



IMPACT REPORT
2024



Strengthening Families Growing Futures

**2024: A year focused on strategies to support
building KinFirst actions and KinFirst communities**

Our mission is to build and strengthen kinship connections and inclusive support networks for families, young people, and children.

In 2024, Kinnect advanced its mission to ensure every child and young person thrives in family care.

We launched KinnectU to expand training and consulting, extended OhioKAN services statewide, and streamlined YNN support. YCPRT expanded to five new communities, and Kinnect to Family marked seven years, serving over 3,000 youth and families. We also advanced efforts to reduce congregate care and strengthen family-centered systems.

Casey Family Programs recognized Kinnect’s leadership and honored Executive Director Shannon Deinhart for advancing KinFirst practices. Internally, we celebrated staff growth and remain committed to building a future where every child’s family connection is supported. Our work drives a KinFirst future where every child’s family connection is seen, valued, and strengthened.

KinFirst Culture: Centering Family Over Systems

KinFirst is more than a practice—it’s our core belief. It guides Kinnect and partners in honoring families as experts with



I’m proud of the Kinnect team’s daily dedication and the impact we achieved in 2024. Thank you for your partnership and support!

— Shannon Deinhart,
Executive Director & Co-Founder, Kinnect

dignity and strength. As we grow, KinFirst remains our compass to ensure every young person and family is seen, supported, and connected to those who care.

The KinFirst Project:
Bridging Gaps, Building Solutions

In 2024, the KinFirst Project strengthened support for kinship and adoptive families across Ohio. With state backing, we expanded legal access, co-designed caregiver training with lived experts, and stabilized Navigator support—advancing our mission to center family in every service and system.

Strategic Goals 2024-2027

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Deliver Effective Programs and Services	Cultivate Cross-Sector Partnerships	Influence System-Change	Ensure High-Performing Teams and Infrastructure	Secure Financial Health and Sustainability
Demonstrate Kinnect’s KinFirst culture across all programs and services internally and externally.	Form inclusive strategic alliances with people and entities with similar missions and desired results that also position our organization as a thought leader.	Engage, support, and inform people, communities, organizations, and policymakers about necessary supports and resources.	Increase investments in optimization tools and systems.	Build and ensure a cash reserve.
Build and expand diverse community networks of support.	Strengthen relationships with partner leaders and sites to enhance coordinated planning, service delivery, and initiatives.	Build the organization’s position as an advocacy and change influencer.	Engage talent in expanded and culturally diverse training, organizational care, and career enhancement opportunities.	Deepen engagement with Board members for funding development and connections.
Increase access to resources and financial supports for young people, kinship caregivers, and families.	Create a seamless internal referral and service delivery model that leverages external partnerships.	Strengthen outreach, messaging, and communications using data and storytelling.	Strengthen performance evaluation and monitoring processes with clear expectations aligned with our guiding principles.	Examine and evaluate return on investment for existing fundraising events and explore new opportunities.
Strengthen partnerships that lead to increased opportunities for training, coaching, and consulting services.		Develop the organization’s Government Affairs strategy and structure.		Hire development staff to design and execute a development strategy and structure.
Engage individuals with lived expertise.		Identify, target, and engage key decision-makers in the child-and-family serving ecosystem.		Develop a fee-for-services practice.
				Establish successful engagement strategies with individual donors, private and public grant-makers, and businesses.

Financials	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	45 Employees	55 Employees	60 Employees	68 Employees	69 Employees
	41 Navigators and Specialists	64 Navigators and Specialists	72 Navigators and Specialists	74 Navigators and Specialists	80 Navigators and Specialists
FUNDRAISING	\$155,088	\$115,261	\$155,410	\$137,095	\$212,996
IMPLEMENTATION	\$1,420,249	\$2,905,621	\$4,233,958	\$4,163,904	\$4,588,097
EVALUATION	\$1,281,983	\$1,381,896	\$1,218,961	\$1,106,690	\$805,488
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION	\$639,222	\$949,116	\$1,205,902	\$963,613	\$831,015
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	\$52,076	\$252,074	\$512,547	\$478,739	\$534,252



Kinnect to Family (KTF): Every Child Deserves a Supportive Circle

In 2024, we continued that commitment by partnering with caseworkers, courts, and counties across Ohio to identify kin, build supportive networks, and ensure children have the chance to grow up in the care of people who love them.

KTF Specialists work alongside public children services agencies to expand the search for connections—parents, relatives, and chosen family—and design individualized plans that put youth and family voice at the center of permanency.

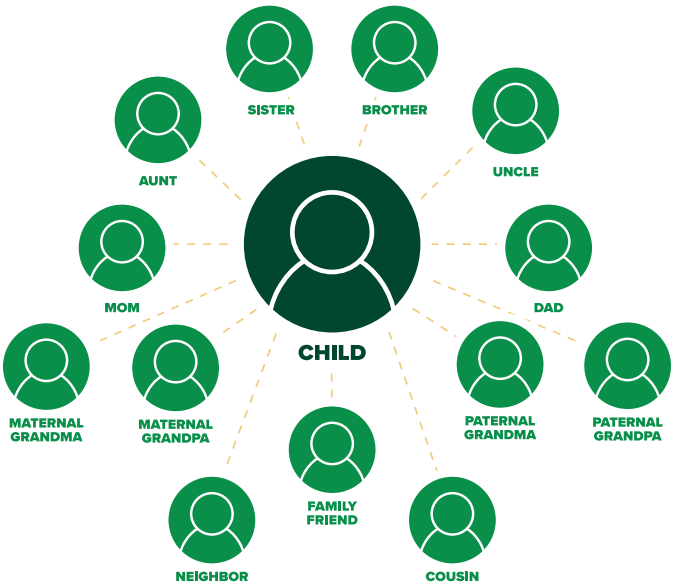
Expanding Across Ohio

In 2024, KTF expanded to serve additional counties and meet rising demand for KinFirst practices. As more systems across Ohio adopt KinFirst approaches, KTF offers a flexible, replicable model that supports individualized implementation while maintaining fidelity to the core elements that make the program successful.

- New partnerships launched in 5 counties through Ohio START
- Customized implementation support adapted to rural, suburban, and urban needs
- Increased investment in capacity-building for local agencies

A Picture of Connection

KTF is driven by real relationships—and powered by data. Our specialists use genograms and family mapping tools to surface hundreds of potential connections per case, making it possible to see the full picture of support that exists beyond what a standard practice file might capture.



“ Kin is family. Family is kin.”

2024 by the Numbers

- 3,116 youth served
- 1,378 families supported
- 1,299 youth placed with kin
- 107 kin connections identified per family (on average)
- 48 Day average service timeline
- 57% county placement rate with kin



Scan to learn more about KTF



Youth-Centered Permanency Roundtables (YCPRT): Supporting Youth Voice in Every Decision

At Kinnect, we believe that no decision about a young person's future should be made without them. YCPRT is transforming the way youth in foster care move toward permanency by putting their voices at the center of planning and decision-making.

YCPRT brings together child welfare professionals, legal stakeholders support and most importantly, the youth themselves to explore permanent options in a structured, youth-driven process. By focusing on connection, identity, and belonging, YCPRT helps ensure young people are seen, heard, and supported in their journey home.

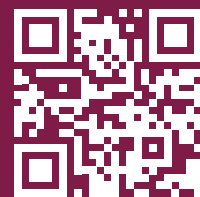
“Thanks for listening to my needs and wants.”

2024 Highlights

- Facilitated youth-centered meetings across Ohio in partnership with public children services agencies
- Expanded use of the Statewide Facilitator Model to support counties without the staffing capacity to run their own roundtables
- Youth report high satisfaction, with top scores in:
 - Feeling heard and respected
 - Understanding the process
 - Believing their voice made a difference
 - Leaving with increased hope and direction

A Seat at The Table

These conversations are more than meetings—they are moments of transformation that build trust and move youth closer to the permanency they deserve.



Scan to learn more about YCPRT

OhioKAN: Navigating Support, Illuminating Hope

OhioKAN continues to be a vital statewide resource for kinship and adoptive families, helping caregivers navigate complex systems and uncover support they didn't know existed. In 2024, our team of compassionate Navigators served thousands of families across Ohio—listening deeply, responding with care, and ensuring that every family has access to the tools they need to thrive.

Whether by phone or email, OhioKAN provides steady guidance to families who may feel lost in the maze of services. This year, the program expanded its reach while maintaining its heart-centered approach to family support.

This level of trust, care, and connection isn't just reflected in testimonials—it's embedded in our model. Evaluations show that caregivers who engage with OhioKAN experience higher levels of satisfaction with services, increased access to resources, and improved adult well-being over time.

Meeting Families Where They Are

OhioKAN offers a range of support options specifically for families and caregivers, ensuring they get exactly the help they want and need. These supports include:

- Benefits
- Navigating Services
- Finding Resources and Financial Assistance

“

I was so happy with the response of OhioKAN and [Navigator] really went above and beyond to make sure me and my family got the information and resources that fit our needs. I would never know so many resources were available without OhioKAN.



2024 by the Numbers

6,373
total inquiries

3,346
caregivers served

13,384
family members supported

88
Counties where services were delivered



Scan to learn more about OhioKAN

Youth Navigator Network (YNN): Centering Youth, Strengthening Futures

At Kinnect, we believe that young people deserve a voice—and a network. The YNN continues to be a powerful resource across Ohio, connecting eligible young people with the support they need, when they need it most. From housing referrals and health care navigation to connections to job training, legal resources, and other community-based supports, YNN is built on one fundamental belief: no young person should have to figure it all out alone.

New in 2024: YNN Mobile App

Recognizing that young people rely on their phones for information and connection, YNN launched a dedicated mobile app to make it easier than ever to connect with a Navigator and access supportive content.



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New in 2024: Care to Conquer Podcast

To further elevate youth voice and build community, YNN launched Care to Conquer, a podcast created by and for young people navigating life after foster care. Hosted by members of the Young Adult Advisory Council (YAAC), the podcast features candid conversations about real-life experiences, challenges, and advice from those who've lived it.

Episodes are available on Spotify, the YNN App, and the YNN website.

“It gave me a sense of direction when everything felt overwhelming. Now I feel like I have a real path forward.”



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KinnectU: Shaping Systems, Strengthening Families

In 2024, KinnectU continued to grow a powerful extension of our mission—equipping professionals across Ohio and beyond with the tools, values, and training to prioritize kinship and create lasting change.

Built from the ground up in direct response to requests from communities, KinnectU serves as the training, consulting, and program replication branch of Kinnect. We designed it to make our evidence-informed programs and best practices more accessible to child welfare agencies, courts, and family-serving organizations that want to do this work — but may lack the internal resources or capacity to do it alone.

Meeting the Moment, Expanding the Reach

From Southeast Ohio to the West Coast, our work is resonating. KinnectU partnered with the state of California to deliver SEEK training (Search, Engage, Explore, Kinnect), supporting hundreds of child welfare professionals, juvenile court staff, and community-based partners in their efforts to build family-first systems.

Why KinnectU Matters

KinnectU makes it possible for more families and individuals to access Kinnect's programs by educating communities and equipping the workforce with training, tools, and customized strategies — strategies that promote a safe and supportive KinFirst culture, strengthen kinship connections, and deliver lasting results for families, young people, and children.

“This was much needed. Thank you! It should be mandatory for caseworkers.”



2024 Highlights

- 1 **400** professionals completed over **900** courses
- 2 Enhanced existing instructor-led virtual and in-person trainings with updated content and materials. Launched new eLearning courses accessible to professionals and partners to support ongoing learning.
- 3 Delivered SEEK training and provided coaching and technical assistance to professionals and communities across California and North Carolina.



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2024 by the Numbers

1,446
youth reached statewide

420
youth eligible for and received direct YNN support

Expanded texting outreach to reduce barriers and increase engagement



Scan to learn more about YNN



KEY STAFF

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