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## Evaluating Kinship Care Alternatives: A Comparison of a Private Initiative to Traditional State Services

*Rodney A. Ellis, Gary D. Ellis, Rochelle Galey*

### Abstract

Multiple stressors on the child welfare system have forced innovative solutions to the overburdened foster care program. A promising alternative is kinship care, in which children are placed with biological relatives. Proponents cite the opportunity to place the child in familiar surroundings, the natural access to additional family resources, and the degree to which it is sensitive to the norms and values of non-dominant cultural groups. Various models of kinship care have been implemented in several jurisdictions, yet little or no research has been done to determine which alternatives are the most effective. This paper addresses that deficit. It reports the results of a study that compares stability of placement outcomes between a program operated by a private, not-for-profit organization (n=60) and a more traditional program (n=79) operated by a state child welfare agency. Results support the use of the private alternative over the more traditional state-operated program.

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TO CONTACT OUR MAIN CAMPUS:  
Indiana University School of Social Work  
902 West New York Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, 46202  
Voice: 317.274.6705  
FAX: 317.274.8630  
TDD/TTY: 317.278-2050

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Comments: [iussw@iupui.edu](mailto:iussw@iupui.edu)

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