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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## DCS promotes new manager for Kinship Navigator Program

**INDIANAPOLIS** (November 25, 2019) – The Indiana Department of Child Services is pleased to announce Karen Hayden-Sturgis as manager of the agency’s Kinship Navigator Program, which supports efforts to place children going into foster care with relatives.

“Kinship programs provide families and caregivers with critical information to support the children in their care during a critical time,” Hayden-Sturgis said. “My job is to identify gaps and address them so we can make connections for those families in communities, statewide.”

The Kinship Navigator Program piloted in May in northeast Indiana. The program focuses on developing a network of resources for formal and informal kinship families and assuring those services are easily accessible.

DCS leaders say Sturgis will help relative caregivers find the support they need to succeed.

“I have had the professional pleasure to work with Karen for many years and know her to be a champion for kids and for doing everything possible to keep them with their families,” said Angela Smith Grossman, DCS assistant deputy director of field operations. “Karen is definitely passionate about the kinship journey and the important role these caregivers play in the lives of children and their families.”

Hayden-Sturgis has worked for DCS for 25 years in several different roles. She currently lives in Frankfort with her family. She received her bachelor’s in education for IU-Kokomo and her master’s in social work from IUPUI.

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**About Indiana DCS:** *The Indiana Department of Child Services engages with families and collaborates with state, local and community partners to protect children from abuse and neglect and to provide child*



*Indiana children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities.*

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