

Village for RI Foster and Adoptive Families and The Heart Tree Receive Grant for Caregivers 55+

The Village for RI Foster and Adoptive Families and The Heart Tree receive an RI OHA grant to reach kinship caregivers, 55+ and connect them with resources.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Village for RI Foster and Adoptive Families and The Heart Tree Receive Grant for Caregivers 55+



[The Village for RI Foster and Adoptive Families](#) (The Village) in collaboration with The Heart Tree announced today the awarding of a new grant through the RI Office of Healthy Aging (RIOHA).

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Our goal is to connect caregivers aged 55+ taking care of children to help with critical services, supports, and invaluable resources, plus connect them with the existing community of caregivers.”

Sue Babin

This grant is designed to reach out to a diverse community of kinship, grandparents and other caregivers, 55 years of age and older in Rhode Island, caring for a child(ren) under the age of 18, and to connect them with all supports and resources available to them.

The Village, since 2016, has supported the development and maintenance of a robust network of healthy, committed, and well-trained resource families. Referred to as kinship families, these consist of relatives and friends caring for children in RI needing out-of-home care, as in cases where they have been removed from their parent(s).

The Heart Tree, since 2021, has provided services to effectively connect with the Spanish-speaking community and to connect families in a culturally appropriate manner.

As foster and adoptive parents themselves, both organizations offer front-line, experienced support to kinship caregivers, who open their hearts and homes, but who need resources, equipment, and practical support in meeting their new parenting challenges, as well as in navigating the Family court system, the Department of Children Youth & Families (DCYF), and

various state agencies.

The plan for this new initiative is to outreach to grandparents and other caregivers over the age of 55, who may or may not be involved with DCYF, to provide them with information, resources and support to improve the well-being of children they are caring for. It includes a multi-faceted effort, in person and online activities, and incorporating traditional print broadcast, digital and social media communication and training. Also included are scheduled family events, informational meetings and exhibit tables at community festivals and events.

According to program director, Sue Babin, “our goal is to connect with existing and potential caregivers of children in as many ways and places as possible. We can help with critical services, supports, and provide easy access to invaluable resources, along with an organized community of other kinship and over 55+ caregivers in RI already in place.”

Lilliam Abreu, program coordinator for The Heart Tree adds, “with this grant we have the opportunity to reach out to and to provide the same practical assistance, tools and family activities for Spanish speaking foster families.”

To expand the outreach effort, The Village and The Heart Tree plan to collaborate with such community partners as RI Coalition for Children, The Point, YMCA's, Family Care Community Partnerships, RIPIN, Families and the Family Advisory Council of DCYF, Progreso Latino and others to enlist the best strategies, and their constituents and ask members to share information with constituents and members to reach out to other families.

Program planning and activities begin June 15, 2022; the scheduled date of service completion is September 23, 2023. For further information about the grant, as well as resources or assistance for grandparents and older kinship caregivers (55+), please call (English), 401.481.5483, visit: RIVillage.org or email admin@rivillage.org. For information in Spanish: 401.779.0770 or visit TheHeartTree.org.

- The Village for RI's Foster and Adoptive Families

The Village incorporated in March 2016 as RI's only foster/adoptive family founded and governed support organization. The Mission of The Village is to contribute to the development and maintenance of a robust network of healthy, committed, and well-trained resource families for children needing out of home care.

- The Heart Tree

The purpose of this organization is to help Spanish speaking foster, adoptive and kinship families through support groups, mentoring, resources, education, and guidance. We provide education, coaching and training courses for this underserved population, cultural competence, and rendering service fully in Spanish. This organization's mission is to create alliances between Spanish speaking foster, adoptive and kinship families.

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