

Five Common Child Welfare Myths

False Messages Given to Kinship Caregivers Seeking Licensure and Placement of Children

#1



FALSE: DCPD will not place a child with kin if the caregiver is unable to support the child independently (without adoption or foster care subsidy payments).



TRUE: Law does not require the foster parent to be able to independently pay for the child without the DCF subsidy before licensure.

#2



FALSE: DCPD will not place a child with kin unless the current kin's home is a certain minimum size, or has some minimum number of bedrooms.



TRUE: Federal law does not include any restrictions on the physical space of a foster home.

#3



FALSE: DCPD will not place a child with kin if the kinship caregiver or another adult household member has past childhood abuse and neglect registry findings.



TRUE: Based on federal law and NJ regulations, past child abuse and neglect findings alone are not reasons to deny a resource-parent licensing application.

... TURN FOR MORE

#4



FALSE: DCPD will not place a child with kin unless the kinship caregiver has legal immigration status.



TRUE: Federal law does not include any requirements on prospective foster or adoptive parents' immigration status. States are not restricted to licensing only foster parents with legal immigration status.

The NJ Department of Children and Families Policy Manual allows the placement of a child with kinship caregivers who are undocumented immigrants or otherwise do not have permanent legal status in the USA when the placement is in the child's best interests. The Office of Licensing has the authority to approve a waiver of the home study requirement in the NJ Manual of Requirements for Resource Family Parents asking prospective foster or adoptive parents to provide documentation of a visa or citizenship.

#5



FALSE: There are restrictions on whether a child's birth parent can live with the kinship caregiver.



TRUE: Nothing in federal statute places restrictions on whether a child's birth parent can live with the kinship caregiver.

States can determine their own policies and regulations on whether a birth parent can move in with a kinship caregiver. Allowing a birth parent to move in with a kinship caregiver can help support reunification and reduce the trauma of removal.

For free legal advice, contact the LSNJLAWSM Toll-Free, Statewide Hotline

LSNJLAWhotline.org
1-888-LSNJ-LAW (1-888-576-5529)