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## **TOP CHILD WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS ANNOUNCE NEW RESEARCH: CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM KINSHIP CARE**

Today five top national organizations devoted to benefiting children and youth announced the release of the groundbreaking research from The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia that confirms that children in kinship families have more stability and demonstrate fewer behavioral problems than children placed with non-relative foster families.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the Center for Law and Social Policy, the Child Welfare League of America, the Children's Defense Fund and Generations United joined together to release the latest findings at a Congressional briefing, "Supporting Child Well-being: New research confirms that children benefit from kinship care."

The briefing highlighted the results of a new study, published in the June issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*. This analysis of the congressionally funded National Survey of Child & Adolescent Well-Being offers the first nationally representative data on the outcomes of children placed into kin and non-kinship foster care. The study demonstrates the value of relatives in providing stability to children at rates far greater than experienced by children in foster care with non-relatives.

"The remarkable thing is that we've known for some time now that children in kinship families have better stability and permanency than most children in non-relative foster care, and our findings confirm that in the largest national study to date of these families. However, we also learned that quite separate from this stability is a protective value within kinship families that itself can reduce the magnitude of behavioral problems compared with other children with the same level of risk who are placed with non-kin foster parents," said David M. Rubin, M.D., FAAP, a pediatric researcher at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and lead author of the study.

"This briefing adds to a growing body of evidence that if we are truly interested in providing the more than 500,000 children in foster care the stability received from a loving and permanent family, then federal policy must do much more to help support kin families," commented Christine James-Brown, President and CEO, Child Welfare League of America, who emceed the event.

Vernadean Mack of Philadelphia, who attended the briefing, is raising her grandson. “Since my grandson has been living with us he has a sense of security and stability – of course there have been emotional challenges for him but he’s definitely made great strides with my two daughters and me,” she said. “He’s doing real good.”

The findings from the report could impact pending legislation in the House and Senate that would provide access to important supportive services for relatives caring for children in foster care, and those helping to keep children out of foster care.

“This research confirms the necessity for Congress to act now to support children in relative care. My bipartisan Kinship Caregiver Support Act offers critical policy steps that will provide permanency and stability for our most vulnerable citizens,” Congressman Danny Davis (D-IL 7th) said.

The briefing also featured remarks from Dr. Joseph Crumbly, Family Therapist and consultant from Pennsylvania, who highlighted the importance of providing quality supportive services to children in kinship families.

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