

Last reviewed: September 2017

Intervention website: <https://keepforfamilies.org/>

GUIDEBOOK INTERVENTION INFORMATION SHEET

Keeping Foster and Kinship Carers Supported

Please note that in the ‘Intervention Summary’ table below ‘child age’, ‘level of need’, and ‘race and ethnicities’ information is **as evaluated in studies**. Information in other fields describes the intervention as **offered/supported by the intervention provider**.

| Intervention summary | |
|---|--|
| Description | Keeping Foster and Kinship Parents Supported (KEEP) is a parenting intervention for foster and kinship carers responsible for a child between the ages of 5 and 12 years old with behavioural difficulties. KEEP is delivered by two practitioners to groups of seven to 10 foster carers. Foster carers attend 16 weekly sessions where they learn practical methods for developing a positive relationship with the children in their care and managing difficult child behaviour. |
| Evidence rating | 2 |
| Cost rating | 2 |
| Child outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preventing child maltreatment<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Increased placement stability.• Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Improved behaviour.• Supporting children’s mental health and wellbeing<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Improved emotional wellbeing. |
| Child age (population characteristic) | 5 to 12 years old |
| Level of need (population characteristic) | Targeted Indicated |

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| Intervention summary | |
|--|--|
| Race and ethnicities (population characteristic) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asian British/Asian• Black• Black British/Black• Mixed ethnic background• White. |
| Type (model characteristic) | Group |
| Setting (model characteristic) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Centre• Home. |
| Workforce (model characteristic) | Experienced foster carers can facilitate sessions for caregivers |
| UK available? | No |
| UK tested? | Yes |

Model description

Keeping Foster and Kinship Parents Supported (also known as KEEP or KEEP Standard) is a parenting intervention for foster and kinship carers responsible for a child between the ages of 5 and 12 years with behavioural difficulties. KEEP aims to empower parents to be agents of change for the children in their care and ultimately decrease placement disruptions, increase permanency, and improve child outcomes.

KEEP is delivered by two practitioners to groups of 7 to 10 foster carers. Foster carers attend 16 weekly sessions where they learn practical methods for developing a positive relationship with the children in their care and managing difficult child behaviour.

Group leaders tailor KEEP's content to the specific challenges the group parents share in supporting their children's developmental needs. However, it is likely that the following topics will be covered during the first 14 weeks:

- Advice on the use of praise and positive reinforcement to encourage cooperation
- Strategies for monitoring and managing behaviour through incentives and sticker charts
- Effective methods for setting limits and implementing discipline

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- Ways of identifying positive and safe behaviours in advance of a difficult situation, such as establishing a healthy relationship with technology
- Strategies for avoiding power struggles
- Ideas for promoting school success and positive peer relationships
- Technique foster parents can use for managing their own stress.

Sessions 15 and 16 are reserved for reviewing earlier content and celebrating the parents' strengths and successes.

Throughout the intervention, parent learning is reinforced through group discussion, role-play activities, home practice assignments, and participate in individual discussions about their child's behaviour to help track progress and challenges.

Target population

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Age of child | 5 to 12 years old |
| Target population | Foster and kinship carers responsible for a child between the ages of 5 and 12 years old with behavioural difficulties. |

Please note that the information in this section on target population is as **offered/supported by the intervention provider**.



Theory of change

| Why | | Who | How | What | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| Science-based assumption | Science-based assumption | Science-based assumption | Intervention | Short-term outcomes | Medium-term outcomes | Long-term outcomes |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in care are in greater risk of exhibiting challenging behaviours and emotions • Challenging child behaviours are the primary reason for breakdowns in foster care placements • Poor placement stability increases the risk of poor outcomes for children in foster care. | <p>Ineffective parenting responses can inadvertently increase the frequency and intensity of challenging behaviours in children receiving foster care.</p> | <p>Foster and kinship carers responsible for a child between the ages of 5 and 12 years with behavioural difficulties often benefit from advice and support for managing challenging child behaviour.</p> | <p>Foster and kinship carers learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively with the children in their care • Promote positive parent–child interaction • Reinforce positive child behaviour through praise and rewards • Discourage challenging child behaviour through age-appropriate discipline. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers understand and implement effective parenting strategies • Carers experience less stress • Conflict within the home is reduced. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster carers experience greater satisfaction • Child behaviour improves. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children experience greater placement stability • Children experience increased wellbeing • Children are at less risk of poor outcomes in adolescence and adulthood. |



Implementation requirements

| | |
|---|--|
| Who is eligible? | Foster and kinship carers responsible for a child between the ages of 5 and 12 years with behavioural difficulties. |
| How is it delivered? | KEEP is delivered in 16 sessions of 1.5 hours' duration each by two practitioners to groups of seven to 10 foster carers. |
| What happens during the intervention? | <p>The primary aim of KEEP is to help foster and kinship carers learn effective strategies for managing unwanted child behaviour and emotional problems.</p> <p>These strategies include effective use of the 5:1 rule, meaning that carers should aim to positively reinforce the child at least five times for every one time they correct or discipline the child.</p> <p>The curriculum is heavily informed by social learning theory, but carers are helped to fit the techniques specifically to the child they are looking after.</p> <p>Carers are also given many opportunities to learn and practise non-harsh methods of discipline, including the use of time-out (Take a Break) and the removal of privileges.</p> <p>The facilitators use a mixed methods approach to delivering the content with a strong focus on carer participation.</p> |
| Who can deliver it? | The two practitioners who deliver this intervention are KEEP facilitators with qualifications in a relevant field such as psychology, medicine, nursing, social work, or counselling. |
| What are the training requirements? | Practitioners have 37 hours of intervention training. Booster training of practitioners is recommended. |
| How are practitioners supervised? | It is recommended that practitioners are supervised by one intervention developer supervisor (qualified to QCF 7/8 level) and one host-agency supervisor (qualified to QCF-6 level), with 37 hours of intervention training. |
| What are the systems for maintaining fidelity? | <p>Intervention fidelity is maintained through the following processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training manual • Other printed material • Video or DVD training • Face-to-face training • Fidelity monitoring • KEEP-Up sessions (twice a year). |



Implementation requirements (cont.)

| | |
|--|--|
| Is there a licensing requirement? | No |
| Contact details | <p>Websites: https://keepforfamilies.org/ www.oslc.org www.oslcdevelopments.org</p> <p>*Please note that this information may not be up to date. In this case, please visit the listed intervention website for up to date contact details.</p> |

Evidence summary

KEEP has preliminary evidence from two pre–post studies conducted in the UK and United States consistent with Foundations’ Level 2 evidence strength criteria.

The first study was conducted in the UK, observing statistically significant pre–post-intervention improvements in KEEP caregivers’ reports of problematic child behaviour, emotional wellbeing, symptoms of hyperactivity and peer problems. There was no comparison group, however.

The second study was conducted in the United States, observing statistically significant pre–post-intervention improvements in KEEP caregivers’ reports of problematic child behaviour and increased placement stability. There was no comparison group, however.

KEEP has preliminary evidence of improving a child outcome, but we cannot be confident that the intervention caused the improvement.



Search and review

| | Number of studies |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Identified in search | 9 |
| Studies reviewed | 4 |
| Meeting the L2 threshold | 2 |
| Meeting the L3 threshold | 0 |
| Contributing to the L4 threshold | 0 |
| Ineligible | 5 |

Individual study summary: Study 1

| Study 1 | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Study design | Pre–post study |
| Country | United Kingdom |
| Sample characteristics | 849 foster and kinship carers and 797 focus children aged 5 to 12 |
| Race, ethnicities, and nationalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82.3% of the children were White • 7.2% were Black British/Black Other • 3.9% were Asian British/Asian Other • 7.6% were of mixed heritage. |
| Population risk factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children were placed under the care of foster and kinship carers • For a majority of children, there were behavioural concerns • Children had had an average of 1.41 care placements. |
| Timing | Post-test |
| Child outcomes | Reduced child emotional and behavioural problems |



| Study 1 | |
|----------------|--|
| Other outcomes | Reduced disruptive parenting discipline styles |
| Study Rating | 2 |
| Citations | <p>Study 1a: Warburton, J. & Glynn, G. (2015) <i>NIS programme report: KEEP Keeping Foster and Kinship Carers Trained and Supported</i>. National Implementation Service.</p> <p>Study 1b: Roberts, R., Glynn, G. & Waterman, C. (2016) 'We know it works but does it last? The implementation of the KEEP foster and kinship carer training programme in England. <i>Adoption & Fostering</i>. 40 (3), 247–263.</p> |

Brief summary

Population characteristics

849 foster and kinship carers participated in the study. They have spent on average 6 years and 2 months as carers. 70.5% cared for the child jointly. 74.5% carers were not related to the child. 25.5% were kinship carers. Only 7.1% carers worked full-time and 13.6% worked part-time.

The majority indicated that the main carer was female (85.4%), 14.6% was male.

797 children participated in the study. They were on average 8 years 8 months old, and in the vast majority of cases there were behavioural concerns. They have had on average 1.41 placements in the past. 57.2% of the children and young people were boys. 82.3% of the children were White, 7.2% were Black British/Black Other, 3.9% were Asian British/Asian Other, and 7.6% were of mixed heritage.

Few children were expected to return to birth parents, but most were still having some form of contact with parents. The majority (82.4%) of adolescents were expected to remain in local authority foster care. 59.2% of the permanency plans for the younger children (particularly those placed with kin) included a special guardianship order (SGO) and 14.3% were expected to be adopted.

Study design

This study is a pre–post study, conducted in the UK. Study 1a included data between 2009 to December 2014, with a sample of 849 KEEP carers and 797 children who received the standard KEEP intervention. Study 1b included data between September 2009 and June 2014, with a sample of 892 carers and 646 children.



Measurement

Assessment took place at baseline and post-intervention (at the final group session or shortly afterwards). The study used the following measures:

- **Carer report** measures included the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and Parenting Scale (PS).
- **Administrative records** included information on children's placement stability at six-month follow-up.

Study retention

The study collected data at post-intervention, six-, and 12-month follow-up. However, the attrition rates at six- and 12-month follow-up are too high; outcomes at those time points do not meet our Level 2 criteria and therefore they are not reported here.

Post-intervention assessment

Study 1a – 64% (511) of the sample of children were retained for the SDQ, and 76% (606) for the Parenting Scale.

Study 1b – 64% (413) of the sample of children were retained on the SDQ and 70% (451) on the Parenting Scale.

Results

Data-analytic strategy

Matched pairs t-tests were used to statistically compare pre with post-intervention scores.

Findings

The study observed consistent, statistically significant benefits favouring KEEP children, including reduced child emotional and behavioural problems. Specifically KEEP children experienced a reduction in emotional problems, conduct problems, inattention/hyperactivity, and peer problems (study 1a). KEEP carers also reduced the use of disruptive discipline styles.

Carer-rated satisfaction was also above the expected level required by the developers to demonstrate fidelity to the intervention goals.

Limitations

The conclusions drawn from this study are limited by the fact it is a pre–post design with no comparison group.



Study 1a: Outcomes table

| Outcome | Measure | Effect size | Statistical significance | Number of participants | Measurement time point |
|--|---|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Child outcomes | | | | | |
| Child emotional and behavioural problems | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) – Total (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 511 | Post-intervention |
| Emotional problems | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 511 | Post-intervention |
| Conduct problems | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 511 | Post-intervention |
| Inattention/hyperactivity | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 511 | Post-intervention |
| Peer problems | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 511 | Post-intervention |



| Outcome | Measure | Effect size | Statistical significance | Number of participants | Measurement time point |
|------------------------------|---|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Prosocial Behaviour | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Carer report) | N/A | No | 511 | Post-intervention |
| Disruptive discipline styles | Parenting Scale (PS) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 606 | Post-intervention |
| Laxness | Parenting Scale (PS) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 606 | Post-intervention |
| Overreactivity | Parenting Scale (PS) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 606 | Post-intervention |
| Verbosity | Parenting Scale (PS) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 606 | Post-intervention |

Study 1b: Outcomes table

| Outcome | Measure | Effect size | Statistical significance | Number of participants | Measurement time point |
|--|---|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Child outcomes | | | | | |
| Child emotional and behavioural problems | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 413 | Post-intervention |



| Outcome | Measure | Effect size | Statistical significance | Number of participants | Measurement time point |
|---|--|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Placement stability | Administrative records | N/A | N/A | 328* | 6-month follow-up |
| Parent outcomes | | | | | |
| Disruptive discipline styles | Parenting Scale (PS) (Carer report) | N/A | Yes | 451 | Post-intervention |
| * The attrition was too high for the placement stability outcome to be able to draw any firm conclusions. | | | | | |

Individual study summary: Study 2

| Study 2 | |
|---|--|
| Study design | Pre–post study |
| Country | United States |
| Sample characteristics | 65 children aged 4 to 12 years old (average age 7 years 7 months) and their foster and kinship caregivers. |
| Race, ethnicities, and nationalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48% of children were Black • 32% were White • 17% were classified as other ethnic group • 3% were of unknown ethnicity. |
| Population risk factors | Children were placed under the care of foster and kinship carers. 39% had behavioural problems, scoring in the clinical range on the Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL). |
| Timing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 months post-intervention • 12 months post-intervention. |



| Study 2 | |
|----------------|---|
| Child outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced child behavioural problems Increased placement stability. |
| Other outcomes | None |
| Study Rating | 2 |
| Citation | Greeno, Elizabeth J., Mathew C. Uretsky, Bethany R. Lee, Jessica E. Moore, Richard P. Barth & Terry V. Shaw. (2016) Replication of the KEEP Foster and Kinship Parent Training program for youth with externalizing behaviors. <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i> . 61, 75–82. |

Brief summary

Population characteristics

75 foster and kinship caregivers were recruited to the study. Most were licensed state foster providers, while 35% were kinship providers. Participants had an average of 2.2 children in the home.

67% caregivers had cared for a total of one to four foster or kinship children ever in their home, with 42% indicating that the longest length of stay for a child placed in their home was more than 24 months.

Approximately half of the caregivers identified themselves as Black/African American (51%). The average age of caregivers was 50.4 years of age (Range 27–72, SD = 11).

The children in the sample were aged 4 to 12 years, with an average age of 7 years 7 months. 51% of children were boys. In terms of ethnicity, 48% of children were Black, 32% were White, 17% were classified as Other, and 3% were of unknown ethnicity.

Study design

This study is a pre–post study, conducted in the United States. The study included a sample of 65 foster and kinship caregivers who received the standard KEEP intervention.

Measurement

Assessments took place at baseline, 2 months post-intervention, and 12 months post-intervention.

- Carer report** measures included Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL), Parent Daily Report (PDR), and the Discipline and Supervision Measure. Data was collected at 2 months post-intervention.



- **Administrative measures** included data on permanency and placement stability. Data was collected at 12 months post-intervention.

Study retention

At baseline, 87% (65) of the caregivers were retained and completed baseline measures – retention for the post-test is calculated based on the baseline sample.

At post-test, 78% (51) of caregivers were retained. Among them, 60% (39) of caregivers were still actively caring for the children in question and completed the post-test questionnaires.

Results

Data-analytic strategy

A paired samples t-test was used to assess changes from baseline to post-test on continuous parent report measures (the PDR and Discipline and Supervision Measure). For the CBCL, the raw scores were categorised into three severity levels – normal, borderline, and clinical – and the proportion of these occurring across groups was analysed with a chi-square test. Chi-square analysis was also used for placement stability.

Findings

The study observed that KEEP children had significantly reduced child behavioural problems, and 12 months after the intervention, more children were considered stable in their out-of-home placements.

Limitations

The conclusions drawn from this study are limited by the fact it is a pre–post design with no comparison group.

Study 2: Outcomes table

| Outcome | Measure | Effect size | Statistical significance | Number of participants | Measurement time point |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Child outcomes | | | | | |
| Child emotional and behavioural problems | Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL) | N/A | Yes | 39 | Post-intervention |
| Placement stability | State administrative data | N/A | Yes | 57 | Post-intervention |



| Outcome | Measure | Effect size | Statistical significance | Number of participants | Measurement time point |
|--|--|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Parent outcomes | | | | | |
| Positive reinforcement and discipline techniques | The Discipline and Supervision Measure | N/A | No | 39 | Post-intervention |

Other studies

The following studies were identified for this intervention but did not count towards the intervention's overall evidence rating. An intervention receives the same rating as its most robust study or studies.

Chamberlain, P., Price, J., Leve, L.D., Laurent, H., Landsverk, J.A. & Reid, J.B. (2008) Prevention of behaviour problems for children in foster care: outcomes and mediation effects. *Prevention Science*. 9, 17-27.

Chamberlain, P., Price, J., Reid, J. & Landsverk, J. (2008) Cascading Implementation of a Foster and Kinship Parent Intervention. *Child Welfare*. 87 (5), 27-48.

Chamberlain, P., Moreland, S. & Reid, K. (1992) Enhanced services and stipends for foster parents: Effects on retention rates and outcomes for children. *Child Welfare*. 71 (5), 387-401.

DeGarmo, D.S., Chamberlain, P., Leve, L.D. & Price, J. (2009) Foster parent intervention engagement moderating child behavior problems and placement disruption. *Research on Social Work Practice*. 19 (4), 423-433.

Greeno, E. J., Lee, B. R., Uretsky, M. C., Moore, J. E., Barth, R. P. & Shaw, T. V. (2015) Effects of a foster parent training intervention on child behavior, caregiver stress, and parenting style. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*. 25 (6), 1991-2000.

Knibbs, S., Mollitor, C. & Bierman, R. (2016) *KEEP Standard evaluation research report: October 2016*.

Leathers, S. J., Spielfogel, J. E., McMeel, L. S. & Atkins, M. S. (2011) Use of a parent management training intervention with urban foster parents: A pilot study. *Children and Youth Services Review*. 33 (7), 1270-1279.

Price, J. M., Chamberlain, P., Landsverk, J., Reid, J., Leve, L. & Laurent, H. (2008) Effects of a foster parent training intervention on placement changes of children in foster care. *Child Maltreatment*. 13 (1), 64-75.



Price, J. M., Roesch, S. & Walsh, N. E. (2012) Effectiveness of the KEEP foster parent intervention during an implementation trial. *Children and Youth Services Review*. 34, 2487–2494.

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Note on provider involvement: This provider has agreed to Foundations' terms of reference (or the Early Intervention Foundation's terms of reference), and the assessment has been conducted and published with the full cooperation of the intervention provider.