

JANAY



All Children Deserve a
Permanent Family

Five Stories of Hope: How subsidized guardianship, if available, can provide children with safe, permanent families when reunification or adoption is not possible

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At ages 15 and 5, social services removed Janay and her little sister, Spring, from their mother's house, because their mother was addicted to drugs. Janay told the social workers to call her grandmother, who then stepped up to raise them. For the three years Spring spent in foster care, the family had to get permission for everything. If she wanted to go to a friend's slumber party, social workers had to talk to the friend's parents and ask them to complete criminal background checks. Instead of facing that enormous embarrassment, Spring didn't go to the parties. The family wanted permanence, but living on a modest retirement income, the grandmother needed support to help raise her granddaughters.

Thanks to KinGAP, the subsidized guardianship program in California, Spring was able to exit the system. Although Janay was 18 and emancipated at the time, she credits the program with the family's success, as does Grandma. Along with permanence and financial help came a more "normal" life.

The family's positive experience with subsidized guardianship eventually led the grandmother to adopt. Now, six years later, Grandma is raising 11 year old Spring, and Janay is planning to get a master's degree in social work.¹

¹All Children Deserve a Permanent Home, Generations United, April 2006