

PROFILE

The Kinship and Foster Family Network of Manitoba

Organizational Mission Statement

To encourage, promote, assist, and educate kinship and foster homes to enhance the quality of life for children in care.

Organizational Beliefs

Children in Kinship and Foster Care are best served when the **Principle of Addition** is followed.

- Always add rather than subtract people from a child's life.
- Adding people always expands the circle of support.
- The birth family always remains at the center of the circle.
- A kinship or foster family is not in the center of the circle, but a valuable, temporary, complementary addition to the birth family.

Organizational Services

Kinship and Foster Care Training and Support

The Kinship & Foster Family Network of Manitoba (The Network) is a non-profit charitable organization funded by the province of Manitoba. The Network's Board membership is fully comprised of Kinship and foster parents. The Network is a member of the Canadian Foster Family Association and is a member of the Child Welfare League of Canada. The Network provides kinship and foster parents with training, guidance, and assistance to enhance their capacities, knowledge, and skills to provide quality care.

The Network provides curriculum-based levels training for skill development in providing kinship and foster care. Participants, upon training completion, can choose to further enhance their skills with additional training to become co-facilitators with KFFNM staff.

The Network provides one-to-one phone peer support to Manitoba's kinship and foster parent care providers. Curriculum-based training is delivered to a volunteer team of kinship and foster parents to become peer support service providers.

Empowering Kinship and Foster Parents to be respected members of the professional team.

The Network staff create and facilitate; relevant, trauma informed, strength-based, capacity building parent training to enhance kinship and foster parents parenting knowledge, strategies, tools, and skills. This training is co-facilitated by staff and trained kinship/foster parent facilitators whenever possible. The Network has supplemented our in-person group trainings with Zoom training sessions designed to reach out to participants through this additional resource.

Kinship and foster families need planned opportunities to share their collective wisdom and experience.

Annually, the Network hosts several Focused Forums province wide to facilitate discussion and gather salient information on topics: relevant to the role of Kinship and Foster parents in the system and for promoting quality care. This information is used to inform best practice.

Our History

In 1993, Manitoba's provincial Foster Family Association (MFFA) was closed due to a loss in funding and was the only province without a Foster Family Association. Recognizing the importance for a Foster Family Association, a group of hard working and committed kinship/foster parents came together and with the support of facilitators created a funding proposal to establish a province-wide Foster Family Network in Manitoba. The proposal was funded by the Province and in 2000 the first office of The Kinship & Foster Family Network of Manitoba was opened on Provencher Avenue in Winnipeg.

Today, The Network is located at 90 Terracon Place in Winnipeg and the services provided have expanded to include: Introduction to Kinship and Foster Care, Levels 1 and 2 training, Peer Support Program, Information Sessions, Focused Forums, and community based events. With the expansion of services, the kinship and foster parents' involvement and participation in The Network has also grown. The Network takes pride in the services and supports provided to individual kinship and foster families and the kinship and foster family community.