

# Supporting Kinship/Grandfamilies with LGBTQ+ Youth

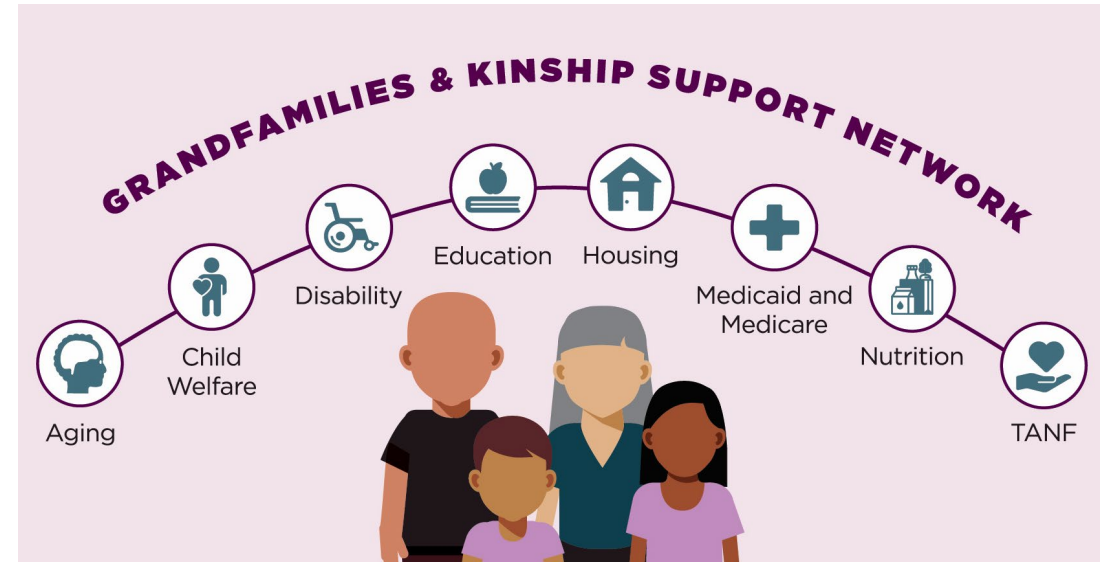
**July 25, 2024**

- We will begin at the top of the hour
- Please type in the **chat** box - your name, state, tribe (if applicable), and role
- Type questions in the **chat** box at any point during our time together
- All participants will receive a link to the slides and recording in the next day or two

# GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP SUPPORT NETWORK

A National Technical Assistance Center

- 5-year (2021-2026) cooperative agreement with Administration for Community Living
- Purpose is to provide technical assistance to the array of tribal, state, and territorial government agencies, as well as non-profit organizations that serve kinship families
- Not designed to serve the families directly – working to improve systems for families



# How We Help



## Learning Collaboratives and Information Dissemination

The Network hosts [webinars](#) and facilitates learning collaboratives.



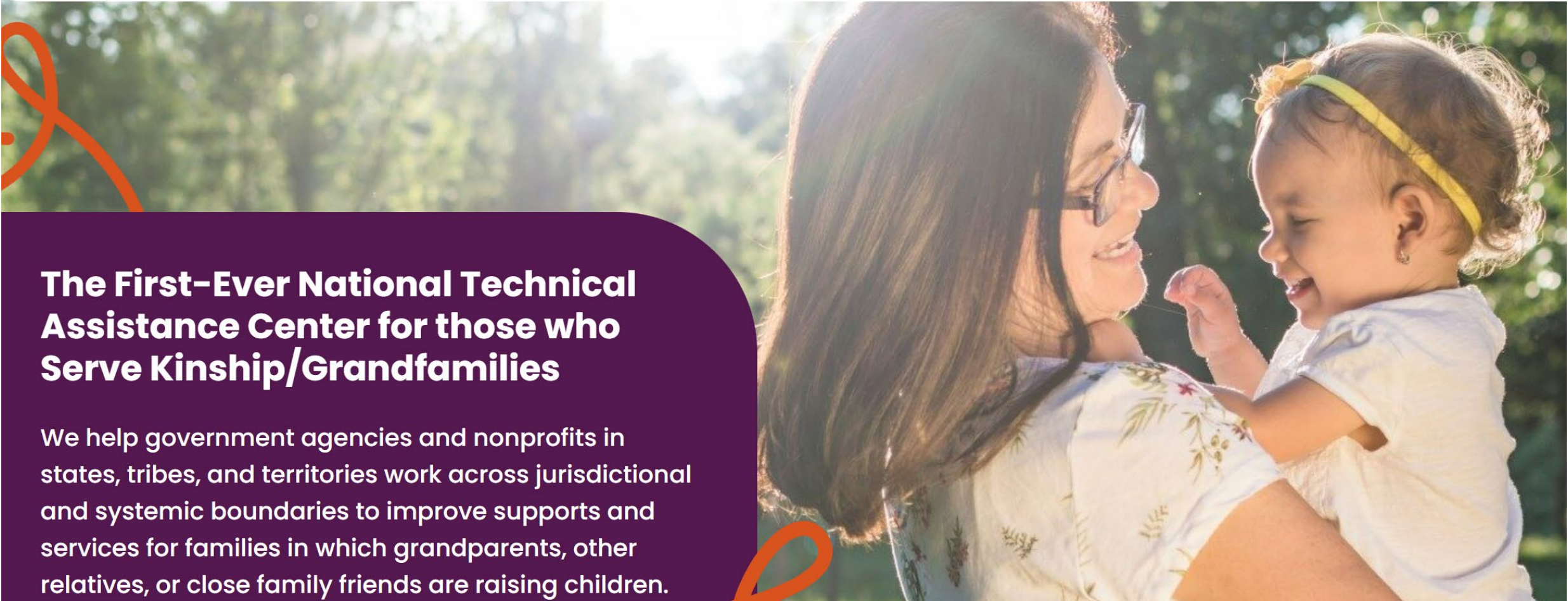
## Individual Assistance

We respond to [individual requests for help](#) from government agencies, kinship navigators, and community-based nonprofits.



## A Centralized Hub

The Network is elevating exemplary kinship/grandfamily practices and programs from around the country on its accessible website, [www.GKSNetwork.org](http://www.GKSNetwork.org).



## The First-Ever National Technical Assistance Center for those who Serve Kinship/Grandfamilies

We help government agencies and nonprofits in states, tribes, and territories work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries to improve supports and services for families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children.

# Stay Connected & Access Support

Sign up for our monthly newsletter, which will provide you with updates on new Network resources.



For the latest updates, follow the Network on LinkedIn!



# New Federal Rule (HHS)

## Designated Placement Requirements Under Titles IV-E and IV-B for LGBTQI+ Children

**To be a designated placement, the provider must:**

- Commit to establishing an environment that supports the child's LGBTQI+ status or identity
- Be trained with the appropriate knowledge and skills to provide for the needs of the child related to the child's self-identified sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression
- Facilitate the child's access to age- or developmentally appropriate resources, services, and activities that support their health and well-being.

This final rule became effective on July 1<sup>st</sup> and Title IV-E and IV- B agencies must implement the provisions of this final rule on or before October 1, 2026.

# LGBTQ+ Young People and Adverse Childhood Experiences

“People who identify as LGBTQ+ are more likely to experience many different types of ACEs, including child abuse, neglect, and other household challenges, compared to people who identify as heterosexual and whose gender matches sex at birth.”

- Centers for Disease Control

## LGBTQ+ young people are at higher risk for childhood adversity



### What are adverse childhood experiences?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0–17 years) including experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect; witnessing violence in the home or community; or having a family member attempt or die by suicide. Aspects of a child’s environment that undermine their sense of safety, stability, and bonding can also be ACEs.

### What is the burden of ACEs among people who identify as LGBTQ+?

ACEs can change the way children’s brains and bodies develop and function,<sup>1</sup> contributing to increased risk of poor mental health, substance use, suicidal behaviors, chronic diseases, and other poor health and well-being outcomes into adulthood.<sup>2,3</sup> Research shows that experiencing discrimination, including discrimination due to identifying or being perceived as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning), is an ACE.<sup>1,4,5</sup>

### What do we know about ACEs and sexual or gender discrimination?

Interpersonal, or individual, discrimination is defined as being treated with less courtesy or respect than other people, receiving poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores, or being threatened or harassed.<sup>6</sup>



The science is clear that interpersonal discrimination is an ACE. It can cause trauma and impact health across the lifespan.<sup>4,5</sup>



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# Meet our Presenters

- **Sherrill Wayland (she/her/they)**, Senior Director of Special Initiatives and Partnerships, SAGE
- **Liz Owen (she/her)**, Vice President, Strategic Communications & External Relations, PFLAG National

# Contact Information

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To request assistance from the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network, visit [www.GKSNetwork.org](http://www.GKSNetwork.org) and click on “Request Assistance.”

# Supporting Your LGBTQ+ Grandchild



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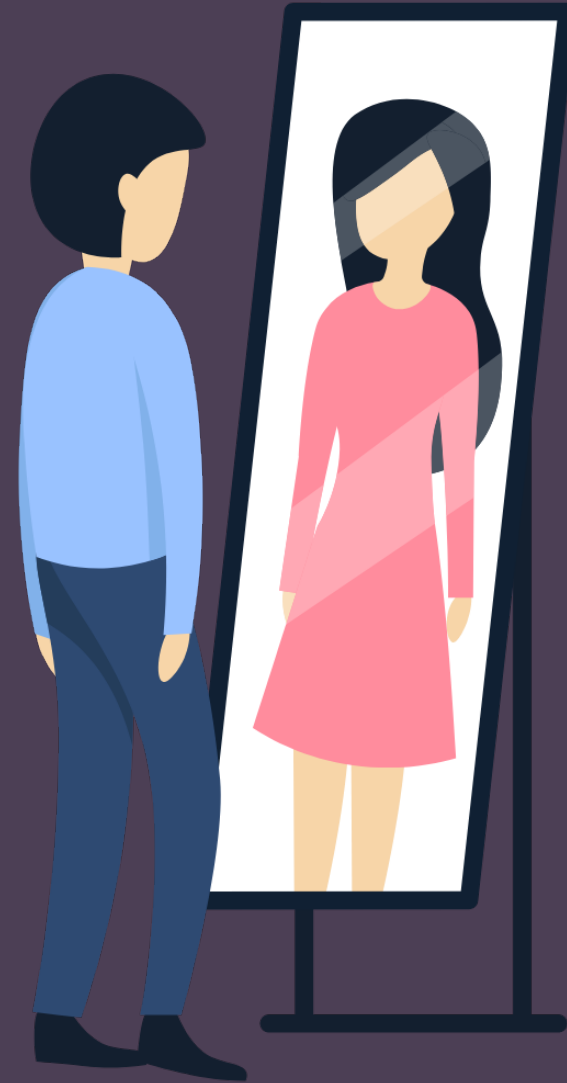


# Let's start with some basics...

- What is gender identity?
- What is gender expression?
- What is sexual orientation?
- How are they all related?



# Gender Identity



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# Gender Expression



# Sexual Orientation





# Gender Identity



# Gender Expression



# Sexual Orientation



# Let's tackle the basic questions...

- How young is too young to know...?
- Is this a phase
- Should I bring it up first?
- What if I say the wrong thing?
- How can I directly show support?
- How do I respond to others?



# My grandchild is too young to date. How can they know what their sexual orientation is?

- Kids are coming out earlier than ever
- Sexual or romantic experiences are not necessary to understand one's attractions to other people
- Trust kids—they know who they are



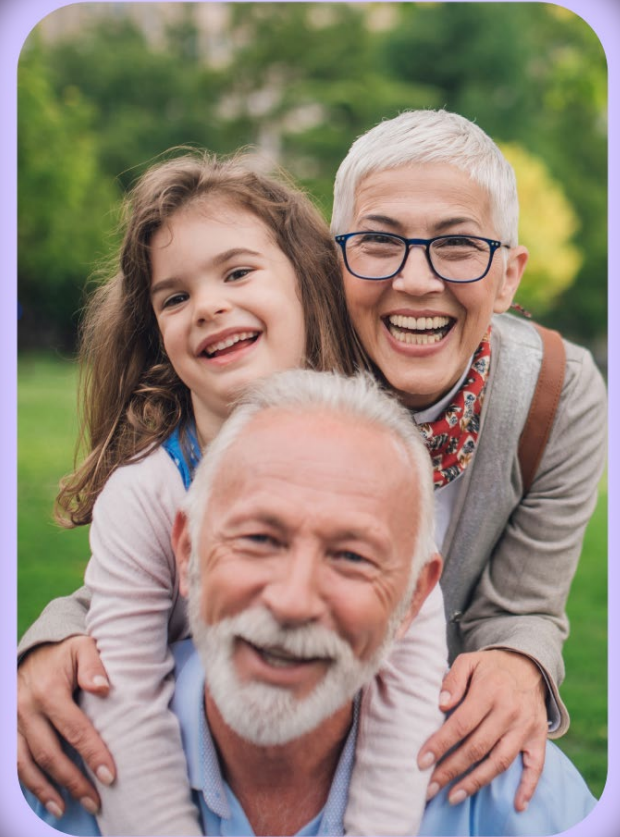
# How can my grandchild know they are transgender at such an early age?

- For most people who are transgender or nonbinary this sense of gender identity happens early in their development
- Kids need to explore, gender is often one of those explorations—it is good to give them space to do that
- Trust kids—they know who they are



# Is this a phase they will grow out of?

- Sexual orientation and gender identity are not a choice, or changeable through things like talk therapy or, for faith-based people, praying
- The most important thing to communicate is that you love them
- Let them guide the conversation



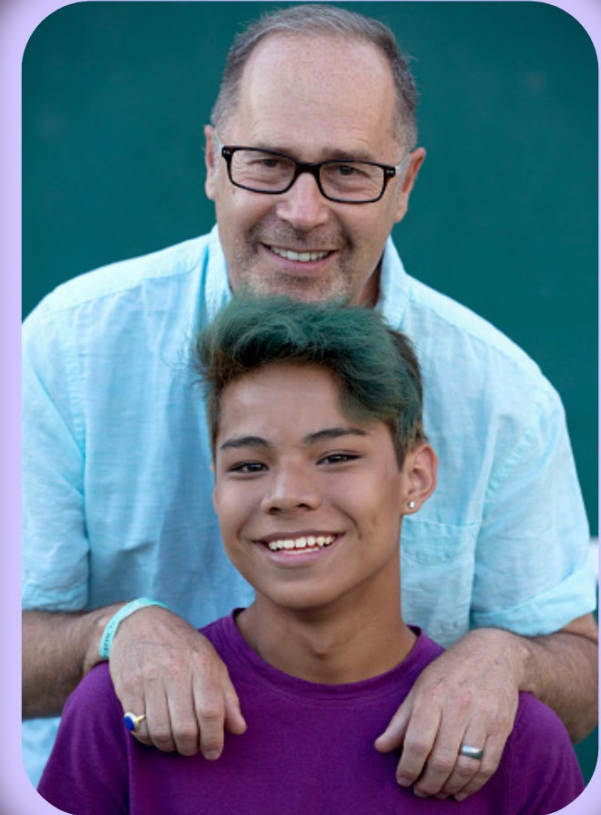
# If I suspect my grandchild is LGBTQ+, should I bring it up first?

- Let your loved one lead
- Ask gentle, open-ended questions
- Support and listen



# What if I say the wrong thing?

- At some point, everyone says the wrong thing...and that's okay!
  - Say, "Thank you for telling me that."
  - Apologize.
  - Do better next time...and practice if you need to



# How can I show my support to my loved one?

- Lead with love
- Find ways to express your support, directly or indirectly
- If you are struggling with your feelings, continue to support and find places to take your struggle away from your loved one





# I often hear other people making jokes about LGBTQ+ people. How should I respond?

- Be open and direct—with permission, of course
- Share your personal story—people might learn from your experience
- Prioritize safety – these are challenging times!



# Where can I get support?

- From both organizations, a free publication, available in English and Spanish
  - [pflag.org/supporting-your-lgbtq-grandchild](https://pflag.org/supporting-your-lgbtq-grandchild)
- From SAGE
  - SAGE National Elder Hotline: [Sageusa.org/hotline](https://Sageusa.org/hotline)
  - Best Practice Guides for Supporting LGBT Older Adults
    - [lgbtagingcenter.org/guides](https://lgbtagingcenter.org/guides)
  - I'm Coming Out: Coming Out as LGBT in Later Life
    - [lgbtagingcenter.org/comingoutlater](https://lgbtagingcenter.org/comingoutlater)
- From PFLAG National
  - PFLAG Connects: Grandparent Community
    - Learn more and sign up at [pflag.org/events/grandparent-community](https://pflag.org/events/grandparent-community)
  - Find a PFLAG chapter near you: [pflag.org/find](https://pflag.org/find)
  - Join the PFLAG National Online Community at [facebook.com/groups/pflagnational](https://facebook.com/groups/pflagnational)
  - Download a publication: [pflag.org/publications](https://pflag.org/publications)
  - For LGBTQ+ teens: [qchatspace.org](https://qchatspace.org)



# Time for your questions!



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# Contact us!



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