December 31, 2018

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DEAR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF ADOPTION CHILD PLACING AGENCIES

ATTENTION: CHILD WELFARE SERVICES STAFF

SUBJECT: GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only

As a strategy within North Carolina’s Program Improvement Plan and in a continuous effort to evaluate and improve North Carolina’s Guardianship Assistance Program, educational materials have been developed for kinship caregivers, foster parents, child welfare professionals and other stakeholders. This program will be referred to as the Kinship Care and Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) to better reflect the intent and purpose of the program. KinGAP provides financial assistance for the care of children by kinship caregivers or foster parents who have assumed legal guardianship of eligible children in foster care.

North Carolina implemented guardianship assistance across the state in January 2017. Since that time, approximately 70 children have exited foster care to guardianship in which the guardian is receiving KinGAP payments. In partnership with UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work, educational resources have been developed to help kinship caregivers, foster parents and child welfare professionals better understand KinGAP and the eligibility criteria for the program. The goal is to bring more awareness to KinGAP and increase the number of children exiting foster care to guardianship who are eligible for guardianship assistance payments.

Please share these materials widely with kinship caregivers, foster parents, child welfare professionals, court personnel, and other stakeholders. The materials for kinship caregivers and foster parents will be posted on the Fostering NC website, www.fosteringnc.org, in early January.
If you have questions regarding KinGAP or the attached materials, please contact Erin Baluyot at (919) 527-6369 or erin.baluyot@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

Lisa T. Cauley
Deputy Director for Child Welfare
Division of Social Services

Cc:  Michael Becketts, Assistant Secretary for Human Services
     Kristin O’Connor, Section Chief, Policy and Programs
     Erin Baluyot, Adoption Services Interim Manager
     CWS Team Leaders

Attachments:

1. KinGAP FACT Sheet for Child Welfare Professionals
2. KinGAP Informational Flyer for Caregivers
3. KinGAP Comparison Chart for Caregivers

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