



Arizona Grandparent Ambassadors

AZGA's Day at the Capitol is on Feb 11th, here is some of the information we will be sharing with legislators:

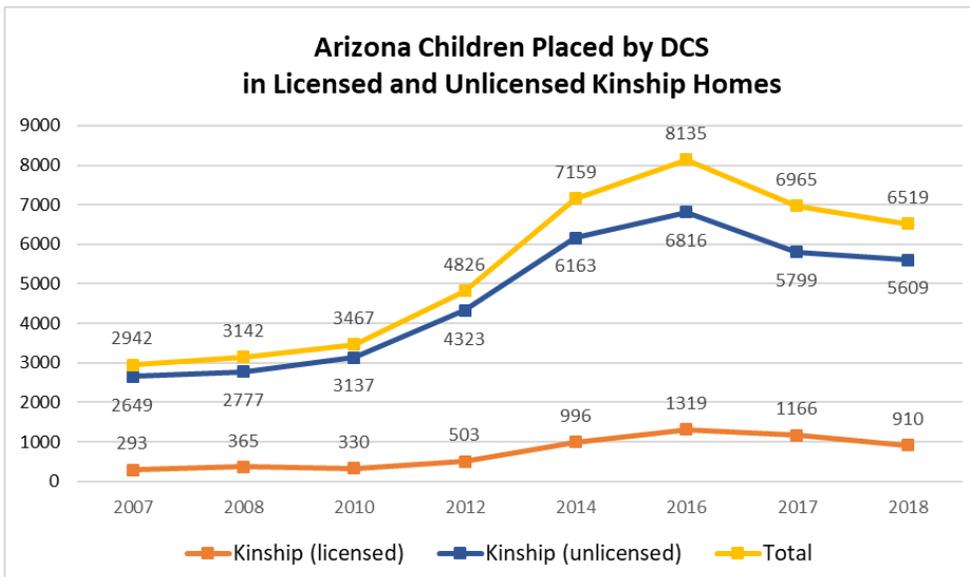
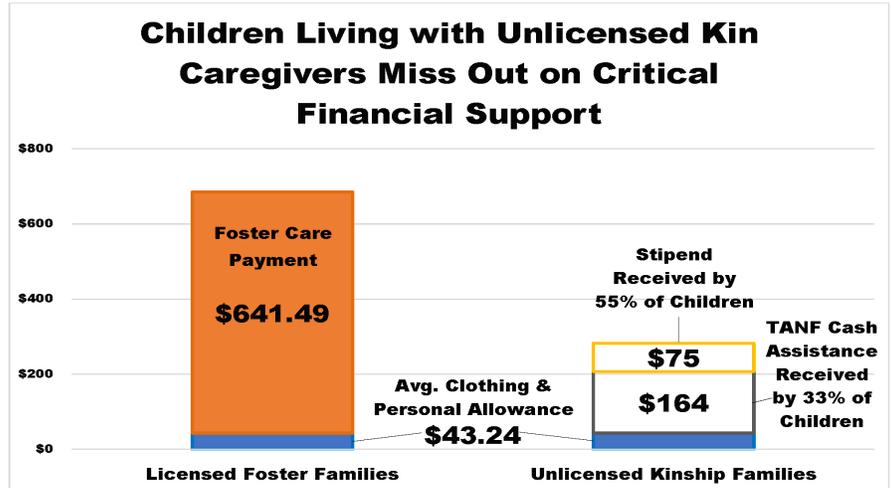
A Double Standard In Safety Means Children In Kinship Families Miss Vital Financial Support.

Relatives remain the first choice for placement of children by DCS. Yet, as unlicensed kinship families, they do not receive the same financial or programmatic support from DCS as licensed foster families.

What is more, Kinship families are contacted by DCS with little to no warning and asked to step in during times of crisis to care for children who have suffered traumatic experiences.

Facing these sudden unexpected expenses, Kinship families must adapt their housing situations quickly and pay for added expenses such as extra beds, special needs equipment and services, all while navigating a new system and managing their own aging and health care challenges.

Unlicensed kinship families do not receive the foster care payment of \$641 per month (average) but instead qualify for much lower financial support. But because the procedural steps DCS requires are often left incomplete, a large percentage of children in kinship families go without even this minimal level of assistance. As a result, many kinship families have only \$43 they can count on each month to help keep the children safe, healthy and stable.



**FACTS & FIGURES:
AZ Kinship Families**

- ⇒ Of the 6,519 children placed by DCS in kinship foster care only 910 are receiving licensed foster family supports.
- ⇒ AZ ranks well above the national average in placing kids in kinship families. AZ 43% —> US 32%

Arizona Grandparent Ambassadors (AZGA) is a statewide coalition of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and fictive kin who stepped up to care for children who for a variety of reasons could no longer remain in their own homes. Our mission is to support, mobilize, educate, and advocate for better laws and policies to help us care for and raise strong, resilient children.

More information about Arizona Grandparent Ambassadors: view our website at www.azga.org or contact Ann Nichols (520) 312-8067 or annwnichols@gmail.com