

Kith and kin: Informal child care -- Highlights from recent research ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Available in print for order (see SOURCE) and online for download.

- [Report overview and links to report products \(in pdf\)](#) ^[2]

Excerpt from overview:

While many children receive care in licensed child care centers, preschools, or licensed family child care homes, a good deal of child care takes place in settings that are, for the most part, not regulated. This type of child care is referred to as "informal" or "kith and kin" care. These terms include care provided by grandmothers, aunts, and other relatives of the child, as well as care by friends and neighbors. They may or may not be legally exempt from state licensing requirements, depending on the state and the specific circumstances.

The research synthesized in the report highlights some important insights into the nature and use of forms of care chosen by many families with young children. These families want flexible, reliable, affordable child care provided by caregivers who share their values and are sensitive to their children. The report reveals a consistent, growing body of research related to the usage of these forms of care and to parents' considerations when choosing it. It also identifies an important area where more work is needed: an understanding of the qualities of informal care providers and the ways in which they influence children's development and family economic security. A better understanding of these issues is especially important for low-income families, who use child care by kith and kin in relatively larger numbers.

Tags: [unregulated](#) ^[3]

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