

Evaluation Plan for Kinship Center Home Study Groups

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# Executive Report

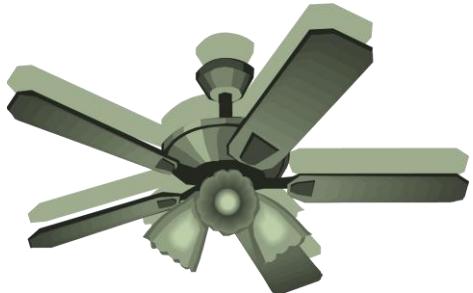
Evaluation of *Pathways to Permanence*,

Attachment and Adoptive Families

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Prepared for the Kinship Center

by Amanda Westman,  
Ceiling Fan Consulting



## Evaluation Purpose

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The conclusions of this evaluation will assist Kinship Center in making decisions regarding the Home Study Groups and *Pathways to Permanence* curriculum. Improving the already-successful program could create more stable, permanent homes for children in foster care.

Children who have been neglected and suffered the loss of a caregiver often suffer from disrupted attachment (Hage, 2000). In order to develop a new bond with an adoptive parent, children must be guided through a healing process. The success of this process is linked to the adoption's success or failure (Wagner, 1993).

Kinship Center teaches prospective adoptive parents how to recognize and respond to attachment disorders. In addition, case workers observe families and provide support during the concurrent foster/adoption process. The cost of training in commitment of both time and financial resources requires an evaluation process to identify areas that could be improved.

## Evaluation Process

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Following the Four Levels suggested in Kirkpatrick's *Evaluating Training Programs* (2005), Ceiling Fan Consulting will collect data related to the responses, learning, change in behavior, and results of sessions two and five of the *Pathways to Permanence* curriculum, both of which address building attachment and overcoming attachment disorders.

Data collected will include surveys after each training session and evaluations completed by case workers during home visits. The evaluation data will be collected entirely with physical media (paper and pencil) rather than electronically due to technology limitations. Ceiling Fan Consulting will use spreadsheets to tabulate and analyze the data, creating reports that will be disseminated both electronically and on paper to appropriate parties.

Results of the home study surveys will be compared with results of training session evaluations. A positive correlation would indicate that the training sessions successfully teach adoptive parents how to encourage attachment, while a neutral or negative correlation would highlight a need for changes to the training program.

Due to the variable nature of adoption timelines, complete data will not be available at consistent intervals. Therefore, annual reports will include results that have been collected so far, with the understanding that not all participants in a particular training session be analyzed at once.

## Key Findings

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Upon completion of the evaluation, Ceiling Fan Consulting expects to find ways to improve the training.

Findings may include the following:

- Value and effectiveness of training techniques used in sessions two and five.
- Common misunderstandings and areas of difficulty.

## Recommendations

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Upon completion of the evaluation process, Ceiling Fan Consulting will be able to recommend specific steps to improve the training and support process.

Recommendations may include the following:

- Teaching methods that will reach a more diverse group of potential adoptive parents.
- Additional topics that will increase understanding of key issues.
- Improved class procedures that will allow for greater efficiency during training sessions.
- Techniques that case workers can use to identify and support families when disrupted attachment is an issue of concern.



## Timeline

	<b>Evaluation Plan</b>	<b>03/20/14</b>	<b>04/03/14</b>
	Draft and Refine Evaluation Plan	03/20/14	03/27/14
	Develop Evaluation Instruments	03/28/14	03/31/14
	Deliver Evaluation Instruments	04/01/14	04/03/14
	<b>Home Study Group Session 2</b>	<b>04/10/14</b>	<b>04/16/14</b>
	Session 2	04/10/14	04/10/14
	Analyze Evaluations	04/11/14	04/11/14
	Create Facilitator Reports	04/14/14	04/15/14
	Deliver Facilitator Reports	04/16/14	04/16/14
	<b>Home Study Group Session 5</b>	<b>05/01/14</b>	<b>05/07/14</b>
	Session 5	05/01/14	05/01/14
	Analyze Evaluations	05/02/14	05/02/14
	Create Facilitator Reports	05/05/14	05/06/14
	Deliver Facilitator Reports	05/07/14	05/07/14
	<b>Home Visits</b>	<b>07/03/14</b>	<b>05/04/15</b>
	Placement	07/03/14	07/03/14
	2 Week	07/17/14	07/17/14
	3 Month	10/03/14	10/03/14
	6 Month	01/02/15	01/02/15
	Adoption Finalization	02/02/15	02/02/15
	Post Finalization	05/01/15	05/01/15
	Deliver Home Visit Summary	05/04/15	05/04/15
	<b>2013 Annual Report</b>	<b>05/01/14</b>	<b>05/06/14</b>
	<b>2014 Annual Report</b>	<b>05/01/15</b>	<b>05/06/15</b>

## Gantt Chart

Task Name	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q1			Q2		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
1																		
2	■ Evaluation Plan				■ Evaluation Plan													
3	Draft and Refine Evaluation Plan				■ Draft and Refine Evaluation Plan													
4	Develop Evaluation Instruments				■ Develop Evaluation Instruments													
5	Deliver Evaluation Instruments				■ Deliver Evaluation Instruments													
6	■ Home Study Group Session 2				■ Home Study Group Session 2													
7	Session 2				■ Session 2													
8	Analyze Evaluations				■ Analyze Evaluations													
9	Create Facilitator Reports				■ Create Facilitator Reports													
10	Deliver Facilitator Reports				■ Deliver Facilitator Reports													
11	■ Home Study Group Session 5				■ Home Study Group Session 5													
12	Session 5				■ Session 5													
13	Analyze Evaluations				■ Analyze Evaluations													
14	Create Facilitator Reports				■ Create Facilitator Reports													
15	Deliver Facilitator Reports				■ Deliver Facilitator Reports													
16	■ Home Visits															■ Home Visits		
17	Placement						■ Placement											
18	2 Week						■ 2 Week											
19	3 Month							■ 3 Month										
20	6 Month								■ 6 Month									
21	Adoption Finalization									■ Adoption Finalization								
22	Post Finalization										■ Post Finalization							
23	Deliver Home Visit Summary											■ Deliver Home						
24	2013 Annual Report						■ 2013 Annual Report											
25	2014 Annual Report											■ 2014 Annual						

## Audience and Context

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The Kinship Center in Salinas, California, provides training and services for individuals and couples who wish to adopt children through the foster care system. Among the many requirements for certification as a foster/adoptive home is a series of 8 weekly 3-hour Home Study Group sessions that teach parents about issues unique to adoption and foster care.

The sessions were developed by the Kinship Center and are facilitated by a team of social workers using a variety of formats, including lecture, discussion, and videos. Participants are given 4-inch binders with sections that include slideshow handouts and additional readings for each session.

This evaluation focuses on sessions two and six.

## Assumptions

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As a participant in this course, unaware of the legal and political issues surrounding the training, I must make several assumptions. Because I do not have a professional relationship with the course developers and trainers, I cannot question their methods or monopolize their time seeking information for a school project. Therefore, I have chosen to assert the following assumptions, acknowledging that any inaccuracies will require changes to the evaluation plan.

Assumption	Rationale
Legal requirements and/or best practices indicate that successful course completion is determined by attendance hours rather than by demonstration of understanding.	I have been required to sign a roster each week, and my case worker has indicated that I would be required to make up any missed classes, but no mention has been made of an objective assessment. All participants are required to complete a home study, which will reflect but not measure knowledge of concepts taught in the class.
The Kinship Center knows that evaluation has a place in training, but results of current surveys are not tabulated or used to inform program-wide decision making.	Current evaluation forms are not targeted toward this specific instructional product. Participants are given a generic tool that could be used in a workplace training setting.
Written evaluation comments are currently reviewed by trainers and used as formative assessment tools.	Trainers frequently begin sessions by responding to questions or comments from the previous week's survey.
Modification of the evaluation process will require more time during the sessions, but the training schedule is flexible enough to withstand this adjustment.	The trainers have shown themselves able to adjust the pace of the content to match available time.

## Data Collection Instruments

The evaluation instruments in appendices A and B gather information for both levels 1 and 2 of Kirkpatrick's Four Levels (2005).

Level	Items Included	Instrument(s)
1	Participant Response to Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confidence in personal understanding of the topic.</li> <li>Perception of the topic's value.</li> <li>Facilitator effectiveness.</li> <li>Location quality.</li> <li>Space for written comments.</li> </ul>	Appendices A and B, Training Session Evaluations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likert scale questions at the top of each week's evaluation form.</li> <li>Open comments section at the bottom of each week's evaluation form.</li> </ul>
2	Application of Learning	Appendices A and B, Session Evaluations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three short questions with space for written responses on each week's evaluation form.</li> </ul>
3	Observation of Behaviors that Promote Attachment	Appendix C, In-Home Survey. Checklist and comment form
4	Reports and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appendix D, Session Evaluation Rubrics</li> <li>Appendix E, Session Evaluation Analysis Spreadsheet</li> <li>Appendix F, Facilitators' Reports</li> <li>Appendix G, Annual Report</li> <li>Executive Summary, pages 2-3 of this document.</li> </ul>

## Data Collection Procedures

### Training Session Evaluation:

Valid analysis of evaluation results require that several items be taken under consideration.

First, evaluation instruments must be given, completed, and returned during the class session in order to achieve a 100% response rate. In addition, evaluation instruments should be short, direct, and easy to understand so that participants will fully engage and give honest responses.

Before handing out the survey (Appendices A and B), the facilitator should explain how the results will be used and thank participants for filling it out completely.

Surveys should be handed out 20-25 minutes before the end of each session, with the announcement that participants will have 10 minutes to finish before the group reconvenes for last thoughts and a preview of next week's session. Couples may choose to complete one survey together to allow enhanced discussion and reflection. The survey form asks participants to hand the completed sheet to a facilitator, so Kinship Center employees should circulate and collect forms as they are completed. This may also be an opportunity to answer questions and note common misunderstandings.

Survey forms should be collected and analyzed in time to make any necessary changes to the following week's session.

#### In-home survey:

Evaluating a change in behavior poses several difficulties, but the case worker support protocol that is already used by the Kinship Center provides solutions with only a few minor adjustments. This form is to be used by the case worker during home visits, which are already part of the placement and support process.

Participants must have time to practice their behavior changes, so the in-home survey allows the case worker to track progress over the course of the adoption process, which lasts at least 6 months for most families. Repeated visits allow multiple opportunities to observe.

The home visits serve as formative rather than summative evaluation, highlighting areas in which additional support would improve outcomes for the entire family. Results will be most accurate if the case worker focuses on natural conversations during the visit, recording observations on the form immediately after leaving the home so that parents feel free to be honest about their needs without the distraction of a rubric.

Every family and child is different, so efforts to control for external factors should be carefully applied. Because the case worker might not observe every behavior on every visit, a section is provided for a "gut check," with the reminder that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." If the case worker has reason to believe that the family is making progress toward healthy attachment, then he or she may indicate so in the final row of the home survey chart.

Foster care and adoption placement follows a variable timeline, so data from each family in the Home Study Group will not be available at a predictable point. Therefore, case workers should collect data from each family for annual analysis. If the Home Study Group curriculum changes significantly, then data from each course should be analyzed separately.

## Analysis and Reporting

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All data will be tallied and entered into a spreadsheet for analysis, with written responses quantified using the rubrics in Appendix D. Numbers will be converted into percentages for ease of comparison. A sample spreadsheet with hypothetical data is shown in Appendix E.

The Facilitators' Report should include data pertinent to training delivery and development, including average responses for each question, notable comments, and all questions. This data should be delivered in brief form 5 days after the session so that any misconceptions or incomplete understandings can be corrected at the next week's session. A sample Facilitators' Report is in Appendix F.

Upon completion of the In-Home Survey, responses should be tabulated and compared to the adoptive parents' session evaluation results. Possible outcomes are discussed in Table 1.

Table 1, Possible Data Outcomes

Outcome	Explanation	Suggested Response
Positive Correlation	Participants' scores can be used to predict the results of in-home surveys; parents who score well on session evaluations show progress toward attachment.	Aside from eliminating redundancies in the training course, no major action is necessary.
Neutral Correlation	Participants' scores are only weakly connected to the results of the in-home survey.	This result would show that the training sessions are not very useful. Instructional design professionals should meet with the trainers and subject matter experts to redesign these sessions for maximum effect.
Negative Correlation	Participants scores are inverse to the results of the in-home survey; participants with high scores struggle with attachment, or participants with lower scores make positive progress	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interview the case worker to determine any external factors, such as exceptionally difficult circumstances.</li> <li>2. Determine what support the family has received between training and placement. If common themes emerge, suggest those interventions for incorporation into training so that all families can benefit.</li> </ol>

The Annual Report will be assembled yearly in May using the previous years' data. This report should include summaries of all collected data, key findings, and recommendations. The report should be made available to all Kinship Center employees, funding providers, and any other government agencies as required by law. Please note that government agencies may require additional information. A sample Annual Report is in Appendix G.

## References

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Hage, D. (2000, November). Parenting with pizazz: Consequences of lack of early attachment. Paper presented at the Annual APC Adoption Conference, New York City, New York.

Kinship Center. (N.D.). *Pathways to permanence* [Educational Materials]. Salinas, CA: Seneca Family of Agencies.

Kirkpatrick, D. L., & Kirkpatrick, J. D. (2005). *Evaluating training programs: The four levels*. (3rd ed.). Williston, VT: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Wagner, V. (1993). *Attachment disorder: Children who can't trust*. Alta Vista Magazine. Alta Vista: McClatchy News Service.

## Appendix A, Evaluation Instrument for Session Two.

<b>Session Two Evaluation</b> <b>Thank you for completing this survey. Your feedback will help us clarify the ideas and improve future sessions. Please hand this survey to a session facilitator before you leave.</b>		
<b>Objective:</b> Parents understand the power of attachment in child development.	<b>Confidence:</b> (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high) How well do you understand this topic?	<b>Value:</b> (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high) How important is this topic?
<b>Objective:</b> Parents understand attachment cycles.	<b>Confidence:</b> (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high) How well do you understand this topic?	<b>Value:</b> (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high) How important is this topic?
<b>Facilitator Quality:</b> Did the facilitators communicate clearly and effectively?		(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
<b>Location:</b> Does this building meet the needs of all participants?		(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)

**Questions:**

- 1. What does healthy attachment look like?**
- 2. What characteristics are common in children with disrupted attachment?**
- 3. What can you do to support a child whose attachment has been disrupted?**

**Comments:**

Helpful comments include your reactions to the topics, summaries of big ideas, specific useful details, questions, and suggestions to improve this session.

Your name:

## Appendix B, Evaluation Instrument for Session Five.

### Session Five Evaluation

Thank you for completing this survey. Your feedback will help us clarify the ideas and improve future sessions. Please hand this survey to a session facilitator before you leave.

<b>Objective:</b> Parents understand the importance of “claiming” a child.	<b>Confidence:</b> (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high) How well do you understand this topic?	<b>Value:</b> (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high) How important is this topic?
<b>Objective:</b> Parents know specific techniques and general behaviors that give children a sense of belonging. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Moving children thoughtfully</li><li>• Sensory memories</li></ul>	<b>Confidence:</b> (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high) How well do you understand this topic?	<b>Value:</b> (low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high) How important is this topic?
<b>Facilitator Quality:</b> Did the facilitators communicate clearly and effectively?		(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)
<b>Location:</b> Does this building meet the needs of all participants?		(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)

#### Questions:

1. **What does it mean to “claim” a child?**

2. **How can you claim your child?**

#### Comments:

Helpful comments include your reactions to the topics, summaries of big ideas, specific useful details, questions, and suggestions to improve this session.

Your name:

## Appendix C, In-Home Survey

Parent Name(s)					
Child Name(s)	Initial Visit	3 Months	6 Months	Finalization	3 Months after finalization
Visit Date					
Parent Attitudes:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refers to child using possessive pronouns (my son, my daughter).</li> <li>• Uses familial terms without adjectives (son, daughter, <i>not</i> “adopted son” or “foster daughter”)</li> <li>• Establishes appropriate routines and rituals</li> </ul>	N/A – N – S – A				
Signs of attachment:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eye contact; reaction to facial expressions</li> <li>• Seeks parent for comfort; allows parent to soothe</li> <li>• Physical contact; snuggling</li> </ul>	N/A – N – S – A				
Signs of disruption:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protest</li> <li>• Despair</li> <li>• Detachment</li> </ul>	N/A – N – S – A				
Overall Assessment					
<i>The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.</i>					

N/A = not applicable or not observed

S = Sometimes

N = Never or almost never

A = Always or almost always

## Appendix D, Level 2 Response Evaluation Rubrics

### Session 2 Level 2 Response Evaluation Rubric

<b>Question 1</b> Assign one point for each item mentioned. 4 points possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two-way emotional connection</li><li>• Carried over time</li><li>• Brings calm and pleasure to the child</li><li>• Presence of a parent reduces the child's stress</li></ul>	
<b>Question 2</b> Assign one point for each item mentioned. 5 points possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child cannot remain calm; remains vigilant</li><li>• Child gives up or self-soothes</li><li>• No trust develops</li><li>• Cannot regulate responses</li><li>• Gives up</li></ul>	
<b>Question 3</b> Assign one point for each item mentioned. 3 points possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be consistent</li><li>• Tell the truth</li><li>• Tell child what will happen</li></ul>	

### Session 5 Level 2 Response Evaluation Rubric

<b>Question 1</b> Assign one point for each item mentioned. 4 points possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conscious act (deliberately calling the child "mine"), avoiding adjectives ("my foster son," "my adopted daughter").</li><li>• Not incremental (starts the first day).</li><li>• Gives the child a sense of belonging.</li></ul>	
<b>Question 2</b> Assign one point for each item mentioned. 3 points possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoiding adjectives ("my foster son," "my adopted daughter").</li><li>• Establishing routines and rituals.</li><li>• Making moves carefully and at an appropriate pace for the child.</li></ul>	

## Appendix E, Sample Session Evaluation Analysis Spreadsheet

Participants 20-69 have been hidden to save space.

Participant ID	Session 2										Session 5									
	Objective 1 Confidence	Objective 1 Value	Objective 2 Confidence	Objective 2 Value	Facilitator Quality	Location	Question 1 Score	Question 2 Score	Question 3 Score	Comments	Objective 1 Confidence	Objective 1 Value	Objective 2 Confidence	Objective 2 Value	Facilitator Quality	Location	Question 1 Score	Question 2 Score	Comments	
1	3	2	3	5	2	5	3	3	3		4	4	5	5	3	4	4	2		
2	4	4	2	2	2	2	4	4	3		3	5	3	3	2	3	4	1		
3	2	3	4	5	3	3	2	2	3		2	5	4	4	3	3	2	1		
4	5	2	2	5	3	4	4	5	3		5	5	3	5	3	5	3	4	3	
5	4	3	2	5	3	2	4	4	3		1	5	4	2	4	4	4	1		
6	2	5	4	5	3	5	3	3	3		2	5	4	3	5	2	3	1		
7	5	1	2	5	3	4	2	2	3		2	3	2	5	2	5	2	2		
8	4	2	2	4	3	2	1	1	3		3	3	3	4	5	2	4	2		
9	5	2	2	4	4	1	2	2	2		5	2	1	5	3	2	4	3		
10	2	4	2	5	2	4	2	2	3		5	3	4	2	4	2	2	2		
11	2	4	1	5	5	5	1	1	3		2	2	3	5	2	5	1	2		
12	4	2	2	4	2	2	4	4	3		5	2	4	3	3	4	4	2		
13	4	4	2	5	2	2	2	5	3		2	4	3	4	5	5	4	2		
14	4	5	2	5	2	4	4	4	3		3	4	4	2	4	4	4	2		
15	2	3	2	5	5	4	3	5	3		3	2	2	3	3	1	3	2		
16	5	4	4	5	4	4	3	3	3		3	3	4	5	5	4	3	1		
17	4	2	2	4	5	2	4	4	3		2	3	2	4	3	3	4	2		
18	3	5	4	5	4	1	2	2	2		3	4	4	3	2	2	2	1		
19	5	4	2	5	1	4	4	4	3		5	5	5	5	2	3	4	1		
70	4	4	2	3	3	5	2	5	2		5	1	1	1	2	3	4	2		
71	4	4	2	1	3	5	2	5	3		1	4	4	3	4	4	4	2		
72	4	4	2	4	4	2	4	5	3		2	2	3	4	3	4	4	2		
73	2	5	5	4	3	2	5	2		2	3	5	3	5	2	3	2			
74	5	5	4	5	5	1	1	5	3		3	4	5	2	4	5	1	2		
75	4	3	2	2	3	4	1	1	1		5	2	2	2	3	5	2	1		
Average	3.6	3.3	2.8	4.1	3.3	3.3	2.8	3.5	2.5		3.0	3.6	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.3	3.4	1.7		
Percentage	72%	65%	56%	82%	66%	65%	69%	71%	83%		60%	71%	66%	65%	70%	66%	84%	58%		

## Appendix F, Training Facilitators' Report

### Session 2

Assessment Item		Average
Objective 1, Parents understand the power of attachment in child development.	Confidence 1 (low) – 5 (high)	72%
Objective 1, Parents understand the power of attachment in child development.	Value 1 (low) – 5 (high)	65%
Objective 2, Parents understand attachment cycles.	Confidence 1 (low) – 5 (high)	56%
Objective 2, Parents understand attachment cycles.	Value 1 (low) – 5 (high)	82%
Facilitator Quality, 1 (low) – 5 (high)		66%
Location, 1 (low) – 5 (high)		65%
Question 1, What does healthy attachment look like?		69%
Question 2, What characteristics are common in children with disrupted attachment?		71%
Question 3, What can you do to support a child whose attachment has been disrupted?		83%
Written Comments and Questions:		

### Session 5

Assessment Item		Average
Objective 1, Parents understand the power of attachment in child development.	Confidence 1 (low) – 5 (high)	60%
Objective 1, Parents understand the power of attachment in child development.	Value 1 (low) – 5 (high)	71%
Objective 2, Parents understand attachment cycles.	Confidence 1 (low) – 5 (high)	66%
Objective 2, Parents understand attachment cycles.	Value 1 (low) – 5 (high)	65%
Facilitator Quality, 1 (low) – 5 (high)		70%
Location, 1 (low) – 5 (high)		66%
Question 1, What does it mean to claim your child?		84%
Question 2, How can you claim your child?		58%
Written Comments and Questions:		

## Appendix G, Annual Report

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The annual report will begin with the Executive Summary found at the beginning of this document, with key results and recommendations completed using results of analysis.

### Overview

- Describe the number of participants for whom complete data is available.
- If any participants chose to stop working with Kinship Center before an adoption was finalized, briefly explain the reasons, especially if an attachment disorder was a factor.
- Detail the number of participants who are still in the adoption process so that decision makers can predict how much information might be available in the next annual report.

### Data and Key Findings

Describe the data outcomes, focusing on connections between the session evaluations and in-home surveys. “Table 1, Possible Data Outcomes” in the “Analysis and Reporting” section of this document provides an overview of correlations.

### Recommendations

The third column of Table 1 provides initial recommendations for each possible outcome.