

# The Impact of a Member-Led Virtual Support Group for Kinship Caregiver Well-Being

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**BACKGROUND:** Kinship caregivers experience increased isolation in their roles and poorer outcomes related to well-being. Kinship Caregivers Connect (KCC) is one of the first online, statewide support groups for kinship caregivers, providing a peer-led community for kinship caregivers throughout the State of Ohio since its founding in 2020.

## METHODS

1. Online open-ended questionnaire evaluating the usability and acceptability with a Participatory Action approach
2. Kinship caregivers (n= 66) who have attended at least one meeting
3. Coding using Grounded Theory, including two caregivers as coders

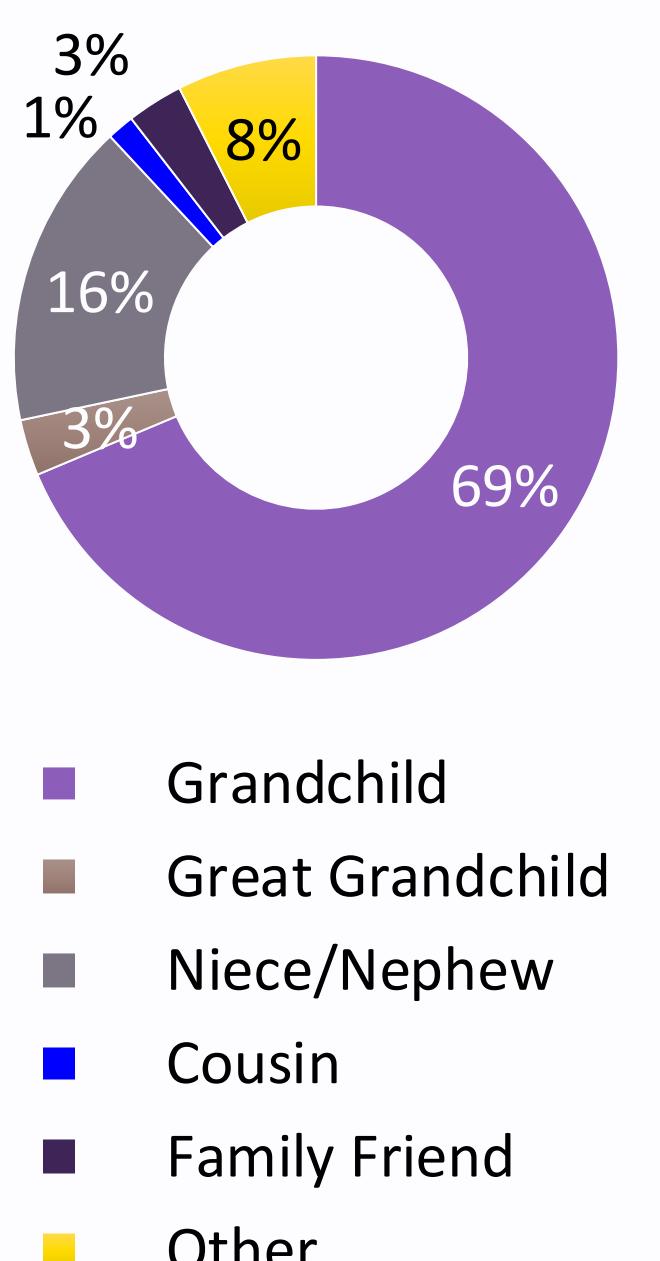


## RESULTS

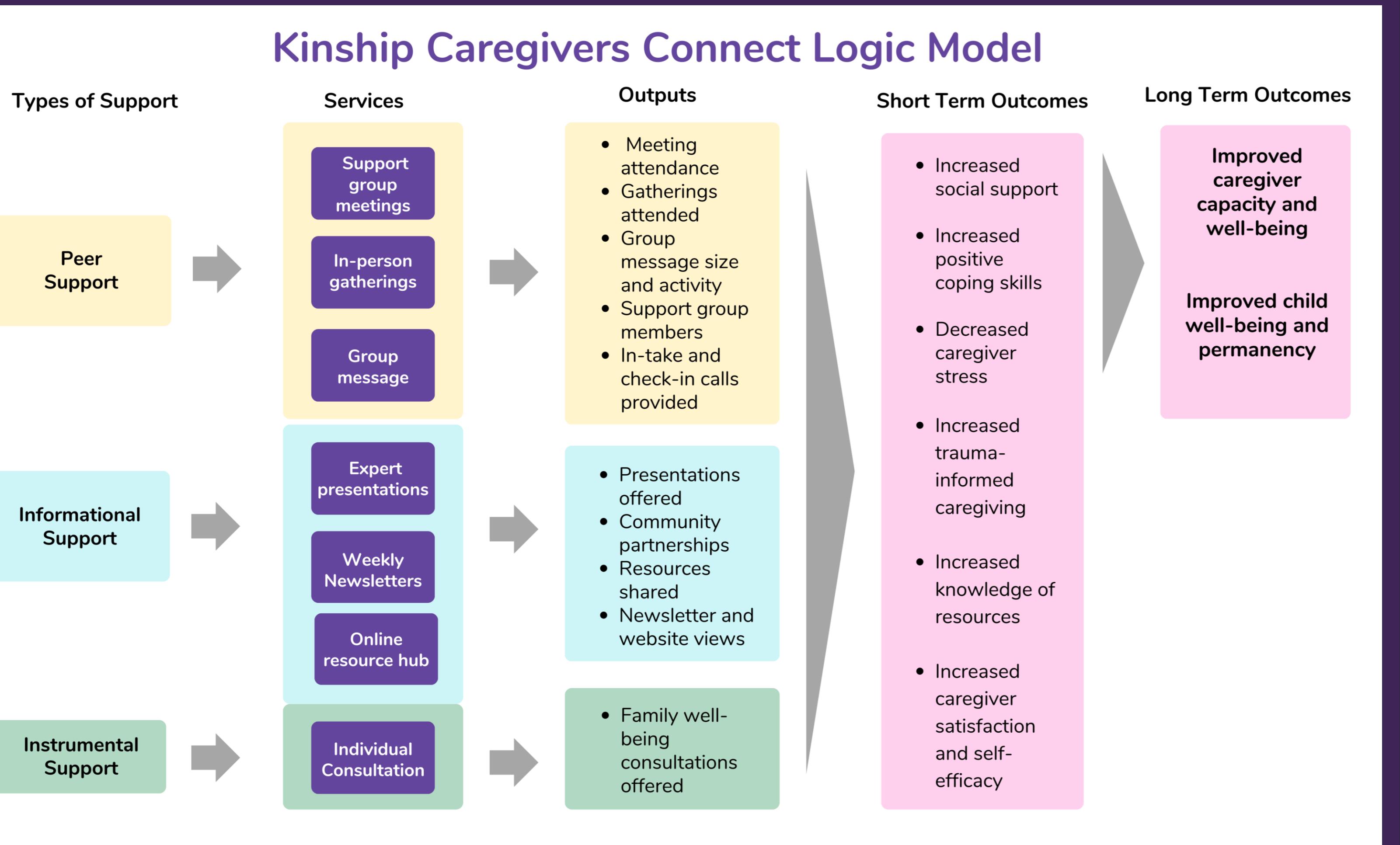
Table 1: Participant Demographics (n = 66)

Gender	
Male, %	3
Female, %	97
Race	
White, %	65.7
Black, %	24.8
Other/Unknown, %	3
Ethnicity	
Non-Hispanic, %	93.5
Hispanic, %	1.6
Other/Unknown, %	4.8
Caregiver Age (av.)	
Rural, %	33.3
Urban, %	20.6
Suburban, %	46

Fig 1 : Relationship to child in care (%)



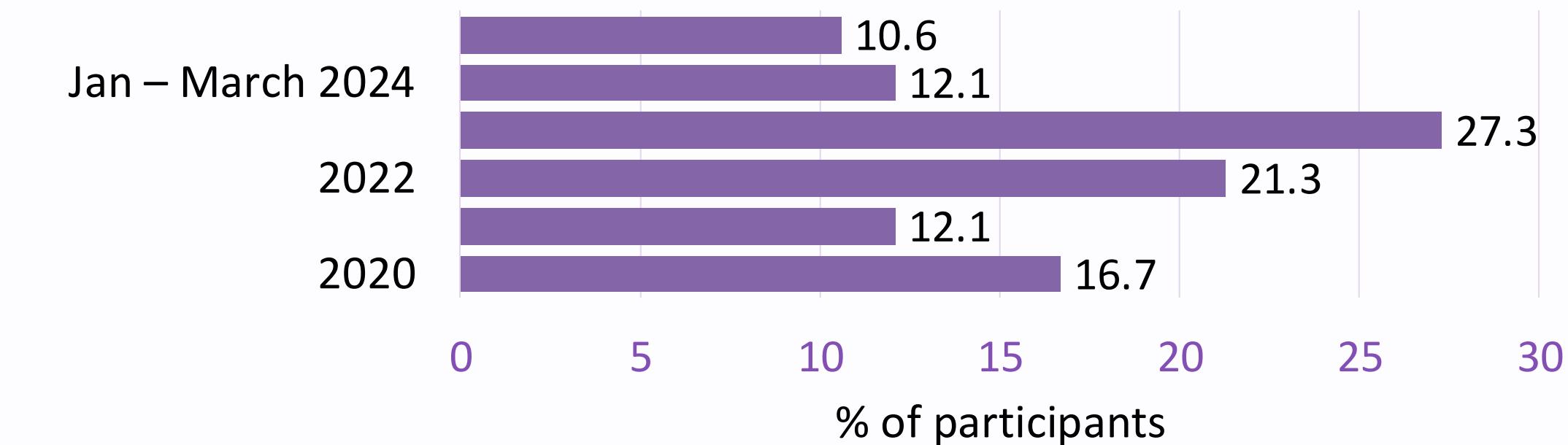
# A peer-led online support group enhances kinship family well-being.



*"KCC was critical to my confidence and fear of being thrust into a kinship arrangement in the beginning of the process. I was introduced to some resources that I did not know existed, but most importantly, I was connected with other people my age that were not only in the same ocean, but in my boat." -KCC Participant*

Organizations/Institutions:  
<sup>1</sup>Kinship Caregivers Connect; <sup>2</sup>Cincinnati Children's Hospital & University of Cincinnati

Fig 2: When Began Attending Support Group (%)



## Qualitative Themes + Subthemes

Themes	Description	Codes
Peer support	Connecting with other kinship caregivers	Safe space to share; not alone; sense of family; encouragement; similar experience
Learning	Gaining information, tools, and resources from various sources	Information, strategies, resources, guest speakers, peers, topics
Impact on Family well-being	Overall positive impact on caregiver well-being, parenting strategies, and family well-being	Confidence, hope, coping, overall well-being, understanding child, trauma-informed parenting strategies
KCC Model	Support provided within context of an online, statewide community	Virtual community, accessibility, additional supports, group leader, caregiver's experience

## Quantitative Findings

94.4% report KCC is helpful or very helpful\*

94.1% agree or strongly agree they would recommend KCC to another caregiver\*

Increased meeting attendance is linked to better emotion-focused coping skills (p > 0.01)

\*Remaining respondents selected neutral. None selected disagree or strongly disagree

**CONCLUSION:** KCC has implemented an online, statewide peer-led support program for kinship caregivers in Ohio, including support groups and informational sessions. A representative sample of participants reported positive usability, acceptability, and impacts on caregiver and family well-being. Future studies will compare outcomes with a control group

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Kinship Caregivers Connect