



Dear Chairs Campos, Valderama and Members of the Human Services Sub Committee of Ways & Means,

My name is Patti Chamberlain. I am a research psychologist living in Lane County Oregon. For the past 40 years I have worked at the Oregon Social Learning Center where we conduct research on parenting, child and adolescent development, and designing interventions aimed at improving outcomes for vulnerable children, teens and their families. Since the mid 1980s, my research team and I have focused our work in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

We have competed for and received six grants from the National Institutes of Health since 2000 to develop and test an intervention (KEEP) to strengthen and support resource/foster and kinship parents through peer -to -peer support and evidence-based parenting practices. We have implemented KEEP in New York City, Maryland, England, Denmark, Tennessee, and beginning after the last legislative session, in Oregon with support from the Foster Homes of Healing, the Oregon Legislature and the ODHS.

Below the Oregon implementation of the KEEP intervention is described. Although KEEP has been successfully brought to over 2,600 families in all 36 Oregon counties, there is continued work to be done. We are grateful for the past legislative support and ask for your support to continue funding for KEEP so that all foster and kinship parents in Oregon can get the help and support that they need.

Thank you,
Patti Chamberlain, Ph.D.

Overview

Numerous studies have shown that many children involved in Child Welfare have serious and complex behavioral and mental health problems that put them at risk for negative long-term outcomes. The enormous potential of these young people and the rough challenges faced by resource/foster and kinship parents inspired the development of KEEP.

KEEP is an evidence-based peer-support and skill enhancement group for resource/foster and kinship parents. The evidence- base for KEEP is extensive, including positive outcomes shown in six Federally-funded randomized controlled trials, multiple independent evaluations of national and international implementations across varied cultural contexts, and numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals (see www.keepforfamilies.org).

What is a KEEP Group?

7-12 resource & kinship parents and 2 trained group leaders

16- weekly, 90 minute sessions

Evidence-based parenting curriculum tailored to each parent's specific needs

KEEP in trauma informed

Remote and in-person options are offered

KEEP doesn't use "one size fits all". Group leaders draw from an established manual but the tailor each meeting to the needs, circumstances, and priorities of participating parents. Each week, the group leaders gather specific information about the children's current behaviors by telephone. This information is then incorporated into the weekly sessions to make sure the group is both current and relevant. KEEP is not a class; groups are fun and

flexible. Unlike a classroom format KEEP groups are interactive and participatory and emphasize peer-to-peer support between parents.

Number of families Served in Oregon

KEEP for Child Welfare

As of December 31st, 2022, we have enrolled over **2,500** foster and kinship resource families from **36** Oregon counties in KEEP. Kinship caregivers comprise **38%** of all KEEP enrollees. We have delivered **347** groups for a total of **5,254** sessions. There are **23** KEEP groups currently in progress. All KEEP groups are currently conducted online.

KEEP Connecting Kin

KEEP Connecting Kin is for informal/voluntary kinship parents, i.e. grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, and other relatives caring for youth and children who are not actively involved with Oregon DHS Child Welfare. KEEP Connecting Kin is funded by a grant from the US Congress through the Administration for Children and Families. As of December 31st, 2022, we have enrolled **130** informal kinship caregivers from **23** counties in KEEP Connecting Kin. We have delivered **17** KEEP Connecting Kin groups for a total of **229** sessions. There are **4** Connecting Kin groups

Culturally-Specific and Affinity Groups

Families caring for Native American children and youth

In collaboration with NAYA, ODI has made cultural adaptations to the KEEP curriculum and materials.

- 3 NAYA-led groups currently in progress
 - 15 NAYA-led groups completed
 - Families from **20** counties have participated in NAYA KEEP groups

Groups for Resource Parents Caring for Unaccompanied Minors (in collaboration with Centro Cultural)

- 2 groups completed, one in English one in Spanish
 - Families from **2** counties participated in UAM affinity groups

LGBTQIA+ Groups

- 2 LGBTQIA+ affinity group currently in progress
 - 5 LGBTQIA+ KEEP SAFE affinity groups completed
 - Families from **17** counties participated in LGBTQIA+ affinity groups
- ☐ Staff from **4** provider agencies have been trained to lead LGBTQIA+ KEEP affinity groups

Spanish-Language Groups

- 2 Spanish-language KEEP SAFE groups currently in progress
 - 14 Spanish-language KEEP groups completed
 - Families from **15** counties participated in Spanish-language groups

Transcultural Fostering Groups

Group for families who are caring for a child who is of a different race, culture, or ethnicity than themselves

- 2 Transcultural groups currently in progress
 - 2 Transcultural affinity groups completed
 - Families from **9** counties have enrolled in the first two Transcultural groups, including 10 participants from rural areas

For Questions or more information,

Contact Patti Chamberlain, Ph.D.; pattic@oslc.org 541-968-2539

Oregon Social Learning Center, Eugene, (www.oslc.org; or www.keepforfamilies.org)