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 A SECOND CHANCE^{INC.}



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News, Networking & Information for
Kinship Care Professionals & Advocates

Being on the Home TEEM™

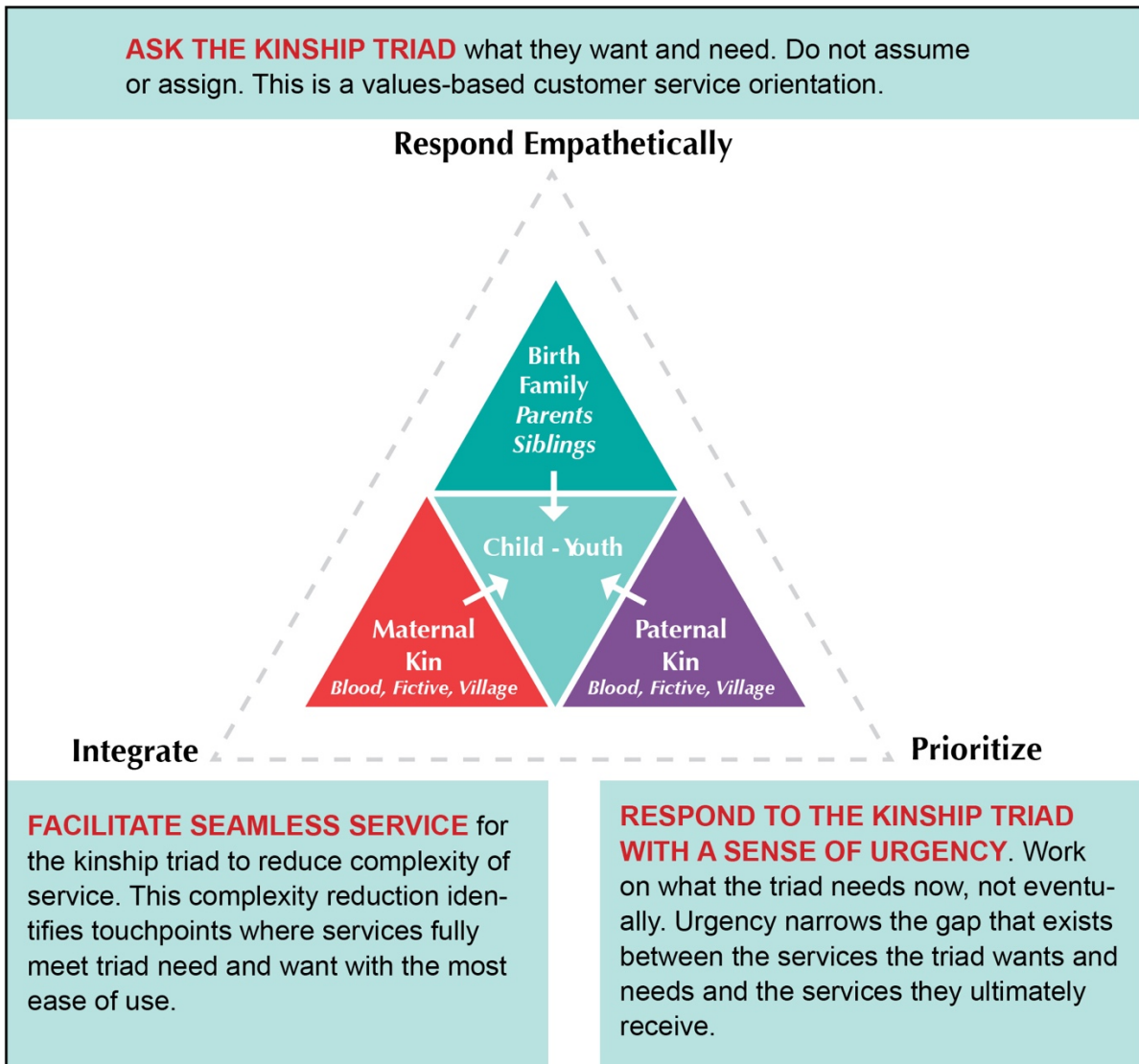
Using Touchpoints in a Family Service Model for Kinship Care

We've all been the client at some time in our lives. Whether scheduling an appointment with a doctor, being on hold with the cable company, or waiting for your car to be serviced - you are in the role of client. Most likely, these experiences included a series of touchpoints, those pre-planned interactions and communications, between you and a service provider.

Often, child welfare systems focus on the parents, child, and caregiver independently; however, in kinship care, the entire kinship triad—child/youth, birthfamily and caregiver, must be served collectively. In the kinship triad, each member is an integral part of the whole, maintaining balance and stability. Because A Second Chance, Inc. (ASCI) engages the entire kinship triad, there are numerous touchpoints.

To support and facilitate this high touchpoint structure, ASCI has developed a strategy called, **Triad Enriched Engagement Management (TEEM)**. As a strategy, TEEM™ works to anticipate and callout all the touchpoints that are needed to facilitate the most valuable kinship care experience for the family. It is a family-inclusive approach that promotes giving equal attention to each part of the kinship triad to form a more comprehensive support network for the family. We use these three questions (See Figure 1) as a guide; they help us to determine whether touchpoints are working to meet the needs of the kinship triad:

- **Are we responding empathetically to the kinship triad?**
- **Are we prioritizing from the kinship triad's perspective?**
- **Are we integrating services to facilitate a more streamlined experience for the kinship triad?**



Kinship Triad-Led Participation is the Key to Value!

Figure 1: Kinship Triad-Led Participation in TEEM™

We answer the questions above by examining kinship triad participation.

There are six drivers that lead to this participation:

- We must directly identify the participation touchpoints. Each touchpoint influences how a family experiences kinship care uniquely. This family-centric approach enhances engagement. That is why TEEM™ was created.
- Everyone wants to feel valued in a relationship. Kinship care is about valuable relationships. We must create an engagement where the kinship triad feels that they are valued and drive all decisions.
- Participation is the starting point for engagement. When people participate in their care, the experience takes on greater meaning and helps build authenticity.
- Each member of the kinship triad has a unique perspective. If any perspective is left unexpressed, it is a missed opportunity to bring value and voice to the situation.
- To “not be invited” into the conversation is to be excluded. Despite intention to include the kinship triad, to not formally invite someone to participate is exclusion. By not directly engaging one part of the kinship triad, the message sent is that you are not interested in his or her views.
- When authentic participation occurs, it is a reciprocal experience valued by all stakeholders – the family, system and community. It is not dominated by a few, and it’s inclusive and inviting to everyone.

What does this look like in practice? Three examples:

The FACT Program (Families and Children Together) was created so that the agency could be intentional in addressing the needs of the birth parents as a part of an array of service delivery, as opposed to an afterthought. As a result, reunification would be prioritized as a permanency outcome for children whenever possible.

The KSA™ (Kinship Strengths Assessment) was developed as a kinship specific assessment tool to strengthen case management by a series of questions seeking input from the entire kinship triad. Questions for children and youth are developmentally appropriate.

SARKS™ (Standards for Assessing and Recognizing Kinship Strengths) is our kinship care specific training curriculum that meets national training standards. Designed specifically for kinship caregivers, it is not an adaptation of an existing traditional foster care training curriculum.

Outcomes-based: Did the touchpoint make a difference in the kinship triad's experience with kinship care?

In any customer service model, the client, in this case the entire triad, is at the center of the values-driven engagement. Customer/client feedback is essential in assessing their experience from a values lens. TEEM™ does this in three tracks:

Track 1: To establish a baseline needs assessment, we ask members of the kinship triad what they want and need. This is done at every stage, from intake to permanency. This is an opportunity to measure how well each interaction with the kinship triad adds to or subtracts from a value-based experience.

Track 2: Using quality assurance measures, we analyze interactions to determine what matters most to the kinship triad and what dimensions of those interactions drive value from the family's perspective. Touchpoints with high volumes of interaction and engagement, as found in kinship care, can elicit potentially strong emotions for families. Emotions drive engagement.

Track 3: We take a data-driven approach to quantify the value of the kinship care experience and to track outcomes for each member of the kinship triad. This allows those in the kinship triad to set priorities and those at ASCI to quantify policy and programming for improving the kinship triad experience.

TEEM™ is a purposeful model that demonstrates how an inclusive approach to kinship care can be used to engage family members. Kinship care must be able to demonstrate quantified outcomes that link directly to a value for family. Without these outcomes, kinship triad-engagement can be obstructed through lack of accountability. This means that each kinship engagement should matter to the entire kinship triad. Kinship care is a beginning-to-end experience. From intake to permanency, touchpoints guide setting the priorities and subsequent outcomes from the kinship triad's kinship care experience.

Kinship Care in the News...

[On My Way Home: A Memoir of Kinship, Grace, and Hope released for Kindle!](#)

Dr. Sharon McDaniel's autobiographical kinship story is now available in e-version.

[How To: Creating a Kin-First Culture in Child Welfare](#)

Generations United, in partnership with the ABA Center on Children and the Law; Annie E. Casey Foundation; and Child Focus, Inc.,- created a WikiHow that highlights seven fundamental steps to creating a kin-first culture, It includes examples of promising policies and practices in use across the country.

[NJ: Transportation Professionals Come Together to Support Bernice's Place for Homeless Children](#)

Transportation industry professionals joined with elected officials and union representatives to support Bernice's Place, the after school and summer program for homeless and near homeless children.

[NC: Cumberland program will help kids aging out of foster care](#)

The Cumberland County Department of Social Services and its partner organizations will use more than \$800,000 in grant money to establish a program to improve the outcome of youth who age out of foster care.

[FL: Delray Housing Authority Provides Homes For Grandparents Raising Grandchildren](#)

Dorothy Ellington, president and CEO of the Delray Beach Housing Authority receives calls daily from people who need a place to live. Recently, though, an increasing number of requests are coming from grandparents who are now raising their grandchildren.

[Kentucky must pay up for relatives providing foster care after Supreme Court refuses case](#)

A growing number of Kentucky relatives providing free foster care for children, won a sweeping victory. The state of Kentucky will begin paying grandparents and other family members, many of whom are struggling financially, the same as they do licensed foster families.

[Vatican City: The Church is more aware of crime, harm of child abuse, top Vatican official says](#)

The Roman Catholic Church has become "progressively aware of the harm suffered by the victims" child abuse and of the need to listen to them. Church officials say they will find ways "to heal the wounds, re-establish justice, prevent crimes" and develop "a new culture of child protection"

Coming Next Month...

Kinship Care Policy in the New Normal

As the Nation attempts to understand the Opioid Crisis, what role does kinship care play? What policies and practices must be addressed in the system of today to better meet the needs of the kinship triad?

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