Family level and community level impact**

- Local staff leadership and administrative roles to support community and system level capacity building
- Coaching to support navigation staff in providing direct services to Families

**Meaningful partnerships with community representatives with an emphasis on individuals with lived experience and direct practice experts**

- Multiple Formal opportunities for individuals with lived experience and direct practice experts to inform and engage in decision-making about program implementation and community capacity building efforts
- Formalized councils with local community representatives to build community capacity and foster awareness of best practices in serving kinship and adoptive families
- Intentional engagement with lived experience members who are diverse and representative of the community, including families of color, LGBTQ+ families, and people with disabilities

**Partnerships with public agencies and community organizations**

- Relationships with local child protective service agencies that are designed to support system involved families reduce entry or re-entry into the formal child-welfare system
- Partnerships with local service providers, community-based organizations, and community stakeholders to facilitate access to services, build community capacity, and prevent duplication of services
- Formalized councils with representatives from diverse multi-disciplinary child and family serving organizations serving diverse communities
- Intentional feedback loops with partnering sites, public agencies and programs, and local child and family serving organizations to ensure program implementation is responsive to the unique needs of kinship and adoptive families in the local context

**Tri-level Continuum of Services**

Included in the core components is the tri-level continuum of services provided to families. At the Inform Service Level families can access the public website with resources, events and content curated for kinship and adoptive families. The Connect Service Level includes navigation and family referral to programs and services. The Collaborate Service Level is individual advocacy for families seeking more engagement and support. Services are additive, so families receiving Collaborate Service Levels also receive all the services at the Inform and Connect Service Levels.

**Staff are trained in and apply the following practices at the Connect and Collaborate Service Levels:**

- Use of motivational interviewing best practices
- Strengths-based approach
- Trauma-responsive engagement skills
- Grounded in principles of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access
- Culturally responsive and identity-affirming engagement

<b>Inform</b>	Publicly available statewide and local resources	<b>Publicly available website</b> with resources, events, and content, curated for kinship and adoptive families
<b>Connect</b>	Navigation and family referral to programs and services	<p><b>Universal standard needs assessment</b> relying on parent or caregiver's self-reported needs, grounded in the value that "we believe families", and conducted in a semi-structured conversational style</p> <p><b>Individualized referrals</b> to available local and statewide services and programs</p> <p><b>Follow-up</b> to ensure connection to referrals and address any barriers or additional needs</p>

**Collaborate**

Individual advocacy for families seeking more engagement

**Individualized Support Planning** that is family driven and includes opportunity for youth voice

**Warm transfers** directly connecting parents and caregivers with referrals

**Concrete supports** including Flexible Funding to offer families direct financial support and provision of hard goods to meet families' needs

**Benefits coordination** including information and individualized support for families applying to or appealing to state benefits programs. This work is supported by intentional partnerships with entities administering state benefits programs.

**In-person services** available to facilitate access

## Core Implementation Supports

Included in the core components are the core implementation supports deemed essential for successful implementation of the OhioKAN program model.

### Commitment to continuous quality improvement

- Promotion of a culture of learning and engagement of staff in making programmatic and practice improvements to achieve outcomes for kinship and adoptive families
- Regular review of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access
- Disaggregation of data by key demographic characteristics to assess and ensure inclusion, diversity, equity, and access

### Comprehensive community service and support mapping

- Service and support mapping generates a list of resources to refer OhioKAN families to
- Assessment of the existing service array and ongoing identification of service gaps

### Localized community outreach and capacity building activities

- Outreach efforts focused on reducing stigma around support seeking behaviors and normalizing a variety of family constellations
- Convening multidisciplinary stakeholders to build awareness and knowledge within communities and across disciplines about the unique strengths, challenges, and needs of kinship and adoptive families and best practices for serving them

## Chapter 3 : Theory of Change

### Theory of Change

Review the OhioKAN theory of change to understand the challenges that Kinship and Adoptive Families face, how OhioKAN serves families and communities so that identified outcomes are achieved.

### Theory of Change Overview

Image





The OhioKAN Theory of Change was developed in partnership with stakeholders representing both public and private service providers and advocates who serve kinship and adoptive families in urban, rural, and suburban settings across Ohio. The document is designed as an overview of how the activities of the OhioKAN program are expected to lead to positive outcomes for communities and families. The primary audience is staff and stakeholders who can use this document to understand the overall design of the program and as a quick desk reference for how activities contribute to the program's goals.

Image

### THE CHALLENGE

Communities and systems don't consistently have awareness of the unique needs of kinship caregivers and adoptive parents or the capacity to appropriately and equitably serve them

There are insufficient human services and material resources to meet the needs of kinship caregivers and adoptive parents

Stigma for seeking resources, services, and supports prevents families from asking for and receiving what they need

Discrimination, racism, and systemic inequities create additional barriers for people marginalized by systems based on race, gender, class, sexual orientation, geography, religion, and other aspects of a person's identity when engaging with public and private resources, services and supports

Insufficient dissemination of information to kinship caregivers and adoptive parents about existing resources their family could benefit from and programs they may be eligible for and lack of inclusive and equitable resources

Kinship caregivers and adoptive parents are adapting to new roles and expectations while coping with trauma, changing family dynamics, and systemic inequities or may simply need additional resources, services, and supports to meet the needs of their children, themselves, and their families

### THE CHANGE

#### OhioKAN partners with families and systems to:

*Develop collaborative strategies to address awareness and capacity gaps for serving kinship & adoptive families within systems like education, health, mental health, housing, legal, and judicial while naming and confronting racism, discrimination, and systemic inequities*

#### OhioKAN co-creates solutions with families through:

- Individualized information and referrals, to meet all kinship & adoptive families' needs
- Family driven, equity-oriented, trauma responsive navigation services, benefits coordination, and advocacy to address the unique and diverse situations families experience
- Access to material resource to care for their children, themselves, and their families

#### Families Build Confidence and Connections

- Build awareness of and access to the resources, services, and supports they identify to improve caregiver, child, and family outcomes.
- Understand all their options and feel confident, supported, and committed to providing a stable home
- Connect and build community with other kinship & adoptive families, and they have the continuous support they need

#### Communities and Systems Build Capacity

- Develop awareness of kinship & adoptive families' experiences and build inclusive and equitable strategies and capacity to better support them
- Promote awareness of available and accessible connections and resources to meet the needs of all kinship & adoptive families across Ohio
- Increase their service array and develop sustainable solutions to support all kinship & adoptive families

**Figure 1. The first page of the OhioKAN theory of change documents the challenge that Kinship and Adoptive Families face and the change that OhioKAN wishes to see in support of Families and communities.**

File

DOWNLOAD THEORY OF CHANGE

The OhioKAN theory of change seeks to address the following problem statements:

- Kinship caregivers and adoptive parents are adapting to new roles and expectations while coping with trauma, changing family dynamics, and systemic inequities or may simply need additional resources, services, and supports to meet the needs of their children, themselves, and their families
- Insufficient dissemination of information to kinship caregivers and adoptive parents about existing resources their family could benefit from and programs they may be eligible for and lack of inclusive and equitable resources
- Stigma for seeking resources, services, and supports prevents families from asking for and receiving what they need
- Discrimination, racism, and systemic inequities create additional barriers for people marginalized by systems based on race, gender, class, sexual orientation, geography, religion, and other aspects of a person's identity when engaging with public and private resources, services and supports
- Communities and systems don't consistently have awareness of the unique needs of kinship caregivers and adoptive parents or the capacity to appropriately and equitably serve them
- There are insufficient human services and material resources to meet the needs of kinship caregivers and adoptive parents
- Communities and systems don't consistently have awareness of the unique needs of kinship caregivers and adoptive parents or the capacity to appropriately and equitably serve them
- There are insufficient human services and material resources to meet the needs of kinship caregivers and adoptive parents

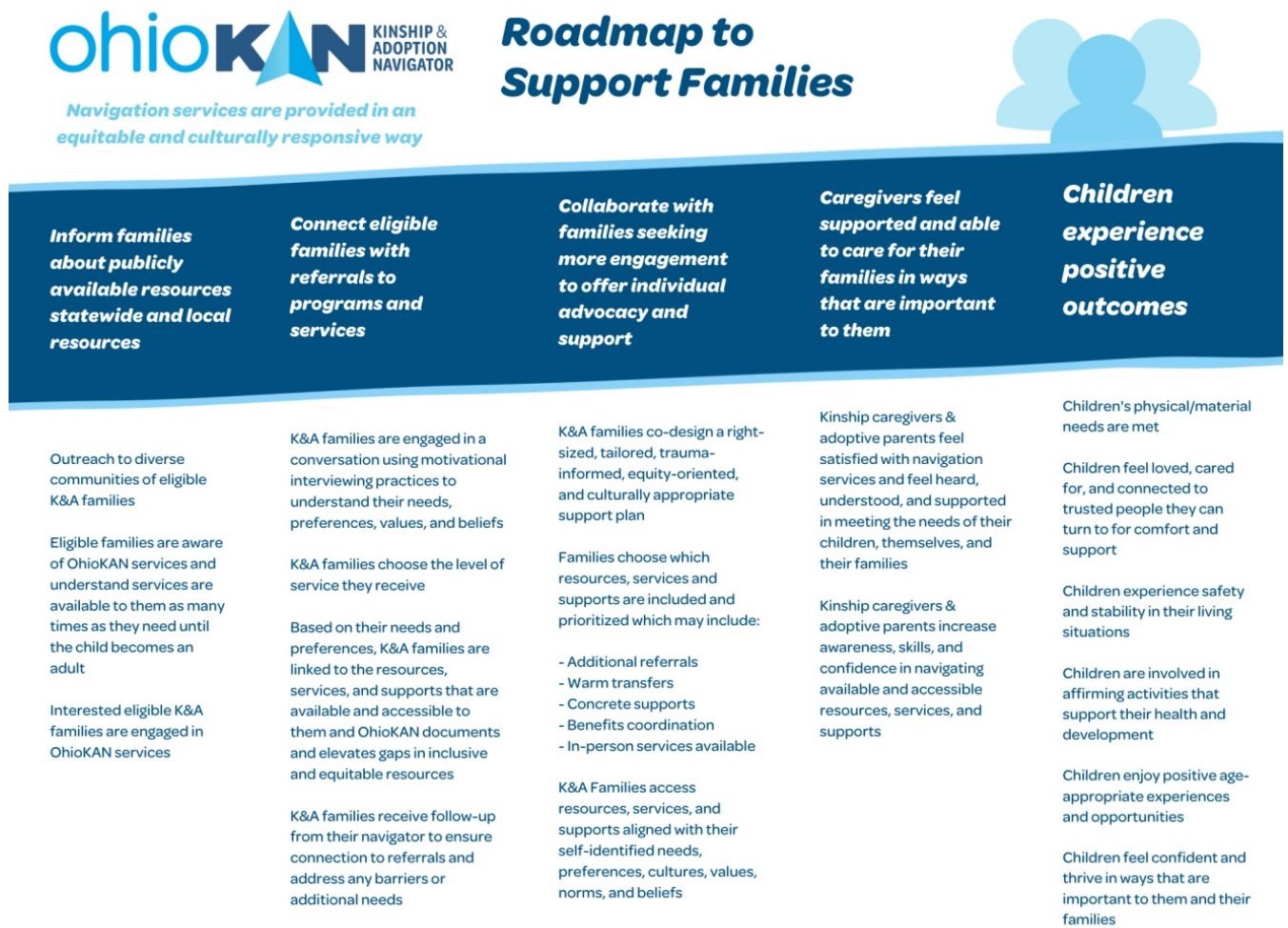
## Two Pathways of Change

OhioKAN's theory of change has two distinct complementary pathways for change. The two pathways include: direct services with families to build confidence and connections and capacity building support for communities and systems. Macro-level systems change is designed to support and reinforce the family pathway while the network of partnerships involved in systems change efforts are expected to benefit families because a more connected system that is aware of the unique needs of kinship and adoptive families will be better equipped to meet their needs. To represent this concept, the two pathways intersect.

The following sequence outlines key milestones and activities expected to contribute to the program's overall impact. The higher-level milestones are associated with key activities that contribute to the next milestone. This chain can be best understood in an if-then sequence.

For example, **if** OhioKAN promotes community knowledge of OhioKAN by launching a statewide public awareness campaign with targeted regional/county level campaigns and educates public system partners about the unique needs of K&A families and how they can be best supported, **then** local human service systems become more knowledgeable and better equipped to serve K&A families. **If** local human service systems become more knowledgeable and better equipped to serve K&A families and OhioKAN assesses and monitors the extent to which the available services and supports meet K&A families' needs, **then** OhioKAN will build community level awareness and develop connections with places families already are.

Image



**Figure 2. The roadmap to support families demonstrates the activities and desired outcomes of OhioKAN service delivery in support of families.**

**Families Build Confidence and Connections**

OhioKAN's target population includes both formal and informal kinship caregivers and adoptive parents, public and private, domestic and international adoptions. Service provision includes information and referrals to meet kinship and adoptive (K&A) family's individual needs, trauma-informed navigation services, and access to material resource to care for the child. The activities related to directly serving families are located on the dark blue roadmap, visualized in Figure 2.

- Gain knowledge and access to the human services and resources they need to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes
- Understand all their options and are confident, capable, and committed to providing a stable permanent home
- Connect and build community with other K&A families, and they have the continuous support they need

Image



## Roadmap to Support Communities



**Figure 3. The roadmap to support communities demonstrates the activities and desired outcomes of OhioKAN service delivery in support of communities.**

### Communities and Systems Build Capacity

In addition to directly serving families, OhioKAN partners with systems like education, health, mental health, housing, legal, and judicial to identify and develop collaborative strategies to address knowledge and capacity gaps. The activities related to building system and community capacity are located on the sky blue roadmap for communities, visualized in Figure 3.

- Develop awareness of K&A families' experiences and build strategies and capacity to better support them
- Become interconnected networks with the knowledge and material resources to serve K&A Families
- Increase their service array and develop sustainable solution to support K&A Families

## Chapter 4 : Partnerships with the Community

### Partnerships with the Community

Learn about how OhioKAN was first implemented in the state of Ohio and the fundamental frameworks for engaging families and honoring their needs through a lens of inclusion, diversity, equity and access.

### Partnerships with the Community Overview

Image



Partnerships with the community are a core component of the OhioKAN model with an intentional pathway included in the theory of change. Examples of such partnerships may include public agencies, community organizations, and community representatives with an emphasis on individuals with lived experience and direct practice experts.

**Meaningful partnerships with community representatives with an emphasis on individuals with lived experience and direct practice experts**

- Multiple formal opportunities for individuals with lived experience and direct practice experts to inform and engage in decision-making about program implementation and community capacity building efforts
- Formalized councils with local community representatives to build community capacity and foster awareness of best practices in serving kinship and adoptive families
- Intentional engagement with lived experience members who are diverse and representative of the community, including families of color, LGBTQ+ families, and people with disabilities

**Partnerships with public agencies and community organizations**

- Relationships with local child protective service agencies that are designed to support system-involved families reduce entry or re-entry into the formal child-welfare system
- Partnerships with local service providers, community-based organizations, and community stakeholders to facilitate access to services, build community capacity, and prevent duplication of services
- Formalized councils with representatives from diverse multidisciplinary child and family serving organizations serving diverse communities
- Intentional feedback loops with partnering sites, public agencies and programs, and local child and family serving organizations to ensure program implementation is responsive to the unique needs of kinship and adoptive families in the local context

## Governance Structure

The following is a description of OhioKAN's governance structure and approach to community partnerships tailored to the Ohio context. The OhioKAN Governance Structure was developed by the nonprofit community organization, Kinnect, in partnership with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). The Governance Structure includes the engagement of community partners, local agencies, and statewide operations all grounded in OhioKAN's CARES values and IDEA principles. The light green boxes indicate the governing agency, ODJFS, and the implementing agency, Kinnect. Below in light blue are the entities established for community partnerships, specifically Regional Advisory Councils with one council per region and a Statewide Advisory Council. Membership of all councils includes intentional engagement of community members with lived experience as kinship caregivers and/or adoptive parents. The darker green boxes indicate the Kinnect program staff that partner with the staff employed by local agencies indicated by the dark blue boxes. Kinnect program staff such as the Program Director, Regional Directors, Coaches and Regional Coordinators all work either directly or indirectly with partnered site staff such as the Partnering Supervisors and Navigators. Coaches work directly with Navigators to support service delivery and continuous quality improvement.

Image

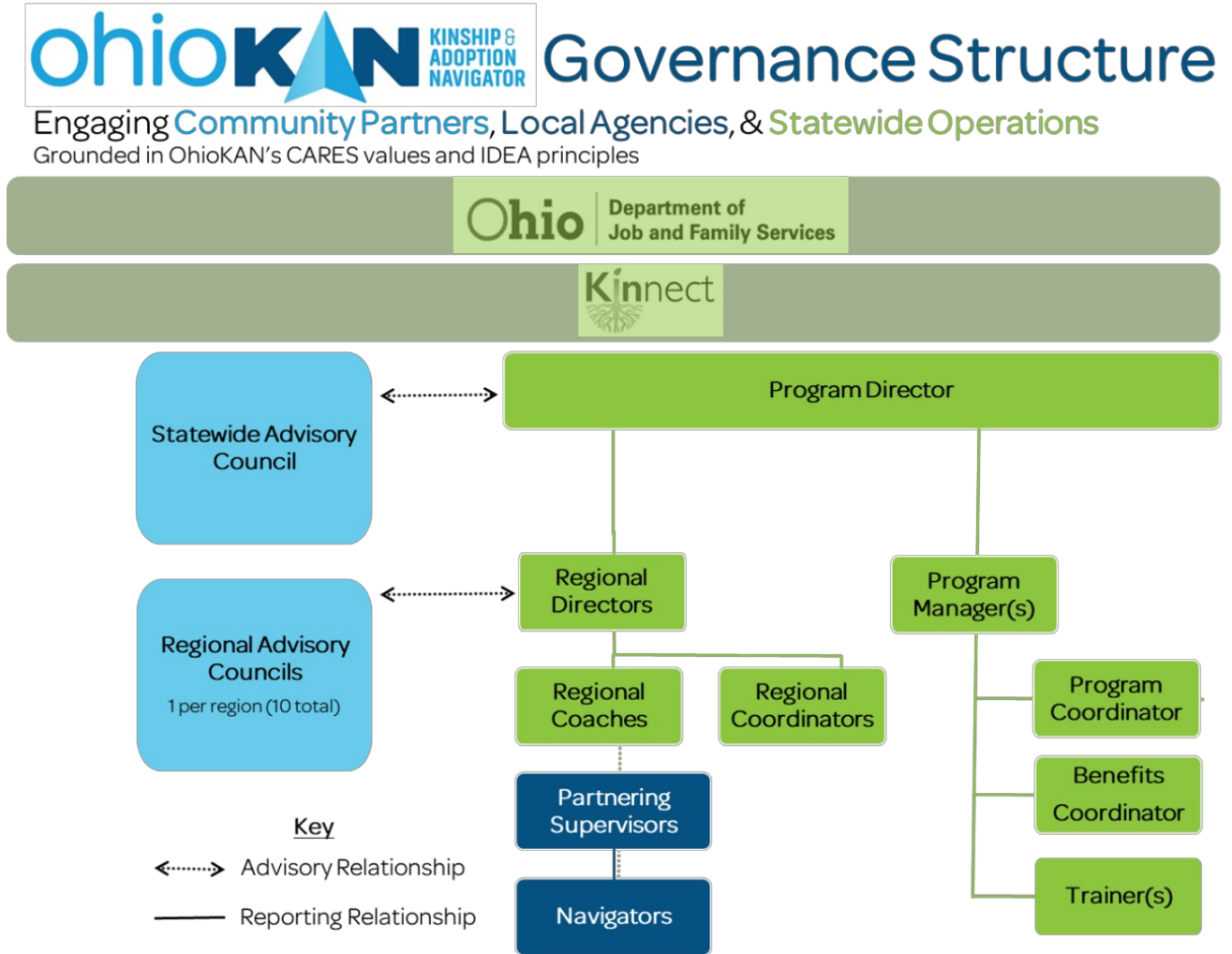


Figure 4. The above visual includes the OhioKAN Governance Structure, a visual that demonstrates the relationships between both internal and external stakeholders involved in the implementation and delivery of the OhioKAN program.

## Statewide Operations

The non-profit organization, Kinnect, and the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) partnered together to convene a formal management structure to attend to the day-to-day operations of the program's implementation, fidelity to the model, and sustainability. Kinnect is the statewide implementing provider organization of the OhioKAN program model. The management structure includes ODJFS Funding and agency staff embedded in the initial and ongoing implementation support efforts such as project and implementation teams. ODJFS staff support the Kinnect staff by providing expertise and guidance in areas such as program development, implementation, and management of the statewide data system (SACWIS).

The OhioKAN program is delivered statewide and administered regionally via ten OhioKAN regions. These geographic regions were developed as part of the initial program design, based on statewide stakeholder recommendations, Ohio census data, and county-reported population data. Each region is supported by a Regional Director with the guidance of a Regional Advisory Council, consisting of local providers and leaders within that region. Kinnect includes a set of program staff to support the OhioKAN model. Such staff include a Program Director, Program Manager(s), Program Coordinator, Program Trainer(s), Regional Directors, Regional Coaches and Regional Coordinators. You can find staff practice profiles in the 'Staffing Resources' section and staff position descriptions in the Appendix.

## Local Site Agencies

Kinnect chose to contract with local agencies to work with established organizations that have a good reputation and credibility in the community to deliver the OhioKAN program model. Selected community organizations and county agencies hire, supervise, and support Kinship and Adoption Navigators. Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Kinnect procures services from community organizations to provide navigation services to kinship and adoptive families. These navigators receive

regular coaching on the OhioKAN practice model and report to a partnering supervisor within their agency who works closely with OhioKAN regional staff to ensure the program is implemented with fidelity and is offering exemplary customer service.

## Advisory Councils

The OhioKAN program model is supported by community partners in both a Statewide Advisory Council and a set of Regional Advisory Councils. The advisory councils support the implementation of the OhioKAN program model and the execution of the community pathway of the theory of change. In partnership with OhioKAN staff, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, and the OhioKAN Regional Advisory Councils, the OhioKAN State Advisory Council works to ensure that a robust, tailored, and continuously improving service array and system-level supports are available across Ohio.

### **State Advisory Council**

The State Advisory Council plays a critical role in developing awareness of kinship and adoptive families and building system-level capacity to support them in a consistent and equitable manner state-wide. The role of this advisory council is to advise OhioKAN on communication about critical state-wide service gaps and system barriers impacting kinship and adoptive families, as well as strategize the dissemination of this information to key stakeholders. The Council facilitates connections and problem-solving regarding identified service gaps, system barriers, and resource needs to promote family well-being, prevent entry into foster care, and other areas that are identified to support the sustainability of the OhioKAN program. The focus on an equitable distribution of service and system supports across the state is rooted in the six key principles of Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Access, which include the continued analysis of historical factors; the distribution of resources and access to opportunity for families in ways that promote equity and support transformational change; ensure conditions for health, safety and economic security; and actively disrupt the perpetuation of institutional discrimination and oppression. The OhioKAN State Advisory Council is a space for state-level change-agents, subject-matter experts, senior leaders, and innovative thinkers to gather, explore new ideas, and tackle systemic issues on behalf of Ohio's kinship and adoptive families.

### **Regional Advisory Council**

Each Regional Advisory Council identifies existing programs and services that support kinship and adoptive families, determine how existing programs and services should be enhanced to best support the OhioKAN model, and identify service gaps and how those gaps should be addressed. Participants may include community organizations and stakeholders such as individuals with lived experience, caregivers, faith community leaders, area offices on aging, housing organizations, local nonprofits, managed care organizations and schools. The Regional Advisory Council plays a critical role in developing awareness of kinship and adoptive families and building community capacity to support them. In partnership with the OhioKAN Regional Director, the Council will help identify existing programs and services that support kinship and adoptive families. They determine how existing programs, services, and practices should be enhanced to best support the OhioKAN model. They identify service and practice gaps for kinship and adoptive families and how those gaps should be addressed. The identification of service gaps is rooted in the six key principles of Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Access, which include the continued analysis of historical factors; the distribution of resources and access to opportunity for families in ways that promote equity and support transformational change; ensure conditions for health; safety and economic security; and actively disrupt the perpetuation of institutional discrimination and oppression. The council provides recommendations on behalf of the region for needed services and resources to prevent entry into foster care and any other areas that are identified to support the sustainability for the regional OhioKAN program.

## Family Engagement Framework

The OhioKAN Family Engagement Framework is a guiding approach and includes a set of core principles that describe how the OhioKAN program and staff partner with kinship and adoptive families. Since the beginning of the process to design OhioKAN, kinship and adoptive families have played an important role in envisioning and identifying the services and supports they want and need. OhioKAN actively and intentionally partners with families through direct services and capacity building engagements. Both efforts build family's confidence, connections, and equip community systems to better support the unique needs of kinship and adoptive families. In partnership with families, the OhioKAN program advocates for services and systems that are inclusive, equitable, responsive, and accountable to kinship and adoptive families and communities.

### **Guiding Approach**

OhioKAN's Family Engagement Framework is based on the Parent Leadership model developed by the FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention 51 . Families and staff work together as partners to make decisions about the OhioKAN program, policies, and practices that affect families, all while sharing responsibility, expertise, and leadership. The Parent Leadership model is a strengths-based approach built on the belief that parents and caregivers are the most knowledgeable about their families and communities.

Collaborative leadership, an aspect of the Parent Leadership model, is a decision-making process that is open to all, built on general agreement and uplifts the points of view of all people involved. Staff seek out, listen, and respect family voice, and recognize that parents, caregivers, and youth are experts on their family's strengths, experiences and needs. Through collaborative leadership, OhioKAN staff and families develop a true partnership to make the best decisions for both families served by the OhioKAN program and the broader kinship and adoptive community. The OhioKAN program and staff also value and celebrate the diversity of families and operate with cultural humility, as staff engage with the intention of honoring families' beliefs, traditions, customs, and values.

### **Core Principles**

The OhioKAN Family Engagement Framework includes a set of core principles which are considered best practices to effectively engage, inspire, and uplift the voices of kinship and adoptive families in both service delivery and broader capacity building efforts.

- **Foster mutual respect and trusting relationships with strong reciprocal communication.** We develop positive relationships with families through authentic interactions over time that are meaningful to everyone involved. We seek out, listen, and respect family voice, and recognize that parents, caregivers, and youth are experts on their own family's strengths, experiences, and needs. We apply our knowledge of the OhioKAN core practice skills to have open, on-going, and two-way

communication with Families, emphasizing Families' strengths, interests, and perspectives. We value that Families and communities know their children, culture, and community. We honor the diverse set of skills, expertise, and backgrounds that equip Families with unique strengths and perspective. We are continuously in the process of building strong relationships with Families 52 .

- **Partner with Families through shared decision-making, responsibility, and leadership.** Grounded in a decision-making process, we embrace collaborative leadership that is open to all, built on consensus, and uplifts the points of view of kinship and adoptive families. We intentionally create space for families to bring their unique expertise and knowledge to decision-making about the services they receive and the priorities they address in their communities. Their deep knowledge and skills are complementary to those of staff and other stakeholders, an essential perspective to meeting the needs of kinship and adoptive families in Ohio.
- **Respect, value, and honor cultural and linguistic assets.** The OhioKAN program values and celebrates the diversity of families and practices cultural humility. Staff engage with the intention of learning about and honoring families' beliefs, traditions, customs, and values. We reflect on, name, and address inequities as well as preconceived ideas, judgements and/or beliefs in interactions with individuals, communities, and systems. We recognize the need to build and rebuild trust with families who are marginalized by systems and experience inequities and discrimination. We recognize the strengths of families; acknowledging, respecting, and learning from differences; and intentionally consider how to adapt our approach to service delivery, policy and program development so that it is culturally responsive and aligned with the values of the community.
- **Engage Families where they are.** The OhioKAN program effectively engages with families in ways that are equitable, accessible, safe, and convenient for Families. We ask families for their communication preferences, and use a variety of options such as phone, email, text, virtual meetings, or in-person meetings to ensure families are connecting with us in the ways that work best for them. We honor the time that families dedicate to engaging with the OhioKAN program by providing stipends to kinship and adoptive families who work with us as advisors 53 .

### Culture of Engagement

OhioKAN is dedicated to a culture of meaningful engagement with families at their request and pace. At every level of the program, staff authentically engage and partner with young people and families as experts on their own experience, culture, and community. The partnership with families is embedded at every level of the organization with a sustained, targeted, and on-going focus. Families add fundamental value to the program by sharing their experiences and insights as a kinship and/or adoptive caregiver, family member, or youth. The OhioKAN program invests in leadership skills of families through service and support planning, active participation of families in program development and opportunities for families' voices in system-wide capacity building efforts. Families and staff partner together to focus on these key areas to share responsibility, expertise, and accountability.

- **Service episode level.** Services are focused on a family-centered, trauma responsive, and strengths-based approach. Staff partner with families to make decisions, set goals and achieve desired outcomes throughout service delivery. Caregivers are the drivers of decision-making, determining the direction, type and level of services received from OhioKAN Navigators. In every aspect of the service episode, families feel heard, honored, and respected 54 . A family-centered and strengths-based approach of family engagement leads to an improved and shared understanding of family needs and thus leads to positive outcomes for children, families, and caregivers 55 .
- **Program level.** At the program or organization level, family members share their knowledge to improve program outcomes and enhance agency operations. Family members share their unique experiences to improve the effectiveness of the OhioKAN program. Ways to engage families at this level may include methods such as focus groups, surveys, interviews, and membership on Regional Advisory Councils 56 .
- **System level.** Families who engage with OhioKAN at the systems level have experience across and within a range of systems and have a desire to use that experience and the power of their voices to improve outcomes for children and families within the community. The voices of those with lived experience as a kinship and adoptive caregiver can highlight system and practice strengths and improvements necessary. Areas of improvement can include inconsistent processes, community gaps, and unmet service needs. In addition, families provide innovative solutions that reflect their experience and community perspective to policy and program development. To inform system level enhancements, families participate in activities such as: Regional or State Advisory Councils; training staff; contribute expertise in public forums; and membership on planning committees or implementation workgroups 57 .

### Conclusion

The OhioKAN Family Engagement Framework embodies the dedication of the OhioKAN program to effectively engage, inspire, respond to, and amplify the voices of kinship and adoptive families. OhioKAN values the importance of creating and sustaining a culture of engagement in partnership with families that is inclusive and meaningful. OhioKAN staff partner with kinship and adoptive families through direct services, program development and system-wide capacity building efforts.

We continuously review family engagement through our continuous quality improvement processes, family satisfaction surveys and transparent accessible methods for families to provide feedback. Kinship and adoptive families served by the OhioKAN program can provide feedback about OhioKAN's Services or Engagement efforts to the site supervisor and OhioKAN regional coach.

51 FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (2019). Retrieved from: <https://friendsnrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Parent-Leadership-Gui...>

52 Massachusetts Department of Education (2020). Strengthening Partnerships: A framework for prenatal through young adulthood family engagement in Massachusetts. Retrieved from: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf>

53 Center for Health Care Strategies (2021). Engaging families in program and policy development to ensure equitable health outcomes for children. Retrieved from: <https://www.chcs.org/engaging-families-in-program-and-policy-developmen...>

54 Capacity Building Center for States (2016). Family Empowerment Implementation Manual. Retrieved from: <https://library.childwelfare.gov/cwig/ws/library/docs/capacity/Blob/126...>

55 Berrick, J.D., Cohen, E., and Anthony, E. (2011). Partnering with parents: Promising approaches to improve reunification outcomes for children in foster care. *Journal of Family Strengths*, 11(1), 1–13.

56 Capacity Building Center for States (2016). Family Empowerment Implementation Manual. Retrieved from: <https://library.childwelfare.gov/cwig/ws/library/docs/capacity/Blob/126...>



57 Capacity Building Center for States (2016). Family Empowerment Implementation Manual. Retrieved from: <https://library.childwelfare.gov/cwig/ws/library/docs/capacity/Blob/126...>

## Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Framework

OhioKAN believes that equity is not only a value and desired outcome, but a process of intentional action to eliminate systemic barriers that have produced historical and contemporary inequities based on race, gender, class, sexual orientation, geography, religion, and other aspects of a person's identity.

OhioKAN stands in support of practices for the elimination of racism, classism, heterosexism, nativism, xenophobia, sexism, transphobia, ableism, discrimination against indigenous populations, and religious discrimination. Through the utilization of best practices specific to implementation science, human centered design, and trauma-informed care <sup>58</sup>, OhioKAN commits to sustained prioritization of the six IDEA principles in all practices. The IDEA principles target the distribution of resources and access to opportunities for children, youth, families, and communities in ways that promote equity and support transformational change, ensure safety, and actively disrupt the perpetuation of institutional discrimination and oppression. The six IDEA principles are:

- **Systems Analysis:** To address the web of interconnected issues that inhibit communities of color and other populations marginalized by systems who are discriminated against and may face barriers to reaching their fullest potential, OhioKAN continually analyzes historical factors and inequities. This includes the distribution of resources, policy development, and practices to address disparities and mitigate trauma.
- **Social Justice:** OhioKAN recognizes that inequities are rooted in policies and systems that unjustly disadvantage people of color and other populations marginalized by systems. For that reason, OhioKAN prioritizes solutions that are grounded in balancing power and advancing social justice for families.
- **Inclusion and Community Voice:** OhioKAN embraces an equity-oriented approach, takes meaningful steps to decenter white dominant culture and actively seeks full inclusion of people of color and other populations marginalized by systems when identifying challenges and shaping solutions that will affect their lives and communities.
- **Naming and Confronting Discrimination and Exclusion:** OhioKAN recognizes that discrimination, oppression, and exclusion have produced disparate outcomes for people marginalized by systems. OhioKAN actively confronts manifestations of discrimination and exclusion through the intentional development and ongoing analysis of programs and practices that are inclusive and equitable.
- **Intersectionality:** OhioKAN recognizes the importance of understanding how race, class, gender and other aspects of one's identity intersect, overlap, and interact with one another. Intersectionality provides some insight into how members of a family may simultaneously experience oppression and privilege in their daily lives interpersonally and systemically. OhioKAN utilizes this understanding of intersectionality in the creation of the program and practices and ensures that program analysis considers individuals' and family's intersectionality.
- **Sustained Commitment:** OhioKAN maintains a commitment to long-term, sustained investment in time, resources, and people to advance equitable realities both internally and externally for the children, families, and communities that we serve. To demonstrate the sustained commitment, OhioKAN staff and agency affiliated representatives actively:
  - Stand against violence and hate of any kind brought on to communities of color and other populations marginalized by systems
  - Supports people and communities impacted by collective or historical trauma
  - Create spaces to continuously improve self-reflective capacity to examine our backgrounds and biases
  - Work against systemic causes of inequities in communities of color and other populations marginalized by systems
  - Remain empathetic to historical, community and cultural factors that may impact experiences with OhioKAN and access to services and supports in the community
  - Engage communities and families as partners and allies
  - Guard against the implied or explicit assumption that western, white, able-bodied, and/or gender conforming/heterosexuality is the normative, standard or default position

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58 SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach. (2014) Retrieved from: [https://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA\\_Trauma.pdf](https://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA_Trauma.pdf)

### Chapter 5 : OhioKAN Service Delivery

## OhioKAN Service Delivery

Understand how the core components of the OhioKAN program model are operationalized such as the steps for opening a service episode, completing the BASICS, providing a referral binder, co-developing a support plan, following up with families, and closing the service episode.

## OhioKAN Service Delivery Overview

Image



This section describes OhioKAN service delivery, including the primary service components of outreach, screening, assessment, service opening, service referral and support, service follow-up, and closing.

## Outreach to Interested Individuals

The OhioKAN program model includes an interactive publicly available website with resources, events, and content, curated for kinship and adoptive families. The website includes a contact form for families to provide their information and to express an interest in learning more about the services. This information gathered from the contact form on the OhioKAN website feeds the Customer Relationship Management Database (CRM), which is used by OhioKAN staff to reach out to prospective kinship and adoptive families. Information collected includes the family's name, best method of contact, phone number, email, physical address, and how the person interested learned about the program.

A written procedure guides outreach by OhioKAN Staff to interested individuals listed in the Customer Relationship Management Database (CRM). The goal of this outreach is to ensure people move from expressing interest in OhioKAN to receiving services or obtaining the information they are seeking.

## Outreach Assignment and Timelines

Once the information is collected in the CRM database, the family information is assigned to the regional team responsible for the area where the family lives and then to a specific navigator responsible for reaching out to the family. Typically, two outreach attempts are made through two different methods such as a phone call, text or email within 72 hours of the assignment. Documentation of contact with the family is made when contact attempts are successful or unresponsive.

## Practice Guidance for Outreach Calls & Texts

OhioKAN staff will respond to interested individuals with a warm empathetic tone and the practices established in the OhioKAN Navigator Practice Profile, which can be found below in Staffing Resources. To reduce barriers to access and build trust, the tone of the outreach conversation should be informal. The OhioKAN Staff member will begin the conversation by introducing themselves and the OhioKAN program, asking open-ended questions, allowing the person to express the reason they wanted to be contacted, then verbally summarizing and checking back with the person to ensure the initial reason for the call is clearly understood. Over the course of this conversation, OhioKAN staff will listen and document why the person wanted to connect with OhioKAN and any other relevant information in the data system.

- If the interested individual would like to receive OhioKAN services staff will move directly to screening. After eligibility is established, OhioKAN staff will move on to the

BASICS or schedule an appointment to complete the BASICS.

- If the interested individual would like to learn more about the program, staff will respond to their questions to the best of their abilities and will send promotional materials or connect them with regional staff via email as needed.

In addition to kinship and adoptive families, nonprofit professionals and community service providers may call OhioKAN for general information about the program. Depending on the information needs of the caller, the OhioKAN staff may immediately answer questions, provide information about how families can access OhioKAN services, send printed or electronic informational materials, and/or arrange for a presentation of the OhioKAN program to a group or organization.

## Screening

A written procedure guides the completion of the OhioKAN eligibility screening. The goal of this screening is to ensure eligible families move from initial inquiry or referral to enrollment in the OhioKAN program. Families interested in OhioKAN must meet specified eligibility criteria as defined in Ohio administrative rule 5101:2-40-10.

OhioKAN staff respond to interested individuals with a warm empathetic tone and the practices established in the OhioKAN Navigator Practice Profile. To reduce barriers to access and build trust, the tone of the screening conversation should be informal. The OhioKAN staff member will begin the conversation with active listening, allowing the person to express the reason for their call, then verbally summarizing and checking back with the person to ensure the initial reason for the call is clearly understood. Over the course of this conversation, OhioKAN staff will listen and document why the person called, members of the household, contact information and any other relevant information in the data system. The primary purpose of this initial conversation is to build rapport, collect basic information about the caller and the people who live in their home, and learn enough about the family to establish eligibility.

Once eligibility has been established the service episode should be screened in the data system. Then the conversation should move immediately to Opening an OhioKAN Service Episode. If a family is not eligible, the OhioKAN staff can assist the family by providing basic information to direct the family to the appropriate services or refer the family to 211. These cases should be screened out in the data system rather than screened in.

## Screening Questions

Screening questions include the eligibility criteria related to age, location, relationship to caregiver, and other criteria. These questions are designed to clarify the information needed to make and document a screening decision. The questions do not have to be asked in any specific sequence and the Navigator should select only the areas that apply. In order to both record the response and safeguard confidentiality, the person's response to any question asked should be documented only in the data system. As soon as eligibility is established under one of the criteria, OhioKAN staff will document it in the data system and move immediately to Opening an OhioKAN Service Episode.

## Opening an OhioKAN Service Episode

The next step after the Navigator has assessed for eligibility and completed the screening process is to open an OhioKAN Service Episode. A written procedure guides staff in opening a service episode which includes the following components:

A brief description of OhioKAN services

- OhioKAN Participant's Rights & Responsibilities and informed consent
- Creating a person record for all individuals involved in the service episode
- Completion of the OhioKAN Brief Assessment and Screening to Inform, Connect, and Support (BASICS).

## Brief Assessment & Screening to Inform, Connect, and Support (BASICS)

Once the service episode is opened and the initial description of the program is shared with the family, the next step is to begin the BASICS with the family. Ideally, the BASICS is completed by OhioKAN Staff during the first or second conversation with the family.

Goals of the assessment include:

- Collect baseline information about family needs and resources
- Identify which referrals and/or supports to provide immediately
- Identify if the family would like additional support and is willing to create a Support Plan
  - Additional supports and resources include:
    - Warm hand-off referrals (calling an agency with a family to introduce them and begin the connection)
    - Assistance with an application
    - Flexible Funds and hard goods
    - Benefits coordination (assisting families with benefits applications, appeals process, and other matters)
    - Collaboration with caseworker, state or local agencies
    - In-person services to facilitate access

Family needs and resources are collected through the BASICS, which is organized into three sections and includes nine domain areas of need.

- **Basic needs:** Housing, utilities, transportation, clothing, Food, Furniture
- **Legal:** Questions about custody, delinquency court, other legal services needed
- **Caregiver Social Support:** Loneliness, no time for self, respite, support groups
- **Caregiver Health:** Mental health, behavioral health, physical health, cognitive health, dental
- **Caregiver training/education:** Caregiver or Parenting training, support for children with special needs
- **Family Functioning:** Child/caregiver relationship, attachment, bonding, Family relationships
- **Child Care:** Locating care, accessing care, after school or summer programs
- **Education/Child Development:** Enrolling child in school, IEP/504 plan, school supplies, Early Intervention, Head Start
- **Child Social Support:** Connections to peers and/or caring adults and mentors
- **Child Health:** Mental health, behavioral health, physical health, dental, special equipment needs

## Guide for Completing the BASICS

After the adoptive parent or kinship caregiver consents and has heard their rights and responsibilities, OhioKAN staff will transition the conversation to the BASICS. The questions are formatted so that they can be read like a list. Some items have specific information about who these items may be most relevant to. Given information learned earlier in the conversation with the parent or caregiver and knowledge of the family composition, OhioKAN staff are encouraged to customize the conversation. For example, you don't have to ask a family who has a toddler about school enrollment, but instead would ask about childcare and developmental screenings.

### *Explaining the rating system*

As the BASICS Assessment begins, the Navigator explains the rating system to the kinship or adoptive caregiver. The caregiver will select the level of challenge for each domain area in the BASICS. It is important that the Navigator refrain from assuming or suggesting a rating based on discussion for each domain. This aligns with the OhioKAN value that we believe in Families.

### *Asking about the BASICS domains*

As the person conducting the assessment, allow the OhioKAN Family to choose their level of need. If the person says "challenging" you can say "would you say that is somewhat challenging or very challenging" then follow with an open-ended question like "can you tell me more about what you need in this area?" While it is important to read all the questions, it is acceptable to ask them in any order. If the person has stated a need in a specific domain during the initial rapport building and screening conversation, begin the assessment by asking them about that domain first. As the Navigator begins asking the caregiver about each domain, the first set will include a focus on caregiver and family needs followed by child needs.

### *State Resources*

The last step includes a review of state programs families may already have in place or may be eligible for. If OhioKAN staff know a family is ineligible for a certain program based on the service episode type, they can mark it as not eligible and skip that question as they move down the list. For example, staff will not need to ask a kinship family if they participate in an adoption subsidy program only open to adoptive families. Similarly, if the family does not have a child under the age of five living in the home there is no need to ask the family about WIC. If staff are unclear whether the family is eligible for a program or not, err on the side of asking the question and documenting the caregiver's response.

After completing the BASICS, confirm the caregiver's preferred method for receiving referral information and describe additional support available with Collaborate services.

## After completing the BASICS

- Ask if they would like the referrals via email or mail.
- Ask if they would like additional support accessing the referrals (such as, calling the referral agency together, help filling out an application, attending a meeting, or other support).
- If they would like additional support or resources to meet their needs, schedule a time to complete a Support Plan to identify specific supports and assistance needed, see the section 'additional support' for more information.
- If they are comfortable accessing the referrals independently, ask if there is a time within the next 30 days when they would like a follow up contact and whether they would like follow up via email, phone, or text message.
- Let them know your direct contact information will be listed on the packet and encourage them to reach out if they encounter any challenges with the referrals.
- Let them know they may be contacted by OhioKAN's evaluator.
- Send the referral binder and overview sheet of all available OhioKAN services.

## Additional Support

Once you identify the family's needs in the BASICS assessment and have identified how they would like to receive their referral binder, ask the parent or caregiver if they would like additional support. Navigators may offer any of the following additional support to families:

- **Warm hand-off referrals**
  - You can offer to call an agency with a family on the phone, or call an agency on a family's behalf to make the initial introduction
- **Assistance with an application**
  - You can offer to assist a family with an application for a social service benefit (SNAP, childcare, SSI, etc.) virtually or in person if there are barriers to completing

the application virtually

- **Flexible Funds and Hard Goods**

- If a family needs hard goods like clothing, beds, car seats, etc., for their kinship or adoptive children, you can offer to directly link families to organizations and agencies for short-term assistance in obtaining these items, and follow up support
- If you have exhausted all community-based options for a family to meet a need for funds or hard goods, you can apply for flexible funds and hard goods through OhioKAN
- See the flexible funds section below.

- **Benefits coordination**

- If the family has questions about eligibility, a benefits appeal process, or would like support with an application, or other benefits challenges that require more specialized expertise, you can offer to connect them with the OhioKAN Benefits Coordinator
- See the benefits coordination section below.

- **In-person services**

- In select situations, you can offer to join a family in a meeting with the child's school, social worker, etc. in the community to provide extra advocacy for the family
- If there are barriers to providing virtual support, you may also offer to visit the family in their home to assist with applications, etc.
- See the in-person services section below.

- **Collaboration with caseworker, state, or local agencies**

- You can offer to coordinate with the family's case worker, if they have one, or reach out to local/state agency contacts to advocate alongside them

If the parent or caregiver would like additional support, ask if they have time to complete a Support Plan or would like to schedule a different time to complete it. Provide a brief overview of what to expect in creating the Support Plan so they can make an informed decision.

## Referring for Support Services

This section guides the referral process to ensure OhioKAN Families receive appropriate referrals for the needs they have identified in the BASICS assessment. For further details on assessment, see section above for Opening an OhioKAN Service Episode.

## Referral Resource

OhioKAN staff may use their knowledge about available services and consult the OhioKAN Information Hub to identify services matched to the needs of each OhioKAN Family. The OhioKAN Information Hub is updated regularly to ensure it provides complete and accurate information about the services available. All OhioKAN staff can edit the information in the OhioKAN Information Hub and keeping the Information Hub updated is everyone's responsibility.

## Referral Considerations

The Navigator suggests service referrals that are responsive to the parent or caregiver's priority concerns and informed by the BASICS and Support Plan. If the family needs additional or different referrals, these should be chosen in collaboration and partnership with the parent or caregiver taking the family's Support Plan into consideration. The following are things to consider when making referrals:

- Refer to organizations near where the OhioKAN Family lives and/or works
- Take into consideration the participant's past experiences, whether positive or negative, with organizations in their area. If an OhioKAN Family has concerns about a referral or organization, accommodate those concerns by suggesting an alternative.
- Consider transportation access (e.g., if the participant is traveling on public transportation, select an organization that is easily accessible via public transit)
- If a warm hand-off by phone, email, or in-person is needed, ensure there is a plan or scheduled time to do so and document this in the SACWIS and in the Support Plan.
- If the family has multiple needs, provide referrals to address these needs. Then, as appropriate, build out a plan with them of when and how they will access those referrals and what support they will need (e.g., reminders, assistance filling out forms, language or transportation support). Record this all in the Support Plan, specifically in the Support Plan Table.
- Use the Support Plan to prioritize and sequence support for the most urgent referral needs first. Sequencing does not mean the referrals themselves are withheld until a later date. All referrals should be provided as soon as the need emerges. However, the advocacy support related to referrals may include a plan to target one or two referrals at a time so that the number of initial engagements with service providers does not overwhelm the family.

## Referral Conversation: Service Information and Connection

- Provide the organization name, address, phone number, and website verbally as well as documenting the organization name in the Support Plan.
- If referring to multiple organizations, pause and ask the OhioKAN Participant if they have any questions or anticipate any barriers.
  - If there are anticipated barriers, document them in the OhioKAN Information Hub and ask about them during the follow up call.
- Ask if the OhioKAN parent or caregiver would prefer to receive their referral packet via email or physical mail.
- If the referral is for a brochure or other written informational resources, be sure to specifically state that you have heard the need and will be sending information for the OhioKAN parent or caregiver to read through.
- Work with the parent or caregiver to develop a plan for how and when they can access the service taking any barriers like transportation or language into

consideration.

## Services Gaps

A written procedure guides the documentation of service gaps. A service gap is when a referral is needed, but no provider is available to the family. If a family identifies a need on the BASICS as "Somewhat Challenging" or "Very Challenging," but OhioKAN staff are unable to identify an appropriate provider to meet the family's current situation, this gap is documented in the data system. This information is used to identify all a family's needs and what service gaps exist in the community. This information is used to inform Regional Advisory Council and Continuous Quality Improvement efforts.

The OhioKAN staff member can document this at the same time they document other case services provided in a binder or at any time when a referral is requested, but a provider is not available or accessible.

When a family has requested a service, but the services are not available or accessible to the family, a Case Service can be added in the data system to document the need. This may also be used when a referral was provided to the family, but the Case Service had to be ended because the family could not use the provider (i.e., ineligible, provider closed)

Sometimes a service may be available, but not accessible. These instances are documented. For example:

- The available provider does not offer services in the language the family speaks.
- The person has mobility challenges, but the available provider's facility is not ADA compliant.
- The person is part of the LGBTQIA+ community and the available provider is not affirming.
- The provider is not willing or able to provide services to a child with behavioral health needs.
- This list is not exhaustive, if you are unsure about a situation where a service seems inaccessible, talk with your coach.

## Completing the Initial Support Plan

A written procedure guides the completion of the OhioKAN Support Plan which is co-created with families who are asking for additional support in addition to referrals, also called the Collaborate Service Level. The goal of the Support Plan is to engage OhioKAN Families in planning and making decisions about the support they receive from OhioKAN, it also serves as a mechanism to communicate the planned activities and track progress towards goals. The initial version of the Support Plan should be co-created with families and then updated regularly at scheduled meetings.

## Time for Support Plan Completion

Navigators should schedule 45-60 minutes to create a Support Plan. Depending on the number and type of needs, the actual conversation with the family takes 15-30 minutes and can be done over the phone, via virtual meeting, or in-person. The remaining time is used to prepare before the meeting, finalize the Support Plan, send follow up communication to the family, and complete documentation or other action items. The Support Plan is co-developed with the caregiver or parent and may require providing additional referrals.

## Child Participation

This process may also involve the child(ren) if it is appropriate to the age of the child, the needs of the family, and relational dynamics of the situation. Before beginning the Support Plan conversation, Navigators discuss with the parent or caregiver whether the child should be involved in the planning conversation. If the parent or caregiver and the Navigator determine it is appropriate to involve the child, the Navigator describes the Support Planning process. The caregiver and Navigator decide together how best to engage the child and which part(s) of the process the child will be involved in. Some families will have multiple service episodes. The Navigator should not take child participation in a prior service episode to mean that child participation is always appropriate for the family. Instead, the Navigator should check with the parent or caregiver to determine how that child should be involved at the start of each new service episode and revisit the conversation as needed throughout the advocacy relationship. There are no circumstances where it is appropriate to involve the child in OhioKAN conversations or Support Planning without the parent or caregiver's consent. See the *Discussion Guides For Co-Developing the Kinship and Adoptive Family Collaborative Support Plan with the Family* in the Appendix for further practice guidance on engaging children in the Support Plan.

## Developing the Support Plan

The Navigator builds rapport and trust with the parent or caregiver, asks follow-up questions based on what was shared in the BASICS, and learns more about the family's circumstances to co-develop a tailored Support Plan. The Navigator's role in co-developing the Support Plan with the caregiver or parent is to facilitate their exploration of ways to address their identified needs, recognize their strengths and abilities, and identify what family and community supports they already have. The primary skills used may include appreciative inquiry and motivational interviewing. Navigators engage with families with a warm empathetic tone and the practices established in the OhioKAN Navigator Practice Profile. The *Discussion Guides For Co-Developing the Kinship and Adoptive Family Collaborative Support Plan with the Family* in the Appendix offers practical guidance and suggested questions.

The Support Plan is organized into five sections and is intentionally organized so that the Family's strengths and key relationships are discussed first to inform the development of the Support Plan. While co-creating the Support Plan with the Family the Navigator works with the Family to specify which additional supports the Family needs in addition to service referrals.

Image



**Figure 5. A brief overview of each of the sections of the support plan completed with families.**

## Additional Support Options to Include in the Support Plan

While developing the Support Plan with the Family, discuss the range of options available for additional support. Considerations in selecting the type of additional support include the unique needs and goals of the family. Navigators may offer any of the following additional support to families:

- **Warm hand-off referrals**
  - You can offer to call an agency with a family on the phone, or call an agency on a family's behalf to make the initial introduction.
- **Assistance with an application**
  - You can offer to assist a family with an application for a social service benefit (SNAP, childcare, SSI, etc.) virtually or in person if there are barriers to completing the application virtually.
- **Flexible Funds and Hard Goods**
  - If a family needs hard goods like clothing, beds, car seats, etc., for their kinship or adoptive children, you can offer to directly link families to organizations and agencies for short-term assistance in obtaining these items, and follow up support.
  - If you have exhausted all community-based options for a family to meet a need for funds or hard goods, you can apply for flexible funds and hard goods through OhioKAN.
- **Benefits coordination**
  - If the family has questions about eligibility, a benefits appeal process, or would like support with an application, or other benefits challenges that require more specialized expertise, you can offer to connect them with the OhioKAN Benefits Coordinator.
- **In-person services**
  - In select situations, you can offer to join a family in a meeting with the child's school, social worker, etc. in the community to provide extra advocacy for the family.
  - If there are barriers to providing virtual support, you may also offer to visit the family in their home to assist with applications, etc.
- **Collaboration with caseworker, state, or local agencies**
  - You can offer to coordinate with the family's case worker, if they have one, or reach out to local/state agency contacts to advocate alongside them.

Some of these supports are further described below with additional information, context and eligibility.

### **Flexible Funds and Hard Goods**

Flexible Funds provide one-time and/or short-term financial assistance to families with needs that the community cannot immediately address and meet. This assistance can be delivered in the form of payments to third parties on behalf of families, gift cards, and access to available hard good inventory. Flexible Funds are another tool in OhioKAN's suite of navigation services to better partner with families and respond to their immediate needs. Navigators, through their engagement with families and community providers, have a first-hand view of the community's available and accessible service array. Flexible Funds provide an opportunity for OhioKAN to help bridge the gap within communities where capacity to serve kinship and adoptive families is still growing.

A written procedure guides decision-making for Flexible Funds and includes an approval process to ensure appropriate use, specific exclusions (e.g., legal fees, ongoing childcare expense, etc.), and defined funding thresholds that require additional review and approval by regional directors or program leadership.

### Using Flexible Funds in Practice

Navigators initially assess for appropriateness of Flexible Fund assistance during the BASICS assessment as they learn about the family's strengths and needs. Flexible funds are only provided as part of the Collaborate-level of service when families develop a Support Plan with navigators. Through their conversations with families, navigators consider the following with regards to the appropriateness of Flexible Funds to meet the family's needs:

1. Are there available community resources that could provide services or resources for the identified need(s)?
2. If yes, have the available community resources been exhausted and no other community supports exist to support the need(s)?

Once approved, Flexible Funds are documented in the Support Plan, and the navigator and family co-develop goals and action steps to further build the family's confidence

to access services and resources they need and their connections within the community for continuous support.

### **Benefits Coordination**

Many kinship and adoptive families who engage in Collaborate Service Level qualify for local, state, or federal benefits programs, but are unaware of the programs or need support navigating the eligibility, application, and/or appeal process. The OhioKAN Benefits Coordinator provides expert support to increase access to public benefits for kinship and adoptive families

The role of the Benefits Coordinator:

- Work directly with Families to navigate benefit programs and appeals
- Train Navigation staff on the basics of Federal, state, and local benefit programs that support kinship and adoptive families
- Integrate benefits work throughout the program

The Benefits Coordinator assists kinship and adoptive families in finding benefits for which they may be eligible and assisting the family by navigating the application, submission, and appeal processes. The Benefits Coordinator often joins Support Plan calls along with the Navigator to listen to families' needs and offer knowledge and support around benefit programs. The Navigators can also schedule a call between a family and the Benefits Coordinator to specifically talk about benefit programs that the family needs additional support navigating. The Benefits Coordinator uses their state-wide connections, knowledge of the legal aid system, and nuances of benefit program processes to support the family in resolving their questions and needs.

The Benefits Coordinator also works to train Navigators as they are the first response to families when they call the program. The benefits Coordinator facilitates Navigators' basic understanding of public benefit programs and thereby empowers Navigators to provide direct assistance to families with routine benefits matters. Specifically, the Benefits Coordinator trains and coaches Navigators so they can learn the language and basic details of the most common public benefits programs and help families access applications. Since there are some benefit programs with complex applications and various nuances at the county level, it is difficult for Navigators to become experts in all the benefits that may support families. When Navigators need additional support helping a family with benefits, they can bring in the Benefits Coordinator to work directly with the family for this process.

The Benefits Coordinator researches and tracks all the local, state, and federal benefit programs that support kinship and adoptive families. They study programs that specifically target kinship and adoptive families, and those like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), etc., that may support these families as well. They take time to schedule informational interviews and develop partnerships with legal aid organizations throughout the state that often support the appeals process, and benefit staff at state and county offices. The Benefits Coordinator creates overview documents of each benefit to support Navigator learning, and documents that can be sent to families as they work to apply and appeal programs.

### **In-Person Services**

Navigators may offer in-person and in-home meetings to families in the Collaborate Service Level to families who face barriers in accessing resources and need support to connect and receive services from a community provider. The in-person meetings occur face-to-face in the community such as at a partner site, library, school, local community providers, restaurants, etc. The in-home meetings occur face-to-face in the family's home. As with every aspect of the OhioKAN program, in-person and in-home meeting services are offered to families in an equitable manner throughout the state.

#### Eligibility

All families utilizing Collaborate Service Level are eligible to receive OhioKAN's services in-person and in-home, but a Navigator may only offer in-person or in-home meetings to families who face significant barriers to accessing resources. When in-person and in-home meetings are scheduled, the Navigator consult with their Coach about preparation, details of the case, and plans to communicate before and after the meeting. Coaches consult with the Regional Director about each in-person and in-home meeting. Navigators have the discretion to offer in-person and in-home meetings based on the need of the family, and the Navigator's availability to conduct these types of visits.

#### In-Person Meetings

An in-person meeting is offered to a kinship or adoptive caregiver who faces a barrier to accessing services or has a need that can only be addressed by meeting in-person in the community with a Navigator. In-person meetings take place at a partner site location, or another neutral community location (library, school, court, local county office, restaurant, or other convenient location for the family). A partner site location, if available and applicable to the need, is the preferred option. The Navigator can offer an in-person meeting without approval by a Coach. A Coach may be asked to join the Navigator during an in-home meeting for training and supportive purposes. If a caregiver visits a partner office site unscheduled and asks to meet in-person with a Navigator who is working in the office, the Navigator starts a service episode with that individual in-person. No additional criteria needed.

#### In-Home Meetings

During, or at any point after the Support Plan discussion, Navigators may offer in-home meetings to families who indicate that it would be a significant barrier to accessing services if a Navigator could not meet in their home. In-home meetings are offered secondary to in-person community meetings and need approval by a Coach.

## **Providing the Support Plan to the Family and Completing Documentation**

The Support Plan is completed and provided to the parent or caregiver within two business days of the contact where the Support Plan was developed. Any additional referrals or relevant documentation such as activity logs should be completed within the same timeframe. The Support Plan should be sent via the parent or caregiver's preferred method of communication (email, text, or mail) and Navigators are advised to include the date and time of the next scheduled contact in the body of the message so that the parent or caregiver can reference it quickly without having to open the file.



## Frequency of Support Plan Revisions

The Support Plan is updated after each scheduled contact with the parent or caregiver and sent to them via their preferred contact method. The Support Plan is saved in a secure location as specified by the program.

## Support Plan Check-Ins and Revisions

The Support Plan check-in frequency and contact type (in-person, web meeting, or phone call) is determined in partnership with the OhioKAN Family upon initial development of the Support Plan. Bi-weekly check-ins are generally a good starting point. The frequency can change as the family's needs change. For example, a family may want to meet bi-weekly initially, but then decrease the frequency to monthly as the service episode progresses. Or a family who has wanted monthly contact may need more frequent support in response to an unforeseen situation.

The purpose of these check-ins is to ensure that OhioKAN Families receive appropriate advocacy support and additional referrals for the needs they have identified, and that Navigators learn about barriers to access, provide support, and verify that all needs are met. During each check-in, the Navigator confirms with the caregiver or parent if substantive changes and revisions are needed. Small updates to the plan are expected, however, revising the entire Support Plan at every check-in is not required.

## Preparing to Check In

Prior to initiating a check-in with the OhioKAN caregiver or parent, the Navigator reviews the documentation for the case, paying specific attention to the needs identified on the BASICS and the Support Plan, notes from the previous check-in on the Support Plan, the household composition, and the family strengths and supports. Navigators are encouraged to use names of household members and ask strengths-based open-ended questions whenever possible. For example, instead of saying, "Does your niece like the new school?" say, "How is Brittany doing with her transition to the new school?"

## During the Check-In

During the check-in, greet the caregiver or parent by name and identify yourself as a Navigator from the OhioKAN program. State the purpose of the check-in:

- To follow up on the Support Plan and check-in on identified action steps and referrals.
- To hear how their experience has been accessing or engaging with the services identified in the Support Plan.
- To see if any other needs have come up.

### **Priorities for the Check-In**

Review the caregiver or parent's priorities for the check-in and ask which needs and referrals the caregiver or parent would like to discuss first. Due to time constraints, it may not be feasible to discuss each need and referral on the Support Plan during each check-in. It is acceptable to focus on addressing a single need during a check-in, for example spending an entire check-in completing a benefits application with a parent or caregiver. A full review of all needs should be completed once the service episode has been open for 90 days or more, see section titled Quarterly Support Plan Review.

### **Priority Needs and Referrals**

Starting with the needs and referrals the caregiver or parent prioritized, ask about each referral made and summarize the caregiver's or parent's response in the Support Plan's Notes section. The response notes should be brief.

When discussing each referral, keep the following in mind:

- Has the person attempted to access the referral resource or take the action step?
  - If not, were there any barriers that prevented them from doing this?
  - If the person did not have time to act on the referral, help them think through a plan to do so by asking questions like, "Is there a time within the next week when you will have time to reach out to this organization?"
    - If the person has a plan to access a referral they have not yet attempted to connect with, ask them if they would like you to follow up again. Specify a best date or time of day to reach them and set yourself a reminder.
- If the caregiver or parent did attempt to access the referral resource, what was the result?
  - If the organization does not provide the service or has a waitlist, ensure this is documented and provide an alternative referral if possible. If an alternative referral is not possible because no other services are available, document this and elevate the service gap to the Regional Coordinator.
  - If the caregiver or parent was told they were not eligible for a service, clarify eligibility.

Since the last conversation, ask if any new needs have arisen.

- If new needs have arisen, document these in the Support Plan and provide additional referrals to address these needs.

Ask if the person feels all their needs have been met at this time and if no longer require Collaborate advocacy and navigation services.

- If yes, close the service episode.
- If no, explore additional needs and potential referrals with them. Document any new needs and referrals in the Support Plan.

## After the Check-In

Ensure all documentation, including the Support Plan, is completed and saved in a secure HIPPA compliant location. All documentation is updated within two working days of the check-in. If revisions were made to the Support Plan, indicate the revision date on the Support Plan and share the revised Support Plan with the OhioKAN caregiver or parent within two working days by phone, electronically, or hard copy. Notes added to the Support Plan during the check-in do not constitute revisions. Be sure to document if a service gap was discovered or information needs to be added to the resource data system. Revisions are defined as substantive changes to the Support Plan, such as adding, removing, or editing the following elements: individuals involved, action steps, needs, referrals.

## Quarterly Support Plan Review

When a Support Plan has been open for more than 90 calendar days, the navigator, coach, and caregiver or parent will conduct a comprehensive review of the Support Plan together to ensure that all needs have been identified and addressed with appropriate referrals and advocacy support. While similar to the structure of the Support Plan check-in process, the Quarterly Support Plan Review will revisit each aspect of the Support Plan with the family, discuss progress to date, and ensure alignment between the family's goals and the Support Plan.

## Prior to Conducting the Quarterly Support Plan Review

The Navigator schedules a time to meet with the caregiver or parent to conduct the review together. A regularly scheduled Support Plan check-in may be repurposed for this activity. The Coach and Navigator review and discuss the OhioKAN Family's Support Plan to ensure understanding of the family's network of support, strengths, needs, referral history, and progress since opening their service episode. The Coach provides recommendations on how to approach specific sections and additional referral resources.

## During the Quarterly Support Plan Review Meeting

The Navigator, Coach, and caregiver or parent review the summary notes from the Support Plan to confirm the Family's network of support, strengths, and needs identified when the service episode first opened. The Navigator asks if any events have occurred that have changed the make-up of the household. If yes, the navigator will update documentation accordingly.

The Navigator, with the Coach's additional support, will ask about each need and its referral(s) listed in the Support Plan to understand the following:

- How each referral addressed the identified need
- If there were any challenges or barriers to accessing each referred service
  - If the Family cannot access a service, this should be documented as a service gap in the data system
  - If a family does not intend to use a referral the service should be end dated in the data system
    - Example: if the family received multiple referrals to meet the same need such as three different childcare providers, and selects one of these services, the other two should be end dated
- How the Navigator provided navigation and advocacy support to ensure the Family accessed the service
- Whether additional referrals or advocacy support were needed to address the identified need.
  - If yes, Navigator, with Coach's support, suggest additional referrals and action steps for advocacy support. Revise the Support Plan to include changes accepted by the caregiver or parent.

After reviewing each need and its referrals in the Support Plan, the Navigator asks if the Family had any needs that were not identified in the Support Plan.

- If yes, the Navigator revises the Support Plan to document these needs. The Navigator, with Coach's support, suggests referrals to address these needs and revises the Support Plan to include those accepted by the caregiver or parent.
- If no, the Navigator asks if the caregiver or parent feels all their needs have been met at this time and if they are ready to close the service episode.
  - If yes, close the service episode
  - If no, Navigator confirms that the Support Plan is accurate and includes all the Family's needs (identified prior to and during the Quarterly Support Plan Review meeting)

## Referral Considerations

The Navigator suggests service referrals that are responsive to the parent or caregiver's priority concerns and informed by the BASICS and Support Plan. If the Family needs additional or different referrals, these should be chosen in collaboration and partnership with the parent or caregiver taking the family's Support Plan into consideration. The following are things to consider when making referrals:

- Refer to organizations near where the OhioKAN Family lives and/or works
- Take into consideration the participant's past experiences, whether positive or negative, with organizations in their area. If an OhioKAN Family has concerns about a referral or organization, accommodate those concerns by suggesting an alternative.
- Consider transportation access (e.g., if the participant is traveling on public transportation, select an organization that is easily accessible via public transit)
- If a warm hand-off by phone, email, or in-person is needed, ensure there is a plan or scheduled time to do so and document this in the SACWIS and in the Support Plan.

- If the family has multiple needs, provide referrals to address these needs. Then, as appropriate, build out a plan with them of when and how they will access those referrals and what support they will need (e.g., reminders, assistance filling out forms, language or transportation support). Record this all in the Support Plan, specifically in the Support Plan Table.
- Use the Support Plan to prioritize and sequence support for the most urgent referral needs first. Sequencing does not mean the referrals themselves are withheld until a later date. All referrals should be provided as soon as the need emerges. However, the advocacy support related to referrals may include a plan to target one or two referrals at a time so that the number of initial engagements with service providers does not overwhelm the family.

## Advocacy Supports

Targeted advocacy and navigation support to assist the caregiver and parent in achieving their Support Plan goals and accessing the services they have been referred to. The navigator may provide the following advocacy support as part of their Collaborate Service Level delivery:

- **Warm hand-off referrals**
  - You can offer to call an agency with a family on the phone, or call an agency on a family's behalf to make the initial introduction.
- **Assistance with an application**
  - You can offer to assist a family with an application for a social service benefit (SNAP, childcare, SSI, etc.) virtually or in person if there are barriers to completing the application virtually.
- **Flexible Funds and Hard Goods**
  - If a family needs hard goods like clothing, beds, car seats, etc., for their kinship or adoptive children, you can offer to directly link families to organizations and agencies for short-term assistance in obtaining these items, and follow up support.
  - If you have exhausted all community-based options for a family to meet a need for funds or hard goods, you can apply for flexible funds and hard goods through OhioKAN.
- **Benefits coordination**
  - If the family has questions about eligibility, a benefits appeal process, or would like support with an application, or other benefits challenges that require more specialized expertise, you can offer to connect them with the OhioKAN Benefits Coordinator.
- **In-person services**
  - In select situations, you can offer to join a family in a meeting with the child's school, social worker, etc. in the community to provide extra advocacy for the family.
  - If there are barriers to providing virtual support, you may also offer to visit the family in their home to assist with applications, etc.
- **Collaboration with caseworker, state, or local agencies**
  - You can offer to coordinate with the family's case worker, if they have one, or reach out to local/state agency contacts to advocate alongside them.

## Referral Follow Up

A written procedure guides follow up, which happens at a convenient time for the family no more than 30 calendar days after the initial referral. The purpose of this contact is to ensure OhioKAN families receive appropriate referrals for the needs they have identified in the BASICS assessment, learn about barriers to access, and ensure all needs are met. For further details on referral procedures, see above section on appropriate referral.

## Before Following Up

Prior to dialing the OhioKAN Participant's number or sending an email, the navigator reviews the documentation for the service episode, paying specific attention to the needs identified on the BASICS assessment and the household composition. Navigators are encouraged to use names of household members whenever possible. For example, instead of saying, "how is your niece doing in her transition to the new school?" say, "how is Brittany doing in her transition to the new school?"

## Follow Up Contact

Each family will receive a follow up contact as scheduled during the initial call and via their preferred method (e.g., phone call with a voicemail, text message, or email). Contacts with the family will be documented in the data system with a separate activity log for each contact. OhioKAN staff are expected to complete up to three additional contact attempts to reach a family if the originally scheduled follow-up contact is unsuccessful. These additional contact attempts should occur within five business days of the originally scheduled follow-up contact. Additional contact attempts may involve using different contact methods (phone call, text message, or email), prioritizing the family's preferred contact method. If the family does not respond to the scheduled follow-up contact and three attempts to reach them have been made, OhioKAN staff will close the service episode 30 calendar days after the initial referrals were provided.

## During the Follow-Up Contact

- Greet the person by name and identify yourself as a navigator from the OhioKAN program.
- State the purpose of the call:
  - To follow up on the referrals made during the prior call.
  - To hear about their experience accessing the service and learn if there were any barriers to service access.

- To see if any other needs have come up.
- Ask about each referral made and document the participant's response.
  - Has the person attempted to access the referral resource?
    - If not, were there any barriers that prevented them from trying to access the service?
    - If the person did not have time to act on the referral, help them think through a plan to do so by asking questions like, "Is there a time within the next week when you will have time to reach out to this organization?"
      - If the person makes a plan to access a referral they have not yet attempted to connect with, ask them if they would like you to follow up again. Specify a best date or time of day to reach them and set yourself a reminder.
      - You may also ask the Family if they need additional support in accessing a referral. If they would like additional support, ask if they have time to complete a Support Plan or would like to schedule a different time to complete it. Provide a brief overview of what to expect in creating the Support Plan so they can make an informed decision.
  - If the participant did attempt to access the referral resource, what was the result?
    - If the organization does not provide the service or has a waitlist, ensure this is documented and provide an alternative referral if possible. If an alternative referral is not possible because no other services are available, document this and elevate the service gap to the Regional Coordinator.
    - If the participant was told they were not eligible for a service, clarify eligibility.
  - Since the last conversation, have any new needs arisen?
    - If new needs have arisen, document these needs in a new BASICS and provide additional referrals to address these needs.
    - Ask the Family if they would like additional information and referrals to meet these needs, or if they would like additional support.
  - Ask if the person feels all their needs have been met at this time.
    - If yes, close the service episode.
    - If no, ask open ended follow up questions to learn more, document the need, and provide additional referrals as appropriate.

## Closing a Service Episode

A written procedure describes the process for when a service episode is closed. An OhioKAN staff may find out that a service episode has ended when they follow up with the family or when the family reaches back out to OhioKAN. There are three primary reasons a service episode may end, although other reasons may arise:

1. Family successfully accessed the provider.
2. Family was unable to access the provider, i.e., ineligibility, provider closed, or language barriers.
3. The need no longer exists, i.e., the child leaves the home, or the family met the need on their own.

## Service Episode Closure Checklist

- Ensure all documentation in the data system is complete.
- Ensure any service gaps or issues with referrals are elevated to the proper person within your team and documented in the Info Hub if appropriate.
- Create an activity log in the data system to document the final contact.
- Use the activity log to close the service episode.

Once it has been identified that a Case Service needs to end, the OhioKAN staff should document that in the data system. How you document the end of a Case Service depends on how many providers you have linked to the Case Service. If only one provider is linked to the Case Service, you end the entire Case Service. If you have multiple providers linked to the Case Service, you end each specific provider. This allows you to keep the Case Service active if the Family is still trying to access different providers or different providers have different end reasons.

Case Services automatically end when an episode is closed in the data system. If staff have no knowledge that a Service was accessed, that there were barriers, or that the family no longer needed the service then there is no need to end a Case Service or provider. This procedure only pertains to those situations in which the family has informed staff that the need for the Case Service or provider has ended.

### Chapter 6 : Staffing Resources

## Staffing Resources

Review the staffing resources leveraged in OhioKAN to train and support staff in serving Kinship and Adoptive families.

## Staffing Resources Overview

Image



This section includes frameworks and practice profiles to support the initial training and ongoing coaching of core practice skills in service to kinship and adoptive families. The Workforce Development Framework includes a brief introduction to the primary components of initial training of OhioKAN staff. Such components include a structure for the initial training, coaching and supervision, job aids and practice guides, learning communities, and ongoing training and professional development. The Coaching Framework is both a supporting document to the Coach Practice Profile and a framework to provide the essential coaching practices used in all other roles throughout OhioKAN. The Navigator and Regional Director Practice Profile delineates core practice skills and provides role-specific guidance.

## Workforce Development Framework

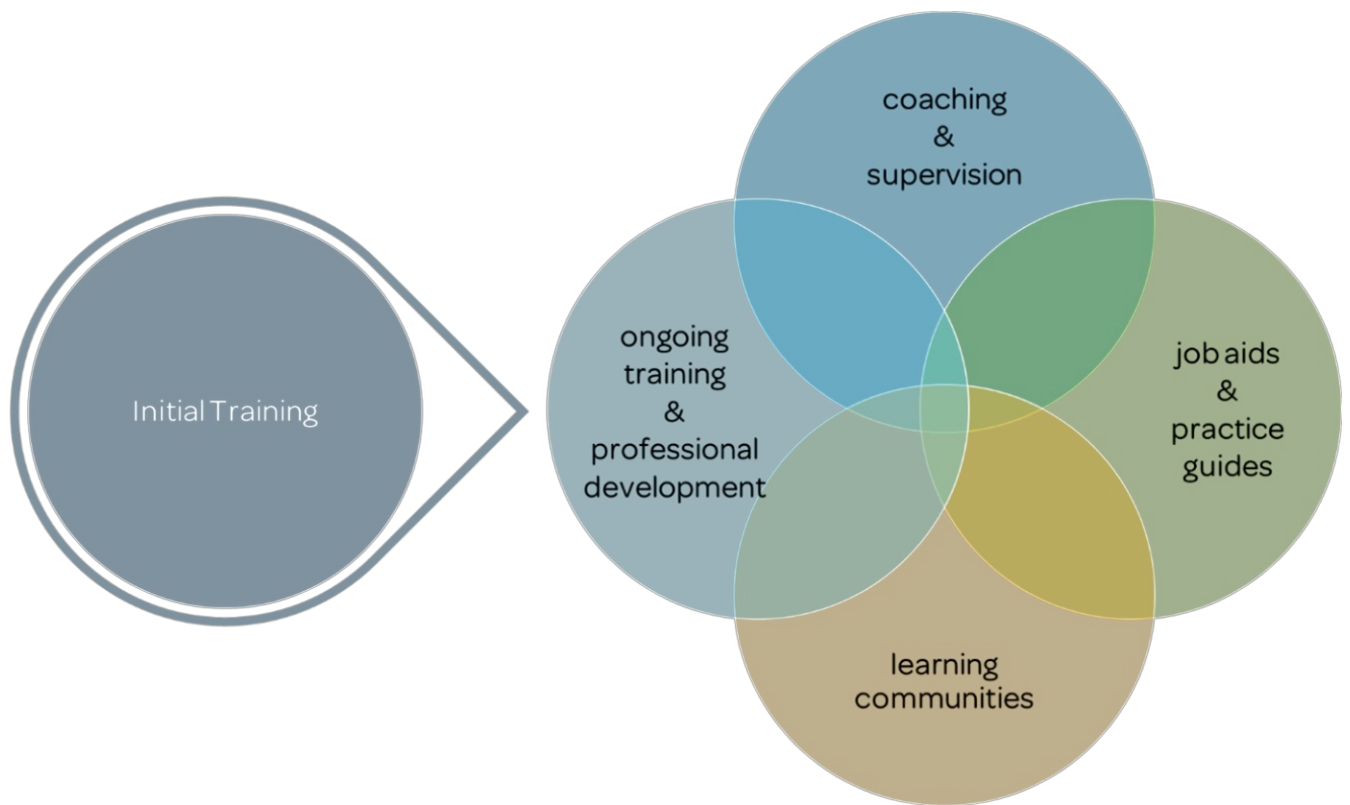
The OhioKAN workforce development framework is a comprehensive and integrated strategy for supporting personnel. The framework consists of five primary components:

- Initial training
- Coaching and supervision
- Job aids and practice guides
- Learning communities
- Ongoing training and professional development

The OhioKAN workforce development framework utilizes a variety of learning methods consistent with adult learning theory and incorporates key findings of implementation science including, but not limited to, stage-based implementation, just-in-time training, experiential learning, and individualized coaching. The modular design ensures that it is adaptable to changing workforce needs and hiring dynamics. For example, the OhioKAN workforce development framework includes initial trainings repeated monthly during the installation and initial implementation phase when many staff are on-boarded at the same time. However, the curriculum may be adapted during the full implementation and maintenance phases to support one on one and small group initial training when hiring is intermittent. Due to the geographically dispersed nature of this statewide program, all initial training is designed to be delivered virtually through video meetings.

The initial training is aligned to the position description for each role as well as overarching expectations about team culture, diversity and inclusion, and best practices for communicating with internal and external stakeholders. This set of trainer-facilitated, coach-guided, and self-guided training content is designed to be completed within the first 90 days of employment and functions as an entry point to the suite of complementary ongoing professional development opportunities. Each component in the framework is designed to be used in conjunction with one another. For example, coaching and supervision may include the use of job aids or practice guides. Similarly, learning communities may be leveraged to offer access to ongoing training and professional development opportunities across the state.

Image



**Figure 6. A high level visual of the training structure and content for the initial training.**

**Initial Training**

The initial training is designed to complement organizational onboarding. OhioKAN's installation phase includes hiring groups of 5-20 staff at a time for each of two cohorts. Staff attend a sequence of initial trainings with a group of peers, many of whom have been hired for the same position. To facilitate relationship building and support coaching and supervision, their supervisors are also invited to attend the training. As part of initial training for supervisors, they must attend the training sequence of the roles directly reporting to them at least once so that they fully understand what practice expectations are communicated to their direct reports during training.

Initial training consists of general sessions common to all positions and role-specific sessions tailored to the initial skills and knowledge needed to be successful in each specific position. All staff who are responsible for answering family calls on the OhioKAN phone line must attend the navigator training sequence.

During the installation and initial implementation stages of the OhioKAN program, trainings reflect the staged rollout of services so that staff get the information they need when they need it. Early cycles of training delivery include usability testing and mechanisms for continuous quality improvement. The training material may be refined and improved after each delivery based on feedback from the facilitator and participants. To facilitate this iterative development, Chapin Hall debriefs with the OhioKAN Trainer regularly to review training feedback and identify action steps. While these trainings are designed to be delivered to a group of staff in similar roles during installation of the intervention, the materials are easily adapted for use in groups where staff hold different positions, or for one-on-one delivery as the program moves from the early stages of implementation to full implementation.

Initial Training Timeline		
30 Days	60 Days	90 Days

- All Staff, Part 1 & 2
- Customer Service
- OhioKAN Information Hub Training
- Navigator Training, Parts 1 & 2
- Navigator Training, Part 3
- Coach Training, Parts 1 & 3
- Regional Coordinator Training
- Regional Director Training
- SACWIS Training
- Procedure 1 Training Video
- Procedure 1 Practice Calls
- Flexible Funds Training Video
- Language Line Training
- Children Services & Mandatory Reporting Overview
- Boundaries, Creativity & Innovative Thinking
- Serving Victims of Domestic Violence
- Evaluation Overview
- Trauma-Informed Care, Parts 1-3
- Management Training for Coaches
- Sexual Orientation Gender Identity & Expression (SOGIE) 101

### Ongoing Training & Professional Development

To build on the knowledge and skills acquired in the Initial Training, OhioKAN staff are provided with ongoing trainings and professional development activities appropriate to their role and professional goals. Some trainings are designed so that staff can move individually through a set of resources at their own pace, other trainings are facilitated by the OhioKAN Trainer or external partners, and some offer a hybrid model with assigned reading accompanied by a discussion with staff in similar roles. The latter can be modified from a group discussion during Installation to a paired peer discussion as the program moves into Full Implementation. The list of trainings and ongoing professional development opportunities in this section is not exhaustive. It is a starting point for the Installation Phase and will be updated throughout the Initial Implementation and Full Implementation phases of the program or as new trainings become available.

Ongoing Training & Professional Development includes any training opportunities offered after initial onboarding and aligned with professional goals or Key Performance Indicators. Much of the ongoing training and professional development coordinated by OhioKAN are offered in the context of learning communities and required for all staff in given role or cohort. Learning Communities will be explained in further detail in the following section, and can include external group training opportunities, peer-led discussions on a particular topic, and monthly cohort-based Learning Collaboratives, which are facilitated by OhioKAN staff or partners to further explore elements of practice and CQI. In addition to learning communities, individual staff may propose individual professional development relevant to their specific needs and request program funds to attend conferences, executive education courses offered by local universities, and other trainings in their field including those that offer education credits to maintain relevant professional licensures.

### Coaching & Supervision

The use of “coaching” in this section should not be confused with the staff role of OhioKAN Coaches. Coaching is support provided at every level of the program to help staff meet fidelity, improve practice, and achieve a high level of performance. While the OhioKAN Coaches certainly do this, this description of coaching and the OhioKAN Coaching Framework applies to every role on the team in regard to supervision relationships. OhioKAN's approach to supervision is characterized as a parallel process of reflective supervision at every level.

### Job Aids & Practice Guides

As listed above in the resource column, a set of job aids and practice guides are available for coaching and reference. These will be included in the Program CQI Cycle to ensure the content remains useful and current. Regional directors, coaches, and navigators all have role specific practice profiles specifying desired practice. Due to the administrative nature of the role of regional coordinators, they have a technical skills checklist rather than a practice profile. In addition to the resources provided through training, staff providing navigation services have a set of job aids available for their first 90 days of answering calls so that they are able to build confidence and work efficiently as they learn SACWIS. After 90 days of answering the phone, staff providing navigation services are expected to be proficient in documenting directly in the SACWIS system without the support of the initial job aids.

### Learning Collaboratives

In keeping with OhioKAN's commitment to continuous learning and growth, learning communities offer staff the opportunity to both direct their own learning through staff-organized opportunities and to participate in structured program- or cohort-wide education. Examples of learning communities include:

- Study groups to learn larger concepts like implementation science
- Staff-led discussion groups around inclusion, diversity, equity, and access
- Coach-led learning within regions
- Team-building conversations between regional directors and leadership
- Cohort-wide monthly Learning Collaboratives for continuous quality improvement and ongoing training (see the Learning Collaborative Framework for further specificity)

## Coaching Framework

The OhioKAN Coaching Framework is a strengths-based, structured learning process that supports the implementation, delivery, and continuous improvement of the OhioKAN program. The OhioKAN Coaching Framework incorporates several key best practice coaching models, which include five core components: collaborative goal setting, observation, action and practice, reflection, and feedback. Through this framework, Coaches build and reinforce core practice skills with OhioKAN Navigators to support fidelity to the OhioKAN model to ensure children and families are equitably served and supported. Coaches serve as a resource and partner to Navigators as they develop

and refine their skills to engage and serve kinship and adoptive families.

The Coaching Framework embodies a reflective and structured learning approach that supports Navigators to better understand their role and relate practice to the key family and community-level outcomes of the OhioKAN Theory of Change. This includes a dedicated safe space to discuss and reflect on how to best incorporate the inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (IDEA) principles in everyday practice as a Navigator. Such discussions could include debrief sessions about how to best advocate for families that are facing expressed oppression, how to ensure equitable service referrals, and reflection on one's own identity and implicit bias.

### **Core Components of OhioKAN Coaching**

#### **1. Collaborative Goal Setting**

The coaching environment is designed to be encouraging and supportive for the Navigator to learn, ask questions, and build trust with the Coach. The Coach should strive to make each coaching session a space for the Navigator to reflect and think on their practice, performance, and goals. By setting goals collaboratively, the Coach and Navigator clarify the focus of their coaching relationship. Goals are focused on developing and refining the core practice skills for the Navigator, ensuring understanding of documentation and data integrity needs, practicing in an equity-oriented and inclusive manner, and achieving OhioKAN family and community-level outcomes. When creating and setting goals, Coaches apply the S.M.A.R.T. goal method with their Navigators. S.M.A.R.T. goals are specific, measurable, achievable, result-focused, and time-limited. The Coach is responsible for helping the Navigator monitor progress towards their goals, identifying next steps to achieve those goals through joint action planning, developing strategies to address opportunities for growth in individual practice, and guiding the Navigator's learning, skill adoption, and competency in role responsibilities.

#### **2. Action and Practice**

Navigators intentionally apply the new skills they have learned through their OhioKAN training and coaching sessions when engaging directly with OhioKAN families and while completing required service episode documentation. Throughout the coaching relationship, to further reinforce Navigators' skills development and ensure program fidelity, Coaches will continuously demonstrate the Navigators' key program behaviors and activities, which include opening an OhioKAN service episode, assessing a family's needs, providing referrals, and supporting the family through ongoing advocacy. Coaches also model the Navigator's Core Practice Skills of engagement, inclusion, assessment, intervention, collaboration, active learner, and reflection to facilitate the Navigators' understanding and implementation of the OhioKAN program.

#### **3. Observation**

Coaches observe their Navigators to support performance, fidelity to the OhioKAN program, alignment with the IDEA principles, and identify areas to provide additional support. This is critical for the Coach to deliver targeted feedback to the Navigator about strengths and growth areas for developing core practice skills and effectively partnering with OhioKAN families. Coaches may observe Navigators' everyday practice both during scheduled engagements with OhioKAN families as well as through case consultation and documentation review. An observation rubric guides the Coach's assessment of the Navigator's core practice skill level and contributions towards OhioKAN family and community-level outcomes. Observation is an important part of our sustained commitment as it allows us to reflect on how our work impacts children, youth, and families - providing us with the opportunity to grow and improve.

#### **4. Reflection**

A reflective practice within the structured coaching process facilitates meaningful learning and builds trust between the Coach and Navigator. Coaches foster a learning environment that encourages and affirms vulnerability for Navigators to feel comfortable discussing areas where they may be struggling and need coaching support. Rather than overthink past decisions and actions, reflection with Coaches encourages Navigators to learn from their practice, consider how it relates to their goals and the OhioKAN theory of change, and identify strengths and growth areas. To promote self-reflection and individual analysis, Navigators are encouraged to keep a journal or log to reflect on their practice in between coaching sessions. Coaches can provide a series of questions to help prompt reflections, which can then be explored during coaching sessions. Reflection questions could include topics such as the use of Navigator's core practice skills, OhioKAN family and community-level outcomes, reflection of implicit bias and the use of the six inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (IDEA) principles, and data integrity. Coaches encourage learning and monitor progress towards achieving goals by asking questions when debriefing with Navigators and actively listening to their responses and individual reflections. Coaches are also encouraged to keep a journal following each coaching session to reflect on their own coaching practice.

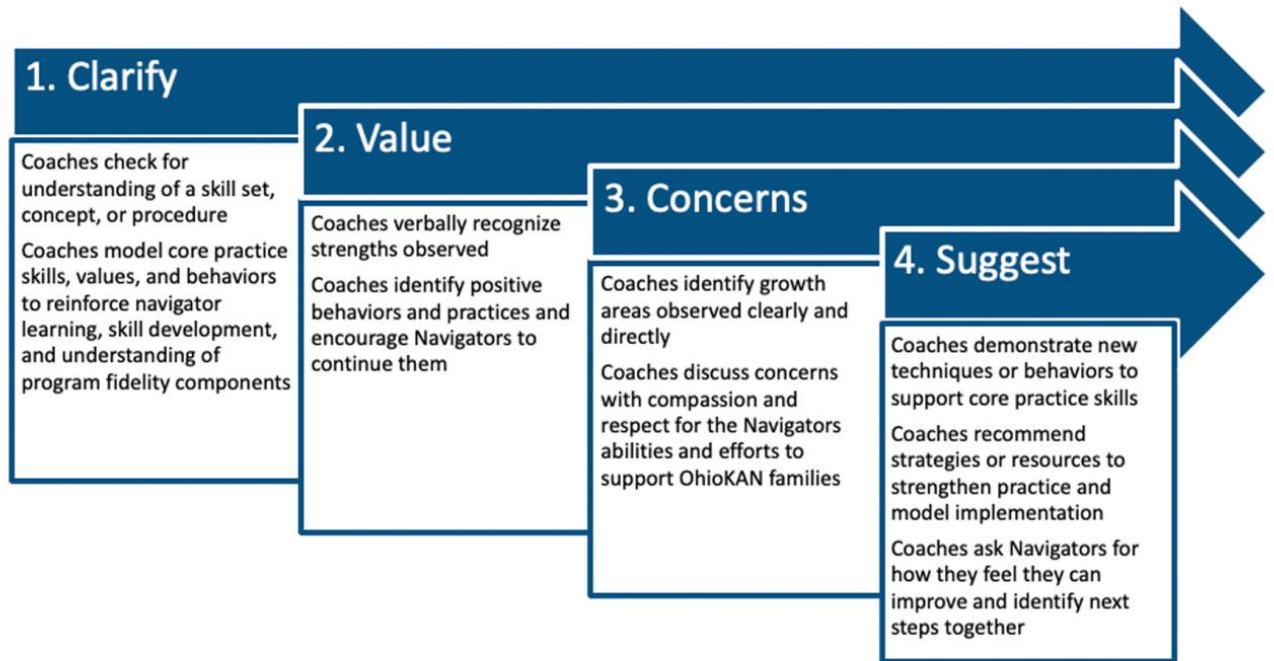
#### **5. Feedback**

Following observation and reflection, structured, timely, and clear feedback between Coaches and their Navigators is the final core component of the OhioKAN Coaching Framework. Coaches share feedback through collaborative, strengths-based discussions to support Navigators in their practice and service delivery. It is especially effective when Coaches apply motivational interviewing techniques and principles: open-ended questions, affirmations, reflective listening, and summary statements (OARS) when delivering feedback. This informed approach builds Navigators' confidence and empowers them to draw from their experiences collaborating with OhioKAN families and the larger community to solve problems as they arise. In this way, Navigators drive their own improvement and performance achievement. Coaches regularly provide feedback to Navigators; Navigators are also encouraged to share feedback to Coaches about strengths and growth areas for the coaching relationship. The Navigator's perspective is valuable to strengthening the coaching dynamic, fostering a trusting environment, and ensuring that the coaching relationship effectively supports the Navigator in their practice and service delivery.

Feedback is an opportunity for Coaches to transfer knowledge in a constructive way that not only equips the Navigators with the necessary skill set to perform their role, but also builds trust with the Navigators. Aspects of the Navigator's training may be repeated during feedback to facilitate learning and bolster skill adoption and development. The ladder of feedback method is an effective tool that Coaches will follow when preparing and sharing feedback with Navigators:

Image





### Coaching Sessions

OhioKAN Coaches maintain regular contact with their Navigators through weekly coaching sessions (at minimum) and may use a facilitation guide and standard agenda template to ensure consistent engagement. Coaching sessions may also include the Navigator's partnering supervisor to further strengthen the supervisory relationship. Throughout the coaching partnership, the Coach may create additional coaching sessions for transfer of learning activities with other Navigators in the region. The OhioKAN Coaching Framework is flexible to allow the Coaches to meet the Navigators at their individual skill level and facilitate necessary learning. As Navigators become more experienced in their role and better equipped with the knowledge and skill set to implement the OhioKAN model with fidelity, the frequency and nature of coaching sessions may evolve.

### Tools to Support OhioKAN Coaching Framework

- Coach Practice Profile
- Observation Checklist
- Coaching Session Facilitation Guide with Standard Agenda Template
- Reflection Questions
- Goal Setting Worksheet

### Core Practice Skills for Coaches

- Engagement
- Inclusion
- Collaboration
- Active Listening
- Goal Setting
- Observation
- Modeling
- Feedback
- Reflection

## Coach Practice Profile

The goal of this role is to provide coaching related to quality service delivery, fidelity to the OhioKAN program model, and performance improvement strategies when indicated. The Coach is expected to provide technical assistance to OhioKAN sites, onboard and train OhioKAN site staff in the program model on an ongoing basis and contribute to continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities at the regional level. Engaging and supporting families is rooted in the six key principles of the Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Access (IDEA) Framework, which includes the continued analysis of historical factors and inequities; prioritization of solutions that balance power and promote social justice for families; elevation of inclusion and community voice; confrontation of all forms of discrimination and exclusion; understanding intersectionality and the sustained commitment to advance equitable realities both internally and for families.

In addition to being proficient in the skills and practice behaviors expected of the Navigator role, the Coach's role includes the following skills and practice behaviors.

Core Practice Skills	
<b>Engagement</b>	<p>Engagement with Navigators begins at first encounter and is established through an honest, respectful, and empathetic approach. We create a place for the Navigator to share practice experiences by actively listening, maintaining transparency, and communicating humbly. Through this dynamic coaching relationship, we partner with the Navigators to strengthen their practice and improve outcomes for children and families. The purpose of engaging with Navigators in this way is twofold: to build trusting strengths-based coaching relationships and to model behavior that will strengthen their practice and improve outcomes for children and families.</p> <p>Genuine engagement with children, families, and community members involves building relationships that are founded on trust and respect. It requires intentional examination of our own biases and active listening to understand and honor each person's unique experiences, perspectives, strengths, and challenges.</p>
<b>Inclusion</b>	<p>Coaches and Navigators work together and routinely have one-on-one discussions to develop an inclusive practice that begins in partnership with children, families, and caregivers. The families that we serve are the experts on their own circumstance and the decision-makers about which services and supports they need. We actively center their voice, experience, and needs through appreciative inquiry and open-ended questions throughout service delivery. During conversations, we respond to discrimination and experiences with oppressive systems and practice by actively listening, validating, and asking what you can do to help and how to be of support moving forward.</p> <p>We continuously work to develop self-awareness of how our own identities and biases shape our behaviors, beliefs, and opportunities. We use humility to be the bridge of awareness and accountability to one another and the families we work with. We continually learn about intersectional identities and the ways in which those identities are affected by social service systems to better understand a family's experience working with OhioKAN, as well as the Navigator's experience working with families and their colleagues.</p>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<p>We collaborate with Navigators to define the coaching relationship and create an effective, synergetic team. We intentionally partner with supervisors to provide Navigators with the tailored support they need to implement the OhioKAN program with fidelity and serve OhioKAN families.</p> <p>We partner with Navigators to build a diverse and collaborative coalition of stakeholders, including youth and families with lived experience, from a cross-section of our community. This community collaboration will help us connect families to the services and supports they ask for, identify both practice and service gaps, and develop new service capacity to support the identified needs of kinship and adoptive families. In alignment with the systems analysis principle in the IDEA framework, Coaches actively partner with Navigators to gather practice knowledge to inform community-level collaborations and coalition building to bridge service gaps and provide better, more equitable services for families.</p> <p>As the needs of kinship and adoptive families expand and evolve in our community, we coordinate with Navigators and Regional Advisory Councils to build new and innovative collaborations and enhance existing partnerships to meet their needs. Furthermore, we aggregate and elevate common direct practice challenges to the Regional Director, CQI Process Teams, and Learning Collaboratives with the goal of working together to find common solutions.</p>
<b>Active Listening</b>	<p>We actively listen to Navigators as they share their experiences working with kinship and adoptive families and implementing the OhioKAN program. By actively listening, we improve our understanding of the Navigators' strengths, growth areas, and needs, which enables us to identify appropriate supports, training, and skill development opportunities. Active listening includes asking open-ended questions, summarizing, checking for understanding, and asking permission to offer solutions. Our commitment to an active listening style is grounded in our core value of believing families and the knowledge that families, partners and staff are the experts of their own experiences. We believe the experience of Navigators working with families and reflect this belief with active listening.</p>
<b>Goal Setting</b>	<p>We jointly develop goals with Navigators that clarify the focus of the coaching relationship. The goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based and facilitate the Navigator's performance and fidelity to the OhioKAN program.</p> <p>The Coach is responsible for structuring the process for the Navigator to monitor progress towards goals. The goal setting and tracking process is designed to build the Navigator's capacity and confidence over time. The OhioKAN model of coaching towards goals includes segmenting larger goals, identifying next steps to achieve those goals through joint action planning, developing strategies to foster growth in individual practice, and guiding the Navigator's learning, skill adoption, and competency in role responsibilities.</p>

**Observation**

Coaches and Navigators work together to create a safe space for observation. We observe Navigators in action through direct and indirect methods to provide positive and constructive feedback to ensure fidelity of the OhioKAN program and equitable service delivery. Through observations, we build a deeper trusting relationship with Navigators to support continuous growth and learning, centered around the enhancement of both the Navigator's strengths and areas for refinement.

Specifically, we accompany Navigators on visits with kinship and adoptive families to directly observe their practice, glean additional practice insights during coaching sessions, and review case record documentation. Observations provide a space to gain greater insight into the systems that kinship and adoptive families experience daily to inform continued analysis of systems through the IDEA framework.

**Modeling**

Coaching is the Navigator's primary resource for support and transfer of learning. We model behaviors, core practice skills, and effective rapport-building techniques to promote Navigators' ability to implement the OhioKAN program equitably and with fidelity. Modeling takes place in structured learning opportunities during coaching sessions, and we also embody OhioKAN behaviors and values whenever we engage with Navigators, other OhioKAN staff, families, and community members. This builds Navigators' understanding of the program and supports their effective engagement with kinship and adoptive families.

We model the active embodiment of the six IDEA principles, data and CQI practices to build evidence and contribute new knowledge to both the OhioKAN program and the broader field of kinship and adoption navigator programs.

**Feedback**

We provide structured, timely, constructive feedback to Navigators about their practice strengths and skill development based on our observations and practice expertise. We provide feedback in a way that accounts for and respects a difference in perspective, learning styles and approaches to the work. We incorporate motivational interviewing techniques and principles to deliver feedback in a strengths-based and affirming manner. We encourage Navigators to also share feedback about strengths and growth areas about their coaching relationship and we respond to this feedback in a way that is appreciative and accepting, which affirms our commitment to continuous learning. We value the Navigator's perspective to strengthen the coaching dynamic and believe it contributes to a trusting environment. This bidirectional feedback informs the coaching process to effectively support the Navigator in their learning, practice improvement, and service delivery ability.

**Reflection**

We foster a safe environment that encourages, affirms, and models vulnerability so that Navigators feel comfortable discussing areas where they may be struggling and need coaching support. We reflect in a way that is safe for all involved, allowing reflection and discussion about topics that the Navigator would like to speak about. We explicitly discuss power dynamics and the complexity of the network of relationships Navigators are establishing.

We support the Navigator's development in building awareness of how their own background and biases impact interactions with families, staff and partners. We create safe spaces to cultivate best practices for culturally humble customer service, naming issues related to IDEA. We facilitate reflection with Navigators by actively listening and asking questions, considering how it relates to their goals and the OhioKAN theory of change, and identifying strengths and growth areas. We debrief practice experiences with Navigators to prompt self-reflections and assess progress towards achieving goals.

**Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Coaching Sessions**

*When I engage with the Navigator and partnering supervisor and collaboratively set goals,*

- During the initial coaching session, establish expectations for the coaching relationship by explaining your role as the Navigator's support resource and guide. Ask the Navigator if they have experiences with a Coach and whether they have any questions or requests to tailor the coaching dynamic. Ask the partnering supervisor how they would like to be involved during these sessions. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Periodically throughout the coaching relationship, check in with the partnering supervisor to ensure that they are participating in the coaching dynamic in the way you believe is necessary and is upholding OhioKAN's mission. Their involvement may evolve over time. Reach out to your Regional Director for more support on relationship management or clarity when needed. (Collaboration)
- Collaboratively set goals with the Navigator. Encourage the Navigator to share their perspective on how they feel their role contributes to the OhioKAN program and what they hope to achieve in their role. This will help you understand their role expectations and motivations. Discuss how their goals relate to the community-level initiatives within each Regional Advisory Council, best practices in service delivery with families, and the six IDEA principles. Remind the Navigator that their coaching sessions are flexible to support them in their ability to effectively partner with OhioKAN families and can be tailored to meet their needs. (Collaboration, Goal Setting, and Active Listening)
- Explain the core practice goals that all Navigators must work on as part of the fidelity monitoring and CQI strategies. Remind the Navigator that while their set of goals will include these core practice goals, they may also add individualized, tailored goals to meet their needs. Refer to the goal setting worksheet to record goals. Let the Navigator know that you are their support to achieve their goals and will help them monitor their progress. (Goal Setting)
- Remind the Navigator that as the coaching relationship and their skill development evolve, their goals may need adjustments and new goals may be added. (Goal Setting and Collaboration)
- Check for understanding of the Navigator's core practice skills, responsibilities, procedural activities, and program components they implement. Offer to demonstrate any elements that the Navigator has questions about. (Engagement and Modeling)

*When I prepare to meet with the Navigator and partnering supervisor for a coaching session,*

- Prior to first coaching meeting: reach out to the Navigator to establish a weekly coaching session day and time and schedule the observation cadence (how often the Coach will observe the Navigator as they partner with Families and how often the Coach will review service episode documentation). (Engagement)
- Use notes from the observation rubric to identify strengths and growth areas for the Navigator's practice and skill development. Cite specific examples of when the Navigator performed well in their direct engagement with OhioKAN Families and case documentation and specific instances where the Navigator could have improved their practice. Gather the necessary learning materials to share with the Navigator. (Observation and Feedback)
- Ask the Navigator to communicate their needs related to what a safe space looks like for reflections on practice, including places where the Navigator may feel stuck such as difficult areas within practice or cultural understandings. Through discussion, develop suggestions and identify strategies to build the Navigator's skills in delivering family-centered and strengths-based service. (Feedback)
- Prepare the coaching session agenda using the standard coaching session agenda template and share with the Navigator in advance to ask for their input on additional agenda items. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Reach out to the partnering supervisor to invite them to the coaching session if they do not already regularly participate. (Collaboration)

*When I facilitate reflections with the Navigator and partnering supervisor,*

- Facilitate reflections with the Navigator on their practice, service delivery, and progress towards their goals. Remind the Navigator that the coaching session is a learning environment for them to hone their practice, ask questions, and feel comfortable sharing and discussing areas where they are struggling and need support. (Reflection)
- Ask the Navigator to share their individual thoughts on their practice strengths, growth areas, and challenges. Actively listen to the Navigator when they describe their experiences and any challenges they've encountered. Use guiding questions (outlined below) to prompt reflections (Reflection and Active Listening)
  - Which aspects of your interactions with OhioKAN Families do you feel most confident about?
  - Which aspects of your interactions do you feel least confident about?
  - What's something you wish you had done differently/plan to do differently in the future?
  - Which aspects of your interaction and engagement with families do you feel need a bit more practice or familiarity?
  - Were there any portions of your calls you found particularly sad or disturbing? (Prompt to encourage processing of secondary trauma when relevant)
  - Were there any parts of your interactions that made you feel uncomfortable or uneasy? If so, why?
  - Where did you see the potential for bias (positive or negative) to influence your decisions?
  - Were there any apparent community system barriers that we could elevate to the Regional Advisory Councils?
- Ask the partnering supervisor to share their reflections on the Navigator's practice (Reflection and Collaboration)
- Debrief complex service episodes and strategies for selecting referrals. Ask the partnering supervisor for their consultation on more challenging service episodes. Ask follow-up questions that help the Navigator learn from past practice, identify strategies for improvement, and understand how the support they provide to OhioKAN Families is contributing to program outcomes. Provide your Navigator with a supportive environment and be aware of any secondary trauma stress responses they might display. (Active Listening and Reflection)
- Listen for themes across your Navigators' reflections to inform how best to support them and whether challenges are community-based and could be experienced by more than one Navigator. (Active Listening)

*When I provide and discuss feedback with the Navigator,*

- Based on observations, provide feedback to the Navigator using a structured, strengths-based approach. Clarify understanding of Navigator core practice skills and OhioKAN program procedures, such as eligibility requirements, screening decision-making criteria, service selection and referral provision, and case management process. Ask the Navigator if they have any questions about the core elements of the OhioKAN program. Gently remind the Navigator that you are their primary resource and partner as they implement the program. You are available to demonstrate or review elements covered in the Navigator's training to reinforce their learning and understanding of the program. (Feedback and Modeling)
- Emphasize the Navigator's positive contributions to the OhioKAN program outcomes by identifying their strengths. Discuss the positive behaviors, practices, and performance you observed and provide clear examples. Link the positive practices observed to the Navigator's goals and progress towards achieving them. (Feedback)
- Share practice concerns using an empathetic, compassionate approach. Let the Navigator know that you recognize their ability to engage with OhioKAN Families and that they are knowledgeable about their families' service needs. Identify the Navigator's growth areas you observed and provide specific examples of how they can improve. Ask for their feedback on your observation and affirm that they understand your reasons for identifying the growth areas. Remind the Navigator that you are specifying growth areas to strengthen their ability to serve OhioKAN Families and contribute to positive outcomes for families. (Feedback)
- Pulling from the Navigator's direct practice you observed, model alternative strategies, techniques, and behaviors for engaging with and supporting OhioKAN Families. In doing so, you are building the Navigator's capacity to serve a range of families who may need different approaches to facilitate positive engagement. (Modeling)
- Suggest strategies and guidance on ways the Navigator can address their growth areas and improve their practice. Provide additional training resources and learning materials that can aid their development. Ask if they have additional ideas on ways to improve. (Feedback)
- Check in with your Navigator to see whether they have any unmet needs you can support them with as well as any feedback for ways to improve the coaching relationship. (Active Listening, Feedback, and Engagement)
- Following feedback, jointly plan next steps and strategies to address identified concerns and growth areas with the Navigator. This may entail adjusting and amending established goals. (Goal Setting and Collaboration)

*When I Coach a Navigator on direct practice with Families,*

- Model OhioKAN CARES values, the six IDEA principles, the Navigator's core practice skills, behaviors, and characteristics through my language, demeanor, and attitude when engaging with Navigators, community members, and kinship and adoptive Families. (Modeling)
- Model and demonstrate engagement and facilitation techniques that Navigators can apply in their own engagement with OhioKAN Families. (Modeling)
- Reinforce role development and application of core practice skills by using role playing exercises to prepare the Navigator to support families with basic or complex needs. (Modeling)

- Practice answering and screening hotline calls, conducting the BASICS Assessment, making service selections and referrals, completing service episode documentation, facilitating caregiver/Family meetings, and closing a service episode
- Be mindful of trends and challenges in the community, as well as interpersonal challenges, that may affect a Navigator's ability to support OhioKAN Families; actively seek solutions and supports when needed. This includes having an awareness of current systemic barriers and cultural context that a family may be dealing with and incorporating that awareness in practice with families. Incorporating this awareness includes the ability to actively listen, collaborate and observe how families are describing their experiences to better inform our service delivery. (Active Listening, Collaboration, and Observation)

*When I coach a Navigator on working in the community,*

- Discuss and co-plan with Navigators about the different opportunities and strategies to educate system partners about the unique needs of K&A Families and how they can best be served and supported. (Inclusion & Collaboration)
- Reflect and work with Navigators on how to build upon their advocacy skills to support the development and increased accessibility of needed supports and services within the community and for families. (Engagement, Reflection & Collaboration)
- Be aware that there may be times when Navigators connect with system partners that display discriminatory or exclusive behavior, encourage Navigators to continue to advocate for the family in these situations. Touch base with Navigators often and if needed, find the time and space to reflect on experiences and discuss concerns and next steps together. (Collaboration, Inclusion and Reflection). If discrimination continues, work to contact and refer the family to services that are respectful and inclusive of all families. (Inclusion & Collaboration)

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action within the CQI Process**

*When I observe a Navigator directly in action and practice and indirectly through documentation,*

- For observing the Navigator's direct practice with OhioKAN Families each month, shadow the Navigator by accompanying them when meeting with a family or listening to a call when they answer the OhioKAN phone line. Reassure the Navigator that you are participating as an observer and support. Let them know that you may model alternative approaches and techniques for handling the situations you observe during your coaching sessions to improve and strengthen their practice. Use the observation rubric to assess quality practice and ensure fidelity to the OhioKAN program. (Observation and Modeling)
- For observing the Navigator's indirect practice with OhioKAN Families, review service episode documentation (call notes, service referrals, Support Plans, BASICS Assessment, Collaborative Assessment, written communication with families) for each week's new service episodes. Use case note review guiding questions (outlined below) to assess quality practice and fidelity to the OhioKAN program. (Observation and Engagement)
  - Are all required data points entered for the service episode's documentation?
  - Was the referral packet sent within 24 hours of completing the BASICS?
  - From the case notes, how did the Navigator demonstrate core practice skills of engagement, collaboration, and active listening during their engagement with the family?
  - Were the provided service referrals appropriate to meet the needs identified in the BASICS Assessment? Are there other referrals the Navigator could have provided?
  - Was post-referral follow-up conducted in a timely manner (within ten business days of referral distribution)?
  - For Collaborate Service Level episodes: Were the service referrals provided in the Support Plan appropriate to meet the needs identified in the Collaborative Assessment?
  - For Collaborate Service Level episodes: Is the frequency of contact appropriate to effectively engage and collaborate with the caregivers and families?
- Monitor trends in Navigators' practice and skill development. Listen for common themes in your Navigators' challenges. This can inform your coaching and teaching approach as it points to skills and areas to focus transfer of learning activities. These challenges may be trends in other regions that can be further discussed at your cohort's Learning Collaborative or CQI Process Team. (Active Listening and Observation)
- Support Navigators in preparing for quarterly CASP reviews by critically reflecting on their practice and ability to provide timely and appropriate referrals for Collaborate Families during coaching sessions. Co-facilitate quarterly reviews with Navigators and families and model key practice skills and behaviors as needed. (Reflection and Modeling)

*When I facilitate a Learning Collaborative,*

- Discuss trends in practice observed, service needs, referrals, and common themes across Navigator engagements with OhioKAN Families as identified by the CQI Process Team with the Learning Collaborative. Prompt Learning Collaborative members to reflect on these trends and how they relate to their individual experiences. Engage members of the Learning Collaborative in reflection and discussion on how to uplift and build on inclusion in our spaces. (Reflection, Inclusion, and Collaboration)
- Share observations on how OhioKAN is implemented and suggest general growth areas for program fidelity. Encourage Learning Collaborative members to provide feedback on these growth areas, revise them as needed, and build consensus for them. (Observation and Feedback)
- Guide the Learning Collaborative through the CQI process, especially with activities that occur during the Plan, Do, and Study phases. (Modeling)
- Create opportunities for members to frame challenges in their own words, support them in elevating areas of concern, and listen to their experiences engaging with OhioKAN Families. (Active Listening, Feedback, and Collaboration)
- Co-design small tests of change within the Learning Collaborative based on members' feedback and contributions and follow up on their implementation with Navigators during coaching sessions. (Collaboration and Reflection)
- Build member consensus on key issues to share with the CQI Process Team for their feedback and reflection. Collaborate with members to identify important issues collectively, ensuring that all members' voices are heard by periodically summarizing, consolidating, and repeating issues they raise. (Collaboration)

*When I participate in the CQI Process Team,*

- Prior to CQI Process Team meetings: Regularly review regional CQI indicator data reports, observation rubrics, and general observations of staff practice to identify trends, disparities and challenges in practice, service needs, referrals, and common themes across Navigator engagements with OhioKAN Families in my region. (Engagement and Collaboration)

- Share observations on my region's OhioKAN implementation, strategies for improvement progress, and main takeaways from my cohort's previous Learning Collaborative session. (Observation and Engagement)
- Actively listen to peers as they share their observations on practice trends, service needs, referrals, and challenges in their regions. (Observation and Engagement)
- Collectively identify growth areas for program fidelity and general program implementation with the CQI Process Team. Be mindful that my voice is not the only voice heard and make efforts to encourage all members to contribute their thoughts. (Active Listening and Engagement)
- Co-design Learning Collaborative session agendas with CQI Process Team members that incorporate challenges discussed. (Active Listening, Collaboration, and Engagement)
- Delegate time-sensitive, CQI-related tasks to regional coordinators and promote collaboration across the CQI Process Team. Clarify needed support and assistance with regional coordinators to ensure understanding. (Collaboration)

**Our Core Practice Skills in Action with Regional Advisory Councils**

*When I engage with a Regional Advisory Council,*

- Discuss trends, with a focus on disparate impact on communities marginalized by systems, in service needs, community providers available, and common themes across Navigator engagements with OhioKAN Families with the Regional Advisory Council.
- Discussion of trends is rooted in the six IDEA principles to proactively address systemic racism and system barriers faced by OhioKAN Families and the larger Ohio community. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Share observations on how the OhioKAN program is being implemented and identify general growth areas for program fidelity. (Observation and Engagement)
- Create opportunities for direct practice experts to frame challenges in their own words and support them in elevating areas of concern within the Regional OhioKAN team and to the Regional Advisory Councils in partnership with the Regional Director. (Engagement and Collaboration)

**Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Reflection**

*When I reflect,*

- When you feel uncomfortable, get curious about it. Reach out to your Regional Director, peers or someone you trust to debrief. (Reflection, Inclusion, and Collaboration)
- When you realize you may have hurt or offended someone by what you have done or not done, apologize and take steps to make amends and improve. (Reflection and Active Learner)
- When someone comes to you about how you may have hurt or offended them – listen and ask questions to make sure you understand, thank them for bringing this to your attention, take accountability and apologize. Reflect after the conversation on ways you can prevent a situation like this in the future. (Reflection and Active Learner)
- Identify your own strengths, biases, areas of growth, and places where you need to ask for help. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Continually examine your own power and privilege and how you are using it. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Reflect on how your intersectional identities are similar and different than those of your colleagues. Even if you have shared experiences, differentiate your own experiences from the experiences of your Navigators or other colleagues. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Questions to ask myself as I reflect (Reflection, Inclusion, and Engagement). In what ways...
  - Did I support inclusion?
  - Did I create opportunities for a family or Navigator to be vulnerable?
  - Did I respond to vulnerability?

## Navigator Practice Profile

The goal of the kinship and adoption Navigator is to support kinship caregivers and adoptive parents in accessing the services, resources, and social support they need to care for themselves and the children in their homes, through a trauma-responsive and equity-oriented approach. We provide these services with the objective of improving placement stability and well-being for all children and caregiver/adoptive parents.

The work of identifying services and supporting families is rooted in the six key principles of the Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Access (IDEA) Framework, which includes the continued analysis of historical factors and inequities; prioritization of solutions that balance power and promote social justice for families; elevation of inclusion and community voice; confrontation of all forms of discrimination and exclusion; understanding intersectionality and the sustained commitment to advance equitable practices with families, partners and colleagues.

Core Practice Skills	
<b>Engagement</b>	<p>Engagement begins at first encounter and is established through an honest, respectful, and empathetic approach. We create a place for the family to tell their story by actively listening, maintaining transparency, and communicating humbly. We communicate through our words and body language our belief that the family is the expert on their situation. Through collaboration and partnership, we establish relationships with the kinship and adoptive families we serve, public agencies, and community organizations.</p> <p>Genuine engagement with children, families, and community members requires intentional examination of our own biases and active listening to understand and honor each person's unique experiences, perspectives, strengths, and challenges.</p>

<p><b>Inclusion</b></p>	<p>Inclusive practice begins in partnership with children, families, and caregivers. The families that we serve are the experts on their own circumstance and the decision-makers about which services and supports they need. We actively center their voice, experience, and needs through strengths-based and open-ended questions to avoid making assumptions about a family's experience. During conversations, we acknowledge, validate, and respond to discrimination and experiences with oppressive systems and oppressive practice.</p> <p>We continuously work to develop self-awareness of how our own identities shape our behaviors, beliefs, and opportunities. We use humility to be the bridge of awareness and accountability to one another and the families we work with. We continually learn about intersectional identities and the ways in which those identities are affected by social service systems to better understand a family's experience working with OhioKAN. Our commitment to practice skills of inclusion ensures that we use language and phrases that families can relate to and understand.</p>
<p><b>Assessment</b></p>	<p>We listen, gather, and make meaning of information Families share with us to understand the individual's and family's strengths, needs, perspectives, and wishes. We know families are experts of their own experiences and create opportunities for them to express their needs. We understand that the needs of Families can change; therefore, this collaborative process is ongoing through formal and informal interaction with the family.</p> <p>We use this same practice skill as we gather information related to the strengths and needs of communities where OhioKAN families reside. Throughout this process, we have regular discussions focused on the historical and current systematic ways the communities we work with were/are currently marginalized to further improve how we address disparities and mitigate additional trauma or re-traumatization. Remaining curious of community needs and strengths assists us to identify gaps in services.</p>
<p><b>Intervention</b></p>	<p>When sharing information and connecting to services, we empower and actively assist kinship and adoptive families in obtaining support, that is individualized and intended to achieve their identified goals. We know that families are the experts on their strengths, needs, and experiences. We partner with families to achieve their goals, work in the community to identify the services and supports they ask for and offer referrals to community organizations and partners. We actively note when community services are not available or accessible and make efforts to increase the service array.</p> <p>Meeting the needs identified by the family is our priority. In our collaboration with families, we explore and prioritize ways to remain solution focused and avoid reinforcing inequitable systems. We recognize that communities of color and other populations marginalized by systems are often met with discrimination and experience barriers to accessing services. To address access challenges, disparities, and mitigate trauma, we have regular discussions focused on the historical and current ways communities are marginalized by systems. We actively identify, document, and elevate service gaps and barriers.</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p>	<p>We work to build a diverse and collaborative coalition of stakeholders, including youth and families with lived experience, from a cross-section of our community that will help us connect families to the services and supports they ask for, identify service gaps, and develop new service capacity to support the identified needs of kinship and adoptive families. As we work and learn with families, we uplift their intersectional identities and unique experiences, remain strengths-based, and commit to shifting power towards families. In our work with families, we also avoid damage imagery and drawing upon stereotypes. The needs of kinship and adoptive families will evolve in our community, and we will continue to search for new and innovative collaborations to meet their needs.</p>
<p><b>Active Learner</b></p>	<p>Learning is an ongoing and vital component of the work we do in our community and with individual families. We approach families as partners and allies, with cultural humility and empower them as experts to inform us about their strengths and needs. We approach this work with curiosity and improve our understanding of why and how people are marginalized by systems in order to advance equitable realities both internally and for the children, families, and communities that we serve. To promote continuous learning, we use the Observation Rubric monthly with our Coaches, participate in practice calls, receive feedback on areas of strength and growth, and set goals to build on our skills.</p> <p>We endeavor to improve our response and array of supports to build their strengths and address their needs. We embrace this commitment through continuous quality improvement activities such as actively reflecting on our practice, drawing insights on program delivery, and ongoing training and coaching. We also work to continuously examine our own biases, participate in listening and learning from diverse communities, and contribute new knowledge to the broader field of kinship and adoption Navigator programs.</p>
<p><b>Reflection</b></p>	<p>Self-reflection on our practice with families and communities is an essential part of our sustained commitment to advanced equitable realities for the children, families, and communities we serve. We also have the responsibility to build and maintain an equitable, safe, and inclusive environment within our organizational community by reflecting on how we interact with each other. Self-reflection is a skill that takes practice. It requires us to be open to others and to hold ourselves accountable while also practicing self-compassion and forgiveness.</p>

*When Receiving an Initial Contact,*

- During the initial contact, keep in mind this may be the caregiver/adoptive parent's first interaction with OhioKAN. It is important that their experience with you is marked by professionalism, acceptance and humility. The caregiver/adoptive parent is exercising strength and courage by calling, and it is a privilege to receive their call.

One of the objectives of this initial call is to determine if OhioKAN is the right program for the caregiver/adoptive parent (Engagement)

- During the initial contact, explain your role and create space for the caregiver/adoptive parent to tell you their story to gently lead the caregiver/adoptive parent to answer the screening questions (outlined in SACWIS). This connection with the caregiver/adoptive parent is a conversation, rather than a formal interview. It is likely that the answers to the screening will present themselves while they share their story. Do ask for clarity, be mindful to not make assumptions about what you are hearing. Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent for their contact information. (Engagement and Assessment)
- Approach the conversation through a trauma-responsive lens by understanding the trauma kinship and adoptive families may experience remaining empathic, and staying solution focused. (Engagement, Assessment, and Inclusion)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent does not meet the service criteria for OhioKAN, explain why and refer them to the appropriate service provider(s) or resource, if possible, to address their concerns. (Intervention)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent meets OhioKAN criteria, explain how OhioKAN can support them. Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent if they would like to participate in the OhioKAN program and get their permission to gather a bit more information about their situation through the BASICS. (Assessment)

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Families Screened into OhioKAN**

*When I open an OhioKAN service episode,*

- After the caregiver/adoptive parent has been screened in to OhioKAN and given consent to participate in the program, complete the BASICS assessment with the caregiver/adoptive parent to gain an initial understanding of the family's strengths and needs. Through open, transparent, and nonjudgmental communication, you show the caregiver/adoptive parent you see them, respect them, and believe they know what is best for their family. Explain that the BASICS helps you learn about their needs so that you can provide them with tailored support. Let the caregiver/adoptive parent set the pace for the conversation while they share more details about why they called OhioKAN and what services and support they're looking for. (Engagement, Inclusion, Assessment and Active Learner)
- Based on the caregiver/adoptive parent's responses to the BASICS assessment and by practicing self-reflection on what you have learned from the family and their needs, determine whether you can respond to their needs with referral information. (Assessment, Reflection, and Inclusion)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent is receiving Connect Service Levels, provide the caregiver/adoptive parent with the appropriate referrals and information to community providers and resources. Ensure the caregiver/adoptive parent knows they can reach out to you at any time to address any needs or concerns that arise; provide the caregiver/adoptive parent with your email and phone number. (Engagement and Intervention)
- Let the caregiver/adoptive parent know that you would like to follow up with them to see how they are doing and check if they have any other needs you can help with. Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent if you may follow up with them within two weeks and if they have a preferred contact method. (Engagement and Assessment)
- Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent if they are willing to participate in a satisfaction survey after the follow-up. (Active Learner)

*When I follow up with the caregiver/adoptive parent after sharing initial referrals,*

- Reach out to the caregiver/adoptive parent within two weeks of when their service episode opened using their preferred method of contact. (Engagement)
- Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent if they have been able to access the services you provided referrals for and if so, how did it go. (Assessment)
- Ask if they have other needs you can support with and record their response in the OhioKAN Database. (Assessment and Active Learner). Inform the caregiver/adoptive parent that the OhioKAN program is available to them as often and for as long as the program can be of assistance. (Engagement)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent determines that they do not have any other needs, begin discussing the process for closing the service episode (Intervention) and let them know that they will receive a request to complete a satisfaction survey to give feedback on the services received. (Active Learner)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent has not yet accessed referred services, ask if they would like additional support and/or have additional needs. (Active Learner and Engagement)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent requests additional support and/or has additional needs, continue services accordingly. (Engagement and Intervention)
- After the conversation, take a minute to regroup and reflect on how it went. Focus on how you're feeling, what you did well and what you want to improve on for next time. If needed, journal, engage in a few minutes of mindfulness, or reach out to your Coach for a debrief, support and/or guidance. (Reflection)

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Families Screened into the Collaborate Service Level of service**

*As I prepare to meet with adoptive and kinship families,*

- If you did not handle the initial inquiry, you will review the BASICS to ensure you have an understanding of the family's story and what precipitated the call as well as any potential service areas where you would like to gain more information. (Assessment and Inclusion)
- Reach out to the caregiver/adoptive parent to introduce yourself, explain your role, describe the Support Planning process, and request the opportunity to meet to learn more about what they need and to plan together for services. Ask who they would like to invite to participate in the meeting and schedule the meeting day, time and method that is accessible for the family (Assessment/Active Learner/Collaboration)
- Collect the necessary resources you will need when you meet with the caregiver/adoptive parent, e.g. BASICS, Support Plan, information on referrals provided in the initial binder (Intervention)

*When I meet initially with an adoptive parent or kinship caregiver/adoptive parent,*

- Introduce yourself, explain your role, and plan to co-create a Support Plan during the meeting so you can gain an understanding of the family's diverse identities, strengths, and needs. (Engagement and Inclusion)
- Let the caregiver/adoptive parent know you appreciate their outreach to OhioKAN and that you value their input and insight into their family's strengths and needs. (Engagement and Active Learner)
- Develop the Support Plan together through an equity-oriented lens by using open-ended questions, appreciative inquiry, and motivational interviewing and actively listening to what the caregiver/adoptive parent says. Respond to answers in an empathic, strengths focused and nonjudgmental manner. (Assessment and Inclusion)
- Reflect to the caregiver/adoptive parent your understanding of their circumstances, strengths, needs, and any culture-specific factors to ensure you understand what the caregiver/adoptive parent is saying. (Engagement/Assessment/Collaboration)



- Based on information gathered, co-develop a Support Plan with the caregiver/adoptive parent by identifying formal public services, community resources, and social supports that are culturally appropriate for the family and align with the caregiver/adoptive parent's goals. Use your knowledge of local resources and consult the OhioKAN info hub to identify needed trauma responsive and equity-oriented services, resources, and supports. (Intervention)
- Provide the caregiver/adoptive parent with the name, address, and phone number of the specific services, resources, and supports via their preferred method of communication (email, text message, or mail). (Intervention)
- Explain what happens next – establish the frequency and objective of follow up meetings in partnership with the caregiver/adoptive parent, schedule the next meeting, including location (virtual meeting, in-person, or phone), and discuss how the caregiver/adoptive parent can contact you. (Engagement)

*When I am assisting with a referral,*

- Once you have worked with an adoptive parent or kinship caregiver/adoptive parent to identify their needs, begin working with them to provide referrals. We always offer the family a choice to connect to their referrals through a warm transfer. A warm transfer is personally connecting the family with the service provider. A warm transfer can be done by connecting the family via phone to the provider or taking the family to the appointment and introducing them to the provider. If the caregiver/adoptive parent does not prefer a warm transfer, we respect their wishes because we believe that families are inherently capable of finding solutions to the circumstances and challenges they face. (Intervention)
- When offering referrals, ask the caregiver/adoptive parent if they have the necessary resources to access the referral. For example, do they have transportation to the counseling services that are being recommended? (Assessment)
- If a family needs flexible funds or hard goods, explain the process and anticipated timeline, ensure they understand what documentation and signatures you will need to complete the request, and ensure you have the appropriate information to deliver the flexible funds or hard goods if the request is approved. (Intervention)
- When we learn that families are experiencing system level challenges such as services that are not available or accessible, we elevate to the appropriate party which may include the Benefits Coordinator, Coach, and Regional Director. (Inclusion and Collaboration)

*When I have ongoing meetings (virtual meeting, in-person or phone) with adoptive and kinship families,*

- Check in with the caregiver/adoptive parent to inquire about progress being made on each element of their Support Plan. Discuss any successes or challenges they have encountered since the last meeting. Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent how you can assist them in overcoming their challenges. (Engagement)
- Review the Support Plan and work with the caregiver/adoptive parent to address any barriers that may have arisen since the last meeting. (Intervention)
- Discuss with the caregiver/adoptive parent any adjustments they would like to make to the Support Plan, e.g., timelines, goals that have been met or need to be added. (Assessment)
- Confirm changes to the Support Plan, as needed. (Intervention)
- Review the comprehensive needs assessment to assist the caregiver/adoptive parent in identifying any additional areas of support. (Assessment)
- Confirm the caregiver/adoptive parent would like to meet again and finalize meeting details such as location and date/time. (Assessment)

*When a family identifies their needs have been met,*

- Once the caregiver/adoptive parent lets you know that all their needs have been addressed, begin discussing the process for closing the service episode. (Intervention)
- Make sure the caregiver/adoptive parent understands that the OhioKAN program is available to them as often and for as long as the program can be of assistance until the child reaches adulthood or is no longer living in a kinship/adoptive home. (Engagement)
- As needed, encourage the family to continue services and supports.
- Gain the caregiver/adoptive parent's permission to contact them in four weeks to check in with them to see if OhioKAN can be of any further assistance (Assessment)
- During the pre-episode closure check-in, let the caregiver/adoptive parent know they will receive a request to complete a satisfaction survey to give feedback on the services they received. (Engagement and Active Learner)

*When I am out in the community engaging with families and partners,*

- When reaching out to community agencies to understand their services and make connections, find a moment to express OhioKAN's commitment to working with kinship families of all backgrounds. (Engagement, Collaboration, and Inclusion)
- When working with system partners, find opportunities to educate them about the unique needs of K&A families and how they can best be served and supported. (Inclusion and Collaboration)
- Advocate for and otherwise support the development and increased accessibility of needed supports and services within the community. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- If system partners exhibit any kind of discrimination and exclusion, try your best to advocate for the family by educating system partners about the family's intersectional needs, strengths, and barriers (Inclusion and Engagement). If discrimination continues, work to contact and refer the family to services that are respectful and inclusive of all families. (Inclusion and Collaboration)

**Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Reflection**

*When I reflect,*

- When working with families, during a follow-up call for example, take a minute to get grounded in your conversation by providing an overview of the last call from your perspective. Share relevant reflections about resources and the experience thus far with the family. Take a moment for the family to reflect and provide any clarifications on the last call from their perspective or confirm shared understanding. (Engagement and Reflection)
- When you feel uncomfortable, get curious about it. Reach out to your Coach or someone you trust to debrief. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- When you realize you may have hurt or offended someone by what you have done or not done, apologize and take steps to make amends and improve. (Reflection and Active Learner)
- When someone comes to you about how you may have hurt or offended them – listen and ask questions to make sure you understand, thank them for bringing this to your attention, take accountability and apologize. Reflect after the conversation on ways you can prevent a situation like this in the future. (Reflection and Active Learner)

Learner)

- Identify your own strengths, biases, areas of growth, and places where you need to ask for help. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Ask for feedback, support or guidance. (Reflection and Active learner)
- Continually examine your own power and privilege and how you are using it. (Reflection ad Inclusion)
- Notice when you're judging someone or telling yourself negative stories about another person's motives or intentions. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Notice when you are reaching your limits of physical and emotional energy and take steps to care for yourself. (Reflection)
- Reflect on how your intersectional identities are similar and different than those of the families you are working with and colleagues. Even if you have shared experiences, differentiate your own experiences from the experiences of the individuals you are working with. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Questions to ask myself as I reflect (Reflection, Inclusion, and Engagement). In what ways...
  - Did I support inclusion?
  - Did I create opportunities for this Family to be vulnerable?
  - Did I respond to vulnerability?
  - Did the Family lead this conversation?
  - Can I grow moving forward?

## Regional Director Practice Profile

The Regional Director's goal is to strategically lead their regional team to ensure that service delivery and capacity objectives are successfully met. The Regional Director is dedicated to building regional, county, and community-level partnerships and supports for the OhioKAN program in their region. Our dedication is rooted in community and family engagement as partners and allies when identifying challenges and shaping solutions to actively disrupt the perpetuation of institutional discrimination and oppression.

The work of engaging and supporting families is rooted in the six key principles of the Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Access (IDEA) Framework, which includes the continued analysis of historical factors and inequities; prioritization of solutions that balance power and promote social justice for families; elevation of inclusion and community voice; confrontation of all forms of discrimination and exclusion; understanding intersectionality and the sustained commitment to advance equitable practices with families, partners and colleagues.

As Regional Directors, we provide these supports to our regional team to facilitate their ability to assist kinship caregivers and adoptive parents with accessing the services, resources, and social support they need to care for themselves and the children in their homes. This practice profile reflects the core practice skills and behaviors for Regional Directors of OhioKAN. Key principles of leadership and management approaches from Dare to Lead (Brown, 2018) informed the development of this practice profile 59 .

Core Practice Skills	
<b>Engagement</b>	<p>Engagement begins at first encounter and is established through an honest, respectful, and empathetic approach. We establish trusting relationships with our regional team, the kinship and adoptive families we serve, public agencies, and community-based organizations, and providers.</p> <p>Genuine engagement with children, families, community members, and our team involves building relationships that are founded on trust and respect. It requires intentional examination of our own biases and active listening to understand and honor each person's unique experiences, perspectives, strengths, and challenges.</p>
<b>Inclusion</b>	<p>Inclusive practice begins in partnership with children, families, community members, and our team. The Families that we serve are the experts on their own circumstance and the decision-makers about which services and supports they need. We actively center their voice, experience, and needs throughout service delivery. When working with families, partners, and our team, we acknowledge, validate, and respond to discrimination and experiences with oppressive systems and oppressive practices. We continuously work to develop self-awareness of how our own identities and biases shape our behaviors, beliefs, and opportunities. We use humility to be the bridge of awareness and accountability to one another and the families we work with. We continually learn about intersectional identities and the ways in which those identities are affected by social service systems.</p> <p>We are responsible for building an inclusive space for all team members to be successful. This is done by believing our team members when they share with or confide in us, exploring ways to improve inclusion, holding welcoming spaces to have open dialogue, and naming and confronting discrimination and exclusion of any kind within our team or throughout OhioKAN.</p>

<p><b>Assessment</b></p>	<p>We listen, gather, and make meaning of information Families share with us to understand the individuals' and Family's strengths, needs, perspectives, and wishes. We know Families are experts of their own experiences and create opportunities for them to express their needs. We understand that the needs of families can change; therefore, this collaborative process is ongoing through formal and informal interaction with the family.</p> <p>We structure strengths-based, open-ended questions that focus on Family's strengths and aspirations using appreciative inquiry and motivational interviewing techniques. We use this same practice skill as we gather information related to the strengths and needs of communities where OhioKAN Families reside. Throughout this process, we have regular discussions focused on the historical and current systematic ways the communities we work with were/are currently marginalized to further improve how we address disparities and mitigate additional trauma or re-traumatization. Remaining curious of community needs and strengths assists us to identify gaps in services and drives our outreach and relationship-building efforts with human service organizations, community providers, and stakeholders across our respective regions.</p>
<p><b>Intervention</b></p>	<p>We ensure our team has the initial training and ongoing coaching needed to implement OhioKAN with consistency to empower and actively assist kinship and adoptive families in obtaining support, that is individualized and intended to achieve their identified goals. Meeting the needs identified and driven by the family and community is our priority. We know that families are the experts on their strengths, needs, and experiences. We partner with Families to achieve their goals and work with the community to identify the services and supports they ask for. We actively note when community services are not available or accessible and make efforts and advocate to increase the service array.</p> <p>We recognize that communities of color and other populations marginalized by systems are often met with discrimination and experience barriers to accessing services. To address access challenges, disparities, and mitigate trauma, we have regular discussions focused on the historical and current ways communities are marginalized by systems. We actively identify and elevate such service gaps and barriers and co-create strategies with communities to increase an equitable service array and promote best practices when serving kinship and adoptive families.</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p>	<p>We collaborate with our OhioKAN colleagues to create an effective, cohesive team. We intentionally partner with Coaches and partnering sites to provide navigation services with the tailored support they need to implement the OhioKAN program with fidelity and to serve OhioKAN Families. We work to build a diverse and collaborative coalition of stakeholders, including youth and families with lived experience, from a cross-section of our community that will help us connect families to the services and supports they ask for, identify service gaps, and develop new service capacity to support the identified needs of kinship and adoptive families.</p> <p>In alignment with the systems analysis principle in the IDEA Framework, we listen to and gather practice knowledge from our teams to inform collaborations and coalition building to bridge service gaps and provide services for families. We actively manage the partnering site and Navigator selection process and closely collaborate with partnering sites to ensure that Navigators are effectively trained and supported in their ability to deliver the OhioKAN services the family has identified, in a strengths-based, trauma-responsive, and solution-focused manner. We advocate alongside kinship and adoptive families for equitable access to services to achieve their goals. The needs of kinship and adoptive families will evolve in our community, and we will continue to search for new and innovative collaborations to meet their needs.</p>
<p><b>Active Learner</b></p>	<p>We recognize active learning is an ongoing and vital component of the work we do in our community and with individual Families. We endeavor to improve our response and array of supports to highlight Families' strengths, to address their needs, and to mitigate instances of inequitable distribution of resources. We embrace this commitment through continuous quality improvement activities such as participating in learning collaboratives, reviewing data, actively reflecting on our practice, and ongoing training and coaching. We also work to continuously examine our own biases, participate in listening and learning from diverse communities and contribute new knowledge to the broader field of kinship and adoption navigator programs.</p>
<p><b>Active Listening</b></p>	<p>We actively listen to our regional team and community stakeholders as they share their experiences collaborating with kinship and adoptive families through the OhioKAN program and other services. We are committed to an active listening style that is grounded in the knowledge that team members, partners, and families are the experts of their own experiences. By actively and attentively listening, we improve our understanding of the team's and community's strengths, growth areas, and needs. This enables us to identify appropriate supports, training, and skill development opportunities together. Active listening includes asking open-ended questions, summarizing, affirming, checking for understanding, and asking for permission to support them in identifying solutions. Our commitment to an active listening style is grounded in our core value of believing families and our teams, and the knowledge that families, partners, and colleagues are the experts of their own experiences.</p>
<p><b>Observation</b></p>	<p>We monitor and observe program performance and outcome data to ensure consistent implementation of the OhioKAN program model, actively participate in the CQI process, and inform strategic decision-making. We monitor CQI dashboards, regional performance reports, and service episode data to build understanding of OhioKAN's reach, service population, community strengths, needs and barriers, fidelity and quality of services provided, and outcomes. Observation is an important part of our sustained commitment as it allows us to reflect on how our work impacts children, youth, and families - providing us with the opportunity to grow and improve.</p>

**Goal Setting**

We co-create professional development goals, including an IDEA related goal, with our regional team that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based. We also collaborate with partnering supervisors to achieve site performance indicators and set performance expectations. We support Navigators with the goals they have set with their Coach. These goals facilitate our team's performance and fidelity to the OhioKAN program.

We support our team to monitor progress towards professional development goals and build their capacity and confidence over time. We coach our team through goals by segmenting larger goals, identifying next steps to achieve those goals through joint action planning, developing strategies to foster growth in individual practice, and guiding learning, skill adoption, and competency in role responsibilities.

We facilitate identification of strategic objectives and implementation planning with Regional Advisory Councils. We support our Regional Advisory Councils with setting specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based goals and objectives to achieve positive community impact.

**Feedback**

We clearly provide structured, timely, and constructive feedback to our team about strengths and impact based on our observations and program expertise. We provide feedback in a way that accounts for and respects a difference in perspective, learning styles, and approaches to the work. We practice the courage to say what we mean and mean what we say with the belief that being clear is kind, while being unclear is unkind. We incorporate motivational interviewing techniques and principles to deliver feedback in a strengths-based and affirming manner.

We encourage our team to also share feedback about our supervisory relationship and we respond to this feedback in a way that is appreciative and accepting which affirms our commitment to continuous learning. We value our team's perspectives to strengthen the supervisory dynamic and believe it contributes to a trusting environment. We foster a learning culture with our partnering sites, community partners, and Regional Advisory Councils by welcoming their thoughts and feedback on OhioKAN implementation. We believe that bidirectional feedback between ourselves and team members, partnering sites, community partners, and Regional Advisory Councils effectively supports our collective learning, practice improvement, and service delivery ability.

**Reflection**

We intentionally cultivate a safe space that encourages, affirms, and models vulnerability so that our OhioKAN team feels safe discussing areas where they may be struggling and need additional support. We explicitly name and discuss power dynamics and the complexity of the network of relationships OhioKAN staff are establishing with families, communities, and each other. We support our team in building awareness of how their own background and biases impact interactions with families, partners, and colleagues. We create safe spaces to cultivate best practices for culturally humble customer service and name and confront all forms of discrimination and exclusion. We facilitate reflection with our team by actively listening and using appreciative inquiry to reflect on their practice and performance, consider how this relates to their goals and the OhioKAN theory of change. We model vulnerability when debriefing practice and performance experiences with OhioKAN team members, partnering sites, and Regional Advisory Councils to prompt self-reflections.

We reflect in a way that is safe for all involved, allowing reflection and discussion about topics that the team is interested in speaking about. We remind our team to share only as much as they are willing, able, and feel safe sharing. We are nonjudgmental and empathetic in these reflections. We demonstrate accountability for our decisions and actions and are vulnerable when confronting difficult situations. We share our own intentional strategies for addressing discord and concerns and encourage others to identify their own. Through active listening, we can support our team, partners, and Regional Advisory Councils to examine our own backgrounds and biases to improve service delivery of the OhioKAN program and achieve positive outcomes for kinship and adoptive families.

**Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Team Leadership**

*When supporting and leading my regional team,*

- Build trust within the regional team by creating opportunities to frame challenges in our own words, co-create solutions, and support each other in elevating areas of concern to the statewide OhioKAN team. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Work toward meaningful inclusion which involves examining our own backgrounds and identities, as well as learning, being aware of and understanding who our team members are to create a space that is respectful, accepting, and inclusive for all. This also involves active efforts to recognize, address and confront moments of discrimination and exclusion within our teams and within OhioKAN (Inclusion).
- Regularly share program updates and information with team members to ensure everyone is aware of the same realities. Be mindful of boundaries and pay attention to what information is shared with the team and when. Create space for the team to ask questions, clarify assumptions, and identify knowledge and/or skills to further develop. (Collaboration)
- Encourage regional team members to identify practice strengths and growth areas they have observed for themselves individually and for the team. Ensure your full understanding of team members' strengths and needs by asking open-ended questions. (Engagement and Active Listening)
- Regularly discuss with regional team members any observed trends in service needs, community providers available, and common themes across Navigator engagements. Leverage existing data sources and the team's expertise and experiences to inform these conversations. Continually analyze with regional team members the historical factors, the distribution of resources, policies, and practices to address disparities and mitigate instances of experienced trauma for OhioKAN families. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Engage in tough conversations with yourself about practice and leadership skills by critically and constructively reflecting on decisions made, program contributions, interactions with team members and challenges experienced. Demonstrate vulnerability and accountability with yourself about areas to improve and strengths before doing so with team members. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Demonstrate authenticity and accountability by welcoming feedback on your leadership skills and abilities. Dig deeper to understand how your behaviors can affect

and/or hinder the team. Model courage and curiosity by asking team members to provide constructive criticism on behaviors and areas for you to improve. Confront the difficult conversations and co-create solutions for leadership improvement. (Feedback)

- Lead with empathy and acknowledge team members' feelings and comfort levels, especially when implementing difficult decisions or confronting challenging situations. Model self-awareness and self-compassion as key values for the team. (Engagement and Inclusion)
- Inspire a shared sense of purpose by consistently celebrating individual, regional, and program successes, implementation progress, and impact of the regional team's efforts. (Engagement)
- Engage with vulnerability when situations call for it by leaning into difficult conversations to build the team's collective courage and comfort addressing difficulties and concerns. Be mindful of team members' varying levels of ease participating in these conversations and provide targeted support to those that may need it. Create space for yourself and team members to acknowledge individual and collective challenges and reflect on how underpinning emotions can affect team dynamics and practice. (Reflection)

*When supervising and coaching regional team members,*

- Build authentic, productive relationships with team members through regular connection and communication. Practice empathy when team members express challenges or identify struggles. Recognize individual and collective contributions to OhioKAN's success and ensure that all team members feel heard, seen, and respected to create an innovative and collaborative work environment. (Collaboration, Inclusion, and Engagement)
- During individual supervisory meetings, facilitate reflections with regional team members on their performance, practice, and service delivery. Remind the team, supervisory sessions are also a learning environment for them to ask questions and feel safe sharing and discussing areas where they are struggling and need support. Demonstrate vulnerability by identifying your own areas for improvement and model strategies for addressing them. Embrace reflections that examine our own backgrounds, cultural strengths and biases to further dismantle white normative thought patterns. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Set boundaries on what are appropriate work behaviors and activities within the OhioKAN team and with partnering sites. Clarify the communication, meeting participation, and teaming behaviors that are ok, which are not, and why to establish ground rules and performance expectations. (Engagement)
- Routinely use appreciative inquiry during individual supervisory meetings. Ask team members to share their thoughts and reflections on their practice strengths, growth areas, and challenges. Actively listen and practice empathy when they describe their experiences and any challenges they've encountered. Use guiding questions like the ones below to prompt reflections (Reflection and Active Listening)
  - Which aspects of your interactions with OhioKAN families, partnering sites, or community providers do you feel most confident about?
  - Which aspects of your interactions would you like to grow more confident in?
  - What is something you wish you had done differently/plan to do differently in the future?
  - What is a challenge you are trying to solve? What solutions have you tried so far?
  - Based on the challenge(s) you identified, could it lead to meaningful learning on a specific skill set, behavior, or program knowledge?
- Listen for themes across the team's reflections to inform how best to support them and whether challenges are community-based and could be experienced by more than one team member. Circle back to common themes related to the community that may be useful to bring to the Regional Advisory Council for further discussion. When we are interested in identifying or further addressing these challenges and shaping solutions, it is important that we actively seek full inclusion of people and communities who will be impacted. (Active Listening and inclusion)
- Assist team members to navigate complex team dynamics and challenging situations within the OhioKAN team and/or the partnering site. Build team members' capacity to address conflicts directly, honestly, and empathetically through guided reflections on the situation, their behaviors, and strategies to resolve issues and cultivate a collaborative partnership. If issues persist, intervene as needed to provide additional support to the team member(s) and facilitate a resolution. (Engagement)

*When providing individual feedback to regional team members,*

- Recognize the potential of each team member and devote time and energy to developing each member's abilities. Co-create professional development goals and clearly communicate the standards, expectations, deliverables, and deadlines. Use performance data and qualitative observations of practice to understand team members' progress towards achieving goals, growing their capacity, and leveraging their potential. (Observation and Goal Setting)
- Regularly provide individual feedback to regional team members using a structured, strengths-based approach. When beginning feedback, establish feedback norms by asking team members what they need to feel safe in the conversation. Gently remind team members that you are available to provide additional guidance and support to reinforce their learning and understanding of the program and can connect them with a resource for further support (Feedback and Inclusion)
- Ensure that team members understand OhioKAN policies, strategies for engaging partnering sites, and approaches to leverage community resources and provide guidance for any procedural updates or program changes. Ask if there are any questions about the core elements of the OhioKAN program. (Feedback)
- Emphasize team members' individual, positive contributions to OhioKAN program outcomes by identifying their performance and practice strengths. Discuss the positive behaviors and performance you observed and provide clear examples. Link the positive practices observed to team members' respective professional development goals and progress towards achieving them. (Feedback)
- Lean into the tough conversations with team members about performance concerns. Share concerns by using a clear, empathetic, compassionate approach. Let team members know that you recognize their ability to execute their respective roles. Identify the growth areas you observed, provide specific examples of how they can improve and ask what they need from you as they grow. Ask for feedback on your observation(s) and affirm that they understand your reasons for identifying the growth areas. Remind team members that you are specifying growth areas to strengthen their ability to effectively implement the OhioKAN program and contribute to its positive outcomes for families. (Feedback)
- Suggest strategies and guidance on ways team members can address growth areas and improve performance. Provide additional training resources and learning materials that can aid their development. Ask if they have additional ideas on ways to improve. (Feedback)
- Check in with team members to see whether they have any challenges, concerns or unmet needs you can support them with as well as any feedback for ways to improve the supervisory relationship. (Active Listening, Feedback, Inclusion, and Engagement)
- Following feedback, jointly plan next steps and strategies to address identified concerns and growth areas with team members. (Collaboration)

*When supporting the CQI process,*

- Actively participate in each month's Learning Collaborative session by sharing observations on how the program is implemented in your respective region and identify general growth areas to improve consistency of practice. (Observation and Engagement)
- Routinely check in with regional team members on progress towards benchmarks and targets for data collection and program fidelity. Through regular discussion with team members, emphasize the importance of the CQI process to our sustained commitment as it allows us to reflect on how our work impacts children, youth, and families - providing us all with the opportunity to grow and improve. Ensure benchmarks are grounded in this sustained commitment. (Observation and Engagement)
- Regularly follow up with team members during team meetings or supervisory sessions about progress implementing small tests of change identified in the Learning Collaborative. (Engagement and Active Learner)
- Champion evaluation and CQI practices for the region by exploring the team's challenges and strengths with collecting and using CQI and evaluation data to support constructive learning and promote practice and performance improvements. (Active Learner)

*When overseeing regional program performance and partnering site engagement,*

- Review each month's CQI information and partnering site performance data to become familiar with regional trends in service episode rates, identified needs on the BASICS Assessment, and referrals provided. (Assessment, Observation, and Intervention)
- Ensure the regional team members (inclusive of partnering site Navigators) are making progress towards their key performance indicators (KPIs), implementing the program with fidelity, and documenting their practice as required by regularly reviewing the CQI fidelity indicators and the monthly performance report. (Observation)
- Regularly meet with the regional team collectively and individually to understand individual and team-level strengths and performance challenges. (Observation)
- Encourage peer learning amongst the regional team by actively participating in Learning Collaborative sessions and prompting colleagues to share their best practice and lessons learned with each other. (Active Learner)
- Follow up individually with Coaches to understand observed region's performance strengths and barriers and discuss collaboration with partnering sites and Navigators. (Assessment and Collaboration)
- Recognize the potential of each partnering site and clearly communicate engagement expectations and ground rules with them. Set performance goals with partnering sites at the start of the partnership. Regularly meet with partnering site leadership on performance to build rapport and adjust expectations as needed. (Assessment, Goal Setting, and Collaboration)
- Meet monthly with each site's partnering supervisor to review performance benchmarks and outcome data. Celebrate success, inquire about challenges, and co-identify areas for growth at the site or Navigator level. (Assessment and Collaboration)
- Demonstrate a willingness to have tough conversations with partnering sites about performance concerns or challenges. (Engagement) Create space for yourself and partnering sites to acknowledge any challenges and discord. Collectively reflect on how underpinning emotions and our own backgrounds and biases can affect partnership dynamics and overall practice. (Collaboration, Inclusion, and Reflection)
- In partnership with Coaches, use performance benchmarks and outcome data to inform decision-making related to site partnerships. Address site performance barriers promptly in a clear, kind, understanding manner and co-create strategies with the partnering supervisor to address identified challenges. (Assessment and Active Learner)
- When challenging interpersonal or performance-based situations arise with partnering sites, clearly articulate concerns directly with partnering site leadership. Demonstrate patience and humility when discussing challenges by engaging partnering site leadership on performance reflections and open-ended questions to understand their perspectives and potential challenges that may be influencing site engagement. Create opportunities to problem solve in partnership with the partnering site and learn from these approaches. If challenges persist with a partnering site, elevate issues to the statewide OhioKAN Program Director and Program Manager for their support and further attention. (Collaboration, Engagement, and Active Listening)

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Community Engagement**

*When leading and engaging with the Regional Advisory Council,*

- Ensure that all members of your region's Regional Advisory Council actively participate in meetings and that all voices are heard. (Engagement)
- Strategically and effectively guide the Regional Advisory Council in developing a regional implementation plan and continuously reviewing and modifying it as needed. In partnership with the Regional Advisory Council, identify and articulate key priorities and strategies for the regional implementation plan using data from the regional readiness assessment and programmatic data. (Collaboration and Assessment)
- Regularly ask for feedback from Regional Advisory Council members to identify new or revised priorities for capacity building and strategies to accomplish them in the regional implementation plan. Challenge them to test to their assumptions on why they think certain strategies will be effective as well as their biases. Emphasize the importance of using data and evidence to inform decision-making within the Regional Advisory Council. (Collaboration)
- Emphasize OhioKAN's program successes, implementation progress, and impact of the Regional Advisory Council to inspire a shared sense of purpose. (Engagement)
- Discuss trends in service needs, community providers available, and common themes across engagements with OhioKAN Families with the Regional Advisory Council. Engage members in continuous discussion around common themes that may arise such as systemic barriers that have produced historical and contemporary inequities for marginalized populations. (Engagement, Inclusion, and Collaboration)
- Create space and opportunities for direct practice experts to frame challenges in their own words and support them in elevating areas of concern to the Regional Advisory Council in partnership with Coaches. (Engagement and Collaboration)

*When building relationships and connections with the community,*

- Explore and execute strategies for targeted outreach to key stakeholders to build, engage, and sustain the membership of your region's Regional Advisory Council and achieve their buy-in for OhioKAN's theory of change. Follow up on outreach using a variety of communication channels to build OhioKAN's larger community network. Ensure the full inclusion of people of color and other populations marginalized by systems the targeted outreach strategy of key stakeholders. (Engagement)
- Actively forge, cultivate, and maintain effective collaborative relationships with key regional, county, and local stakeholders to strengthen OhioKAN's presence within the community by attending and participating in community events, reaching out to individuals and groups, and leveraging existing OhioKAN community relationships to further strengthen OhioKAN's community presence. (Engagement)
- Regularly meet with and actively listen to all kinship caregivers, adoptive parents, and young people with lived experience youth to understand their experiences

navigating social service systems within their communities and the services they participated in with OhioKAN. (Inclusion and Engagement)

- Attentively research regional, county, and community-level human service organizations to develop nuanced understanding of their organizational objectives, decision-making structures, areas of subject matter expertise, priority concerns, and opportunities for further collaboration and partnership to support kinship and adoptive families. Ensure the inclusion of people of color and other populations marginalized by systems in the process of identifying challenges and shaping solutions that will affect their lives and communities. (Engagement, Inclusion, and Active Learner)
- Explore new opportunities as well as support and promote existing venues for community, kinship, and adoptive family stakeholders to collaborate, connect, and engage with each other to strengthen community-family relations. (Engagement, Inclusion, and Collaboration)
- Identify areas for improvement within communities by analyzing the distribution of resources, policies, and practices that prevent equitable access for families. Prioritize solutions that are grounded in a commitment to balancing power and advancing social justice for families. (Engagement and Inclusion)

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Partnering with Families**

*When receiving an initial contact,*

- During the initial contact keep in mind this may be the caregiver/adoptive parent's first interaction with OhioKAN. It is important that their experience with you be marked by professionalism, acceptance and humility. The caregiver/adoptive parent is exercising strength and courage by calling and it is a privilege to receive their call. One of the objectives of this initial call is to determine if OhioKAN is the right program for the caregiver/adoptive parent (Engagement and Inclusion)
- During the initial contact, explain your role and create space for the caregiver/adoptive parent to tell you their story to gently lead the caregiver/adoptive parent to answer the screening questions (outlined in SACWIS). This connection with the caregiver/adoptive parent is a conversation, rather than a formal interview. Provide the caregiver/adoptive parent with a forum to tell you their story. It is likely that the answers to the screening will present themselves while they share their story. Do ask for clarity and be mindful to not make assumptions about what you are hearing. Approach the conversation through a trauma-responsive lens by understanding the trauma kinship and adoptive families may experience, remaining empathic and staying solution focused. Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent for their contact information. (Engagement and Assessment)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent does not meet the service criteria for OhioKAN, explain why and refer them to the appropriate service provider(s) or resource, if feasible, to address their concerns. (Intervention)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent meets OhioKAN criteria, explain how OhioKAN can support them. Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent if they would like to participate in the OhioKAN program (obtain consent) and get their permission to gather a bit more information about their situation through the BASICS assessment. Create strategies to navigate asking for sensitive information and use active listening techniques to identify when a caller may not feel comfortable answering a certain question. (Assessment)

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Families Screened into OhioKAN**

*When opening an OhioKAN service episode,*

- After the caregiver/adoptive parent has been screened in to OhioKAN and given consent to participate in the program, complete the BASICS assessment with the caregiver/adoptive parent to gain an initial understanding of the family's strengths and needs. Through open, transparent communication, you show the caregiver/adoptive parent you see them, respect them, and believe they know what is best for their family. Explain that the BASICS helps you learn about their needs so that you can provide them with tailored support. Let the caregiver/adoptive parent set the pace for the conversation while they share more details about why they called OhioKAN and what services and support they are looking for. (Engagement, Assessment and Active Learner)
- Based on the caregiver/adoptive parent's responses to the BASICS assessment and by practicing self-reflection on what you have learned from the family and their needs, determine whether you can respond to their needs with referral information, or if the needs require Collaborate support. (Assessment, Reflection, and Inclusion)
- Provide the caregiver/adoptive parent with the appropriate referrals for their identified needs and information to community providers and resources. As co-creators of solutions, we understand the importance of the family's experience and the prevalence of disproportionate access to resources and services that often lead to barriers in meeting family needs. While completing the referral, ask the caregiver or family if they have previously accessed the resource and what their experience was like. Document their experiences and, if appropriate, complete a referral to a different community provider. Ensure the caregiver/adoptive parent knows they can reach out to OhioKAN at any time to address any needs or concerns that arise. (Engagement and Intervention).

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Reflection**

*When I reflect,*

- When you feel uncomfortable, get curious about it. Reach out to your peers or someone you trust to debrief. (Reflection, Inclusion, and Collaboration)
- Create opportunities to collaboratively reflect with your Regional Team and/or peers on current practice and discuss ways to improve or change to develop a more inclusive space and experience for all. (Reflection, Inclusion, and Collaboration)
- When you realize you may have hurt or offended someone by what you have done or not done, apologize and take steps to make amends and improve. (Reflection and Active Learner)
- When someone comes to you about how you may have hurt or offended them – listen and ask questions to make sure you understand, thank them for bringing this to your attention, take accountability and apologize. Reflect after the conversation on ways you can prevent a situation like this in the future. (Reflection, Active Learner, and Active Listening)
- Identify your own strengths, biases, areas of growth, and places where you need to ask for support. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Continually examine your own power and privilege and how you are using it. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Reflect on how your intersectional identities are similar and different than those of your Regional Team and/or peers. Even if you have shared experiences, differentiate your own experiences from the experiences of those on your Regional Team or colleagues. (Reflection and Inclusion)
- Questions to ask myself as I reflect (Reflection, Inclusion, and Engagement). In what ways...
  - Did I support inclusion?
  - Did I create opportunities for my Regional Team or a team member to be vulnerable?
  - Did I respond to vulnerability?

59 Brown, B. (2018). Dare to lead: Brave work, tough conversations, whole hearts. Random House.

## Regional Coordinator Practice Profile

### Purpose

The Regional Coordinator supports their regional team's ability to deliver OhioKAN services with consistency. The Regional Coordinator is dedicated to coordinating implementation needs for their regional, county, and community-level partnerships and supports for the OhioKAN program in their region. Our dedication is rooted in community and family engagement as partners and allies when identifying challenges and shaping solutions to actively disrupt the perpetuation of institutional discrimination and oppression.

The work of engaging and supporting families is rooted in the six key principles of the Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Access (IDEA) Framework, which includes the continued analysis of historical factors and inequities; prioritization of solutions that balance power and promote social justice for families; elevation of inclusion and community voice; confrontation of all forms of discrimination and exclusion; understanding intersectionality and the sustained commitment to advance equitable practices with families, partners and colleagues.

As Regional Coordinators, we provide administrative and communication support, data and records management, and event coordination to our regional team to facilitate their ability to assist kinship caregivers and adoptive parents with accessing the services, resources, and social support they need to care for themselves and the children in their homes. This practice profile reflects the core practice skills and behaviors for Regional Coordinators of OhioKAN.

### Core Practice Skills

#### Engagement

Engagement begins at first encounter and is established through an honest, respectful, and empathetic approach. We establish trusting relationships with our regional team, the kinship and adoptive families we serve, public agencies, and community-based organizations, and providers. We respond to inquiries about OhioKAN by providing accurate information, and actively seek out information when we are not sure of the answer, so that families, partners, and colleagues receive the support, connections, or expertise they need. We foster regional team and Regional Advisory Council cohesion by scheduling, organizing, and staffing meetings. We coordinate our team's participation in community events to support program outreach and engagement with families and community members. We maintain regular communication and engagement with our community and state partners to support effective implementation.

#### Inclusion

Inclusive practice begins in partnership with children, families, community members and our team. The families we serve are the experts of their own circumstances and the decision-makers about which services and supports they need. We actively center their voice, experience, and needs throughout service delivery. When working with families, partners, and our team, we acknowledge, validate, and respond to discrimination and experiences with oppressive systems and oppressive practice. We support our team, partners, and Regional Advisory Councils to examine how our own identities and biases shape our behaviors, beliefs, and opportunities and affect service delivery. We use humility to be the bridge of awareness and accountability to one another and the families we work with. We continually learn about intersectional identities and the ways in which people with marginalized identities are affected by social service systems. We explicitly name and discuss power dynamics and the complexity of the network of relationships within OhioKAN staff. We contribute to an inclusive space for all team members to be successful. This is done by believing our team members when they share with or confide in us, exploring ways to improve inclusion, holding welcoming spaces to have open dialogue, and naming and confronting discrimination and exclusion of any kind within our team or throughout OhioKAN.

#### Interpretation

We monitor CQI dashboards, regional performance reports, and other program-specific trackers to build understanding of OhioKAN's reach, service population, fidelity and service quality, and outcomes to illuminate practice and implementation areas to further enhance. We gather, synthesize, and make meaning of information to understand family's strengths, needs, perspectives, and wishes by reviewing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) data. We track and observe program performance and site performance data with our regional teams to ensure consistent implementation of the OhioKAN program model. We help our teams make connections across trends in performance data and elevate common themes between CQI and Regional Advisory Council discussions to inform strategic decision-making.

At a regional level, we gather and interpret information related to the strengths and needs of communities where the OhioKAN families reside. This assessment of community needs and strengths assists us to identify gaps in services and drives our outreach and relationship-building efforts with human service organizations, community providers, and stakeholders across our respective regions. We elevate common themes across counties within our region to support efforts to enhance service arrays.



<p><b>Intervention</b></p>	<p>We ensure our team has the initial training and ongoing support needed to implement OhioKAN with consistency to actively assist kinship and adoptive families to achieve their identified goals. Meeting the needs identified and driven by the family and community is our priority. We actively monitor when community services are not available or accessible in our regions and elevate common themes in service gaps and barriers to Regional Advisory Councils to strengthen efforts to enhance service arrays. We recognize that communities of color and other populations marginalized by systems are often met with discrimination and experience barriers to accessing services. To address access challenges, disparities, and mitigate trauma, we have regular discussions focused on the historical and current ways communities are marginalized by systems. We actively identify and elevate such service gaps and barriers and co-create strategies with communities to increase an equitable service array and promote best practices when serving kinship and adoptive families.</p>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p>	<p>We collaborate with our OhioKAN colleagues to create an effective, cohesive team. We intentionally partner with Regional Directors, Coaches, and partnering sites to provide navigation services with the tailored support they need to implement the OhioKAN program with fidelity and to serve OhioKAN families. We model vulnerability when exploring performance experiences together with colleagues in CQI discussions and Regional Advisory Councils. We are nonjudgmental in these reflections to facilitate feedback and reinforce OhioKAN's collaborative learning culture.</p> <p>We provide active coordination and communication support to assist Regional Directors with managing partnering sites, regional teams, and Regional Advisory Councils. We contribute to Regional Directors' efforts to build a diverse and collaborative coalition of stakeholders from a cross-section of our community. We partner with stakeholders to help identify service gaps and develop new service capacity to support the identified needs of kinship and adoptive families. We advocate alongside kinship and adoptive families for equitable access to services to achieve their goals. As the needs of kinship and adoptive families evolve in our community, we will search for new and innovative collaborations to meet their needs.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge Management</b></p>	<p>We organize, create, use, and share knowledge within and across our regional teams to support effective implementation and program management. We actively maintain our regional team's records and program documentation to support effective implementation and program management. We facilitate feedback and communication loops between the different spaces and conversations we participate in to ensure our regional teams are aware of program updates, operational information, and implementation insights. We help our teams make connections across different spaces to inform strategic planning and decision-making. We believe that bidirectional feedback between ourselves and team members effectively supports our collective learning, practice improvement, and service delivery ability.</p> <p>We accurately capture questions asked, insights shared, and action items discussed to share with our regional teams to inform decision-making and program management. We manage data entry for partnering site's program compliance and fiscal records to ensure appropriate and consistent delivery of services. We survey and document community supports, gaps, and barriers to maintain a list of available community providers to help our regional teams meet families' needs. We contribute to active outreach strategies by researching opportunities for community engagement and tracking our regional team's</p>
<p><b>Active Learner</b></p>	<p>Learning is an ongoing and vital component of the work we do in our community and with individual families. We cultivate learning spaces by contributing our own reflections on processes and program performance. We endeavor to improve our response and array of supports to address the needs of families and communities and strengthen our team's implementation efforts. We embrace this commitment to improvement through active participation in CQI activities, coordination and scheduling of trainings, and communication with state and community supports. We actively review data and contribute new knowledge to the broader field of kinship and adoption Navigator programs.</p>
<p><b>Active Listening</b></p>	<p>We actively listen to our regional team and community stakeholders as they share their experiences collaborating with kinship and adoptive families through the OhioKAN program and other services. We are committed to an active listening style that is grounded in the knowledge that team members, partners and families are the experts of their own experiences. We accurately document what we heard to share insights with our regional teams. By actively and attentively listening, we improve our understanding of the team's and community's strengths, growth areas, and needs, which enables us to identify appropriate supports, training, and skill development opportunities they need. Active listening includes asking open-ended questions, summarizing, checking for understanding, and asking permission to offer solutions.</p>

**Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Team Coordination:**

*When Supporting my Regional Team,*

- Ensure your regional team is up to date on program updates by promoting timely information sharing through appropriate communication channels and leveraging feedback loops between the different spaces and conversations you participate in. Be mindful of boundaries and pay attention to what information is shared with the team and when. (Collaboration and Knowledge Management)
- Foster regional team cohesion by scheduling, organizing, and staffing regional meetings and other events. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Build trust within your regional team by contributing to solution development and elevating areas of concern to your Regional Director. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Regularly discuss any observed trends in service needs, community providers available, and common themes across Navigator engagements with your Regional Director. Leverage existing data sources and the regional team's expertise and experiences to enrich and contextualize these observations. (Interpretation and Knowledge Management)

- Contribute to your regional team's skill growth and development by coordinating trainings. Identify resources and opportunities for further learning and capacity development and circulate within the regional team. (Intervention and Active Learner)
- Maintain accurate regional records, fiscal reports, and program records (e.g., memorandums of understanding, training/program materials and notes from OhioKAN programmatic activities) to support your Regional Director with the functional management of the regional team and its activities. (Intervention and Knowledge Management)
- Continually analyze with regional team members the historical factors, the distribution of resources, policies, and practices to address disparities and mitigate instances of experienced trauma for OhioKAN Families. (Inclusion, Interpretation, and Active Learner)
- Contribute to a shared sense of purpose by celebrating individual, regional, and program successes, implementation progress, and impact of the regional team's efforts. (Engagement)
- Regularly check in with team members to see whether they have any coordination needs you can support them. Team members may not explicitly ask for help, but exercise initiative in proactively offering support to regional team members when needs are explored. (Collaboration and Active Listening)

*When Participating in the CQI process,*

- Champion CQI practices for the region by reflecting on available program and administrative data (CQI Dashboard and regional tracker) and elevating implementation successes and growth areas to promote constructive learning and practice improvements. (Interpretation and Active Learner)
- Prepare for each month's CQI Process Team by assessing the CQI Dashboard and other regional data trackers to understand your region's performance on CQI measures of reach, service population characteristics, and fidelity and quality. Reflect on conversations from the Regional Advisory Councils and elevate relevant themes and insights during the CQI Process Team meeting to contextualize observed dynamics in the CQI Dashboard. (Interpretation and Collaboration)
- Listen for key themes, big ideas, and reflections on practice discussed during CQI Process Team meetings and Learning Collaborative discussions and capture in minutes reports to facilitate feedback loops that support the stewardship of the CQI process. (Interpretation, Knowledge Management)
- Reinforce bidirectional feedback loops between your Regional Advisory Council, regional team, and CQI Process Team by sharing critical insights and themes on implementation and practice. (Interpretation and Knowledge Management)
- Contribute to cohort peer-to-peer knowledge sharing through Learning Collaborative planning and preparation. Partner with your region's coach to design engaging Learning Collaborative sessions that meet the learning needs of the team. (Collaboration, Active Learner, and Knowledge Management)
- Encourage peer learning amongst the regional team by actively participating in Learning Collaborative sessions and prompting colleagues to share their best practice and lessons learned with each other. (Active Learner)
- Regularly follow up with team members during regional team meetings about progress implementing small tests of change identified in the Learning Collaborative. (Engagement and Active Learner)

*When Observing Regional Program and Partnering Site Performance,*

- Manage monthly trackers for critical program areas of interest (e.g., Flex fund use, outreach efforts, and service gaps and barriers). Coordinate with your regional teams to ensure accurate tracking and elevate themes observed. (Interpretation and Knowledge Management)
- Provide coordination support to your Regional Director to facilitate their monthly performance management meetings with each site's partnering supervisor. Prepare program performance data using the CQI Dashboard and other trackers for the Regional Director to share with partnering site supervisors. (Interpretation, Knowledge Management, and Collaboration)
- Review quarterly Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reports with your Regional Director to prepare for their quarterly site performance meetings with site supervisors. Observe trends in your region's sites' performance on MOU standards and share your observations with your Regional Director. (Interpretation and Knowledge Management)
- Share insights on program and site performance with regional teams to inform decision-making related to site partnerships. Elevate site performance challenges promptly to Regional Directors in a clear, kind manner. (Interpretation and Active Learner)

**Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Community Engagement:**

*When Supporting and Engaging with the Regional Advisory Council,*

- Support your Regional Director to ensure that all members of your region's Regional Advisory Council actively participate in meetings and that all voices are heard. (Engagement and Inclusion)
- Coordinate Regional Advisory Council scheduling to accommodate members' availability. Regularly communicate scheduling updates with members to ensure their attendance and participation. (Engagement and Collaboration)
- Synthesize key themes, insights, and observations shared during Regional Advisory Councils and other stakeholder engagements in meeting minutes. (Interpretation, Active Listening, and Knowledge Management)
- Assist your Regional Director to guide the Regional Advisory Council in developing a regional implementation plan. Actively listen to discussions within the Regional Advisory Council on key priorities and strategies for the regional implementation plan and integrate identified enhancements. Elevate insights from the regional readiness assessment and programmatic data to inform planning decisions. (Collaboration, Interpretation, and Active Listening)
- Partner with your Regional Director and Regional Advisory Council to actively monitor progress on your region's regional implementation plan. Listen for updates on efforts to strengthen the region's service array (mitigate service gaps and barriers) and document updates. (Interpretation, Knowledge Management, and Active Listening)
- Compile and synthesize the data needed to inform decisions and action plans in the Regional Advisory Council and regional teams. (Interpretation and Knowledge Management)
- Review the monthly CQI Dashboard and regional tracker on service gaps and barriers to assess regional trends in families served, identified needs on the BASICS Assessment, referrals provided, and types of services needed. Bring in trends discussed in CQI Process Team on service needs, community providers available, and common themes across engagements with OhioKAN Families with the Regional Advisory Council (Interpretation, Knowledge Management and Intervention)
- Support your Regional Director's facilitation of the Regional Advisory Council by sharing information and updates on OhioKAN's program successes, implementation

progress, and impact of the Regional Advisory Council to inspire a shared sense of purpose. (Engagement and Knowledge Management)

*When Building Relationships and Connections with the Community,*

- Actively research regional, county, and community-level human service organizations to develop nuanced understanding of their organizational objectives, decision-making structures, areas of subject matter expertise, priority concerns, and opportunities for further collaboration and partnership to support kinship and adoptive families. Share insights learned with your Regional Director and regional team. (Interpretation, Knowledge Management, and Active Learner)
- Analyze the distribution of resources, policies, and practices that prevent equitable access for families to identify possible areas for improvement within the community. Leverage information gathered on service gaps and barriers to understand service array priorities for the community. (Interpretation and Inclusion)
- Contribute to your regional team's targeted outreach to build, engage, and sustain the membership of your region's Regional Advisory Council and achieve community buy-in for OhioKAN's theory of change. Support your Regional Director with outreach follow-up and tailor communications to specific audiences. Track target audiences reached to ensure the meaningful inclusion of people of color and marginalized populations. (Collaboration and Knowledge Management)
- Support your Regional Director in cultivating and maintaining effective collaborative relationships with key regional, county, and local stakeholders to strengthen OhioKAN's presence within the community. Provide scheduling and coordination support to facilitate your regional team's attendance and participation in community events. (Engagement)

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Partnering with Families:**

*When Receiving an Initial Contact,*

- Respond to all inquiries from kinship and adoptive families, community members, and providers about participation in the OhioKAN program using appropriate customer service skills. Provide accurate information about the program and available services to all individuals that contact OhioKAN. (Engagement and Intervention)
- During the initial engagement, keep in mind this may be the caregiver/adoptive parent's first interaction with OhioKAN. It is important that their experience with you be marked by professionalism and humility. The caregiver/adoptive parent is exercising strength and courage by calling and it is a privilege to receive their call. One of the objectives of this initial call is to determine if OhioKAN is the right program for the caregiver/adoptive parent (Engagement)
- During the initial engagement, explain your role and gently lead the caregiver/adoptive parent to answer the screening questions in SACWIS. This connection with the caregiver/adoptive parent is a conversation, rather than a formal interview. Provide the caregiver/adoptive parent with a forum to tell you their story. It is likely that the answers to the screening will present themselves while they share their story. Do not ask for clarity and be mindful to not make assumptions about what you are hearing. Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent for their contact information. (Engagement and Interpretation)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent does not meet the service criteria for OhioKAN, refer them to the appropriate service provider(s) to address their concerns. (Intervention)
- If the caregiver/adoptive parent meets OhioKAN criteria, explain how OhioKAN can support them. Ask the caregiver/adoptive parent if they would like to participate in the OhioKAN program (obtain consent) and get their permission to gather a bit more information about their situation through the BASICS assessment. Create strategies to navigate asking for sensitive information and use active listening techniques to identify when a caller may not feel comfortable answering a certain question. (Intervention)

#### **Our Core Practice Skills in Action for Families Screened into OhioKAN**

*When Opening an OhioKAN Service Episode,*

- After the caregiver/adoptive parent has been screened in to OhioKAN and given consent to participate in the program, complete the BASICS assessment with the caregiver/adoptive parent to gain an initial understanding of the family's strengths and needs. Through open, transparent communication, you show the caregiver/adoptive parent you respect them and believe they know what is best for their family. Explain that the BASICS assessment helps you gain an initial understanding of their needs so that you can provide them with tailored support. Let the caregiver/adoptive parent set the pace for the conversation while they share more details about why they called OhioKAN and what services they are looking for. (Engagement, Intervention, and Active Learner)
- Based on the caregiver/adoptive parent's responses to the BASICS assessment, determine whether you can respond to their needs with referral information, or if the needs require Collaborate support. (Intervention)
- Provide the caregiver/adoptive parent with the appropriate referrals for their identified needs and information to community providers and resources. As co-creators of solutions, we understand the importance of the family's experience and the prevalence of disproportionate access to resources and services that often lead to barriers in meeting family needs. While completing the referral, ask the caregiver or family if they have previously accessed the resource and what their experience was like. Document their experiences and, if appropriate, complete a referral to a different community provider. Ensure the caregiver/adoptive parent knows they can reach out to OhioKAN at any time to address any needs or concerns that arise. (Engagement and Intervention).

### **Chapter 7 : Core Implementation Supports**

## **Core Implementation Supports**

Read about the mechanisms utilized by OhioKAN to support successful implementation of the program model, such as a rigorous fidelity monitoring process.

## **Core Implementation Supports Overview**

Image



Included in the OhioKAN core components are the core implementation supports deemed essential for successful implementation of the OhioKAN program model. Such supports are essential to creating an enabling context where OhioKAN's practices can be implemented and produce the program's intended outcomes. The NIRN Active Implementation Frameworks defines an enabling context as the environment and setting needed for effective practices to be used well. The Active Implementation Frameworks specify improvement cycles and linked implementation teams as essential to creating an enabling context 60 .

OhioKAN's Core Implementation Supports are designed to make explicit the activities needed to ensure the program is implemented in an environment conducive to its success. A continuous quality improvement cycle which includes opportunities for staff at all levels to participate is essential to the program's success. Furthermore, community service and support mapping and community outreach and capacity building are key activities implementation teams must attend to when implementing OhioKAN.

Each of these supports enable the successful implementation of OhioKAN by providing both technical and adaptive solutions to challenges faced both at the community level and family level. Kinnect chose a specific method, such as the OhioKAN Information Hub, to address each of these core implementation supports. Jurisdictions can choose to customize their approach when implementing OhioKAN to the context of the circumstances and possible existing infrastructure of the implementing agency.

**Continuous quality improvement** promotes a culture of learning and engagement of staff at all levels in making programmatic and practice improvements to achieve outcomes for kinship and adoptive families. Dedicated CQI meetings provide the opportunity to those that are delivering the service to give feedback about their experience to in turn further enhance the successful implementation of the program model. Such spaces intentionally provide time to discuss trends, identify barriers and service gaps, find solutions to practice challenges, conduct small tests of change, regularly review the inclusion, diversity, equity, and access framework and to disaggregate data by key demographic characteristics. The organization's leadership promotes a culture that values ongoing reflection of service quality and continual efforts by the full agency, its partners, and contractors. The infrastructure that supports effective CQI is critical to identify places for improvement, critically reflect and incorporate feedback from all staff levels to implement solutions that improve both practice and fidelity to the program model for achievement of outcomes for kinship and adoptive families.

- Methods for ensuring fidelity to the model
- Methods for feedback of satisfaction from consumers
- Methods for measuring outcomes and impact of services

**Comprehensive community service and support mapping** provides a critical mechanism for OhioKAN staff to match the needs of families with available resources in the community. Specifically, ensuring there is a searchable index of resources that can be updated as information changes is a key activity implementation teams must ensure is completed before service delivery begins. This index should be categorized by BASICS domain and include location and contact information for each service or support. This service and support map is utilized to identify resources and to develop a referral binder, an essential element of the Connect Level of Service. In addition, developing a process for the assessment of the existing service array and ongoing identification of service gaps and barriers play a key role in both providing targeted resources to families and achieving outcomes on the community pathway of the OhioKAN theory of change, which includes the awareness of and support in filling community service

gaps.

**Localized community outreach and capacity building** activities are focused on reducing stigma around support seeking behaviors and normalizing a variety of family constellations that often make up the kinship and adoptive families served by the OhioKAN program. Multidisciplinary stakeholders regularly convene to build awareness and knowledge within the communities and across disciplines about the unique strengths, challenges, and needs of kinship and adoptive families and best practices for serving them. Implementation teams are responsible for designing structures and processes that are tailored to the jurisdiction's context.

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60 National Implementation Research Network (NIRN). Active Implementation Frameworks. (2005). Retrieved From: <https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nirn.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/AIHub%2...>

## Continuous Quality Improvement

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is a way for teams and organizations to reflect and ask themselves, "How are we doing?" and "How can we do it better?" CQI provides a process for the intentional use of evidence to critically assess performance, identify strengths and areas needing improvement, identify solutions, and monitor those solutions in an environment that embraces continuous learning.

OhioKAN's CQI framework is grounded in the principles and common language of CQI, as outlined by Chapin Hall and the Center for State Child Welfare Data 61. These principles, while originally designed for child welfare CQI systems and applied in states' implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act, have been tailored to OhioKAN's unique model and include:

- Viewing CQI as a cyclical Plan-Do-Study-Act process with problem-solving activities,
- Valuing and incorporating rigorous use of evidence at every stage,
- Developing and testing hypotheses that are rooted in OhioKAN's theory of change and through the lens of OhioKAN's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Framework,
- Converting data to evidence,
- Focusing on the variety of experiences and outcomes of children and families served,
- Continually using a data-driven, strategic, and systematic approach to adjust process, quality, and/or capacity investments,
- Incorporating continuous learning and improvement in everyday practice,
- Engaging and empowering staff toward common goals and leveraging their expertise to achieve program goals,
- Examining service delivery processes through performance measures, and
- Communicating well throughout the organization.

### OhioKAN CQI Approach

OhioKAN's CQI approach provides the framework for improvement planning and ongoing monitoring of the program's key performance, practice, and implementation measures. CQI activities ensure quality service delivery and effective program implementation to achieve OhioKAN's vision for kinship and adoptive families. CQI practices are present throughout the model and reinforced through OhioKAN's culture of continuous learning, staff reflect on practice and apply CQI principles throughout every aspect of the program in both the family and community pathways of the theory of change.

The OhioKAN CQI framework collects, aggregates, analyzes, and compares program data within and across the state's ten regions and two implementation cohorts to fully leverage implementation data and improve program delivery. This framework creates opportunities for the OhioKAN program to be implemented with greater effectiveness and responsiveness to the needs of kinship and adoptive families it serves. A comprehensive CQI measurement framework tracks implementation and performance outcomes and identifies opportunities to improve practice and service delivery. The monthly CQI Dashboard informed by the measurement framework is regularly reviewed by coaches and regional directors and further discussed during monthly CQI Process Team meetings. By promoting consistent implementation of the OhioKAN model across the state, OhioKAN CQI not only monitors program fidelity, but also program quality for and inclusion of OhioKAN families.

Regular CQI activities allow staff to learn and build upon effective outreach strategies for eligible families, understand OhioKAN family satisfaction, strengthen practice skills, grow available and inclusive services, and supports to meet families' diverse needs, ensure fidelity to the model at all levels of the intervention, and identify additional community resources to invest and achieve OhioKAN outcomes. CQI implementation supports, such as training, procedures, meeting facilitation, practice profiles, practice observation rubrics, monitoring tools and guides, and reporting structures, continue to be refreshed and refined in collaboration with OhioKAN implementation and evaluation partners as the OhioKAN program grows and staff become proficient in the improvement cycles.

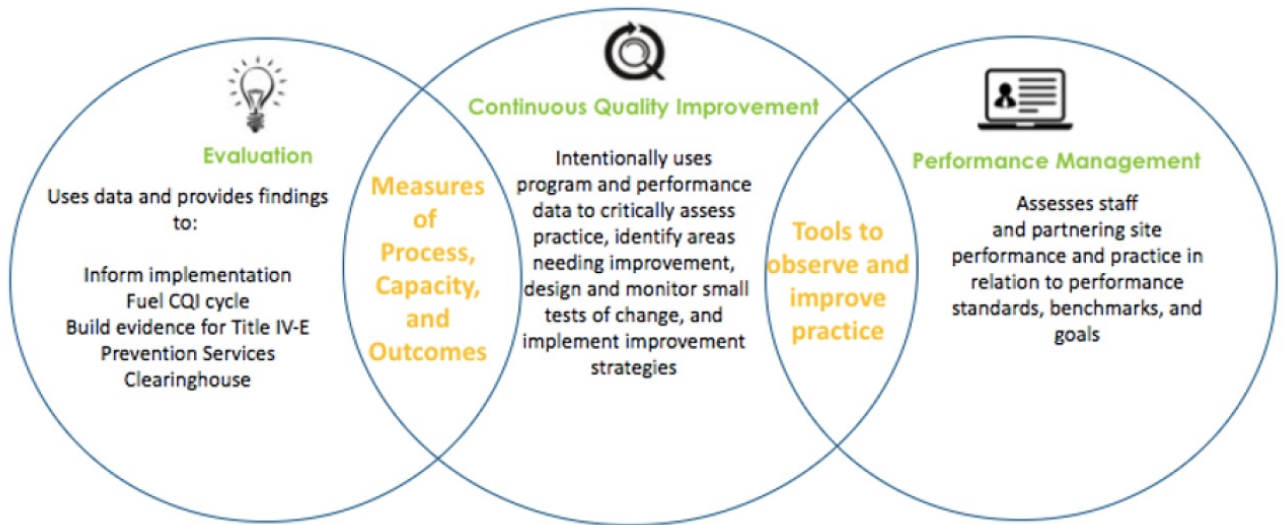
The OhioKAN CQI approach incorporates the OhioKAN Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Framework. OhioKAN believes that equity is not only a value and desired outcome, but a process of intentional action to eliminate systemic barriers that have produced historical and contemporary inequities based on race, gender, class, sexual orientation, geography, and other forms of difference. Such actions within CQI include the disaggregation of data by the forms of difference listed. In reference to the OhioKAN theory of change, the disaggregation of data can be used on the family track to better improve service delivery for the diverse communities served and through the community track by linking data disaggregated by race and geography to identify systemic barriers for certain communities in Ohio. Through the disaggregation of CQI data, OhioKAN staff is equipped with a robust set of data to better inform decision-making and improvements around service delivery at both the family and community level.

OhioKAN is committed to partnering with families served at all levels of their involvement with the program. OhioKAN recognizes that families are experts of their own experience and are fully equipped to identify program improvement strategies. Families and those with lived experience inform improvement planning within OhioKAN

through surveys, focus groups and Regional Advisory Councils.

**OhioKAN CQI, Evaluation, and Performance Management**

Image



**Figure 7: Relationship between OhioKAN CQI, Evaluation, and Performance Management**

As shown in Figure 7, OhioKAN CQI is closely aligned with the program's evaluation activities and performance management framework. The findings from evaluation activities not only inform course corrections and build the evidence base for OhioKAN, but also fuel the CQI cycle. Similarly, CQI and performance management both assess staff and partnering site practice skills and use the same tools to observe and improve practice. While related to CQI, evaluation and performance management each represent distinct frameworks, whose relationships with CQI are further explained below.

**CQI and Evaluation**

The OhioKAN CQI and Evaluation efforts, as shown in figure 1, are interconnected and contribute to OhioKAN's culture of continuous learning. OhioKAN's evaluation process is a comprehensive, rigorous approach to assess the model's readiness for implementation and its effectiveness. Evaluation activities are focused on answering key research questions related to the model's implementation, evaluability, usability, and effectiveness in addition to site readiness. These evaluation activities will provide insight on whether OhioKAN is effective at achieving desired outcomes, for which populations, and under which circumstances. By building this evidence for OhioKAN's impact, evaluation efforts will contribute to the larger field's learning for effective kinship and adoptive family interventions. Ultimately, the findings from the effectiveness trial will support OhioKAN's rating on the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse. Many of the same measures of process, capacity, and outcomes feed CQI and evaluation activities, and evaluation findings fuel the CQI process. To complement evaluation initiatives, the OhioKAN CQI framework ensures consistent implementation of the model through ongoing monitoring of key reach, fidelity, quality, and outcome indicators. CQI and evaluation activities inform program refinements and implementation course corrections to strengthen the model and ensure its sustainability.

**CQI and Performance Management**

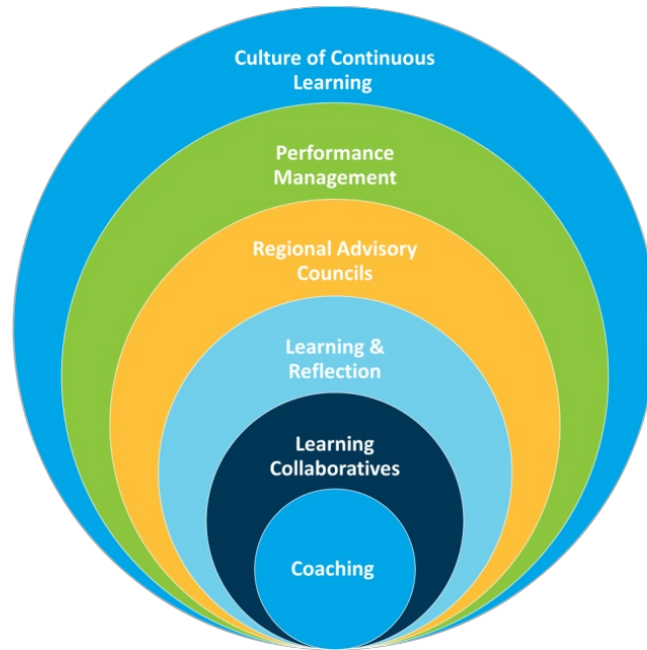
While OhioKAN's CQI processes and performance management practices are closely interrelated, as seen in figure 7, they represent distinct frameworks. OhioKAN's CQI framework is focused on the intentional use of data to critically assess practice to identify and monitor solutions. OhioKAN's Performance Management Framework provides an additional set of levers to influence staff and partnering site performance and establish a culture of accountability through its structured supervision and performance assessment processes. Staff and sites are continuously monitored through supervision practices to assess their ability to meet role expectations and performance goals. These performance assessments also inform decisions related to professional development, staffing, and site contracting. The Performance Management Framework complements OhioKAN CQI through its organizing principles:

1. Promote information-based decision-making
2. Embed CQI in routine management practices
3. Provide easy access to information

Both CQI and performance management leverage the same tools and meeting spaces to observe and monitor staff performance and practice. These include tools to observe practice as well as case-level data reports in SACWIS. While OhioKAN's CQI framework uses these tools to fuel improvement cycles, the Performance Management Framework apply them to evaluate individual staff and partnering site performance. CQI is not intended to replace supervision, but to enhance it by discussing job performance feedback and working with staff to strengthen skills at regular supervisory meetings or coaching sessions. During regular all-staff and management meetings, CQI-related agenda items are routinely discussed. In alignment with the Performance Management Framework's organizing principles and in keeping with OhioKAN's culture of continuous learning, staff apply CQI practices during supervisory and management meetings to identify performance areas needing improvement and develop strategies to refine skills. For more on OhioKAN performance management, please see the Performance Management Framework.

**OhioKAN Culture of Continuous Learning**

Image



**Figure 8: OhioKAN Spheres of Continuous Learning, which includes the areas in which CQI occurs throughout the program.**

OhioKAN is dedicated to creating a culture of continuous learning, grounded in the belief that all individuals involved in OhioKAN play a role in improvement cycles. OhioKAN's environment of continuous learning provides space for staff, community partners, and families to learn from each other on a daily basis and at every stage of the model. The "spheres of continuous learning" in figure 8 above refer to the different dimensions of the OhioKAN program, with the largest sphere representing the culture of continuous learning that is present throughout all aspects of the program. Within each sphere, staff leverage CQI practices to discuss performance challenges, assess program outcomes, and elicit feedback from families, each other, and community stakeholders to inform and co-create improvement strategies. OhioKAN's culture of learning is promoted and sustained through each sphere's use of CQI practices, which contribute to the larger OhioKAN CQI process. The individual spheres are further explained below:

- **Performance Management:** This sphere encompasses the learning within team, supervisory, and partnering site relationships that occurs as part of OhioKAN's infrastructure for monitoring and managing staff and partnering site performance.
- **Regional Advisory Councils:** This sphere encompasses the learning within each region's community as part of OhioKAN's Regional Advisory Council structure.
- **Learning and Reflection Sessions:** This sphere encompasses the opportunity for cohort staff to engage in informal conversation around performance and programmatic strengths, challenges and questions
- **Learning Collaboratives:** This sphere encompasses the peer learning between program staff in each cohort as part of the OhioKAN Learning Collaborative Framework.
- **Coaching:** This sphere encompasses the learning between coaches and staff providing navigation services during regular coaching sessions.

Each sphere's feedback loops promote learning and improvement between program staff, OhioKAN families, and stakeholders across all regions. Supervisory and management meetings, reporting, and communication procedures facilitate these feedback loops and support the CQI process. Insight from a diverse group of families, stakeholders and frontline staff can inform necessary changes to improve the quality and equity of services, staff behaviors, fidelity to the OhioKAN model, and community service array gaps. The feedback loops and insights from stakeholders reinforce OhioKAN's culture of continuous learning where CQI principles are practiced on a regular basis and incorporated in everyday conversations.

Elements of OhioKAN's CQI infrastructure, such as data monitoring tools, reporting mechanisms, CQI practices outlined in the CQI Toolkit, and performance measures, are leveraged and operationalized within each sphere by staff, community, and family participation in OhioKAN's CQI process. Members of each sphere use small-scale cycles of plan-do-study-act (PDSA), as shown in figure 8, to identify, implement, and monitor tests of change to inform service delivery and implementation improvement strategies.

61 Wulczyn, F., Alpert, L., Orlebeke, B., & Haight, J. (2014). "Principles, language, and shared meaning: Toward a common understanding of CQI in Children Services." Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

## Fidelity Monitoring

Fidelity is the extent to which the delivery of an intervention is consistent with the original design and intent of service delivery to achieve outcomes for the population the intervention was designed to serve. The following section specifies how the OhioKAN program model conceptualizes fidelity to the context, content, and competence needed to produce positive outcomes for kinship and adoptive caregivers and the children in their care. Attention to fidelity is also critical to promote consistent implementation of the OhioKAN model across a state or jurisdiction. The OhioKAN CQI approach includes intentional use of data to ensure fidelity to the model at all levels of the intervention.

The CQI teams in OhioKAN leverage data to measure the progress towards fidelity, identify areas for improvement, and leverage improvement cycles to enhance consistent service delivery of the program model with a focus on quality of practice. Such information structures feedback for staff on what areas of practice they excel in and where improvement is needed. For instance, in OhioKAN, Coaches base their feedback and coaching sessions on information learned through exploration of the CQI dashboard and through observations of practice. Other opportunities for navigators to reflect on and enhance practice include trainings and learning collaboratives.

The OhioKAN program model conceptualizes fidelity in three domains:

- **Context:** the structure, framework and environment in which service delivery occurs. This includes characteristics of the physical environment, organizational and administrative requirements. An example of context fidelity in OhioKAN are the Regional Advisory Councils. The RACs track service gaps and barriers in each region to identify what community resources are needed and how to fill those needs, for the purpose of achieving the intended outcomes outlined in the community path of the theory of change.
- **Content:** the adherence to defined activities or practice behaviors and the dose of intervention such as the frequency and duration of service. An example of content fidelity in OhioKAN is sending referrals within two business days of completing the BASICS with a caregiver.
- **Competence:** the skills of practitioners and the quality of service delivery encompass the competence fidelity domain. Within OhioKAN, competence fidelity is represented by elements such as the use of the core practice skills defined in the Navigator Practice Profile, which are observed and recorded by Coaches in the Observation and Debrief Checklist, the observational fidelity monitoring tool.

#### *OhioKAN Program Fidelity and Quality Indicators*

The OhioKAN core components are the backbone for operationalizing fidelity and identifying indicators to measure fidelity to the program model. The OhioKAN program, in coordination with implementation and evaluation experts, identified a set of indicators to measure the adherence to fidelity and quality. These indicators are outlined below.

- % observations where navigator uses OhioKAN core practice skills, by practice skill
- % families with BASICS completed
- % families sent referral(s) to resources to meet their needs, by BASICS need domain
- % families that receive follow-up after referral
- % BASICS assessments completed within 2 days of initial intake
- % referral packets sent within 2 days of BASICS completion
- % families that receive follow-up within 30 business days of referral
- Average number of contacts in Collaborate and Connect levels of service

#### *Fidelity Monitoring through Observations of Practice*

Coaches monitor and observe practice of OhioKAN program procedures and confidentiality standards using indirect and direct practice observation methods. Coaches observe their navigators' core practice skills at four points of observation each month:

- Point 1: Navigator and family engagement (direct observation)
- Point 2: Debrief of observed navigator and family engagement with the navigator during coaching
- Point 3: Document review (indirect observation)
- Point 4: Debrief of reviewed document with the navigator during coaching

These four observation points allow coaches the opportunity to observe the following navigator core practice skills (further specified in the Navigator Practice Profile): Engagement, Inclusion, Assessment, Intervention, Active Learner, and Reflection. Coaches use the fidelity monitoring tool, the Observation and Debrief Checklist (see Appendix), to document their observations during each of the four observation points. Completed checklists help inform practice areas to explore during regular coaching sessions. In addition, aggregated data from completed checklists are used to observe larger trends for the program's fidelity and quality.

#### *Direct observation of family engagement*

Coaches observe OhioKAN's staff direct practice through monthly observation of their engagement with OhioKAN families. These observations can occur during screening and intake, BASICS completion, follow-up, and support plan development. Coaches use the Observation and Debrief Checklist, included in the Appendix, to observe the degree to which OhioKAN staff demonstrate core practice skills and deliver services in alignment with the model's program and confidentiality procedures. In the Observation and Debrief Checklist practice skills are observed during direct observation points to determine learning opportunities to further unpack, debrief, and explore with navigators during coaching. These observations are then debriefed with navigators during coaching, where the coach may also observe the core practice skills of Reflection and Active learner. Direct observation of practice allows coaches to ensure fidelity to the model and monitor for implicit bias to ensure that all families receive high-quality services and navigators demonstrate consistent practice.

#### *Indirect observation through service episode document and data review*

Coaches indirectly observe OhioKAN staff core practice skills by reviewing service episode documentation (e.g., BASICS with referral binder or BASICS and referral binder with support plan) each month. This indirect observation method helps coaches understand the degree to which OhioKAN staff demonstrate core practice skills in their service episode documentation. Coaches use the Observation and Debrief Checklist to note which core practice skills they've observed in reviewed documentation and whether there are learning opportunities to further unpack, debrief, and explore with navigators during coaching. These observations are then debriefed with navigators during coaching, where the coach may also observe navigator core practice skills of Reflection and Active learner. The review of service episode documentation allows the coach to fully understand practice skill level, biases, and quality of navigation services to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. In addition, coaches complete a timely review of data quality to observe staff data entry practices. Coaches follow up with navigators as needed on data entry improvement needs and guidance.

## Community Service and Support Mapping

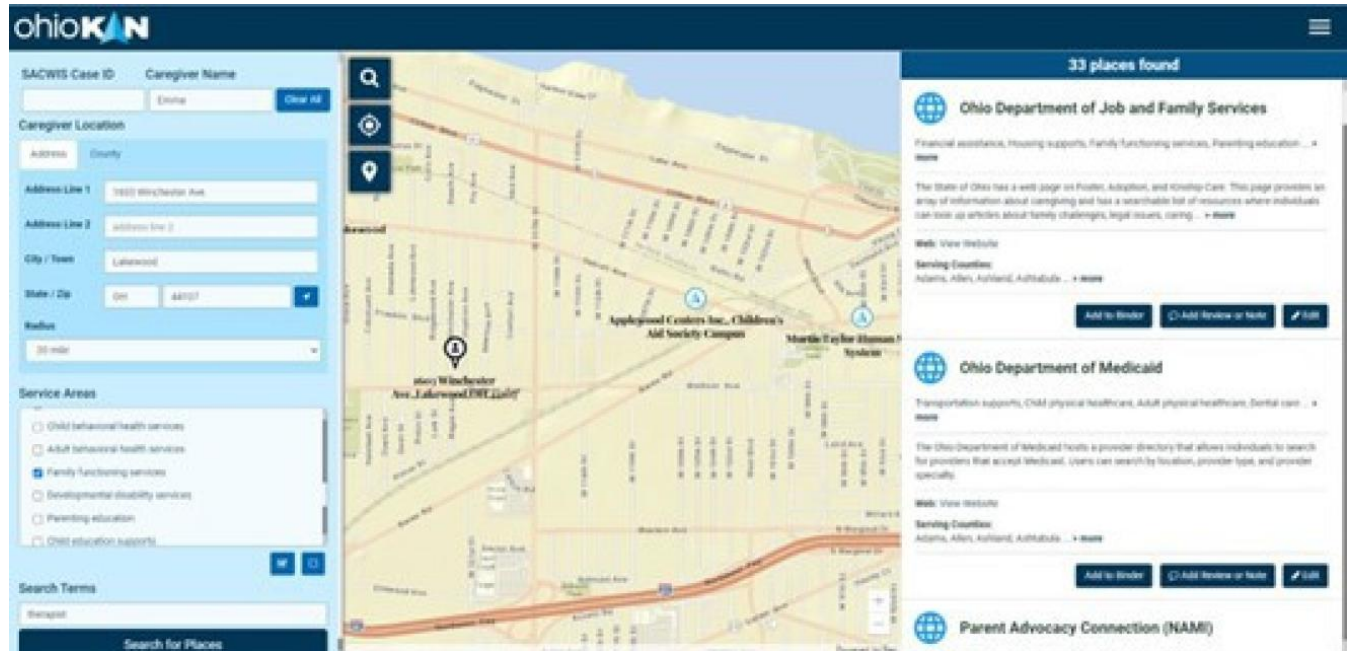
Community service and support mapping are considered core implementation supports for successful implementation and sustainment of the OhioKAN program model. The



OhioKAN program staff utilize a list of resources to align the needs of Families identified in the BASICS with the resources available in the community. The resources matched with the family's needs are then transferred into a referral binder as a key aspect of the Connect Level of Service. Many kinship and adoptive caregivers reach out to OhioKAN for the sole purpose of receiving a referral binder of targeted resources. Without this list of resources, the OhioKAN program would be unable to meet the needs of caregivers in the community.

In preparation for the implementation of the OhioKAN program model, Kinnect contracted with the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) to develop the OhioKAN Information Hub. The Info Hub is a unique platform with community services and supports mapped by county, region and statewide. This Info Hub describes the community provider, the supports available, organization specific details such as days and times open, and provides a space for OhioKAN staff to add notes for future reference. When staff initially log in to the Info Hub, they can navigate the Ohio map to search for resources and have the capability of adding new resources. The Info Hub allows staff to search for resources that are closest to the caregiver's physical address and by service area that aligns with the 10 domains in the BASICS.

Image



**Figure 9: The above is a screenshot of the OhioKAN Information Hub that Navigators use to view and select referrals to meet the unique needs of Kinship and Adoptive Families.**

When a resource is identified and aligns with the caregiver and family's unique needs, the OhioKAN staff member is then able to add the resource to the referral binder. The Info Hub also has the capability to add internal-only notes for other staff members, such as tips on how to access an online benefits portal, etc. These tips are often then explained to the caregiver for ease of accessing the community resource in their referral binder. The referral binder is a feature developed within the Info Hub software: staff are also able to add notes to each resource for the family.

Image

## 1 Applewood Centers Inc., Children's Aid Society Campus

10427 Detroit Avenue  
 Cleveland, OH 44102  
 216-521-6511  
<http://www.applewoodcenters.org/>

Applewood Centers provides behavioral healthcare and out-of-home services for children and their families. Services include counseling & outpatient services; school-based counseling; after school group counseling; psychiatry services; residential treatment; and foster care and adoption services.

Recommendations or reminders from your conversation with the family.

Remove from Binder

**Figure 10: The above is a screenshot the referral binder feature in the OhioKAN Information Hub that allows Navigators to add referrals with specific notes for the family.**

The referral binder is shared with the family in their preferred form of contact such as by email or through the postal service, this also includes in the preferred language. Once a referral binder is sent, the Info Hub displays when a Follow up is needed to a family. The follow up feature is a great way for staff to keep track of all referral binders sent and when a follow up is needed.

In addition to the list of resources in the community, OhioKAN staff play a critical role in assessing the existing service array and ongoing identification of service gaps. This includes keeping a keen ear for service gaps and barriers in conversation with families who call OhioKAN. When gaps and barriers are identified, Navigators make a notation in SACWIS as an activity log and communicate with their region's Coach and Regional Coordinator, who then assist in documenting the service gaps and barriers. This tracker is used in collaboration with the Regional Advisory Council to assist in action planning around how to meet the need of identified service gaps and barriers in the community.

## Community Outreach and Capacity Building

The OhioKAN program model considers community outreach and capacity building as core implementation supports to successful implementation and sustainment of the program model. Outreach efforts include a focus on reducing stigma around support seeking behaviors and normalizing a variety of family constellations. This includes, convening multidisciplinary stakeholders to build awareness and knowledge within communities and across disciplines about the unique strengths, challenges, and needs of kinship and adoptive families and best practices for serving them.

Community outreach supports effective implementation, sustainment of the model, and achievement of programmatic outcomes by ensuring that eligible families and those who serve them are aware of OhioKAN. This includes reducing stigmas of varying family constellations and building the awareness of supports needed and available in the community for Kinship and Adoptive Families. OhioKAN staff support community outreach efforts by engaging professionals who serve families in the community and engaging families in places they already engage with. The below includes a list of community outreach strategies leveraged by the program:

- Presentations to community-based organizations and public systems (e.g., schools, courts, etc.)
- Curated content such as webinars and printed materials aimed at professionals
- Networking and having regional advisory council members introduce OhioKAN staff to their networks
- Direct outreach at local events (e.g., state fair, back-to-school events, etc.)
- Outreach through partners such as asking schools to send information home in backpacks

Capacity building supports includes convening an array of different stakeholder groups to build awareness and knowledge within communities about the supports available and needed for Kinship and Adoptive Families. Stakeholder groups could include state and regional advisory councils aimed at identifying and addressing local service gaps and needs. See section titled Advisory Councils for more information about state and regional advisory councils leveraged for capacity building.

### Appendix

## Appendix

## **Appendix 1. Assessments and Plans Used in Practice**

### **Brief Assessment & Screening to Inform, Connect and Support (BASICS)**

Image

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# Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice

**BRIEF ASSESSMENT &  
SCREENING TO INFORM,  
CONNECT AND SUPPORT  
(BASICS)**

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**Purpose of the BASICS**

The Brief Assessment and Screening to Inform, Connect, and Support will be conducted during a first or second conversation with a family that has been screened in for OhioKAN services based on eligibility criteria. The goals of BASICS are to:

1. Collect baseline information about family needs and financial resources.
2. Determine whether family's needs are imminent and/or complex.
3. Identify which referrals to provide immediately.
4. Identify which domains to conduct additional assessments.

**How the BASICS was Developed**

None of the research-validated assessments reviewed as part of the literature review met the unique goals of the OhioKAN brief assessment. The OhioKAN Design Team, which includes stakeholders from child welfare, aging, formal and informal kinship, adoption and post-adoption, implementation, and evaluation, developed a draft brief assessment specifically designed for OhioKAN needs based on:

- Current kinship and adoption navigator program practices in Ohio,
- Domains commonly included in research-validated measures, and
- Federal and state legislation guiding kinship and adoption navigator services.

Nine core "domains" of potential need were identified by comparing and combining these perspectives. Each of the domains includes examples of specific services or supports that are relevant. Through the conversation with a family, the OhioKAN staff will assess the level of need based upon the family's expressed urgency and/or complexity of need. This does not denote the frequency of a particular need, but the severity of the need. Because this is a newly developed measure, the evaluation team will test reliability and validity to ensure that it has strong measurement properties and can be used for research/evaluation purposes, as required by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse.

**Using BASICS in Practice**

To administer BASICS, the OhioKAN staff will talk with an adoptive parent or kinship caregiver about their family and the reasons they reached out to OhioKAN. After informal conversation and rapport building, Navigators will tell families that OhioKAN can support kinship and adoptive families in a number of ways, depending on what the family needs. The Navigator will ask about the following...

**BASICS Items**

"Kinship and adoptive families sometimes face special circumstances that can make parenting even more challenging. I am going to list a few different areas, and I would like you to tell me whether this area is..."

- 0 = Not challenging for my family; no additional support needed
- 1 = Somewhat challenging for my family; additional support could be helpful for us
- 2 = Very challenging for my family; we need support right away'

Image



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Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice  
Brief Assessment & Screening to Inform, Connect and Support (BASICS)

Domain	Examples	0 = Not a challenge	1 = Somewhat challenging	2 = Very Challenging	Not Answered
<b>Caregiver/Family Needs Tab</b>					
<b>1. Basic needs</b>	<i>Housing, utilities, transportation, clothing, food, furniture</i>				
<b>2. Legal</b>	<i>Questions about custody, delinquency court, other legal services needed</i>				
<b>3. Caregiver Social</b>	<i>Loneliness, no time</i>				

<b>support</b>	<i>for self, respite, support groups</i>				
<b>4. Caregiver health</b>	<i>Mental health, behavioral health, physical health, cognitive health, dental</i>				
<b>5. Caregiver training/ education</b>	<i>Caregiver parenting training, support for children with special needs</i>				
<b>6. Family functioning</b>	<i>Child/caregiver relationship, attachment, bonding, family relationships</i>				
<b>Other Domain</b>	<i>If Caregiver mentions something outside the domains listed above – captured with a narrative</i>				
<b>Child Needs Tab</b>					
<b>1. Child care</b>	<i>Locating care, accessing care, after school or summer programs</i>				
<b>2. Education/Child Development</b>	<i>Enrolling child in school, IEP/504</i>				

Image



**OhioKAN Program Manual**  
**Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice**  
 Brief Assessment & Screening to Inform, Connect and Support (BASICS)

	<i>plan, school supplies, Early Intervention, Head Start</i>				
<b>3. Child Social Support</b>	<i>Connections to peers and/or caring adults and mentors</i>				
<b>4. Child health</b>	<i>Mental health, behavioral health, physical health, dental, special equipment needs</i>				
<b>Other Domain</b>	<i>If Caregiver mentions something outside the domains listed above – captured with a narrative</i>				
<b>Resources Tab</b>					

**Does your family already have any of these resources in place?** (Select options: Yes/No/Not eligible/Not Answered)

- Adoption Assistance (AA)
- Area Agency on Aging
- Free/reduced school meals
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
- Kinship Caregiver Program (KCP)
- Kinship Permanency Incentive Program (KPIP)
- Medicaid
- Ohio Works First Child Benefits (OWF)
- Other medical insurance
- Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy (PASSS) Program
- Social Security death benefits
- Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
- State Adoption Maintenance Subsidy (SAMS)
- Subsidized child care
- Subsidized housing
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

**Prior involvement with Kinship and Post-Adoptive services?**

Yes/No

**Name of Program/Agency**

[text field]

**Were urgent and/or complex needs identified?**

Yes, complex

Yes, urgent

Yes, both urgent and complex

No, neither urgent nor complex

## Support Plan

Image



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# Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice

**SUPPORT PLAN**

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Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice  
Support Plan

**Support Plan**

<b>Name of Kinship and Adoption Navigator:</b>	
<b>OhioKAN Region:</b>	
<b>Family Name/Service Episode ID:</b>	
<b>Date of first support planning meeting:</b>	

<b>People Involved in the Collaborative Support Plan</b>	<b>Family Role (child, adoptive parent, biological parent, kinship caregiver)</b>

<b>Narrative Summary</b>

Image



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Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice  
Support Plan

**Current Family and Community Supports for Identified Needs**

Family Supports	Relevant BASICS Domain	Support relevant to
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Community Supports	Relevant BASICS Domain	Support relevant to
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

Referral Updates						
Area for Support/ Assistance <i>Brief description</i>	BASICS Domain	Binder Referrals Already Provided <i>if applicable</i>	New Referrals Needed <i>If applicable</i>	Were new referrals provided?	Was youth voice included?	Notes and Updates
1.	Choose an item.			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	Choose an item.			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	Choose an item.			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	Choose an item.			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice  
Support Plan

Action Steps Table							
Area for Support/ Assistance Area	BASICS Domain	Action Step	Person Responsible:	Estimated Target Date	Was youth voice included?	Notes	Date Accomplished
1.	Choose an item.			Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.
2.	Choose an item.			Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.
3.	Choose an item.			Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.
4.	Choose an item.			Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.
5.	Choose an item.			Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.
6.	Choose an item.			Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.
7.	Choose an item.			Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.
8.	Choose an item.			Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click or tap to enter a date.

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Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice  
Support Plan

**Our next meeting is:**

Contact/Plan Check-In Schedule			
Preferred Contact Method(s)	Frequency	Day or Time Preferences	People to Involve in Check-Ins
	Choose an item.		

Date	Updated referrals	Connected to a referral together	Updated action steps	Requested funding	Worked together to access benefits	Requested benefits coordinator support	Notes
Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Click or tap to enter a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

# Support Plan Discussion Guide

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# Appendix 1. Assessments & Plans Used in Practice

**SUPPORT PLAN  
DISCUSSION GUIDE**

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### Discussion Guides For Co-Developing the Kinship and Adoptive Family Collaborative Support Plan with the Family

The OhioKAN Collaborative Support Plan is a tool used to plan Collaborate Service Level. The Support Plan is designed to be co-developed through open-ended discussion with the caregiver or parent and should be revisited and updated at each meeting. This discussion guide provides suggested questions to better understand the somewhat challenging and very challenging areas the caregiver or parent identified during the BASICS assessment. The goal of the first interaction when providing Collaborate Service Level is to build rapport and trust with the parent or caregiver, ask follow-up questions based on what was shared in the BASICS, and learn more about the family's circumstances to co-develop a tailored Support Plan.

#### The Navigator's Role and Primary Skills

The Navigator's role in co-developing the Support Plan with the caregiver or parent is to facilitate their exploration of ways to address their identified needs, recognize their strengths and abilities, and identify what family and community supports they already have. The primary skills used may include appreciative inquiry and motivational interviewing.

Before starting the Support Plan discussion, be sure to reintroduce yourself if needed and re-explain your role using plain language, especially if children are present.

#### During the Support Plan discussion:

- ask open-ended questions
- listen closely
- make reflective statements to confirm understanding
- Follow the caregiver or parent's lead, adjusting the pace and content of the discussion to be responsive to the emotional dynamics of the conversation
- take notes of the main points to fill out the Support Plan template
- orient the caregiver or parent to the Support Plan so that they understand what the next steps are and what to expect in their ongoing work

#### Framing the Discussion

The order of the Support Plan sections is flexible, though it is recommended you begin by discussing the reasons the caregiver or parent first contacted OhioKAN (information provided on the BASICS). You are encouraged to use your practice experience and follow the lead of the OhioKAN family when selecting a place to start. Depending on the family's circumstances, you should select the applicable sections/questions. The conversation and Support Plan should be tailored to the family's needs; you are not required to ask all the questions or use all the sections on the Support Plan.

As you frame questions, mirror the language OhioKAN families use about themselves, their relationships, and their situation. For example, if the caregiver describes the situation as temporary, you can say "staying in the home" rather than "living in the home". Rather than using the more general term of caregiver, you can identify the specific relationship of "grandparent" "auntie" "uncle" or whatever term the caregiver and child use to identify their relationship. You will see multiple options of words to use in parentheses, and you may develop your own way of phrasing based on what you think will resonate with the OhioKAN family and will create a positive strengths-based conversation.

#### Youth Involvement in Developing the Support Plan

It is best practice to involve youth in planning and making decisions that impact them because it can give youth a sense of control and increase their engagement in services. When it is developmentally appropriate and appropriate to the needs of the family, you should always ask the parent/caregiver if they would like youth to be involved in developing the plan. Youth involvement is especially relevant to the domains of education/child development, child social support, and child health. Involving youth in the support/assistance portion of the conversation is not recommended, especially if the discussed areas are related to Flex Funding. Your conversation with the caregiver or parent about the BASICS should inform what areas for support or assistance are appropriate to discuss with the youth.

Image

### How do I determine youth involvement in the discussion?

- Determine if youth involvement is developmentally appropriate. If you are unsure, ask the parent/caregiver.
- Ask the parent/caregiver if they would like the youth to participate in the conversation.
- Ask if there are identified needs that they would rather not talk about in front of the youth (e.g., financial support, caregiver health, caregiver social support).
- With the caregiver's permission, ask the youth if they would like to participate in the plan.
- Ensure the youth has an authentic choice, if the youth is hesitant, do not pressure

When a child is involved in the Support Plan, be mindful of how long they have lived in the caregiver's or parent's home as well as the relational dynamics the caregiver or parent reports and what you observe. The Support Plan may remind them of past trauma or sensitivities that could inform your approach to the discussion as well as identify

additional areas of support. The child is always welcome to leave the conversation, be mindful of both verbal and nonverbal cues that may signal the child is done.

After determining with the caregiver and family if the youth will be involved in the discussion, you can use the following prompts to engage them while co-developing the Support Plan:

1. What would you like us to know about you?
2. What are you interested in?
3. Are there things that are important to you that you want to be sure we are paying attention to?
4. What feels hard right now?
5. Can you tell us about any problems you are trying to solve that you would like our help with?
6. You may also want to ask questions to learn about how they are experiencing referrals that impact them (e.g., after school programs, health/behavioral health providers, etc.)

**Discussion Guide: Exploring Personal Strengths and Family and Community Supports** To build the Support Plan's family and community supports table and action steps table with the caregiver or parent, it may be helpful to also explore areas in their broader family and community networks that might be strengths and natural supports. You can explore personal strengths and supportive relationships by applying appreciative inquiry skills (suggested questions below) to have an open-ended conversation with the caregiver or parent. If appropriate to the circumstances of the family and support needs identified by the caregiver, you may consider developing together a network of support diagram.

**Suggested questions to explore personal, family, and community strengths for caregivers/parents are outlined below:**

1. Who do you feel like you and your family can count on?
2. Who helps you out when you need extra support?
3. What community groups or organizations are you already connected to?
4. What are you most proud of as a (family role – caregiver, parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin, etc.)?
5. How would you describe what's best about your (family or home)?
6. What do you think of as your most important personal strengths?
7. How would you describe what's best about your community?
8. Who outside of the family is important to you?
9. Tell me about a time you or your (family/household) experienced a challenge and how you addressed it?
10. What do you think of as you and your (family's/household's) most important strengths?
11. What do you think of as you and your community's most important strengths?

*Tip: Be mindful of how the caregiver or parent characterizes their family or household and modify your questions as needed. OhioKAN serves the whole family, including a caregiver's or adoptive parent's biological child(ren).*

**Discussion Guide: Articulating Areas for Support or Assistance**

The goal of the conversation is to co-develop a Support Plan by learning more about the reasons the caregiver or parent first contacted OhioKAN and the BASICS domains they identified as "very challenging" and "somewhat challenging" and to make plans to address these challenges together. Co-developing the Support Plan is a way to build trust and accountability with the caregiver or parent through this discussion to support them with their unique circumstances. If the caregiver or parent's reason for contacting OhioKAN relates to Flex Funds, the conversation should focus initially on those reasons for requesting this support before exploring other potential needs and include clear expectations of the steps involved in the process and how long it may take.

**Exploring the BASICS Domains**

To open the conversation with the caregiver or parent, begin by asking about the BASICS domains they reported as "somewhat challenging" or "very challenging" and asking follow-up questions to learn more about their support needs and which are most important to them. If you have not already, you may also want to review the binder referrals with them and learn whether they have been able to access those referrals. Remember, you can always make different or additional referrals and you can offer to contact a provider with a family IF they would like your assistance.

Some suggested prompts are below. Questions will need to be tailored to the unique circumstances of the family. The caregiver or parent may choose to opt out of answering certain questions.

1. You identified [BASICS domain] as very challenging. Can you tell me a little more about that? Would you still describe it as very challenging?
2. Tell me more about what first led you to contact OhioKAN.
3. Are there other areas for support or assistance that are especially important to you?
4. What support or assistance can we provide that would be most helpful to you?
5. How important is this area of support or assistance to you?
6. I see that you identified financial assistance as the primary reason for contacting OhioKAN. Can you tell me a little more about that? Are you interested in exploring other forms of assistance from OhioKAN?

Repeat this process as needed until you and the caregiver or parent feel that enough information has been gathered on the "challenging" and "very challenging" domains indicated in the family's BASICS.

**Exploring other Family Needs**



After going through the domains indicated as "very challenging" and "challenging" on the Family's BASICS, you may also explore other areas of support the caregiver or parent may be interested in sharing. Follow the parent or caregiver's lead and assess their level of comfort with the conversation before exploring additional areas. The below questions are suggestions for ways to explore additional needs and should be tailored to the Family's unique circumstances:

1. Are there other areas of support that are important to you that you would like to share?
2. Are there other problems you are trying to solve that you would like our help with?

**Discussion Guide: Developing Action Steps**

Developing action steps is a critical piece of the Support Plan as it lays the groundwork for the Family's expectations for OhioKAN's Collaborate support. This discussion guide is closely related to the next guide on exploring personal strengths and family and community supports as action steps build on and leverage the caregiver's or parent's strengths. The below guiding questions are a starting point for this portion of the Support Plan conversation, but it is not an exhaustive list. Questions will need to be tailored to the unique circumstances of the Family.

1. During our conversation, it sounds like you've identified [ ] as an area for support or assistance. What would it look like to see this problem solved?
  1. If you could wave a magic wand and make this challenge go away, what would change?
  2. What will it take to see this problem solved?
  3. How important is this area for support to you?
2. I'd like to understand what you've tried before to address this area. Are there resources or services in your community you've accessed? What was your experience with them?
  1. Can you tell me about any steps you've taken to address this challenge previously?
3. Can we build on resources you may already have in your network to support with this challenge?
  1. Who in your network has been helpful with this area?
  2. Who do you turn to for support?
  3. Who is available to you when you need help?
4. Can we explore what you found meaningful about our conversation so far?
  1. How would you describe your greatest strength to support change?
  2. How would you describe your hope and biggest reason for change?
5. What are some steps you'd like to accomplish to address this area for support?
  1. How confident are you that you can accomplish this step?
  2. How ready are you to take this step?
  3. How difficult do you think taking this action step will be?
  4. How much energy do you think this step will take?
  5. How much support do you feel you will have for taking this step? Support might be from me, your family, your community.
6. Let's explore how I can partner with you to solve this problem and support you with your action steps. What steps would be helpful for me to take? How much support do you feel you will need to move forward?
  1. Would a referral to [service] address this area for support?
  2. I see you've identified enrolling in [benefit program] – can I help you with completing the necessary forms?
  3. Would it help if I introduce you to [service provider]?
  4. Would it help if I attended the [appointment, school meeting] to support you?

Collaborate Service Level build on the referrals offered through the Connect Service Level. In addition to providing referrals, you can also offer the following services and supports:

- **Warm hand-off referrals**
  - You can offer to call an agency with a family on the phone, or call an agency on a family's behalf to make the initial introduction
- **Assistance with an application**
  - You can offer to assist a family with an application for a social service benefit (SNAP, childcare, SSI, etc.) virtually or in person if there are barriers to completing the application virtually
- **Benefits coordination**
  - If the family has questions about eligibility, a benefits appeal process, or would like support with an application, or other benefits challenges that require more specialized expertise, you can offer to connect them with the OhioKAN Benefits Coordinator
- **Flexible Funds and Hard Goods**
  - If a family needs hard goods like clothing, beds, car seats, etc., for their kinship or adoptive children, you can offer to directly link families to organizations and agencies for short-term assistance in obtaining these items, and follow up support
  - If you have exhausted all community-based options for a family to meet a need for funds or hard goods, you can apply for flexible funds and hard goods through OhioKAN
- **In-person visiting**
  - In select situations, you can offer to join a family in a meeting with the child's school, social worker, etc. in the community to provide extra advocacy for the family
  - If there are barriers to providing virtual support, you may also offer to visit the family in their home to assist with applications, etc.
- **Collaboration with caseworker, state, or local agencies**
  - You can offer to coordinate with the family's case worker, if they have one, or reach out to local/state agency contacts to advocate alongside them

## Appendix 2. Job Descriptions

### Kinship & Adoption Navigator

#### Overview of the OhioKAN Program:

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OhioKAN builds the necessary community and systems capacity to support families and works directly with kinship and adoptive families to build confidence and connections. Anticipated outcomes to be measured include greater family resilience, improved family functioning, increased stability and permanency for children, and improved child well-being.

OhioKAN is a statewide program organized into 10 geographic regions. Regional staff will develop community capacity to deliver a service model designed to support formal and informal kin caregivers and adoptive parents obtain the knowledge, social support, and access to the human services and resources they need to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes for themselves and the children in their care.

#### Overview of the Kinship and Adoption Navigator Position:

The Kinship and Adoption Navigator is a full-time position dedicated to supporting kinship caregivers and adoptive parents in accessing the services, resources, and social support they need to care for themselves and the children in their homes. The Kinship and Adoption Navigator reports to the [insert partnering supervisor's organizational job title here], and meets weekly with the OhioKAN Regional Coach for case consultation and support in delivering OhioKAN services with fidelity. The primary functions of this role include providing direct services to families and children, participating in continuous quality improvement activities, community outreach, collaboration, and continued learning of emerging best practices in serving kinship and adoptive families.

#### Providing Direct Services

- Responds to inquiries about participation in the OhioKAN program, provides referrals, and follows up in a timely manner
- Partners with kinship and adoptive families to assess their needs, identify their goals, and provide individualized case management to provide an appropriate level of support in achieving their goals
- Collaborates with diverse families and organizational partners with an empathetic strengths-based orientation that prioritizes dignity and respect
- In partnership with the Regional Director, builds and maintains relationships with public and private partners to support referrals
- In partnership with the Regional Coordinator, builds and curates a list of services and resources across the region to serve kinship and adoptive families
- Advocates alongside kinship and adoptive families for access to services to achieve their goals
- Organizes and hosts events for outreach, public education, and to support kinship and adoptive families
- Conducts home visits and meetings at times and locations that accommodate families' schedules
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and Continued Learning
- Meets regularly with assigned OhioKAN Coach to monitor fidelity to the OhioKAN model, review cases, and set goals.
- Documents case-level data as specified by the OhioKAN model
- Identifies trends across cases and shares common barriers and facilitators that kinship and adoptive families are experiencing
- Participates in Learning Collaboratives in order to problem-solve and exchange knowledge with other Kinship and Adoption Navigator sites across the state
- Implements strategies as defined by the regional and statewide CQI plans and participates in CQI activities as assigned by the Regional Director

#### Education and Experience

- Associate's or Bachelor's degree in Social Work, Public Health, Education, or related field preferred
- Experience working directly with families and/or case management experience preferred

TRAVEL REQUIRED, AS NEEDED. MUST HAVE ACCESS TO OWN TRANSPORTATION.

Background Check Information: The final candidate selected for the position will be required to undergo a criminal background check. Criminal convictions do not necessarily preclude an applicant from consideration for a position. An individual assessment of an applicant's prior criminal conviction(s) will be made before excluding an applicant from consideration.

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OhioKAN Program Manual

# Appendix 2. Job Descriptions

**KINSHIP & ADOPTIVE  
NAVIGATOR**

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# Regional Coordinator

## Overview of the OhioKAN Program

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OhioKAN builds the necessary community and systems capacity to support families and works directly with kinship and adoptive families to build confidence and connections. Anticipated outcomes to be measured include greater family resilience, improved family functioning, increased stability and permanency for children, and improved child well-being.

OhioKAN is a statewide program organized into 10 geographic regions. Regional staff will develop community capacity to deliver a service model designed to support formal and informal kin caregivers and adoptive parents obtain the knowledge, social support, and access to the human services and resources they need to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes for themselves and the children in their care.

## Overview of the Regional Coordinator Position:

The Regional Coordinator is a full-time position dedicated to supporting implementation by coordinating within one of OhioKAN's 10 service delivery regions. The Regional Coordinator reports to the Regional Director, supports Coaches within their region, and collaborates frequently with OhioKAN staff from other regions and the statewide team. The primary function of this role include administrative support to the region, coordinating regional communications and events, managing data and program records, and partnership with OhioKAN Families.

## Administrative Support

- Supports the Regional Director in achieving programmatic goals
- Takes clear comprehensive notes of regional meetings and trainings
- Manages communications with and scheduling of the Regional Advisory Council
- Coordinates meetings with internal and external stakeholders
- Ensure regional staff have adequate supplies and equipment

## Regional Communications and Event Coordination

- Coordinates regional trainings and learning communities in partnership with staff from other regions
- Schedules, organizes, and staffs regional meetings and other regional events (e.g. trainings and outreach events)
- Creates and regularly updates a list of community events and service providers across the region
- Maintains regular communication with ODJFS, the Program Director, and Program Coordinator

## Data and Records Management

- Maintains regional records and fiscal reports
- Maintains orderly and complete program records including MOU's, training/program materials and notes from OhioKAN programmatic activities
- Facilitates communications related to the evaluation and ensures data entry and CQI processes take place as scheduled
- Participates in and supports CQI activities as assigned
- Enters data and runs reports in the OhioKAN Database

## Partnership with OhioKAN Families

- Responds to inquiries about participation in the OhioKAN program, provides referrals, and follows up in a timely manner
- Collaborates with diverse families and organizational partners with an empathetic strengths-based orientation that prioritizes dignity and respect
- Advocates alongside kinship and adoptive families for access to services to achieve their goals

## Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree preferred
- Related experience using databases strongly preferred
- Experience maintaining an internal SharePoint site and a high level of proficiency in Microsoft Office strongly preferred

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# Appendix 2.

# Job

# Descriptions

## REGIONAL COORDINATOR



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## Regional Coach

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### Overview of the Regional Coach Position:

The Regional Coach is a Full-time position dedicated to supporting implementation and coordinating within one of OhioKAN's ten service delivery regions. The Regional Coach reports to the Regional Director, supports the navigator sites within their region, and collaborates frequently with OhioKAN staff from other regions and the statewide team. The primary function of this role include coaching for fidelity to the OhioKAN program model, ensuring continuous quality improvement activities at the regional level, and partnering with OhioKAN families

### Coaching for Programmatic Fidelity

- Meets regularly with OhioKAN Kinship and Adoption Navigators and regional staff who provide navigation services to consult on cases and support implementation of the OhioKAN practice model
- Reviews program tools, fidelity measures, and data collection for the evaluation team with OhioKAN Kinship and Adoption Navigators and regional staff
- Monitors programmatic goals and metrics for assigned navigator sites
- Partners with navigator sites to set goals, gather feedback on common challenges, and interpret program data
- Facilitates communication and maintains relationships within referral agencies to ensure effective service delivery
- Coaches and supports OhioKAN Kinship and Adoption Navigators and regional staff to evaluate and discern how each case with its individualized plan meets benchmarks set forth by the evaluation team
- Responds to inquiries from prospective OhioKAN program participants and provides referrals and direct services as needed

### Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and Continued Learning

- Executes CQI plan for assigned navigator sites and drives regional CQI activities
- Partners with Coaches from other regions to identify and meet continued learning needs for OhioKAN Kinship and Adoption Navigators and Partnering Supervisors through Learning Collaboratives
- Communicates regularly with the Regional Director and Regional Coordinator regarding program delivery and services provided
- Partners with Kinship and Adoption Navigators to identify trends across cases and share common barriers and facilitators that kinship and adoptive families are experiencing
- Participates and facilitates CQI activities as assigned

### Partnership with OhioKAN Families

- Responds to inquiries about participation in the OhioKAN program, provides referrals, and follows up in a timely manner
- Partners with kinship and adoptive families to assess their needs, identify their goals, and provide individualized case management to provide an appropriate level of support in achieving their goals
- Collaborates with diverse families and organizational partners with an empathetic strengths-based orientation that prioritizes dignity and respect
- In partnership with the Regional Director, builds and maintains relationships with public and private partners to support referrals
- In partnership with the Regional Coordinator, builds and curates a list of services and resources across the region to serve kinship and adoptive families
- Advocates alongside kinship and adoptive families for access to services to achieve their goals
- Conducts home visits and meetings at times and locations that accommodate families' schedules

### Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree required, Master's preferred in Social Work, Public Health, Education or related field
- Related experience and skills

TRAVEL REQUIRED, AS NEEDED. MUST HAVE ACCESS TO OWN TRANSPORTATION.

Background Check Information: The final candidate selected for the position will be required to undergo a criminal background check. Criminal convictions do not necessarily preclude an applicant from consideration for a position. An individual assessment of an applicant's prior criminal conviction(s) will be made before excluding an applicant from consideration.

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# Appendix 2. Job Descriptions

**REGIONAL COACH**

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## Regional Director

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### Overview of the Regional Director Position:

The Regional Director is a full-time position dedicated to building community-level supports for the Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator program in their assigned region(s). The Regional Director reports to the OhioKAN Program Director and supervises a regional team which may include – a Regional Coordinator and Coach. The Regional Director will partner with the Regional Coordinator and Coach to ensure the service delivery and capacity building objectives of the OhioKAN are successfully met within their region. The Regional Director will also work with the statewide evaluation team to ensure that successful data collection and continuous quality improvement activities are completed for the region.

The Regional Director will build and maintain local partnerships and co-facilitate regular Regional Advisory Council meetings designed to engage local stakeholders. In partnership with the Regional Advisory Council, the Regional Director will develop a regional implementation plan to build their region's capacity to serve kin caregivers and adoptive parents. The regional director's responsibilities include strategic leadership at the regional level, program design and implementation, community engagement, evaluation and CQI, and partnering with OhioKAN Families.

### Strategic Leadership:

- Exemplifies the mission, vision, and values of the OhioKAN program
- Leads and sustains the implementation and continuous quality improvement of the OhioKAN program in a multi-county regional area in a manner that is responsive to the needs of kinship and adoptive families, takes into account the resources and capacity of individual counties and local communities, ensures fidelity to the program model, and supports formal program evaluation and CQI activities
- Leads a regional staff team
- Forges, cultivates, and maintains deep relationships with and connections among a broad network of regional and local human services organizations
- Inspires a shared sense of purpose among key stakeholders, including families served, public and private human service organizations, community leaders, and staff
- Establishes, grows, and co-leads a Regional Advisory Council, composed of key regional and local stakeholders, that is charged with providing ongoing expert guidance, service capacity assessment and building, problem-solving, and support for the regional OhioKAN program
- Contributes to the success of the statewide OhioKAN program by building collaborative relationships with peer regional directors, actively sharing ideas and information, and contributing personal creativity and critical thinking to the ongoing refinement and success of OhioKAN

### Program Design and Implementation

- Implements OhioKAN consistent with the program model, project timeline, and budget
- Hires, trains, and supports regional OhioKAN staff, including a Regional Coordinator and two Coaches
- In conjunction with the Regional Advisory Council and supported by the Evaluation Team, conducts a regional readiness assessment and utilizes the same to define strategies and objectives for developing necessary resources
- Manages the process for selecting organizations to serve as host sites for OhioKAN Navigators and site supervisors within the region
- Initiates formal agreements with partnering organizations; forges close collaborative relationships with the same; and plans with partnering organizations for the selection, onboarding, training, and supervision of OhioKAN Navigators
- Ensures the initial training of OhioKAN Navigators and site supervisors (and regular case consultation conducted by Coaches) and ongoing peer support through learning collaboratives

### Community Engagement

- Targeted outreach to key stakeholders to build, engage, and sustain the membership of the Regional Advisory Council, a group which the Regional Director co-leads
- Meets with and listens attentively to kinship caregivers, adoptive parents, and youth
- Builds effective collaborative relationships with key regional, county and local stakeholders
- Forges effective and collaborative relationships with human service organizations across the region
- Engages stakeholders in identifying priorities for capacity building and strategies for accomplishing them
- Acquires nuanced understanding of the regional, county, and community-level human service organizations, formal and informal decision-making structures, and priority



concerns

**Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)**

- Champions evaluation and CQI practices for the region; effectively communicates the same to partnering organizations and stakeholders; and utilizes performance and outcome data to inform decision making
- Directly and in conjunction with regional Coaches and evaluation staff, supports partnering organizations in their collection, input, and utilization of evaluation data and constructive learning through the application of sound CQI practices
- Achieves targets for data collection, data integrity, program fidelity, and CQI practices
- Participates in and facilitates CQI meetings and activities as assigned

**Partnership with OhioKAN Families**

- Responds to inquiries about participation in the OhioKAN program, provides referrals, and follows up in a timely manner
- Collaborates with diverse families and organizational partners with an empathetic strengths-based orientation that prioritizes dignity and respect
- Advocates alongside kinship and adoptive families for access to services to achieve their goals

**Education and Experience**

- Bachelor's degree required; masters preferred
- 3-5 years of progressive leadership experience including experience supervising a team

TRAVEL REQUIRED, AS NEEDED. MUST HAVE ACCESS TO OWN TRANSPORTATION.

Background Check Information: The final candidate selected for the position will be required to undergo a criminal background check. Criminal convictions do not necessarily preclude an applicant from consideration for a position. An individual assessment of an applicant's prior criminal conviction(s) will be made before excluding an applicant from consideration.

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OhioKAN Program Manual

# Appendix 2. Job Descriptions

**REGIONAL DIRECTOR**



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# Program Coordinator

## Overview of the OhioKAN Program:

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## Overview of the Program Coordinator Position:

The Program Coordinator is a full-time position dedicated to supporting statewide implementation by coordinating with OhioKAN's 10 service delivery regions. The Program Coordinator reports to the Program Director and collaborates frequently with Regional Directors and Regional Coordinators. The primary functions of this role include administrative support to the Program Director, coordinating statewide communications and events, managing data and program records, and partnering with OhioKAN Families.

## Administrative Support

- Supports the Program Director in achieving programmatic goals
- Takes clear, comprehensive notes of statewide meetings and trainings
- Manages communications with and scheduling of the Statewide Advisory Council
- Coordinates meetings with internal and external stakeholders
- Coordinates all statewide CQI activities

## Statewide Communications and Event Coordination

- Coordinates statewide trainings and learning communities in partnership with the regional staff
- Schedules, organizes, and staffs statewide meetings, trainings, and outreach events
- Maintains regular communication with ODJFS, Regional Coordinators, and key stakeholders

## Data and Records Management

- Maintains programmatic records and fiscal reports for OhioKAN
- Maintains orderly and complete program records including MOU's, training/program materials and notes from OhioKAN programmatic activities
- Facilitates communications related to the evaluation and ensures data entry and CQI processes take place as scheduled

## Partnership with OhioKAN Families

- Responds to inquiries about participation in the OhioKAN program, provides referrals, and follows up in a timely manner
- Collaborates with diverse families and organizational partners with an empathetic strengths-based orientation that prioritizes dignity and respect
- Advocates alongside kinship and adoptive families for access to services to achieve their goals

## Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree preferred
- Related experience and skills

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# Job

# Descriptions

## PROGRAM COORDINATOR



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## Benefits Coordinator

At Kinnect, we envision a child welfare system in Ohio where:

- Foster care is a temporary or short-term option
- Children and families are empowered to find solutions to the problems they face
- Direct service providers and social workers can establish and maintain a culture of innovation and excellence
- All stakeholders prioritize permanency in each decision made on behalf of a child and their family

We believe that childhood is a fundamental human right, and that every day for a child in foster care is a day in crisis. We envision a world where families, agencies, resources – and children – work together so that every child is loved and nurtured in a permanent chosen family. We develop partnerships that transform beliefs, values, and actions to achieve permanency for all children in the shortest time possible. We have been advancing this mission since 2005 (as Waiting Child Fund).

### OhioKAN Program

OhioKAN is a flexible and responsive kinship and adoption navigator program designed to assist children, caregivers, and families statewide. With OhioKAN Navigators working throughout 10 OhioKAN Regions, we combine local knowledge with statewide resources. OhioKAN is designed specifically to ensure every kinship and adoptive family who wants support navigating the resources available to them can get it.

### Position Description:

Kinnect is seeking a Children and Family Benefits Coordinator ("Benefits Coordinator") to support its OhioKAN Program. This role works closely with families to ensure awareness and access to appropriate social services (SNAP, etc.). The Benefits Coordinator is responsible for conducting education and outreach, as well as providing application assistance to enroll children and their families into available benefit programs.

This position involves staying current on available benefits and successfully connect and enroll children and families to the benefits for which they are eligible. The Benefits Coordinator builds effective working relationships with OhioKAN staff and partners to ensure seamless service to OhioKAN clients.

### Essential Functions:

#### Technical Assistance

- Act as liaison between the State of Ohio, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and the OhioKAN staff to create awareness of available benefits.
- Provide education and training to OhioKAN staff and partners on available benefits.
- Create internal guidelines and trainings on best practices for coordinating benefits.
- Document and maintain standard operating procedures and policies.

#### Relationship Building and Collaboration

- Create collaborative relationships with OhioKAN staff and partners to deliver optimal services and support to Kinnect's clients.
- Convene teams to build relationships and maintain a consistent understanding of OhioKAN and the benefits that are available to its clients.
- Assist in problem resolution, as needed.
- Regularly communicate with staff and partners to ensure alignment and provide current information.

#### Information and Data Management

- Create process for collecting, analyzing and reporting actionable data to Kinnect staff and partners.
- Maintain and manage database.
- Document data management procedures and policies.

### Qualifications and Requirements:

- Bachelor's Degree in social work or related field or equivalent work experience.
- Three to five years' (3-5) experience in social services or non-profit organizations, preferred.
- Thorough knowledge of the benefits available in family and child services system.
- Strong working knowledge of Microsoft Suite including Outlook, Excel (including formula function), and Teams.
- Experience working with diverse and underserved communities.
- Ability to work independently, anticipate needs, and take initiative in a fluid and fast-paced environment.
- Experience in data entry and data management, including producing and interpreting reports.
- Ability to effectively conduct information sessions and training to diverse audiences in person and virtually.
- Strong organizational and time management skills, attention to detail; ability to work collaboratively, and excellent writing and oral communication skills.
- Bi-lingual/Multi-lingual skills, desirable.

### Physical Demands and Work Environment:

- Ability to work within an office environment and have regular interaction via telephone, teleconference, text and email with Kinnect's team as well as in the community.
- Periodic travel may be required.

### Americans with Disabilities Act

This position involves sitting in a stationary position for at least 50% of the time and the ability to ambulate with or without assistance to attend on-site meetings, as

needed. The job requires movement in a typical office environment with file cabinets, office machinery, office furniture and typical hallway and access doorways. The position must operate typical office equipment, such as copiers, telephones, computers and peripherals. This job requires that the incumbent must have the ability to access transportation to attend meetings and special events. The organization provides reasonable accommodations for this position.

Disclaimer: The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by employees assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of employees assigned to this position.

All employment decisions at Kinnect are based on business needs, job requirements and individual qualifications, without regard to race, color, religion or belief, national, social or ethnic origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, size, physical, mental or sensory disability, HIV Status, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, marital, civil union or domestic partnership status, past or present military service, family medical history or genetic information, family or parental status, or any other status protected by the laws or regulations in the locations where we operate.

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# Appendix 2.

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# Descriptions

## BENEFITS COORDINATOR



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## Program Trainer

At Kinnect, we envision a child welfare system in Ohio where:

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- Direct service providers and social workers can establish and maintain a culture of innovation and excellence
- All stakeholders prioritize permanency in each decision made on behalf of a child and their family

We believe that childhood is a fundamental human right, and that every day for a child in foster care is a day in crisis. We envision a world where families, agencies, resources – and children – work together so that every child is loved and nurtured in a permanent chosen family. We develop partnerships that transform beliefs, values, and actions to achieve permanency for all children in the shortest time possible. We've been advancing this mission since 2005 (as Waiting Child Fund).

### Position Summary

The Kinnect Trainer is responsible for delivery of new staff orientation, program-specific training, and stakeholder presentations for all Kinnect staff and programs. This position is directly responsible to the Director of Program Innovation and will help shape learning and engagement for all Kinnect partners and programs. It is critically important for the Trainer to maintain a strong knowledge base of Ohio revised code and administrative code as it relates to child welfare practice. The Trainer will also work closely with the Institute for Human Services and other Ohio child welfare training and program partners. The Trainer is the voice of Kinnect's values, mission, and vision.

### Essential Functions:

- Support OhioKAN through training of Navigators, Coaches, Regional Directors, Regional Coordinators and all other OhioKAN roles
- Lead and assist with the development of new training content
- Provide program-specific stakeholder training
- Provide in-service training as requested for OhioKAN staff
- Mentor new OhioKAN staff through modeling, collaboration, and coaching approaches
- Attend meetings and trainings as requested
- Collaboration for curriculum development
- Build relationships with community partners and engage them in training opportunities as they arise
- Assess and provide feedback to Kinnect supervisors, as well as partner agencies, regarding employee engagement and retention/application of training material
- Build and maintain relationships with Kinnect and partner agency staff
- Documentation
- Accurate tracking of attendance at trainings
- Collection and summary of pre/post-test knowledge checks
- Collection of trainer evaluation forms to be submitted to the Program Director

### Education, Skills & Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in Social Services or related field, required.
- Experience in working in child welfare, social services, academia or government settings, required.
- Minimum of three (3) years training experience, required.
- Ability to travel in state which may include overnight stays up to five nights at a time
- Ability to work a flexible schedule, which may include nights and weekends
- Possess exemplary public speaking and interpersonal skills
- Ability to use customer service initiatives to work with partner agencies
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to meet multiple program deadlines, and manage multiple tasks
- Experience using Microsoft Office
- Possess a valid driver's license and dependable transportation
- Ability to maintain a contact log spreadsheet
- Knowledge of the Ohio welfare system
- Ability to train others
- Must be able to pass a background check

### Additional skills/competencies necessary:

- **Teaming:** Ability to motivate and inspire a team. Must show a commitment to establishing and maintaining vision in a fast-paced fluid environment and to help team members to understand their role in helping to accomplish the vision.
- **Initiative:** Measure self against a standard of excellence. Undertake self-development activities and learn new skills, seek increased responsibilities and ask for and offer help when needed. Demonstrate the ability to work independently and harmoniously with a variety of personalities and leadership styles.
- **Communication Skills:** Clearly and persuasively communicate, including public speaking; listen and seek clarifications; participate in meetings; write clearly and informatively.
- **Integrity:** Work well in a rapidly changing environment; treat others with respect and consideration; accept responsibility for own actions. Understand business implications of decisions, align work with strategic goals, complete administrative tasks and develop strategies to achieve organizational goals.
- **Flexibility:** Able to multitask in a changing work environment. Handle competing demands and unexpected events. Willingness to change approach to best fit the



situation.

- Dependability: Follows instructions, takes responsibility for own actions; keeps commitments.

**Working Conditions**

- This position requires frequent travel throughout Ohio.
- This position occasionally requires long hours and occasional weekend work.
- This job generally operates in a professional office environment. This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, filing cabinets, etc.

DISCLAIMER: The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by employees assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of employees assigned to this position.

All employment decisions at Kinnect are based on business needs, job requirements and individual qualifications, without regard to race, color, religion or belief, national, social or ethnic origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, size, physical, mental or sensory disability, HIV Status, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, marital, civil union or domestic partnership status, past or present military service, family medical history or genetic information, family or parental status, or any other status protected by the laws or regulations in the locations where we operate.

Image

OhioKAN Program Manual

# Appendix 2. Job Descriptions

**PROGRAM TRAINER**



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## Program Manager

At Kinnect, we envision a child welfare system in Ohio where:

- Foster care is a temporary or short-term option
- Children and families are empowered to find solutions to the problems they face
- Direct service providers and social workers can establish and maintain a culture of innovation and excellence
- All stakeholders prioritize permanency in each decision made on behalf of a child and their family

We believe that childhood is a fundamental human right, and that every day for a child in foster care is a day in crisis. We envision a world where families, agencies, resources – and children – work together so that every child is loved and nurtured in a permanent chosen family. We develop partnerships that transform beliefs, values, and actions to achieve permanency for all children in the shortest time possible. We have been advancing this mission since 2005 (as Waiting Child Fund).

### Overview of the OhioKAN Program

OhioKAN is an innovative statewide Kinship and Adoption Navigator Program that supports formal and informal kin caregivers and adoptive parents by providing information and referral services and assistance obtaining support services. Building on current and previous Ohio kinship navigator programs,

OhioKAN is distinguished by its planned statewide implementation, broad population of families served, and provision for rigorous evaluation. Contingent on evaluation results, OhioKAN may establish a new evidence-based practice model that may be considered for federal payments under the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018. OhioKAN builds the necessary community and systems capacity to support families and works directly with kinship and adoptive families to build confidence and connections. Anticipated outcomes to be measured include greater family resilience, improved family functioning, increased stability and permanency for children, and improved child well-being.

OhioKAN is a statewide program organized into 10 geographic regions. Regional staff will develop community capacity to deliver a service model designed to support formal and informal kin caregivers and adoptive parents obtain the knowledge, social support, and access to the human services and resources they need to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes for themselves and the children in their care.

### Position Summary

The OhioKAN Project Manager is a full-time position dedicated to support the OhioKAN program and the OhioKAN team. The Project Manager will work under the direction of the Program Director to manage various programmatic aspects with emphasis on data and program expansion.

The Project Manager will be responsible for coordinating, facilitating and monitoring program-related benchmarks as they implement the program. The Project Manager will also be responsible for managing program data and will play a critical role in maintaining relationships with external partners, as well as teaming amongst Kinnect staff.

### Essential Functions

- Develop, implement and manage a program database in collaboration with partners and stakeholders
- Maintain tracking of programmatic outcomes and reports to inform program strategy and tactics with all appropriate stakeholders
- Develop weekly, monthly and annual program reports
- Train Kinnect staff and partners on data reporting and management as needed
- Work collaboratively with Project Director and Regional Directors(s) to manage implementation benchmarks of all county partners
- Participate in Learning Community meetings
- Participate and contribute to leadership calls and strategic planning efforts
- Work with strategic partners and consultants to further program development efforts
- Educate and support partner counties to ensure all partner commitments are understood and actualized
- Schedule organizational and programmatic meetings
- Maintain fiscal records for program
- Create and maintain office documents
- Attend program and staff meetings as needed
- Maintain confidentiality regarding Kinnect, partner organizations, and children served
- Perform other responsibilities assigned by the Project Director
- Assist with staff orientation and onboarding

### Minimum Requirements

Education: Bachelor's Degree in Social Services or Business Administration. Master's Degree preferred.

Experience: Demonstrated experience working with interdisciplinary teams utilizing innovative strategies to overcome obstacles. Some nonprofit and/or government sector is preferred.

### Preferred Skills/Qualifications:

- Adaptation and flexibility
- Detail oriented

- Ability and comfort working with diverse populations in various environments
- Basic knowledge of Microsoft Office programs
- Understanding of, or ability to learn, Quickbooks
- Ability to build and maintain a team
- Knowledge of qualitative and quantitative program measures

**Additional skills/competencies necessary to carry out services to the service population's culture and socioeconomic characteristics:**

- Obtain a cultural awareness that results in a clear understanding of the worldview that directs individual interactions with people of other backgrounds.
- Ability to identify needs unique to various diverse populations including those of different gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnic group, race, and physical or mental capacity and address those needs with community resource referrals.
- Assist other professionals and team members in understanding the unique needs/characteristics of diverse populations.

**Working Conditions**

- This job generally operates in a professional office environment. The role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, filing cabinets, etc.
- This job requires occasional overnight travel in the state of Ohio

DISCLAIMER: The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by employees assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of employees assigned to this position.

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OhioKAN Program Manual

# Appendix 2. Job Descriptions

**PROGRAM MANAGER**



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# Program Director

## Overview of the OhioKAN Program:

OhioKAN is an innovative statewide Kinship and Adoption Navigator Program that supports formal and informal kin caregivers and adoptive parents by providing information and referral services and assistance obtaining support services. Building on current and previous Ohio kinship navigator programs, OhioKAN is distinguished by its planned statewide implementation, broad population of families served, and provision for rigorous evaluation. Contingent on evaluation results, OhioKAN may establish a new evidence-based practice model that may be considered for federal payments under the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018.

OhioKAN builds the necessary community and systems capacity to support families and works directly with kinship and adoptive families to build confidence and connections. Anticipated outcomes to be measured include greater family resilience, improved family functioning, increased stability and permanency for children, and improved child well-being.

OhioKAN is a statewide program organized into 10 geographic regions. Regional staff will develop community capacity to deliver a service model designed to support formal and informal kin caregivers and adoptive parents obtain the knowledge, social support, and access to the human services and resources they need to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes for themselves and the children in their care.

## Position Description

The Program Director, OhioKAN, will report to the Executive Director/Chief Program Officer and will oversee the Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator Program (OhioKAN). The Program Director will support the statewide implementation and evaluation of the Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator Program that will be administered in partnership with the Program Manager from the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) in 10 regions across Ohio. The Program Director will directly oversee ten regional directors working in diverse regions statewide. Regular and frequent travel around the state is expected.

## Strategic Leadership

- Exemplifies the mission, vision, and values of the OhioKAN program
- Leads the implementation of the OhioKAN program statewide in a manner that is responsive to the needs of kinship and adoptive families, takes into account the resources and capacity of individual counties and local communities, supports regional staff ensuring fidelity to the program model, and supports formal program evaluation
- Leads a statewide team including Regional Directors, Regional Coordinators, Regional Coaches, and the OhioKAN Navigators
- Forges deep relationships with and connections among a broad network of state, regional and community-level human services organizations
- Inspires a shared sense of purpose among key stakeholders, including, families served, state partners, public and private human service organizations, community leaders, and regional staff
- Contributes to the success of the statewide OhioKAN program by building collaborative relationships with regional directors and program staff, actively sharing ideas and information, and contributing personal creativity and critical thinking to the ongoing refinement and success of OhioKAN

## Program Responsibilities

- Reports to and works collaboratively with the ODJFS OhioKAN Program Manager to achieve all Federal and State requirements for the OhioKAN Program
- In partnership with the ODJFS Program Manager ensures fiscal and budget management and ensures diversity in funding for the sustainability of OhioKAN
- Informs and advocates for kinship policy and procedure changes in partnership with ODJFS as areas of needs are identified
- Supports hiring and directly supervises (10) Regional Directors across Ohio
- Works in partnership with the Regional Directors to develop partnerships with community-level providers to increase organizations' capacity to ensure service delivery to kinship and adoptive families statewide
- Establishes and supports the regional staff in creating (10) Regional Advisory Councils, composed of key regional and local stakeholders, that is charged with providing ongoing expert guidance, service capacity assessment and building, problem-solving, and support for the regional OhioKAN program
- Addresses any major challenges to implementation with the Program Manager from ODJFS and with the Regional Directors

## Evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

- In partnership with the evaluation team, supports the coordination of statewide data collection, data integrity, program fidelity, and CQI practices
- Works proactively with Regional Directors and regional staff to ensure accurate and targeted data collection from all community partners across the state

## Minimum Requirements

- Master's Degree required with at least three years of experience in child welfare, public health, health and human services, and/or community-based services.
- Demonstrated effectiveness in program management and program coordination
- Proven experience in meeting program objectives
- Proven record in meeting and exceeding the financial management of a large scale program
- Experience managing a budget of over 3 million dollars

## Preferred Skills/Qualifications

- Demonstrated expertise and professional experience in statewide program supervision and program coordination
- Ability to demonstrate a strong knowledge of child welfare best practices.
- Experience developing and leading strong high functioning teams

- Demonstrated success supporting the evaluation of programs
- Experience working in a fast-paced high performing environment
- Demonstrated experience in hiring, managing, developing and coaching individuals and teams

***Minority and LGBTQ candidates strongly encouraged to apply.***

All employment decisions at Kinnect are based on business needs, job requirements and individual qualifications, without regard to race, color, religion or belief, national, social or ethnic origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, size, physical, mental or sensory disability, HIV Status, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, marital, civil union or domestic partnership status, past or present military service, family medical history or genetic information, family or parental status, or any other status protected by the laws or regulations in the locations where we operate.

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# Appendix 2. Job Descriptions

**PROGRAM DIRECTOR**



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## **Appendix 3. Fidelity Monitoring: Observation Check-List Tool**

### **Observation and Debrief Checklist**

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# Appendix 3. Fidelity Monitoring: Observation Check-List Tool

**OBSERVATION AND DEBRIEF  
CHECKLIST**

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Appendix 3. Fidelity Monitoring: Observation Check-List Tool

Observation and Debrief Checklist

Navigator (First & Last Name)	Coach (First & Last Name)	Cohort/Region	Month/Year	Observation Type	Type of Doc. Review
				SACWIS ID: <input type="checkbox"/> Intake/BASICS <input type="checkbox"/> Support plan dev. <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up	SACWIS ID: <input type="checkbox"/> BASICS + Referral Binder <input type="checkbox"/> BASICS + Support Plan

Engagement	Observation		Debrief		Doc Review		Debrief		Notes
	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	
<b>E1. Actively listened to the family.</b> For example: - Checked for understanding - Affirmed family's strengths - Reflected observations from last conversation - Paraphrased, repeated, rephrased - Reflected feelings - Asked open ended questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>E2. Demonstrated cultural humility during interaction with the family.</b> For example: - Acknowledged and validated family's experience with oppressive systems (when appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>E3. Conveyed empathy for family's situation.</b> For example: - Perspective taking, listened without judgement, practiced mindfulness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Inclusion	Observation		Debrief		Doc Review		Debrief		Notes
	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	
<b>I1. Asked about family's preferences regarding interaction and resources.</b> For example: - Offered accommodations based on accessibility needs. - Connected the conversation with interpretive services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>I2. Used language and phrases the family could relate to and understand in verbal and written communication.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>I3. Understood family's previous experience(s) with local resources and worked through that with them.</b> - Offered different ways of talking about their experience and needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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I4. Partnered with family to co-create a support plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Assessment	Observation		Debrief		Doc Review		Debrief		Notes
	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	
A1. Asked all the BASICS questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A1b. Included notes documenting family strengths, needs and wishes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A2. Explored resources family is already receiving.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A3. Explored family experiences when seeking assistance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A3b. Asked about successes, challenges, or gaps in accessing community resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Intervention	Observation		Debrief		Doc Review		Debrief		Notes
	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	
V1. Referred family to resources that met their identified needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
V2. Referred family to resources that were consistent with the family's preferences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
V3. Offered family additional collaborate level supports based on their needs and preferences. - Benefits coordination, hard goods, flex funds, warm handoff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
V4. Support plan aligned with family's needs, preferences and experiences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
V5. Contacted family according to their preferences, and as frequently as they prefer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
V6. Identified barriers and facilitated breaking down barriers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Active Learner	Observation		Debrief		Doc Review		Debrief		Notes
	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	
AL1. Demonstrated curiosity about family's experience.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
AL2. Considered why and how family is marginalized by systems. (Debrief Only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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AL3. Considered how intervention could advance equity. (Debrief Only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Reflection	Observation		Debrief		Doc Review		Debrief		Notes
	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	Observed	Learning Opp.	
R1. Identified your own strengths, supports, biases, areas for growth, and places where you need help and support. (Debrief Only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
R2. Considered how personal intersectional identities are similar and different than those of families you're working with. (Debrief Only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
R3. Processed own bias, power, and privilege and considered how it is being used. (Debrief Only)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## Appendix 4. OhioKAN CARES Values

### OhioKAN CARES Values

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# Appendix 4. OhioKAN CARES Values



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# C A R E S

## *Children & Families*

We value Ohio's children and families and are determined to keep their stability and well-being as our primary drivers.

## *Accountability*

We value integrity and transparency. We do what we say and say what we do. We regularly reflect on our practice to ensure we are always learning how we can respond in the most appropriate and consistent ways.

## *Respect*

We value the diversity of families and hold the belief that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and thoughtfulness.

## *Engagement*

We value the voices of all kinship and adoptive families and will partner with them knowing their perspective is the foundation on which we will build. We intentionally advocate alongside people of color and others marginalized by systems to shape solutions affecting their lives.

## *Strengths*

We value every family's strengths and believe everyone can contribute to their solutions. We believe families and honor them as the experts on their situation.