



2020 Annual Report



About Foster Kinship

We believe that when children can't be with their parents, they should be with their family. Foster Kinship was established as a 501(c)(3) organization in 2011 to help the 33,000 children in Nevada living with relative caregivers, also known as kinship care.

Foster Kinship was founded with a mission to strengthen the kinship caregivers' capacity to provide **safe, permanent, and nurturing** homes for children. Foster Kinship is the only organization in Nevada exclusively serving grandparents and other caregivers of kinship children. Since its inception, Foster Kinship has proudly served thousands of kinship families across Nevada. Foster Kinship provides two free programs for grandparent and other kinship caregivers: Kinship Navigator Services and Child Welfare Training. Foster Kinship also advocates for all kinship families to receive equitable access to services.

By helping to **"keep home in the family"** for vulnerable children, Foster Kinship envisions a safe and healthy childhood for ALL children in kinship care.



2020 Reflections from the Executive Director

When I think back on this past year, the first thoughts that come to my mind are not the dark and difficult struggles we all faced. Quite the opposite actually- the memories of our work together last year lead me to be incredibly hopeful. In such a tragic year, with truly so much suffering, I was blessed to be in a position that showed me the best of others. This is not due to any rose-colored tinting of my experience, but because I was witness to the power of daily compassion and kindness. Despite the personal adversity, so many stepped up to help.

I'll start with **kinship families**. We already know that these remarkable and selfless caregivers of children who can't be with their parents do amazing things every day to keep kids in their family. However, when it became clear that many of our caregivers were more at risk for complications from COVID, all of us at Foster Kinship were deeply concerned. Grandparents and great-grandparents who are raising grandchildren needed to be able to stay home to reduce their risk of exposure. The children in their homes may have additional needs due to the trauma they've experienced. I felt fear creep into my thoughts as I worried about what would happen to the children if something were to happen to their caregivers. But despite being faced with a pandemic that literally threatened their health and their livelihoods, kinship families did not collapse under the weight of the stress. Instead, they rose to the occasion and found strength upon strength in a way that quickly banished my fears.

They found ways to stay home, to school their children, to access new resources, and to support each other. They shared resources and tips with each other. Kinship caregivers who faced fewer risks delivered extra food and necessities to those that needed to stay home. They were creative and solution-focused as they reached out and helped each other. They spoke out and advocated for their families and what they needed. They took classes online and joined online support groups. When they had extra, they donated it to others who didn't. So many times when a caregiver would pull up to an event we had, such as giving out food or diapers, they would bring a trunk full of clothing, toys or other necessities to pass on to another family.

Secondly, there was the amazing **community support** that seemed to pour out from the depths of communal resilience that I have not seen before. Food, diapers, formula, medicine, Lysol wipes, even toilet paper- these things were donated to our organization in abundance every time we asked for help. We never had to deny a family what they needed when reached out to ask us for because the community made sure that we were always fully stocked. Financial support for our work did not slow down either. When I feared for the survival of us as a small nonprofit, the community of donors blew me away.

Finally, I want to talk about the **team at Foster Kinship**. We didn't miss a single class, a single day of work, or drop a single service. In fact, we served more families with more services than ever before. Their flexibility, strength, and positivity kept us all going. When we all had to work from home we found new ways to connect with each other. I am so proud of each and every one of the people at Foster kinship and am very grateful for them as we move into 2021. They gave me the strength to carry on when I wanted to give up. They give me so much hope for what we can accomplish in the future.

This year we all had to grow and stretch to be able to meet the needs of a global pandemic and make sure that our most vulnerable children and families were safe and stable. And while I am grateful to be able to share our work this year- highlighting the outcomes for our children and families, our expansion into Reno, the results of our external evaluation, and our financial stability- more importantly, I wanted to share how this year redefined who we are and gave us all the courage to see that **we can do hard things**.

As we move into 2021 I know things will remain challenging, but I take with me a great deal of optimism from our work in 2020. When I thought we were facing impossible obstacles, we overcame them - with the strength of our kinship families, the support of our community, and the resilience of the lovely team of professionals at Foster Kinship- **together**.

With gratitude,

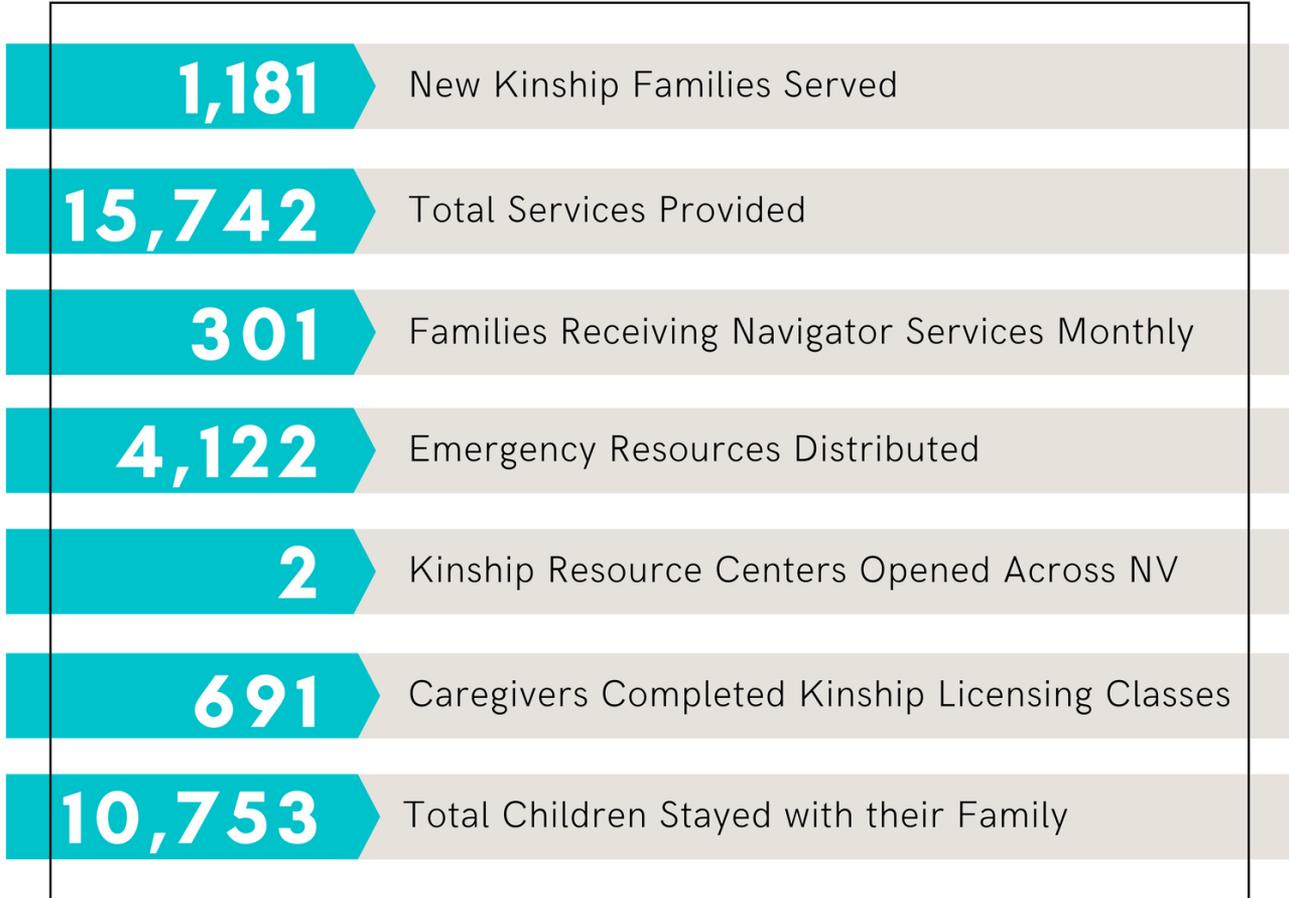


Ali Caliendo, PhD

Founder and Executive Director

2020 AT A GLANCE

How We Keep Home in the Family



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“The amazing staff at Foster Kinship are dedicated to helping families stay together. They are always available to listen, share their knowledge, and offer a helping hand. Just a few of the many things they offer are classes to get licensed as a Kinship Foster parent, CPR, and car seat training. They have monthly support group meetings. They have spent countless hours working to change and pass new laws. They take time away from their own families to make sure all the children and our families have a Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner and gifts for all the children at Christmas. During the recent pandemic, they opened up a drive-thru shop that provided food and necessities to families. They personally delivered items to families that couldn't leave their homes. They had hundreds of cooked meals hand-delivered to families in need. Thank you for all your kindness and compassion! Your support means everything and we couldn't survive without you!”

"These kids are worth it. And if we want to see them **thrive** & have a **vibrant future**, we have to invest in them now. It's so worth it."

DR. ALI CALIENDO



\$1,205,540

Income



\$966,375

Operating Expenses



\$239,165

Restricted and Reserves

Assets

Total Cash and Bank	\$383,440.53
Total Other Current Assets	\$127,955.46
Total Assets	\$511,395.99

Liabilities

Total Current Liabilities	\$10,184.65
Total Liabilities	\$10,184.65

Equity

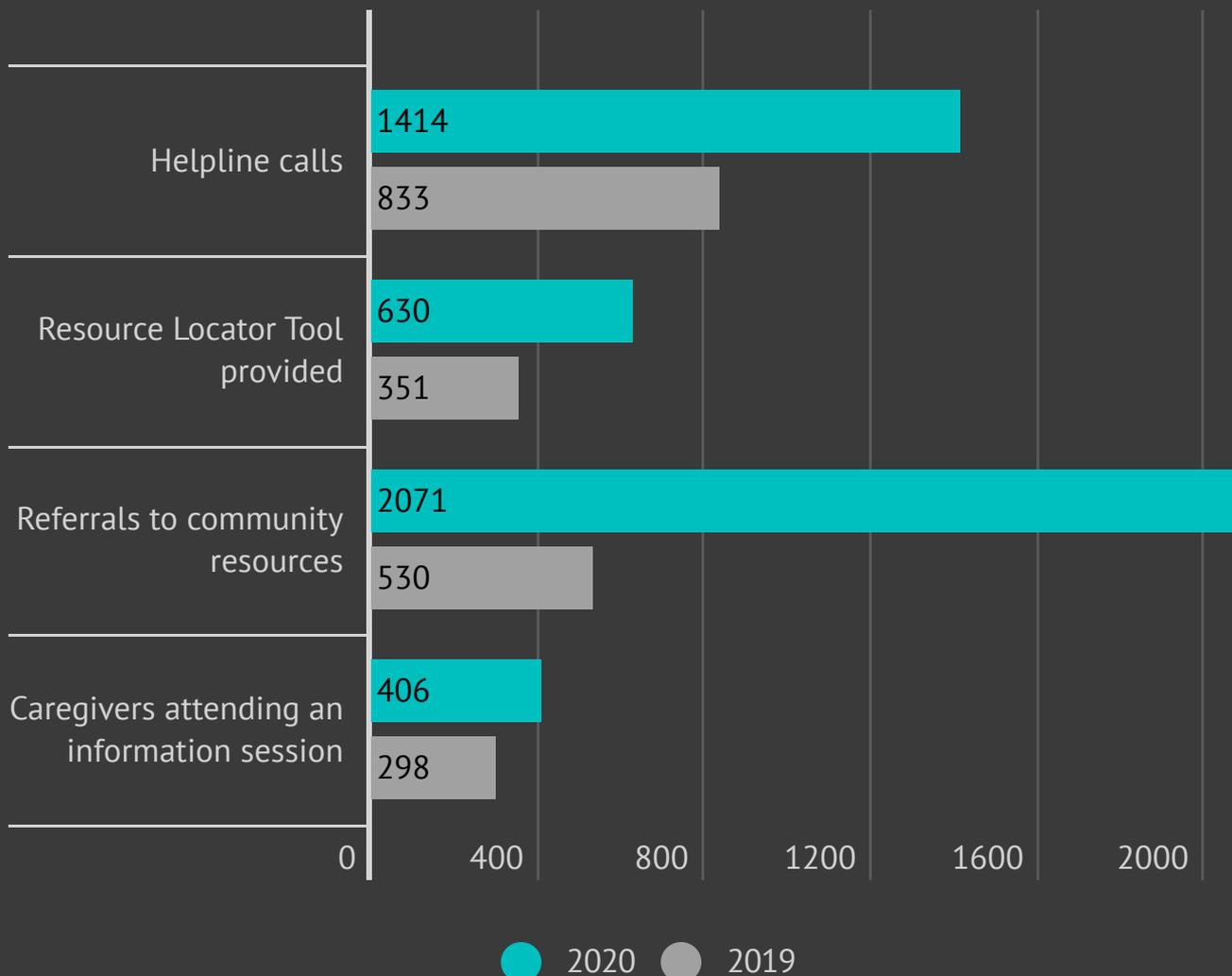
Total Retained Earnings	\$501,211.34
Total Equity	\$501,211.34

2020 Highlights

January



We started the year positive and excited to help kinship families access the information and resources they needed to make the best decisions for their families. A core component of this work is our Helpline and Referral Services out of our Navigator Program. Looking back, there was no way we could have predicted just **how needed our services** would be throughout 2020, but the Family Advocates who specialize in intake made sure our caregivers were supported more than ever this year.



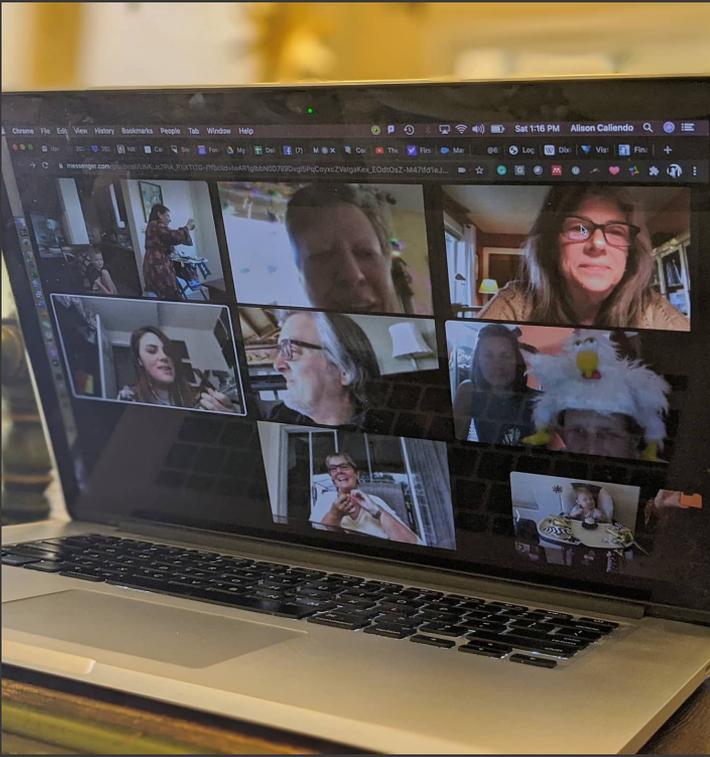
February

Another core component of our Navigator program is ensuring children have a stable legal arrangement with the kinship caregiver. This includes helping families understand how to get a guardianship or become a licensed kinship foster parent. We assisted 208 families with the guardianship process, ensuring [375 children were in more stable legal arrangements](#). As family court services went online later in the year, we made videos about how to navigate the new online systems, paid for hundreds of legal filing fees for those who did not have a computer, and even supported caregivers by remotely attending their online hearings.

March

As Nevada went into lockdown the basic needs of our kinship families grew exponentially. We quickly modified our services to include a drive-through resource pick-up where we provided food, diapers, formula, medicine, masks, and cleaning products to caregivers so they would not have to spend as much time going from store to store when things were sold out. We were the inaugural nonprofit partner in the innovative Delivering with Dignity program, which provided twice a week family meal delivery to our families who couldn't leave their homes. By the end of 2020 we had distributed [4122 emergency resources](#), a huge increase over the 530 provided in 2019. This was only made possible through the incredible generosity of our community of donors and for that, we remain deeply grateful.





April

As schools closed and caregivers were faced with the job of educating kids at home, we wanted to ensure that caregivers remained emotionally supported. Our team provided [2522 support calls](#), [962 support groups](#) and [one on one emotional support](#). In addition, 791 kinship caregivers across Nevada joined our 24/7 online support group to help each other and connect even when they couldn't leave their homes.

May

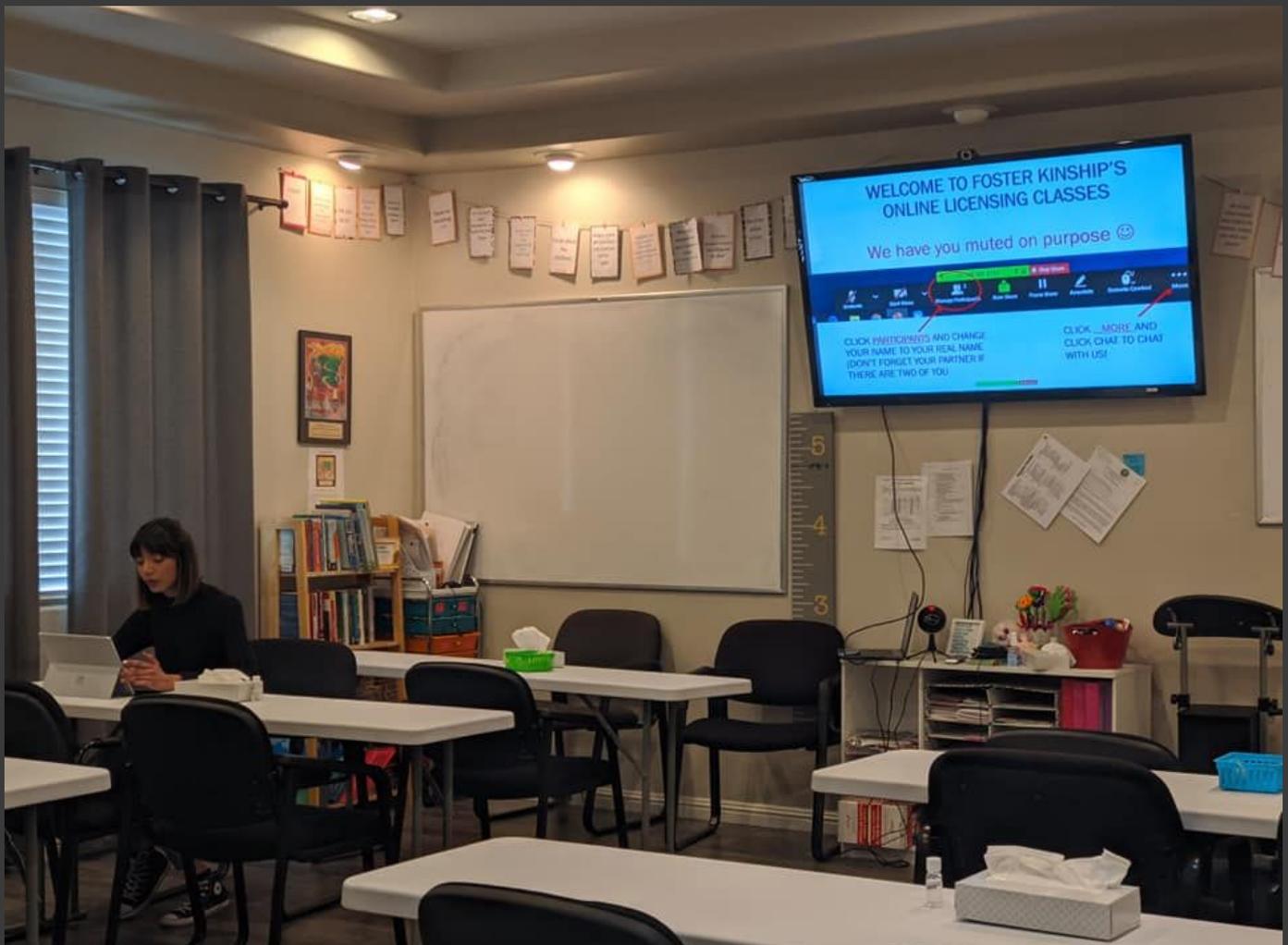
As caregivers began to lose their jobs due to the shutdown, ensuring they had financial support, a core component of our navigator program, became more critical than ever before. We worked to understand how to apply for benefits online after all the welfare offices shut their doors and created how-to videos and guides for caregivers. Family Advocates assisted [296 families with applications for financial assistance, helping them access an estimated \\$1.6 million dollars of support.](#)



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I love this place, ANYTIME I need anything for my little one I know I can call them and they will help me or point me in the right direction to resources that can help with my situation. The staff is very friendly. I've never had a negative experience. They make me feel like I have someone in my corner, even if it is just a listening ear!"

Foster Kinship's Child Welfare Training Program partners with Clark County Department of Family Services to ensure kinship caregivers of children in foster care can become licensed foster parents and ultimately receive the same supports as traditional foster parents. Our training program, which normally consists of in-person training, had to make major changes this year. We quickly learned how to navigate the world of online meeting options and moved all our classes online. We also created hybrid options for our car seat safety and CPR classes, allowing caregivers to do the majority of the classes online and then make an appointment to come in and safely skills test. We did not miss a single class this year, which required herculean efforts on the part of our training team to learn the new methods and then assist caregivers as well. With these adaptations, we were able to ensure that [nearly 700 kinship caregivers of children](#) in foster care were able to access the equivalent number of training supports as 2019.



July



After years of writing grants to start a respite program for kinship families, we were honored to be awarded the competitive **Impact Las Vegas grant** for \$58K in July, which finally allowed us to realize our dream! Our respite care program supports health and wellness, not only for caregivers but for each child we interact with.

Through play, we are able to discuss coping mechanisms, critical thinking skills, problem-solving through language and communication. At a time where social development is hindered by a global pandemic, it is most important to focus on the mental health of all children and ensure their ability to express feelings in productive, healthy ways.

The Foster Kinship Respite care program has become more than just an opportunity for our caregivers to take some time for themselves. Our initial thoughts were to focus on helping our caregivers by keeping themselves happy and healthy by providing a wellness program where their children can be safely dropped off and cared for by trained staff. However, it became so much more than that. We have been able to give children opportunities to socialize in a safe environment, where many schools and outdoor activities have discontinued.

We have been able to preserve family in the home, at times when caregivers have become overwhelmed or frustrated. We have done this by offering emergency respite care in order to support the needs of each family individually. And the effectiveness of our program has been reflected by the incredible amount of positive feedback from our caregivers, who openly express their gratitude and encourage others to take advantage of a respite opportunity. We are grateful to have been given the opportunity to provide such a unique service and served nearly **200 children** in the first six months.

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This organization is amazing and has been a huge help and support...I do not think I would have made it this far with out them.

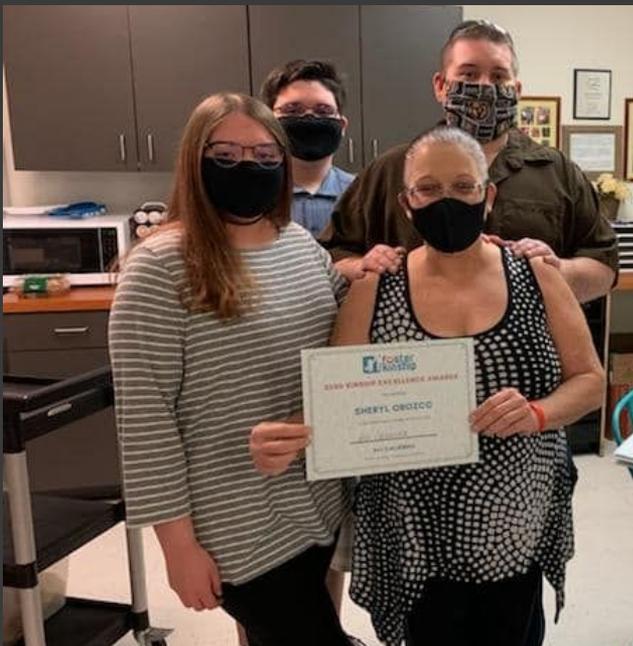
August

After years of subleasing, we were finally able to move into our own office space just down the street from our former office location! Having our **own space** gave us the ability to design the office to be the most welcoming space we could think of. We can't wait to be fully open again and welcome more of our families in person.



September

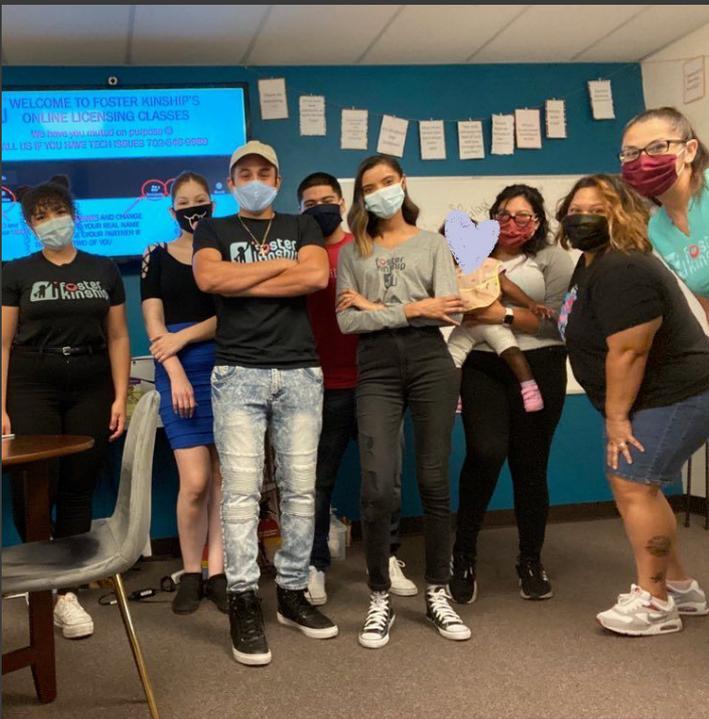
For the 4th year in a row, Nevada honored **September as Kinship Care Month!** We celebrated by highlighting how kinship families are making a difference in Nevada in the lives of over 30,000 children. We were excited to honor our Kinship Caregiver and Kinship Professional of the Year at our Annual Kinship Excellence Awards!



October

Although Foster Kinship expanded from Clark County to serving the entire state of Nevada in late 2018, it has been difficult without a physical presence in Washoe County. A generous grant from the **Walter S Johnson Foundation** allowed us to open a **second office in Northern Nevada** and hire a Reno-based social worker to serve kinship families in Reno, Carson City, and the surrounding areas.



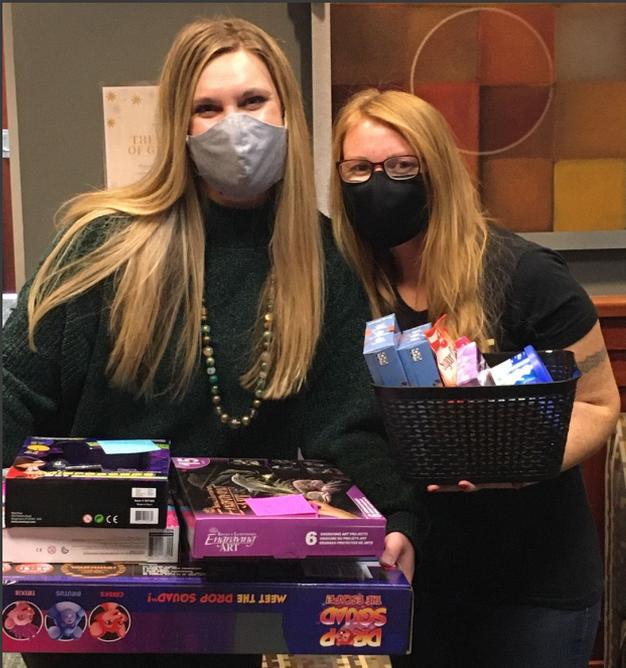


November

Foster Kinship's Navigator program has been undergoing an outside evaluation of our effectiveness for the past two years. Compared to those children whose caregivers did not receive navigator services, those who used our program were 3.41 times more likely to access needed services and 2.99 times more likely to provide a stable home. We are thrilled our program is now truly **evidence-based**.

December

We started the holiday season concerned that maybe this year we would not be able to do as much for families because our donors were also feeling the effects of the pandemic. Boy, were we quickly proven wrong. This year, over 200 individuals and serval companies reached out to us about helping children. In addition, we received a literal truckload of toys and bikes from the **Zwagil Foundation**. The combined effort of our community allowed us to serve nearly 1,500 children in Northern and Southern Nevada with Christmas gifts, holiday meals, additional basic needs, and grocery store gift cards throughout the holiday season.



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Every child is unique, every placement has its own complexities and hurdles, and Foster Kinship is prepared for them all. I'm never treated as simply a case, rather I am treated with dignity, compassion, and with genuine interest to **make sure our little family has what it needs, at a moment's notice.**

THANK YOU!

Individual Donors like YOU!

Delivering with Dignity

Clark County BNA

Walter S. Johnson Foundation

City of Las Vegas

Impact Las Vegas

DCFS

DFS

Papa Pita Bakery

Dermody Properties

Bean Counter Notary and Tax

Fostering Hope's Manderley Market

Axis Home Loans

Canyon Ridge Christian Church

Foster Change

In N Out Burger Foundation

100 Dinners

Clark Student Counsel

James Joseph Ford Foundation

Engelstad Family Foundation

The San Diego Foundation

KeyInCode

National Charity League

Del E. Webb Foundation

Cox Charities

Mark B Wallner Foundation

Hannahs Closet

Preston Management Consulting

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Las Vegas

The Bungie Foundation

Project For Humanity

Newport Meat of Nevada

G Alex Foundation

Union Pacific Foundation

Dedicated Managers, Inc

Indo Desert LLC

Zwagil Foundation

D&G Realty

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Clark County OAG

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The Boyd Foundation

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Custom Merchandising Services

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The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, Inc.

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