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

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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



Theory of Change

Roadmap to Support for Families and Communities

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 careaiver, 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.

Roadmap to

Collaborate with

families seeking

more engagement

to offer individual

advocacy and

support

Support Families

Image



Navigation services are provided in an equitable and culturally responsive way

Inform families about publicly available resources statewide and local resources Connect eligible families with referrals to programs and services

Outreach to diverse communities of eligible K&A families

Eligible families are aware of OhioKAN services and understand services are available to them as many times as they need until the child becomes an adult

Interested eligible K&A families are engaged in OhioKAN services K&A families are engaged in a conversation using motivational interviewing practices to understand their needs, preferences, values, and beliefs

K&A families choose the level of service they receive

Based on their needs and preferences, K&A families are linked to the resources, services, and supports that are available and accessible to them and OhioKAN documents and elevates gaps in inclusive and equitable resources

K&A families receive follow-up from their navigator to ensure connection to referrals and address any barriers or additional needs K&A families co-design a rightsized, tailored, traumainformed, equity-oriented, and culturally appropriate support plan

Families choose which resources, services and supports are included and prioritized which may include:

- Additional referrals - Warm transfers

- Concrete supports
- Benefits coordination - In-person services available

K&A Families access resources, services, and supports aligned with their self-identified needs, preferences, cultures, values, norms, and beliefs families in ways that are important to them Kinship caregivers &

Caregivers feel

to care for their

supported and able

Kinsnip caregivers & adoptive parents feel satisfied with navigation services and feel heard, understood, and supported in meeting the needs of their children, themselves, and their families

Kinship caregivers & adoptive parents increase awareness, skills, and confidence in navigating available and accessible resources, services, and supports Children experience positive outcomes

Children's physical/material needs are met

Children feel loved, cared for, and connected to trusted people they can turn to for comfort and support

Children experience safety and stability in their living situations

Children are involved in affirming activities that support their health and development

Children enjoy positive ageappropriate experiences and opportunities

Children feel confident and thrive in ways that are important to them and their families

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

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ODIOK N KINSHIP & ADOPTION NAVIGATOR

Navigation services are provided in an equitable and culturally responsive way

Roadmap to Support Communities

Promote community awareness of OhioKAN and reduce stigma for seeking equitable and inclusive support Establish community partnerships to ensure the effective implementation of OhioKAN Build community level awareness and develop connections with places families already are Local human service systems are more aware of and responsive to K&A families A robust, tailored, equity-oriented and continuously improving service array is available and accessible across Ohio

Promote broad community awareness of OhioKAN with varied outreach efforts regionally and statewide

Educate public system partners about the unique needs of K&A families and how they can best be served and supported

Stand against violence and hate of any kind brought on to communities of color and other populations marginalized by systems Partner with established community-based providers to deliver navigation services

Engage individuals with lived experience, people of color, and other populations marginalized by systems as partners when identifying challenges and shaping solutions that will affect their lives and communities.

Convene a multidisciplinary group of advisors and individuals with lived experience to assess, prioritize, and create action plans at both the state and regional level Connect purposefully with child welfare agencies and county-level groups to strengthen practice

Partner with local familyserving organizations who bring intersectional identities and represent diverse constituencies.

Continually search for and participate in local community and cultural events, fairs, festivals and other places where families gather Assess and monitor the extent to which the available services and supports meet K&A families' needs

Analyze historical factors and inequities when considering the distribution of resources and policy development

Partner in designing solutions to address the historical, community and cultural barriers that may impact families' access to resources, services, and supports. Share and continuously improve best practices in serving K&A families with public agencies and community-based providers across the state

Develop and analyze program practices to identify and confront manifestations of discrimination and exclusion

Support the development and increased, awareness and accessibility of needed resources, services, and supports in ways that promote equitable outcomes and support transformational change

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