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The Impact of Kinship Care on Children

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Research + Scholarship SYMPOSIUM



The Impact of Kinship Care on Children

Our presentation examines the dynamics of kinship care in three regions of the world. The following countries were chosen due to the extensive contrasting research available regarding kinship care values, practices and experiences. In light of these factors, personal interest was also utilized to identify three unique countries: Australia, Kenya and the United States. The literature reflected that the value placed on the family unit remains firm despite region specific differences. We uncovered the prevalence of kinship care in these three specific countries to highlight underlying causes and lasting effects on the family unit. The Australian kinship care system has been seen as a positive alternative to foster care, and is promoted by the Australian government. Whereas in the United States, the government is hesitant to endorse informal kinship care, since it limits their ability to regulate the systems' practices and policies. In the middle of the spectrum, research suggests Kenya has embraced the practice of kinship care as a social norm and necessity. Kenya's unique situation highlights the effectiveness of kinship care despite extensive negative outcomes. It is our hope to present a review of literature that shows despite cultural differences, the value upon the family unit exists throughout all three regions. With this knowledge, we hope to provide a balanced perspective of both the drawbacks and benefits of kinship care.