

KINSHIP AND FOSTER FAMILY NETWORK OF MANITOBA

2020 SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

Semi-annual service report for the Kinship & Foster Family Network of Manitoba
as set out in our service purchase agreement.

REPORTING PERIOD

April 1, 2020 to
September 30, 2020



The Kinship & Foster Family
Network of Manitoba

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS

The Network provides kinship and foster parents with training, guidance, and assistance to enhance and strengthen capacities, knowledge and skills for supporting quality care.

Who Are We?

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 promotes the participation of kinship and foster parents in co-facilitating education programs and responding to peer support calls for guidance. The Network belongs to the Canadian Foster Family Association and is a member of the Child Welfare League of Canada.

Mission Statement

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

Organizational Beliefs and Services

At The Kinship & Foster Family Network of Manitoba we believe:

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

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

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

- ✦ To achieve this goal, Network staff create and facilitate culturally relevant, trauma informed, capacity building training to enhance kinship and foster care skill development.
- ✦ This training is co-facilitated by staff and kinship/foster parents whenever possible.

A Support system which includes trained peers is invaluable.

- ✦ The Network provides a Peer Support Program which is managed by staff and trained volunteer kinship/foster parents who provide a broad range of supports to other caregivers navigating difficult situations related to fostering.

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

- ✦ Annually, the Network hosts several 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 better practice.

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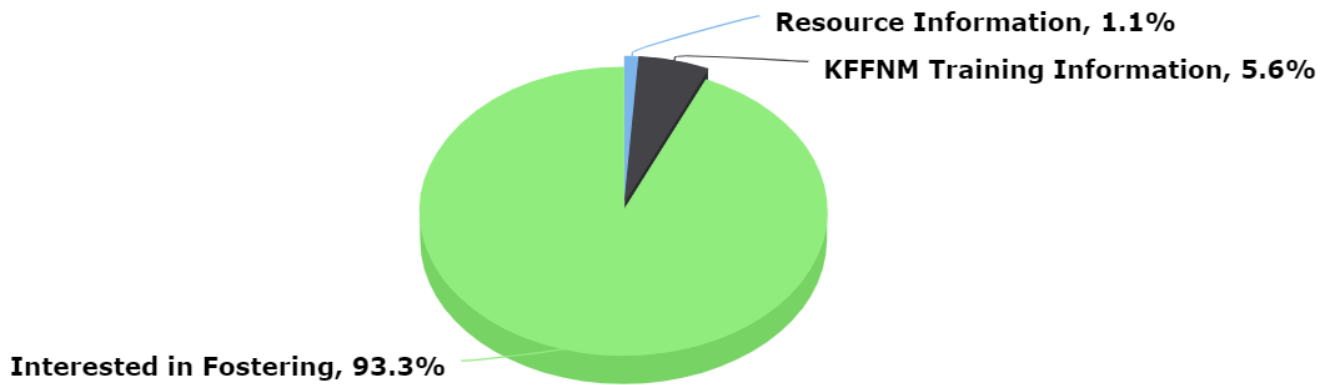
Kinship/Foster Parent Services Overview

Community of Care	KFFNM responds to the Community of Care phone line on behalf of the Province and Authorities. Information packages are sent to interested callers. KFFNM Introduction to Kinship/Foster Care sessions are offered.
Introduction to Kinship/Foster Care	Historical understanding and awareness of care expectations, legislation, the structure of the family services system and standard licensing process.
Peer Support Program	Trained volunteer kinship and foster parents provide phone support and education to kinship/foster parents on best practices and systems information.
Kinship/Foster Care Skill Development Series	Level 1 sessions: understanding of kinship/foster parenting skills and knowledge. Level 2 sessions: parenting strategies, tools and skills to enhance competencies. Facilitator Training: skill development for co-facilitating group training sessions offered through KFFNM.
Information Sessions	Understanding the Child Removal Appeal Process Understanding legislation, standards and policies. Historical perspectives for Fostering Reconciliation KFFNM Service Overview
Focus Forums	Three forums per year are facilitated province wide on issues identified by kinship and foster parents and the KFFNM Board.
Groups, Events and Gatherings	Providing support to kinship and foster parent communities.

Kinship & Foster Family Network of Manitoba

General Information Callers

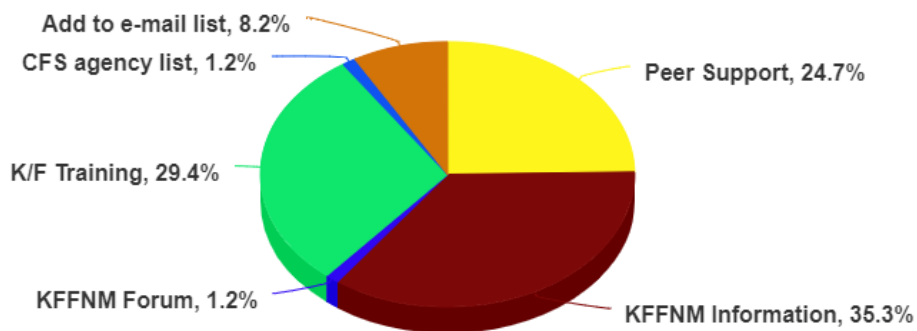
KFFNM provides support and information for community members seeking information about kinship and foster care in Manitoba. Community members can access through the Provincial Community of Care phone line or the KFFNM office phone line. During this reporting period, KFFNM responded to **90** service calls.



Kinship/Foster Care Providers Service Request

KFFNM provides program services for kinship and foster parents in Manitoba. During this reporting period, KFFNM responded to **94** kinship/foster program service calls.

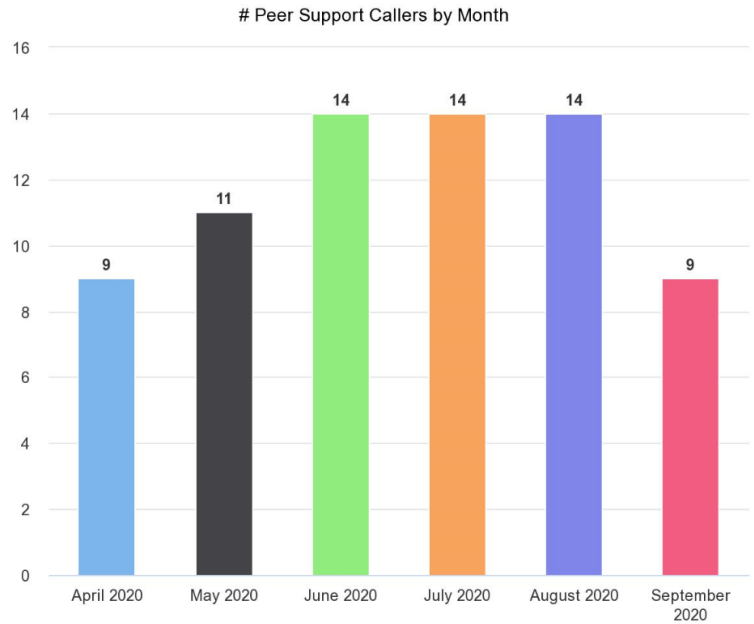
KFFNM Service Requests



Kinship/Foster Parent Peer Support

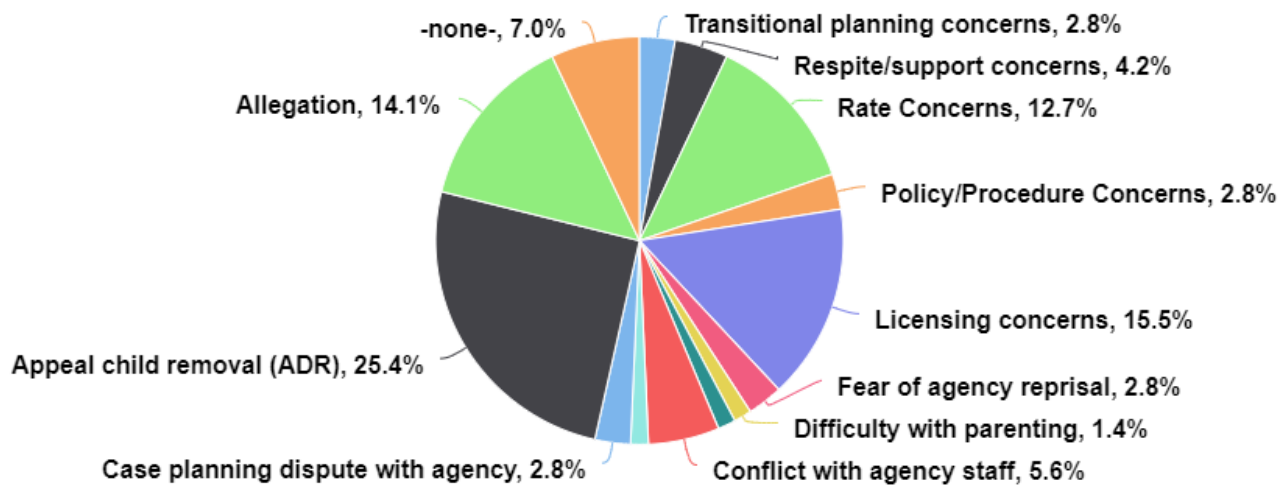
Callers requesting Peer Support Program

KFFNM provides a Peer Support Program for kinship and foster parents who are seeking support for a variety of concerns. During this reporting period our Peer Support Program received **71** caller requests for support.



Primary Issues Identified by Callers

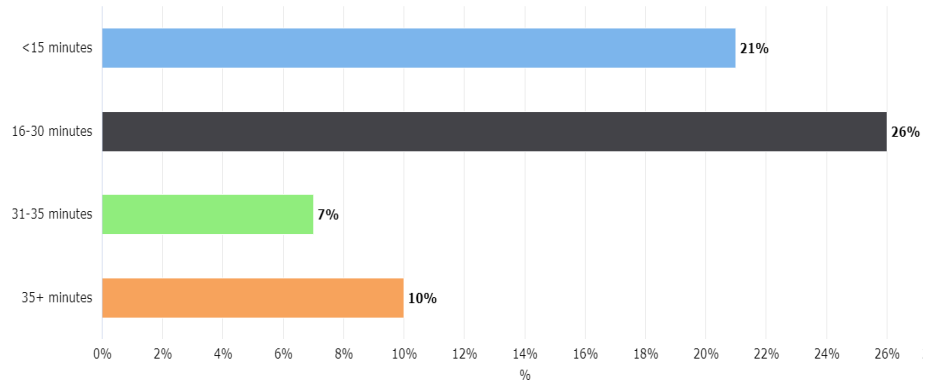
Peer Support calls are grouped into primary issues identified by callers. Data is collected relating to all complimentary concerns and Peer Support provider responses are recorded for training purposes.



Kinship/Foster Parent Peer Support

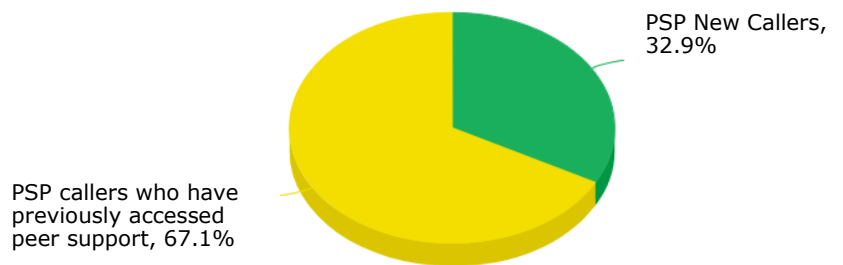
Peer Support Program Service Delivery Data Analysis

KFFNM database provides information regarding the average length of time provided to callers. Dramatic changes to the average call time may indicate a need for program service adjustment.



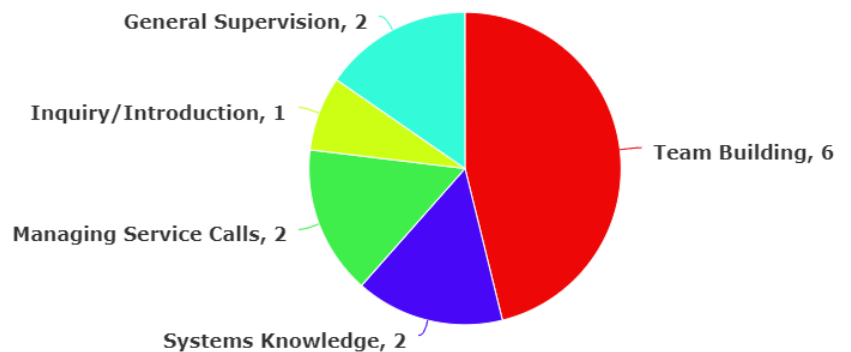
Peer Support Program Service Delivery Data Analysis

KFFNM database provides clarity for the number of repeat calls a caller makes contrasted with callers who receive sufficient information and/or support during their initial call. Dramatic changes to these percentages may indicate a need for program service adjustment.



Volunteer Training Provided

During this reporting period **13** hours of Direct training hours were provided to Peer Support Volunteers.



Introduction to Kinship/Foster Care Information Sessions

Table provides the number of community member contacts and those who chose to register then attend sessions.

Information Sessions were provided through Zoom sessions. At this time, participant feedback from sessions is unavailable. Future sessions will adjust to have feedback polls delivered through the Zoom session.

	# Contacts interested in fostering	# Registered to attend	# Attended
April	4	2	Session cancelled
May	12		No session provided
June	14	1	Session cancelled
July	19	11	Session cancelled
August	20	11	7
September	15	12	6
Total	84		

Kinship/Foster Care Skill Development Training

By mid March it became impossible to meet in person with kinship and foster parents groups to provide training/supports during this reporting period. KFFNM has developed standardized means and methods for training kinship and foster parents through group dynamics.

In order to expand our reach to care providers across the province, KFFNM, prior to the impact of Covid-19, began the learning process for providing ZOOM training/support meetings. The sudden and dynamic impact of Covid-19 accelerated the attainment of those goals.

During this reporting process, standards for providing all KFFNM established and developed training delivery were reviewed and adjusted to suit the new training approach. Training sessions were announced and made available commencing in the middle of September.

Since April 2017, KFFNM has provided **252** Skill Development training sessions to **2223** session participants. During this time period, the sessions have been provided in community settings through-out the province of Manitoba. In order to reach out even further and to provide increased opportunities for kinship and foster parents to learn, share and communicate we began, in 2019, planning to expand our training services to include complimentary on-line training to supplement in-person, group trainings.

To develop awareness of this service, we collected data on training participants who missed previous training sessions. **105** individuals were identified as having missed one or more trainings sessions. During this reporting period e-mails were sent to those participants to engage them in ZOOM trainings.

Kinship/Foster Care Provider Level Trainings

Fall Skill Development training commenced mid-September. Sessions extended into following semi-annual period and will be reported then.

On-going Training Sessions

4 series of 12 sessions

Facilitator Training Provided

At the conclusion of Level 1 & 2 Skill Development training sessions participants are encouraged to take additional training to become KFFNM co-facilitators.

# Training Series	# Participants
(3) 4 hour trainings	8 kinship/foster parents

Kinship/Foster Parent Support & Engagement

KFFNM recognized the unique challenges with connecting kinship and foster parents who were experiencing the extraordinary impact of Covid-19 during this time period. We focused on a variety of approaches to connect, support and chat with care providers within our data base.

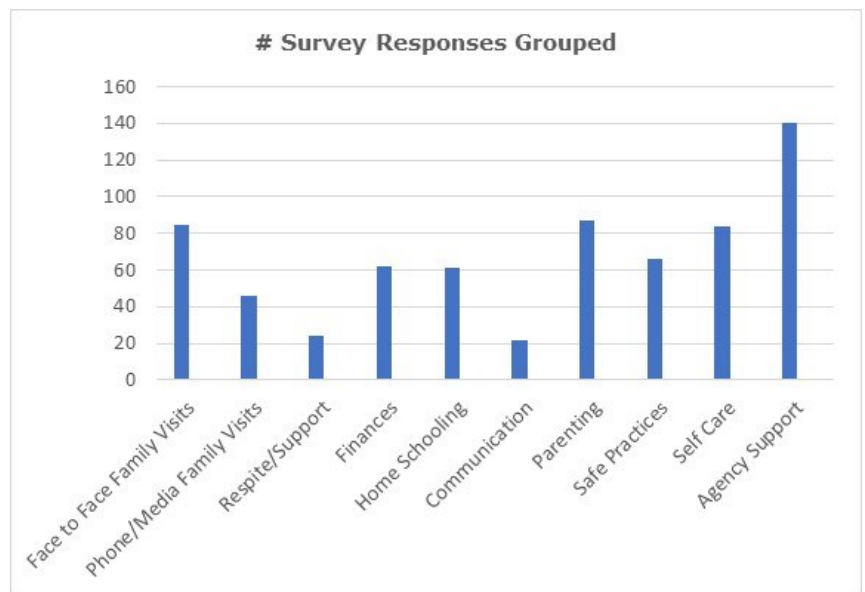
1. Survey of Kinship and Foster care providers during early stages of Pandemic.

During the period of the Covid-19 pandemic the Kinship and Foster Family Network of Manitoba distributed **4** surveys to kinship and foster parents to collect their feedback on how they were managing during the pandemic. Surveys queried questions (10 in total) which adapted and evolved to reflect the **677** responses provided over the four surveys

The survey responses reflected the evolving changes in guidance and communication kinship and foster parents were receiving about key issues such as family visits, respite, support, and financial assistance. Another issue which impacted survey responses was the decisions and timing around school closure. By the last survey distributed, kinship and foster parents' voices appear less uncertain, and more settled into a routine in response to clear guidance and communication.

A report was created to provide the Child and Family services system with information reflecting the voices of kinship and foster parents regarding their initial experiences over a two-month period during the Covid 19 pandemic in Manitoba.

Recommendations were generated through a summary of grouped responses and presented concerns, as well as potential steps forward regarding respite, safety, finances, home schooling.



2. Kinship and Foster care providers missing data points on KFFNM data base.

KFFNM database currently holds **1468** individual profiles, storing information regarding peer support provided, training registration/attendance, Information Sessions attendance, Focus Forums and general inquiries.

In an effort to reach out and provide support, profiles which contained missing data points were contacted. During this reporting period staff reached out, through phone contact and e-mails to **361** kinship/foster parents initiating contact to fix missing data points and engage in supportive communication.

3. Website

Since April 2020, we have updated and changed our website pages to grow and reach our Foster and Kinship Parents. We have provided up to date Covid-19 information and sanitizing procedures. We have adapted our calendar and training series to allow for participants to register on line. Our website has allowed us to continue to provide information on legislation, licensing procedures, and the rights of foster parents. Information about the closing of B & L Inc. has been made available on the website to aid in understanding the changes that were involved for children and foster parents.

4. Facebook

KFFNM uses face book to post information regarding the network, trainings, job postings, Annual General meeting information, and relevant information to kinship/foster care. Information bulletins for 3rd parties such as Voices, Children First Canada, Adoption Council of Canada etc. are also shared.

During this reporting period KFFNM news related posts reached 1106 people with engagement from 395, 86 likes, 5 comments, 15 shares.

KFFNM information posts reached 901 with engagement from 45, 7 likes/comments/shares.

Covid related information reached 992 with engagement from 269, 23 likes/comments/shares.

Network related information such as AGM, job postings, office updates, trainings, reached 7167 with engagement from 492, 76 likes/comments/shares.

Other Resources reached 147, engaged 19, with 4 likes/comments/shares.

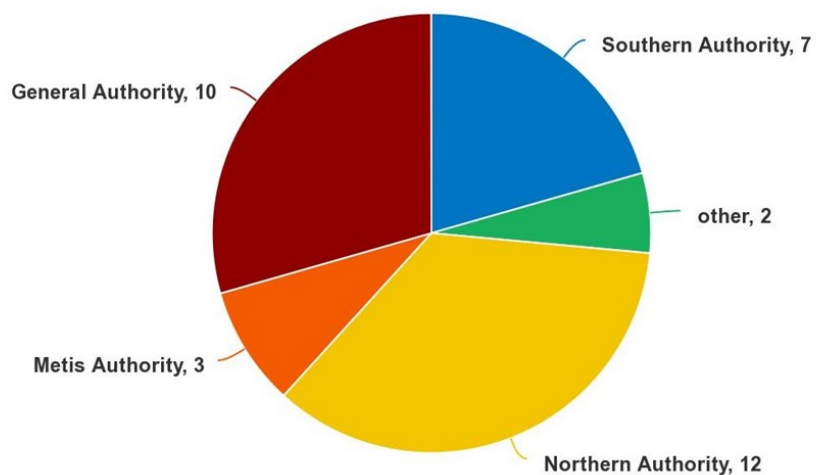
Child and Family Services Agency Engagement

During the months of August and September 2020, the Kinship and Foster Family Network of Manitoba delivered Question and Answer sessions for mandated agencies and Community Care organization staff. Four sessions were facilitated: August 21 and 24 and September 11 and 14, 2020. In total, 34 staff representing all 4 Authorities, the Child and Youth Services Division and 1 Community Care organization, participated in the Q and A sessions.

To facilitate participation from workers and in recognition of their very busy schedules, the sessions were kept to one hour in length. The sessions were scheduled prior to the delivery of the KFFNM Fall 2020 Skill Development training schedule to allow for agency engagement.

Network staff contacted CFS agencies and Community Care foster support staff across the province to notify them about the Q and A presentations and to invite them to attend. The Network's Program and Training Synopsis was sent to interested agency staff prior to the sessions to provide an overview of the training and services that the Network offers.

The Q and A presentations were delivered through Zoom. All Zoom protocols and processes were followed. Presentations were approximately 30-40 minutes long; allowing participants time to ask questions. The sessions were delivered by the Executive Director and Network staff.





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