



Annotated Example: **Family Finding Connections Log**

Placement with kin can help children experience [more stability and stronger connections to their family, community, and culture](#) while in out-of-home care. If a removal does occur, agency staff can increase the likelihood that a child is cared for by kin in their initial placement by beginning to document information about possible kin connections early in an investigation. If a child is not placed with kin initially, creating a comprehensive list of connections can widen the child's support network and enable staff to build on earlier kin search and engagement efforts later.

The GPL created this annotated and adapted version of the Family Finding Connections Log for other jurisdictions to learn from and use. The tool was originally developed by ChildNet, the community-based care lead agency in Broward County, Florida, with support from the GPL.

This tool provides a single, centralized location for staff to record key information about a child's relational network throughout the life of the case. The Family Finding Connections Log prompts staff to ask about a wide range of potential relationships, including paternal family, sibling parents, and fictive kin relationships. Staff can reference and add to this tool during case planning or hand-off meetings as well as during conversations with parents, children, and family members. This tool also helps staff preserve and share information across case hand-offs. The following pages include ideas on how to introduce and use a Family Finding Connections Log and a fictionalized example of what it could look like for staff to use this tool in practice.

[Download a copy of the Family Finding Connections Log](#)

“The log can be really helpful for both our staff and families. A lot of families will say ‘We don’t have anyone,’ but then their answers change when staff get specific. Introducing the log showed staff that making kin placements is a top priority for us.”

*- Sheryl Williams,
Program Officer of Case
Management & Adoptions at
ChildNet, Broward County, Florida*



FAMILY FINDING CONNECTIONS LOG			
Child(ren)'s Name(s) and Age(s): _____			
Case ID: _____			
CONTACTS			
Relationship to Child(ren)	Name	Address and Phone Number	Brief Notes (e.g., why not pursued / placed, other support roles to play for child/family, follow-up touchpoints, etc.)
MATERNAL FAMILY			
<i>Mother</i>			
Maternal Grandmother			
Maternal Grandfather			
Maternal Aunt			
Maternal Uncle			
Maternal Cousin			
Maternal Other:			
Maternal Other:			
PATERNAL FAMILY (Cut and paste for multiple fathers)			
<i>Father of:</i>			
Paternal Grandmother			
Paternal Grandfather			
Paternal Aunt			
Paternal Uncle			
Paternal Cousin			
Paternal Other:			
Paternal Other:			
OTHER FAMILY			
Adult Sibling			
Other family:			
Other family:			
FICTIVE KIN			
Stepparent			
Parent of Half-Sibling			
Godparent			
Neighbor			
Church Member			
School Connection			
Family Friend			
Parent of Child's Friend			
Other:			
Other:			

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5

6

1. Listing many relationships encourages staff to explore a broad range of potential placement options *and* build a network of support for the child(ren) – rather than just identifying a single placement option.

2. This list format may be easier and faster for staff to use than genogram tools or software, which may be more complicated or feel intimidating.

3. Sometimes, a child's paternal side may not be explored as deeply as their maternal side. These prompts can encourage more comprehensive kin searches up front and be used as a guide during conversations with parents.

4. This tool prompts staff to ask about a range of fictive kin, including godparents, coaches,

friends' parents, or neighbors. This is especially important for teens, who may have strong relationships with supportive but unrelated adults.

5. Staff can add brief notes about the nature of each relationship. This could include potential barriers to placement, when to follow-up, or other ways that individual could play a role in the child's life beyond placement, such as providing respite care for a potential caregiver, helping with transportation, or providing academic support.

6. This information can be handed off to staff throughout a case – from initial investigative staff to ongoing case workers – to continue building and reaching out to connections, with a goal of eventual kin placement.

Tips for Introducing a Family Finding Connections Log

- **Before using the log, solicit feedback from staff and managers on how it may enhance existing kin search practices.** Consider: How is information on kin connections currently documented and shared? How might a tool like this strengthen kin search efforts and case hand offs? Are there any relationship types missing from this list?
- **Collaborate with staff to establish clear protocols and processes for use.** Consider: Who will be responsible for initiating the log? Where will the document be saved so everyone has access? How will the document be updated over time? How will information be handed off to subsequent case workers?
- **Pair the introduction with applied training and discussion.** Work with staff to practice having conversations about extended family and fictive kin relationships listed on the log by asking questions like, “Who was at the child’s last birthday party?” or “Who do you sit by at church?” For more ideas, download our [Family Conversation Guide](#).

Below is a *fictionalized example* of how staff may use a Family Finding Connections Log in practice. Note that this is only one illustrative example, and agencies can adapt this tool to meet their specific needs and internal processes.

FICTIONALIZED EXAMPLE

Child(ren)’s Name(s): Anthony Williams (age 10, male, 4th grade)			
Jamie Williams (age 12, male, 6th grade)			Case ID:123456789
Contacts			
Relationship to Child(ren)	Name	Address and Phone Number	Brief Notes (e.g., why not pursued/placed, other support roles to play for child/family, follow-up touch points, etc.)
MATERNAL FAMILY			
Mother of: Anthony & Jamie	Brianna Jones	123 Walnut Ave. (555) 121-9876	
Maternal Grandmother	Clara Jones	234 Cherry St. (555) 232-8765	Potential placement resource: Mobility issues prevent driving. Happy to have kids spend the night and possibly serve as placement option if her son can support. Has one extra bedroom.
Maternal Grandfather	deceased		
Maternal Aunt	Sheila Jones	345 Cedar Ave. (555) 777-9440	Recovering from major surgery. Can’t take children but could visit 1x week. (Follow-up in June.)

Maternal Aunt	Ebony Jones	456 Oak St. (555) 454-6543	Potential placement resource: Lives out of state (30 min away) and had a falling out with Brianna 5 years ago due to substance use concerns. Interested in reconnecting with children, but not sure about Brianna's feelings. Would be happy to serve as a placement resource if allowed. Has an extra bedroom, just not sure about how children would get to school. <i>(Follow up with Brianna about this relationship.)</i>
Maternal Uncle	Henry Jones	234 Cherry St. (555) 565-5432	Potential placement resource: Lives with mother, helps out. Not currently employed, has prior drug offense conviction from 15 years ago. Has a great relationship with the children.
Maternal Other: Great Aunt	Tina Wilson	678 Fir Ave. (555) 676-4321	Support role: Has 5 young children, willing to have Anthony and Jamie over to play. <i>(Follow up to schedule.)</i>
Maternal Other: Cousin	Jasmine Brown	789 Willow Ct. (555) 787-3219	Support role: Babysat children during the summer when they were younger, good relationship. Taking community college courses and working, but willing to help with driving, homework tutoring or hanging out on weekends.
PATERNAL FAMILY (Cut and paste for multiple fathers)			
Father of: Anthony & Jamie	Tony Williams	789 Elm St. (555) 989-2198	Support role: Works 2 jobs, lives with roommates in an apartment that doesn't allow children. Wants new housing but struggling to find it. <i>(Connect Tony with housing navigator.)</i>
Paternal Grandmother	deceased		
Paternal Grandfather	Marlon Williams	332 Chestnut Pl. (555) 878-1987	Support role: In a care facility, not able to care for children, but would welcome visits from them, phone calls.
Paternal Aunt	Misty Smith	443 Pine Ave. (555) 767-9876	Very good relationship with the children, not in a stable job right now. <i>(Check back in July.)</i>
Paternal Cousin	Leon Nelson	339 Spruce St. (555) 656-8765	Has a spare bedroom but currently used by another extended family member. <i>(Check back in October.)</i>
Paternal Other: Great Aunt	Leticia Owen	665 Locust St. (555) 545-7654	Potential placement resource: Maternal aunt of Tony Williams, helped raise Tony after his mother passed away. Has a good relationship with the children and has 3 extra bedrooms in her home. Worried about whether she has the energy and support to raise two boys for an extended amount of time but is willing to serve as a placement resource.

FICTIVE KIN			
Neighbor	Robert Schwin	125 Walnut St. (555) 434-6543	Neighbor of Brianna Jones for 10 years.
Neighbor	Valerie Weston	783 Elm St. (555) 323-5432	Support role: Lives near Tony Williams. Anthony and Jamie help walk her dog. Happy to pick them up from school.
Church Member	Lisa Monroe	899 Maple St. (555) 219-2084	Support role: Taught Anthony and Jamie in Sunday School for several years. Happy to drive them to church, take them back-to-school shopping.
School Connection	Xavier Johnston	(555) 889-3219	Support role: Biology teacher at Jamie's school. Says Jamie will often eat lunch in her classroom, happy to help with extra tutoring, or a place to stay after school.
Family Friend	Sonia Taylor	(555) 778-2198	Friends with Brianna Jones for many years. Has a child the same age as Anthony. Often celebrate birthdays together.
Family Friend	Maria Small	(555) 667-1987	Brianna Jones' friend. Has two children, was busy during the initial phone call, said she would call back but hasn't. <i>(Follow up in 1 week, May)</i>
Family Friend	James Franklin	(555) 556-9876	Support role: Grew up with Tony Williams, visits with kids often, brings them birthday presents. Willing to help with overnight stays, transportation needs.
Godparent	Tina Louis	(555) 445-8765	Jamie's Godmother. Family members say she is friends with Brianna Jones from childhood but they've lost touch over the last years. <i>(Haven't been able to reach her - possible wrong number?)</i>
Stepparent	N/A		



The [Government Performance Lab](#), housed at the Taubman Center for State and Local Government at the Harvard Kennedy School, conducts research on how governments can improve the results they achieve for their citizens. An important part of this research model involves providing hands-on technical assistance to state and local governments. Through this involvement, we gain insights into the barriers that governments face and the solutions that can overcome these barriers. By engaging current students and recent graduates in this effort, we are also able to provide experiential learning.

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