

 ARIZONA'S
CHILDREN
ASSOCIATION | **Arizona Kinship
Support Services**
Creating Connections for Kinship Caregivers



**Manual for Replicating the
*Arizona Kinship Navigation Program™ Model***

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About Arizona's Children Association and the Arizona Kinship Navigation Program™ Model

For 100 years, Arizona's Children Association (AzCA) has stayed true to "Protecting Children, Empowering Youth, and Strengthening Families," serving more than 42,000 children, individuals and families in all 15 counties in the state each year. Our professionally trained, caring and dedicated staff provides a broad spectrum of services that help create and sustain a healthy family environment. Our services include adoption & foster care, counseling & family support, kinship services, parenting education, transitional youth services and trauma/crisis response. Ninety cents of every dollar is spent directly on programs and services and we have been recognized by The Business Journal as one of Arizona's top-ranking charitable organizations. We maintain a number of accreditations, state licenses and organization memberships that allow the agency to remain on the leading edge of child welfare and behavioral health issues in Arizona and the country. AzCA is licensed by the Arizona Departments of Behavioral Health and Economic Security and nationally accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) and Better Business Bureau. **To learn more, visit our website at www.arizonaschildren.org.**

Arizona Kinship Navigation Program™ (KNP) Model (formerly known as Arizona Kinship Support Services (AKSS) Kinship Navigator Program) is a program of AzCA, providing assistance to families who are raising their relative's children (grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings and non-relatives/fictive kin). Many of these children come into the care of their relatives due to many different reasons including abuse, neglect, abandonment, drugs, incarceration, death, chronic illness, etc. The Kinship Navigation Program is designed to provide these core services to help kinship caregivers navigate the various systems that they will encounter when raising their relative's children and effectively utilize available community resources. **For more information on Arizona Kinship Navigation Program™ (KNP) Model, please visit <http://arizonakinship.org>.**

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Introduction

Purpose and Overview of the Manual

Arizona’s Children Association (AzCA) and its evaluation partner, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, Inc., have produced this Program Replication Manual for AzCA’s Arizona Kinship Navigation Program (KNP)TM Model (formerly known as Arizona Kinship Support Services (AKSS) Kinship Navigator Program). The purpose of this Program Replication Manual is to provide service providers with guidance on how to replicate and implement the KNPTM Model, so that programs may provide services, such as Information, Referral, and Connections (IRC), Kinship Navigation, and/or other services, that effectively support kinship families.

Background Information

This manual begins by providing background information on kinship caregiving, including definitions used by the program for formal and informal kinship care, as well as the need for kinship care in Arizona. This section also provides an overview of the Arizona KNPTM Model philosophy, eligibility criteria, and key KNPTM services that are reviewed in this manual: IRC services, kinship navigation services, and other support services.

Program Administration and Operations

The second section of this manual reviews Model administration and operations, including key staff positions that support and operate the Arizona KNPTM Model. Each staff position description reviews the key duties and responsibilities, as well as the minimum qualifications and any other pertinent requirements. This section also reviews the training and certification requirements for staff and recommended staff supervision and caseload standards.

Core Components of Program Implementation

The third section of this manual is broken into six areas, reviewing the core components of implementing the Arizona KNPTM Model. Areas reviewed include: recruitment of kinship families; screening, intake, and IRC services; kinship navigation services; other family support services; and the recommended duration and intensity of services.

Fidelity Monitoring

The fourth section of this manual reviews the fidelity monitoring protocols in place and tools utilized for the Arizona KNPTM Model.

Data Management and Program Evaluation

The final section of this manual provides an overview of recommended data collection areas and tools for implementing and evaluating the Arizona KNPTM Model. This section also provides information on third party evaluation services available by AzCA’s evaluation partner, LeCroy & Milligan Associates, Inc.

Background

Kinship Caregiving

The Child Welfare Information Gateway (2022) defines kinship care arrangements as informal and formal. **Informal kinship care** refers to arrangements made by parents and other family members without involvement from a child welfare agency or juvenile court. In **formal kinship care**, children are placed into legal custody of the state by a judge; the child welfare agency then places the children into the physical custody of a kinship caregiver. Common needs of kinship families include: financial resources; child care; and material goods to support the family. Kinship care can also present legal issues and concerns, as many caregivers lack information, access to appropriate legal services available, and do not understand their legal custody situation (Gerard et al, 2006; Treinen, Schmidt & Espino, 2015; Wallace & Lee, 2013).

An evaluation of the Arizona Kinship Navigation Program™ (KNP) Model (formerly known as Arizona Kinship Support Services (AKSS) Kinship Navigator Program) clients conducted from 2012-2015 showed that over half of kinship caregivers at baseline self-reported facing one or more barriers in the process of seeking legal custody, guardianship, licensure, or adoption of their kinship children (Treinen, Schmidt & Espino, 2015). Caregivers viewed this process as complicated and confusing (e.g., difficulty completing legal paperwork), especially in formal kinship arrangements. Other baseline needs of formal kinship caregivers included a lack of: awareness of permanency options; understanding the courts or dependency process; representation in court; and understanding of benefits for which they may be eligible.

Overview of Arizona Kinship Navigation Program™ Model

Program Philosophy

The overarching goal of the Arizona KNP™ Model is to support kinship families and contribute to the increased safety, permanency, and well-being of youth in formal and informal kinship care. The Arizona KNP™ Model seeks to keep children living with kin in safe, stable, nurturing environments, and when possible, out of the state's custody. The program provides informal support services to kinship families so the children/youth can remain with family and the continuity of culture, relationships, and the environment essential for child safety and well-being, can be maintained. The program empowers kinship families to support and advocate for each other, thus fostering interdependence and helping them develop natural supports. Services fall within AzCA permanency programs and reflect the philosophy that children in kinship families experience optimal growth and maturation as a result of living in a permanent, nurturing home (AzCA, 2015).

Eligibility Criteria

Arizona KNP™ Model services are available to informal and formal kinship families who are either relatives or non-blood relatives who have significant relationship to a child not born to them. A kinship caregiver can include grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, neighbors, godparents, family friends, etc.

Key Program Services

The Arizona KNP™ Model's key service areas are described below. All services are voluntary, non-clinical in nature, client-based, and focused on the expressed needs of the family. Services are family centered, strength based, and meet the needs of families in a culturally appropriate manner. Services are provided in both English and Spanish. Arizona KNP™ Model clients are served in several ways (detailed throughout this manual), depending on their situation and level of need.

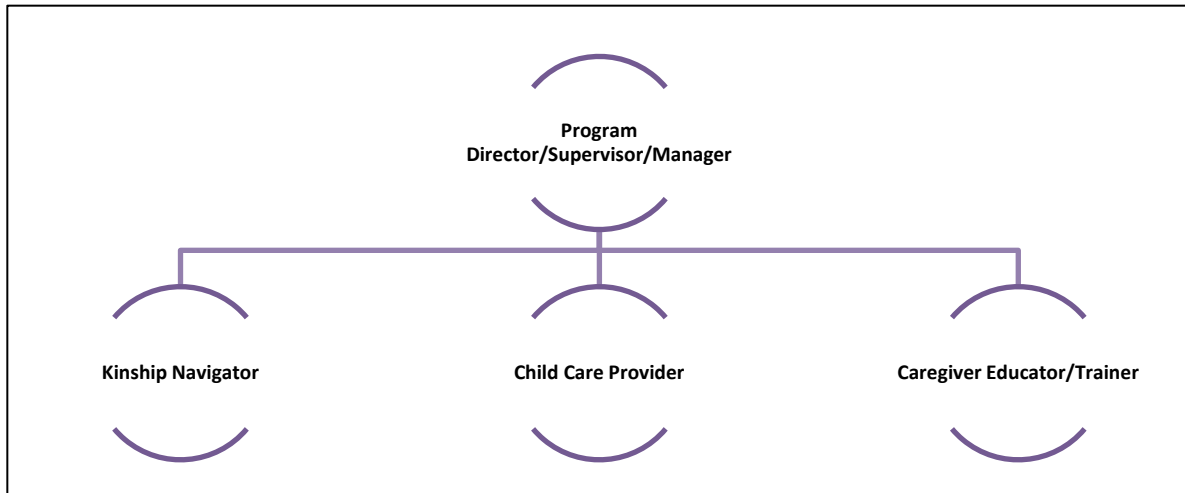
- **Information, Referral, and Connection Services** – At screening and intake, Arizona KNP™ Model staff collect caregiver demographic and needs information. All clients receive IRC services, which includes referrals to community services and resources, such as vouchers for clothing, food, and diaper banks. These clients can participate in any on-site KNP™ Model services, without opening a navigation case.
- **Kinship Navigation Services** - Caregivers with a higher level of need or meeting specific criteria for navigation services (reviewed in further detail in this manual) are offered more intensive kinship navigation services through an open case. The goal of the Kinship Navigator is to assist caregivers in meeting their family's needs. This goal is accomplished by ensuring that kinship families have access to benefits for which they are eligible, providing a linkage to needed legal services, navigating existing community support systems, strengthening kinship families who are involved with the child welfare system, and enhancing other community-based and government responses for kinship families. The Arizona KNP™ Model was originally designed based on several regional models funded by Children's Bureau Family Connections Discretionary Grants, including: YMCA Kinship Support Services of San Diego County (Hernandez et al, 2014); Children's Home Society of New Jersey (Feldman & Fertig, 2013); and Florida Kinship Center at the University of South Florida (Littlewood, 2015).

Program Administration and Operations

Staffing Descriptions, Duties and Responsibilities

There are several key staff positions that support and operate the KNP™ Model. Exhibit 1 shows the staffing hierarchy of positions, including the Program Director/Manager/Supervisor, Kinship Navigators, Caregiver Educator, and Child Care Providers. Each position is described below, including required competencies, key duties and responsibilities, and minimum and other qualifications.

Exhibit 1. Organizational Chart of Key Staff Positions for the Arizona KNP™ Model



Program Director

The Program Director provides administrative oversight of Kinship Navigators, Caregiver Educators, Child Care Providers and budgets, and outcomes. This position also ensures quality standards and services delivery. Required competencies for this position include: competency in administrative, management and supervisory tasks; strong knowledge and skill-based expertise in child welfare or applicable field; knowledge of management techniques and supervisory best practices; strong written, oral and interpersonal communication skills; must have good organizational skills and have ability to prioritize and complete tasks within specified time frames; ability to deal professionally with all types of people, work under stress, and recognize when to step in and make a recommendation and/or decision; must be able to work in a diverse, multi-cultural environment and be sensitive to the service population’s cultural and socioeconomic characteristics; and must have ability to maintain confidentiality, and exhibit mature judgment and emotional stability.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Key responsibilities and duties of this position include:

- Implements program in accordance with contract and licensing requirements.
- Develops, implements, and monitors the budget.
- Oversees facilities management where required.
- Manages the services performed by employees, contracted staff, students, trainees and volunteers within the assigned program area(s).
- Participates in selection process for new staff, disciplinary proceedings, supervision and evaluations, and makes recommendations for terminations.
- Interviews and selects candidates to fill open positions, following agency protocols.
- Organizes training opportunities and sharing of staff expertise for assigned program areas, in addition to participating in orientation for new employees.
- Provides support/feedback regarding business opportunities, challenges with programs and target communities, and identifies solutions to problem areas.
- Ensures outcomes data is processed timely.
- Must be able to monitor consumer activities safely and effectively, with or without a reasonable accommodation.
- Performs additional duties as assigned which are consistent with the general responsibilities of the position.

Minimum Qualifications and Other Requirements

The Program Director position requires a Bachelor's degree (Master's degree preferred) in Social Work or related field of study from an accredited college or university, as well as a minimum of five years of experience in the child welfare field, including a minimum of two years providing supervision.

Kinship Navigator

Kinship Navigators assist kinship caregivers with understanding, navigating, and accessing the system of out-of-home care supports and services for children. Kinship Navigators are supported by the Program Director. This position is responsible for working with kinship caregivers, groups, organizations, and institutions. Kinship Navigators assist caregivers in identifying, connecting to, and effectively utilizing community resources to support their family and the children in their care. Kinship Navigators also increase awareness of kinship needs with community providers, court and child welfare staff, and other key stakeholders to develop kinship resources for the betterment of kinship care. Kinship Navigators need in depth knowledge of the local, regional, county, and/or statewide issues affecting kinship families, and available community resources that can help. Kinship Navigators may be peer kinship caregivers who have personal experience raising children in kinship care and navigating the child welfare, legal, educational, and health systems. Required competencies of this position include: knowledge of kinship family dynamics and systems; excellent and effective written,

oral and interpersonal communication skills, including speaking in front of groups; ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and the organizational skills to coordinate events and processes; ability to function effectively in a variety of community settings and with diverse populations; must be able to work in a diverse, multi-cultural environment and be sensitive to the service population's cultural and socioeconomic characteristics; and must have ability to maintain confidentiality, and exhibit mature judgment and emotional stability.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Key responsibilities and duties of this position include:

- Demonstrates knowledge of kinship care, children, and families.
- Provides screening and assessment, information and referral, connection to services and case management, to kinship caregivers and their families.
- Identifies and addresses barriers to effective service utilization.
- Organizes and coordinates meetings specific to the kinship population.
- Supports kinship caregivers, groups, organizations, and institutions with identifying assets and needs. Nurtures emerging kinship caregiver leadership.
- Assists in creating partnerships in the community.
- Acts as a liaison between community building initiatives, bringing together people and programs to work alongside kinship caregivers.
- Shares data and provides access to information about the kinship care. Collects and shares stories about kinship care and the building process.
- Collaborates with other agencies and groups to provide services to kinship families.
- Develops programs and educational materials for kinship care and delivers trainings on kinship issues to a variety of audiences.
- Provides screening and assessment, case management, information, and referral; organizes events; and facilitates support groups for kinship families.
- Must be able to monitor consumer activities safely and effectively, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

Minimum Qualifications and Other Requirements

The Kinship Navigator position requires a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in social work, human services, or related field of study from an accredited college or university. Bilingual in the English and Spanish languages is preferred. Familiarity and experience in working with kinship families is preferred. This position requires a minimum of one year of experience working in social services, education or related field required. Due to the nature of this position, staff must be willing to work a flexible schedule; regular evening and weekend hours may be required.

Caregiver Educator/Trainer

The Caregiver Educator/Trainer conducts training/instruction to those individuals required to receive training on specific subject matter.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Key responsibilities and duties of this position include:

- Trains professionals, paraprofessionals and/or families on specific subject matter in accordance with program curriculum and procedures.
- Conducts training independently or with co-facilitators.
- Assures all necessary items for training events are ordered, available, taken to training as well as returned to the office.
- Administers all tests, evaluations, surveys, and other program paperwork.
- Attends and participates in team meetings.
- Stays current with specific subject matter to ensure information presented is accurate, practical, useful, and relevant to participants.
- Must be able to monitor consumer activities safely and effectively, with or without a reasonable accommodation.
- Performs other duties as assigned which are consistent with the general responsibilities of the position.

Minimum Qualifications and Other Requirements

This position requires a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent and a minimum of one year of experience in the subject matter. A Bachelor's degree in social services or a related field of study from an accredited college or university is preferred.

Child Care Provider

The Child Care Provider provides periodic childcare during scheduled Arizona KNP™ Model activities for caregivers. This position assists in implementing recreational, social, and independent living activities consistent with the Navigation Plan for the client.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Key responsibilities and duties of this position include:

- Provides children with necessary structure, guidance, and limits.
- Oversees the physical care and safety of the children.
- Develops and conducts age appropriate development activities for children.
- Maintains accurate records regarding issues involving children under supervision.
- Participates in planning and implementing parent involvement activities.
- Maintains confidential information on children and maintains appropriate contact with caregivers.

- Supervises and teaches daily living skills, and recreational skills in the areas of games, sports, arts and crafts, and hobbies.
- Must be able to monitor child activities safely and effectively, with or without a reasonable accommodation.
- Performs additional duties as assigned which are consistent with the general responsibilities of the position.
- Provides limited transportation as identified in Navigation Plan to connect clients with services.

Minimum Qualifications and Other Requirements

The Child Care Provider position requires a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent and a minimum of one year of experience working in the child welfare field.

Training Requirements and Certification

The Arizona KNP™ Model training curriculum engages participants through a blended-learning approach of online learning, classroom discussion, skill exercises, and field shadowing experiences. Classroom learning is a participatory training with discussions of best practices for kinship service providers and skills practices that contribute to the increase safety, permanence, and well-being of children and youth in their local community. The curriculum hinges on coaching experiences with supervisors and mentors to align best practices and build a foundation for reciprocal, supportive supervision (Allen et al., 2021).

The Arizona KNP™ Model training is intended to assist Kinship Navigators to make sound assessment and case management decisions surrounding the safety, stability, and well-being of children and their caregivers. The training will provide definitions, examples, and guidance on appropriate ways to assess and document comprehensive support provided to kinship families. The Arizona KNP™ Model training curriculum is intended to enhance the critical skill sets of participants necessary to engage, assess, treat, and evaluate children and families, and explain, document, and collaborate services for each client. The course content focuses on knowledge and skills correlated with successful outcomes for clients involved with kinship and child welfare service systems.

Content delivery will adhere to adult learning theory and employ a blended learning model, to include a combination of: *classroom training* (instruction, group discussions, scenario-based practices, activities, skills practices, skills observation with feedback), *online modules* (pre-learning/ pre-work), and *field and office skills application* (observation/shadowing, supervisor-led experience debriefing, observation feedback, resource documents and materials, and self-study development). Supervisors are expected to review and discuss skills practices and learning experience with staff as they experience training. Skills observation forms are included for adherence to the Arizona KNP™ Model competencies.

Outline for Arizona KNP™ Model Training Schedule

Pre-work: Online pre-work is required. Materials are provided and include Relias courses, documents, and job aides for review. Participants should allow a minimum of eight (8) hours to complete this training component.

Schedule: The schedule for the KNP™ Model **site-based** training is five (5) days. Four (4) days will consist of eight (8) hours of combined instruction, practice, technical assistance and consultation services and the last day will be four (4) hours. Lunch hour and breaks are included.

The Arizona KNP™ Model Training Topics

Session 1: Kinship Care in the United States

Session 2: Engagement: Working with Children and Families

Session 3: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Kinship Care

Session 4: Inclusive, Equitable, Accessible Service Provision

Session 5: Childhood Development

Session 6: Interviewing Skills with Children

Session 7: Safety, Risk, and Protective Capacities

Session 8: Interviewing Skills with Adults

Session 9: In-Home Assessments

Session 10: Case Management: Documentation & Service Planning

Supervision of Staff

As with any child welfare practice approach, quality supervision is essential. The Arizona KNP™ Model require for every 40 hours of work, staff must receive one hour of supervision. Supervision is designed to support staff in managing cases and maintaining an acceptable work load and is conducted in one-on-one supervision as well as team group supervision. All full-time employees are required to have a minimum of four hours of supervision per month. Part-time employees must have one hour of supervision for every 40 hours worked.

Kinship Navigators Caseloads

Kinship Navigators may carry a caseload of no more than 25 clients receiving full navigation services. Caseloads may be smaller, depending on acuity of needs of the families involved, and are reviewed with the supervisor/director, to ensure quality of service provision.

Core Components of the Arizona Kinship Navigation Program™ Model

Core services of the Arizona KNP™ Model that should be replicated by other programs are listed below. All services are voluntary, non-clinical in nature, client-based, and focused on the expressed needs of the family. Services are family centered, strength based, and meet the needs of families in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. Services should be provided in languages spoken by caregivers. Core services include:

- Screening and intake
- Information, referral, and connection (IRC) services
- Kinship navigation services
- Caregiver education and training
- Emotional and peer-to-peer support through kinship support groups
- Childcare provision during caregiver service receipt

Outreach to Kinship Families

Recommended family outreach strategies to enroll families into Arizona KNP™ Model include:

- Program Website
- Social Media
- Referrals from external agencies and advocacy networks (e.g., schools, courts, child protective services)
- Outreach events and activities staffed by Kinship Navigators, volunteers, or other community agencies (e.g., tabling at education, resource fairs, or other community events)
- Promotional materials and fliers
- Word-of-mouth referrals from current and previous clients
- Community resource referral system (e.g., 211, resource line)

Screening, Intake, and Information, Referral, and Connection Services

Upon first contact, kinship families are connected to a Kinship Navigator for screening, intake, and IRC services. Kinship families who cannot be served by the program, or cannot be served promptly, are referred or connected to appropriate resources.

Screening and Intake Process

Kinship families are screened promptly and responsively to determine their needs and are informed of the services available at the specific location and/or through other community resources. Respectful listening ensures the family's immediate needs are understood and all families receive equitable treatment. It also allows for successful relationship building between the Kinship Navigator and family, which is crucial in order to effectively provide support.

Priority is given to caregivers with urgent needs and emergency situations. Kinship families with emergency situations are encouraged to call 911, law enforcement, Child Protective Services, or a Crisis Hotline. At initial screening, it is determined how a kinship family will be provided information (telephonically, in person, email or via postal mail) and/or referred to a community resource. Native American children are identified and their respective tribal social services may be contacted to access appropriate documentation, benefits, and services. In cases where the Indian Child Welfare Act applies, these standards are upheld. In the case that a Native American child is working with a tribal case manager or any other tribal worker, every effort is made to connect and work alongside the tribe in support of the child's case plan

Upon completion of the screening process, at a minimum Kinship Navigators provide caregivers with IRC services to meet their immediate needs. The Kinship Navigator assists the family in identifying and contacting these resource agencies. The Kinship Navigator may also provide caregivers with relevant agency pamphlets and/or brochures and facilitate the initial and subsequent appointments with community resource agencies. Depending on needs, Kinship Navigators may provide families with a variety of assistance, such as:

- Providing caregivers with donated goods, such as diapers or other household goods;
- Finding and connecting families to existing resources (e.g., food assistance, utility assistance, childcare, mental health services, etc.);
- Assisting caregivers in understanding the local dependency court process and the process for establishing a legal relationship with the child in care;
- Assisting caregivers in working with child welfare/protective services and their processes; and
- Connecting caregivers to access TANF/TANF-Child Only, health insurance, or other types of assistance available.
- Referring families to other family support services (described in greater detail in this manual).

Initial Contact Form

At intake, Kinship Navigators work with the kinship caregiver to complete an **Initial Contact Form** (ICF) that collects information from the primary caregiver(s), such as: contact information; gender; date of birth; race/ethnicity (including Tribal affiliation); employment status; annual household income; benefits received; and spouse/partner information. Information on kinship children in care or those for whom the caregiver is seeking to care should be collected, such as: caregiver's biological/kinship relationship to the child; current and sought legal relationship; reasons why the child's biological parents are not the primary caregiver; child welfare involvement; education status; access to health insurance; special needs status; date of birth; gender; and race/ethnicity. Information may be collected from the primary caregiver in person or by telephone.

Kinship Navigation Services

Upon completion of the screening, the client and Kinship Navigator will determine if the client is in need of more intensive Kinship Navigation Services.

Eligibility

Indicators that a kinship family may benefit from the Kinship Navigator Program services are shown in Exhibit 2. Upon completion of the screening process, to ensure timely initiation of services families are served on site, in the home, and/or referred promptly to other community services. Provision of service will be flexible to meet the unique needs of each family with delivery of service in a neighborhood setting, home or in the office.

Exhibit 2. Indicators that a Kinship Family may Benefit from the Arizona KNP™ Model

Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caregiver is caring for a sibling group of three children or more.• Caregiver is between the ages of 18–25 years or is a sibling of the children.• Child(ren) has current involvement or need of behavioral health services.• Caregiver is having difficulty establishing a legal relationship with the child(ren) (e.g., needs assistance with paperwork; discussing guardianship process with bio parent; transportation or other barriers, etc.).• Caregiver is having difficulty obtaining medical care or enrolling child(ren) in school due to lack of a legal relationship with the child(ren).• Caregiver asks referral source for assistance at meeting/staffing or makes multiple requests for support or clarification.• Family has material needs related to poverty or a crisis.

Family Assessment

All families whose case is opened for full kinship navigation services receive an assessment of family needs from a family centered and strengths based perspective. This framework encourages building upon the strengths of families and individualizing services to meet the needs of the family. Through this approach, Arizona KNP™ Model can produce strong outcomes focused on safety, permanence, and well-being.

The **Strength, Needs, Cultural Discovery (SNCD)** is completed by staff with information collected from the caregiver during assessment and intake. The SNCD must be completed within 14 days of case opening and is signed by the caregiver and staff. The SNCD is updated when there are significant changes in the caregiver's situation or every 90 days. This assessment is an individualized, strength-based, family focused, and culturally responsive assessment that informs the development of the Navigation Plan. The assessment is a mutual process and is directed at concerns identified by the caregiver and the Kinship Navigator in the initial screening. The assessment is comprehensive and pertinent for establishing service requests and objectives in the Navigation Plan. The assessment is conducted in the language of the family's preference (translators are accessed as needed) and in a manner that will encourage service participation, as appropriate. Through screening and assessment, the Kinship Navigator and caregiver identify strengths and needs in the following areas:

1. Strength and Commitment of Kinship Bonds
2. How Child Came into Kinship Care
3. Family Relationships
4. Spiritual and Religious Activities
5. Social and Recreational Activities
6. Residence and Living Environment
7. Financial Circumstances
8. Mental and Emotional Health
9. Medical Health
10. Legal Situation
11. Educational and Vocational
12. Culture
13. Crisis and Safety

If the client is seeking to care for kinship children, the caregiver's readiness, capacity, and commitment to providing full-time care may be assessed. If issues are identified that affect permanency, other family resources and natural supports will be sought to ensure maximum family stability and caretaker's willingness and ability to facilitate an ongoing relationship with the parents, as appropriate. Also, services that may be beneficial to the family from a best practices perspective are evaluated. Kinship Navigators continually assess the kinship family

and community risks, evaluate impediments to services, and determine if the family continues to benefit from services.

While the Arizona KNP™ Model services are not designed to provide health services, eligible kinship families are connected and referred to enrollment in state and national financial assistance benefits (e.g., TANF, Medicaid, SNAP) and given information about other options for care when insurance coverage is not available. Kinship families are encouraged to access resources for physical, dental, and health care and are provided with information and referrals for youth and the caregiver, as needed. The kinship family is also provided with assistance in accessing resources such as mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and/or domestic violence services, as needs are identified by the Kinship Navigator, the kinship family, or a Child Protective Services case specialist.

The Arizona KNP™ Model services are not designed to provide educational services. Kinship families are assisted with navigating the educational system and connected with the appropriate resources within the educational system to assure that the family's needs are met. Kinship Navigators assist caregivers who are experiencing enrollment difficulties and provide verification that the caregiver is pursuing a legal relationship with the child, as requested by the caregiver. Additionally, Kinship Navigators can accompany kinship families to school meetings, such as Individual Education Plans (IEP), and provide educational support.

Service Planning and Monitoring

During navigation service planning, Kinship Navigators and kinship caregivers explore:

1. Client and Kinship Navigator expectations and responsibilities;
2. Benefit of planned services;
3. Cultural relevance of planned services;
4. Available options/resources;
5. Agreed upon goals;
6. Goal target/completion dates;
7. Desired outcomes; and
8. How the Kinship Navigator can support the achievement of the plan.

The Navigation Plan is based on the SNCD assessment and addresses identified services and supports that help kinship families maintain safety, stability, and permanency, which strengthens family relationships and respect for the extended family's informal social networks.

Navigation Plans are:

- Developed by a Kinship Navigator and the caregiver within 30 days of the case opening;
- Signed by the supervisor, Kinship Navigator, caregiver, and other family members involved in the plan (including children over the age of 6), as deemed appropriate, and a copy is given to the family;

- Continually assessed with the family to ensure that services and supports remain relevant to the family's needs and wishes;
- Reviewed and revised, as needed, at 90 day intervals, or sooner, if necessary, jointly by the Kinship Navigator and caregiver/family. Revisions are signed by the supervisor, Kinship Navigator, caregiver, and family members, as deemed appropriate; and
- Reviewed by the Kinship Navigator and their supervisor with the following in mind: Navigation Plan implementation; progress on the Navigation Plan and goals; and whether the Navigation Plan is still appropriate to the needs of the family.

Scheduling Appointments

When scheduling appointments, there are many variables to consider, such as meeting the family's needs while maintaining a manageable staff work schedule. Areas to consider when scheduling home visits (HV):

- What type of HV and how much time is needed?
- Does the family or client require any accommodations?
- What other appointments do staff have scheduled for the day?
- How much time do staff need to review the requirements for the HV?
- Does the family or client have any time constraints?
- What materials are needed for the HV?
- What travel time is needed, especially when visiting a client during hours of high traffic?
- Have staff accounted for any other variables and are prepared for the HV?
- Have staff given the family enough notice for this HV?

Scheduling tips include:

- Schedule the next HV during a current HV.
- Call/email the client the day before the HV to remind them of the scheduled time to meet.
- Keep an up to date calendar that reflects all scheduled appointments for the month.

Navigation Plan Completion and Case Closure

A Navigation Plan and family file may remain open in the Arizona KNP™ Model as long as the family benefits from the support. The navigation support component is closed by an agreement between the Kinship Navigator and the kinship family, based on the accomplishment of the Navigation Plan goals or for any reason by mutual consent. A Closing Summary of the Navigation Plan is completed, reviewed, and signed-off by the program supervisor. The Closing Summary will remain in the client's file, should the file need to be re-opened. Upon plan closing, any collaborating service providers are notified by the Kinship Navigator, as appropriate. If the kinship family is asked to leave the program, every effort is made to connect them to appropriate services. Kinship families are welcome to return for additional support services at any time.

Aftercare/Follow-Up

The Arizona KNP™ Model does not provide formal aftercare once the Navigation Plan is completed and closed. However, kinship families are encouraged to return to the Arizona KNP™ Model to enrich program services and to support and advocate for other families. All kinship caregivers are kept on a mailing list in order to continue to receive information and resources that benefit kinship families.

Other Family Support Services

In addition to IRC and Kinship Navigation services, the Arizona KNP™ Model offers other services to caregivers, individually or in a group setting, either directly on-site or in collaboration with local community service providers and government agencies that interact with kinship families.

Legal Services

Through collaboration with a local Legal Aid office or law firm, caregivers receive pro bono assistance from a lawyer in completing court documentation. Legal information related to kinship caregiving and family law is provided to caregivers by a lawyer in a group or individual setting.

Guardianship Clinics. Guardianship Clinics are conducted in partnership with local legal entities. Guardianship is voluntary and may be terminated when the child turns 18. This type of guardianship is appropriate when consent to the guardianship has been given by the child's parents, or suspended by circumstances, such as death, disappearance, incarceration, military service, serious illness or incapacity of parent or parents.

Exploration of Permanency Options

Through collaboration with child welfare, TANF, and the court system, formal kinship families are provided with a basic orientation for families to understand the dependency process, home evaluation, option of becoming a licensed foster care provider, and orientation to other kinship support services. Kinship Navigators also refer families to training provided by a local foster care licensing agencies.

Kinship Information Sessions. Kinship Information Sessions are for families involved with child protective services. They are designed to help kinship caregivers understand what to expect from the dependency process and what resources are available, and assist them in providing safety, permanence, and well-being for children in their care. Content includes information from the Arizona KNP™ Model and information/representation from partnering agencies, such as the court system, child protective services, health insurance plans, foster care licensing, and child care resources. Kinship Information Sessions are offered in a group format and in the preferred language of the kinship family.

Adoption or Guardianship Training. This training is an informational session for caregivers of children in the custody of child protective services and making a decision to adopt or be a permanent guardian. Information is provided about adoption and guardianship, including topics such as subsidies, visitation, parental rights, liability and court involvement, and additional supports and resources. Adoption or Guardianship Training is offered in a group format and in the preferred language of the kinship family.

Support Groups

Support Groups meet regularly at intervals determined by the group members. Some groups meet monthly for two to three hours and include educational guest speakers. Other groups meet bi-weekly or weekly. Groups are facilitated either by a Kinship Navigator or a designated Peer Leader. Support groups connect kinship caregivers with emotional, social, and recreational support. Additionally, they are a great way for caregivers to learn about navigating child welfare systems from other caregivers who have been through these systems.

Topical Education

Kinship College. Kinship College is a monthly two-hour class that is facilitated by community experts and covers various topics driven by caregiver requests and interests. In rural areas, this class may be offered as part of the monthly support group. Coordination of Kinship College is facilitated by the Kinship Navigator. Kinship caregivers and service providers are registered via phone, email, and in person. The Kinship Navigator responsibility includes:

- Contacting and coordinating guest trainers;
- Coordinating staff supervised activities of children;
- Setting up adult/youth sign in sheets; and
- Providing any provisions (e.g., food, materials, handouts, etc.).

Family Recreational Events, Services, and On-site Childcare

The Arizona KNP™ Model provides staff and volunteer supervised activities for children and youth on-site, while their kinship caregivers are participating in services. The Arizona KNP™ Model also provides on-site childcare services for caregivers who attend any on-site navigation service, class, group, or activity. In addition, the Arizona KNP™ Model hosts special events that celebrate kinship families, such as Grandparent's Day, Kinship Care Month, Back-to-School, and holidays. Kinship Navigators also refer families to other community-based services and programs such as food banks, diaper banks, respite, after school programs, teen mentorship programs, adult education, gardening, health screening and education, etc.

Recommended Duration and Intensity of Services

Duration of the Arizona KNP™ Model services depends on the needs of the kinship family. An open navigation case can range from three months to two years. Events, such as Support Groups, Education, and Training Classes, may be held weekly, semi-monthly, or monthly, depending on client interest, availability, and program resources. Intensity of the Arizona KNP™ Model services depends on the needs of the kinship family. A time study of Kinship Navigation assistance intensity includes the following scenarios, based on a staff time allocation study conducted with staff in 2014-15:

- **Kinship Navigator** communication with or on behalf of client via telephone, text, or email: 1 to 60 minutes, average of 7 minutes.
- **Office Visit with Kinship Navigator:** 1 minute to 5 hours, average of 30 minutes.
- **Home Visit with Kinship Navigator:** 10 minutes to 4 hours, average of 1 hour.
- **Kinship Navigation Case Opening:** 30 minutes to 3 hours, average of 1.5 hours.
- **Support Group:** 60 to 120 minutes.
- **Education Class:** 60 to 120 minutes.
- **Legal Assistance:** 30 to 120 minutes.

Fidelity Monitoring

The Arizona KNP™ Model has a fidelity monitoring system to assess whether or not the interventions of the KNP™ Model are delivered with fidelity to the intended service delivery. The fidelity monitoring processes is designed for assessing performance indicators and providing feedback for continuous program improvement. The goal of ongoing quality improvement is to attain an optimal, responsive, and inclusive environment for caregivers who receive KNP™ Model services. Program Administration & Management Standards Audits and Core Component Standard Audits monitor fidelity of the KNP™ Model Services.

Program Administration and Management Standards and Core Component Standard Audits

At minimum, on an annual basis, a Program Administration & Management Standards Audit is facilitated by Arizona's Children Association to ensure fidelity of the KNP™ Model. This audit consists of the following evaluation criteria and all components must be present for 100% compliance:

- Staff Qualification
- Supervisory Requirements
- Training & Certification

A Core Component Standard audit is also conducted at minimum, on an annual basis, or more frequently as deemed necessary. This audit consists of the following evaluation criteria and requires, at minimum 85% compliance, is required to ensure fidelity to the KNP™ Model:

- Outreach
- Screening and Intake
- Assessment of special needs
- Information, Referral and Connection Services
- Navigation Assessment
- Navigation Service Planning and Monitoring
- Navigation Plan Completion
- Voluntary Caregiver Supports*
- Community-based Services*
- On-site Childcare*

*Excluded from the 85% scoring

Every full Kinship Navigation Service chart is reviewed for compliance within 90 days of case opening. Compliance Chart Audits are conducted monthly with results being discussed in team meetings. A minimum of 5% of charts are reviewed for quality of service delivery. A Navigation file content shall include (as applicable):

- Initial contact form
- Contact notes/Documented connection to resources
- Strength, Needs and Cultural Discovery (SNCD) Assessment
- Kinship Navigation Plan
- Any information received on behalf of other agencies
- Closing Summary

Perception of Care Satisfaction Survey

The Perception of Care Survey is a tool developed by AzCA's Compliance, Performance, and Quality Improvement Coordinator for Performance Evaluation. This instrument is available in both English and Spanish and administered to caregivers two months post receipt of services.

Data Management and Program Evaluation

The Arizona KNP™ Model staff collect and enter necessary Kinship Navigator Program data in an accurate and timely manner. The general protocol is that staff enter data within one week of collection or by designated data collection cut-off dates, determined by reporting requirements. Appendix A presents recommended case record documentation protocols, based on the forms utilized by the Arizona KNP™ Model. Appendix B shows recommended data collection areas that programs may collect through paper records and/or data entered and monitored in a spreadsheet or database system. The Arizona KNP™ Model has specific data elements collected, including:

- Services or resources requested and utilized;
- Resources and referrals made;
- Navigation assessment, plan, and open case record;
- Client satisfaction with the assistance provided;
- Identification of gaps and barriers to services;
- Client outcomes; and
- Other program reporting requirements.

Program Evaluation

LeCroy & Milligan Associates, Inc. provided evaluation services for AzCA and the Arizona KNP™ Model from 2012 to 2021, funded by federal grant funding. LeCroy & Milligan Associates is a full service consulting firm specializing in program evaluation, technical assistance, and training that is innovative, research-driven, practical, and useful. Their evaluation team collaborated with AzCA to conduct and co-author the 2021 study of the Arizona KNP™ Model that provided evidence for the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse to rate this model as “Supported” (see [Schmidt & Treinen, 2021](#)). LeCroy & Milligan Associates is available for consultation and may be contracted as a third-party evaluator by programs implementing the Arizona KNP™ Model.

Since their establishment in 1991, their goal has been to provide program evaluation that enables stakeholders and clients to document outcomes, provide accountability, and engage in continuous program improvement. Evaluation staff value a collaborative and participative approach to evaluation and consultation that help clients address their most pressing questions and achieve the results they seek. With central offices located in Tucson, Arizona, LeCroy & Milligan Associates has worked at the local, state, and national level with a broad spectrum of non-profit and government agencies, universities, private businesses, and foundations. Please contact LeCroy & Milligan Associates at (520) 326-5154, email info@lecroymilligan.com, or visit <https://www.lecroymilligan.com/> for more information about their services and how they can help programs evaluate the Arizona KNP™ Model.

About the Arizona KNP™ Model 2021 Study

The Arizona KNP™ Model study (Schmidt & Treinen, 2021) utilized Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) administrative data to assess child permanency outcomes of baseline equivalent intervention and comparison groups. Results showed that children in the Arizona KNP™ Model intervention group were significantly more likely to have **achieved sustained favorable permanency outcomes** than comparison children (who received DCS services as usual) at **12 months or more** post service receipt (i.e., case closure).

- Children whose families received Arizona KNP™ Model intervention services were significantly more likely to be **placed in kinship care while in DCS custody**, compared to children from the DCS-only comparison group. Kinship care is a desired placement outcome because it is considered to be the least restrictive/disruptive placement while in child welfare custody.
- Children in the Arizona KNP™ Model intervention group were also significantly more likely to have **exited DCS custody with a permanent placement** through reunification, permanent guardianship, or adoption, than children in the comparison group. Intervention children achieved these sustained favorable outcomes regardless of Arizona KNP™ Model service receipt, intensity, and duration.

These results suggest that participating in the Arizona KNP™ Model (a family-driven model that allows families to self-select from a variety of services based on their needs and capacity to utilize them) can meaningfully improve the permanency outcomes of children and families with child welfare involvement.

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Appendix A. Recommended Arizona KNP™ Model Case Record Documentation Protocol

Form Name	When is it collected?	How is data collected? Where is it submitted/stored?	Who completes it?
Initial Contact Form (ICF)	At initial contact, collected in person or over the phone.	Staff completes a paper ICF and then enters data into the database.	Staff completes this form with information provided by the caregiver.
Consent Form	At time of enrollment	Staff introduces the program to the caregiver and reviews the consent form to participate in services.	Staff and the consenting caregiver must sign and date consent form. The caregiver can receive a copy upon request.
Navigation Plan	Initial navigation plan completed within 30 days	The initial navigation plan is developed within 30 days of case opening. The initial navigation plan should include identified needs of the client. The plan must include the caregivers' signature and anyone over the age of 6. The caregiver can sign	Staff and caregiver discuss needs and create the initial navigation plan. The plan is signed

Form Name	When is it collected?	How is data collected? Where is it submitted/stored?	Who completes it?
	of case opening	in place of the child if they choose. The navigation plan is updated when there are significant changes or every 90 days.	by the caregiver and staff.
Strengths, Needs and Cultural Discovery (SNCD)	Initial SNCD completed within 14 days of case opening	The Strength, Needs, Cultural Discovery (SNCD) is completed within 14 days of case opening and is signed by the caregiver. The SNCD is updated when there are significant changes or every 90 days.	The SNCD is completed by staff with information collected from the caregiver. The caregiver and staff will sign.

Appendix B. Recommended KNP™ Model Data Collection Areas

- Referral Source to Program
- Initial Contact Form Data (e.g., family demographics)
- Perception of Care/Caregiver Satisfaction Survey
- Navigation Services (other than initial information and referrals. Data can include documentation of date, time/duration in minutes, location, and other pertinent information about the service)
 - Navigation – Case Opening
 - Navigation – Court Attendance
 - Navigation – Office Visit
 - Navigation – Home Visit
 - Navigation – Staffing
 - Navigation – Communication on Behalf of Client
 - Navigation – Communication with Client
- Caregiver Education and Training
- Caregiver Support Groups
- Resources and Referrals
- Legal Services (e.g., Legal Aid, Private Attorney)
- Permanency Resources (e.g., Foster Care Licensing, Guardianship and Adoption Services)
- Basic Needs (e.g., WIC, Food Bank, Clothing, Diapers, Housing, Utility)
- TANF/TANF-Child Only
- Health Care/Health Services for Adult and Child
- Respite, Child Care, Recreation, and Socialization
- Education System for Child
- Caregiver Education
- Community-Based Services