

Provider Spotlights

The Colbert County Spotlight is on Sanara Mills.



Ms. Mills cares for six of her nieces and nephews and has been a foster grandmother for the past four years. She also provides care and enrichment for infants and toddlers at Ecclesia Daycare.

A few of her hobbies are reading, word puzzles, coloring and card making.

Ms. Mills said, "It takes a village to raise a child and I love the work I do." When asked what she would like to share about Kids and Kin program, she said, "I believe Kids and Kin is a fantastic program for grandparents, or any retiree. It gives a good view on what's happening with kids today and how to handle situations in the family, in school or in church. I love it!" Thank you Ms. Mills, we appreciate you!

Cherokee County Spotlights Mrs. Angie Turner.



Mrs. Angie has attended Kids and Kin classes for over five years. She and her husband, Jeff, have been married for 21 years and they have five grandchildren. Some of Mrs. Angie's hobbies include decorating, crafts, painting and sewing. She loves farm life and is

an avid animal lover. She loves the outdoors; hunting, fishing, and teaching her grandchildren about farm life.

Mrs. Angie said that she enjoys coming to Kids and Kin workshops and learning helpful information that helps her with her grandchildren. She also loves being in class with other grandparents.

The Fayette County Spotlight is Shining on Ms. Gloria Sizemore.



Miss Gloria started attending the Kids and Kin program a couple of years ago and quickly grew to love it! She has over 20 grandchildren, ranging in age from two years to over 20. Miss Gloria is a member of Sisters 4 Christ, and is proud that her daughter leads this group. Her daughter teases her when she is unable to attend class and says she knows her mom is truly sick if she doesn't attend because she won't let anything keep her away from the Kids and Kin program!

Miss Gloria said, "I absolutely love the Kids and Kin program and my daughter is right, I do not like to miss a class! Thank you Miss Gloria for being a special part of our Fayette Co. Kids and Kin family, you are a treasure!"

Walker County is Proud to Spotlight Ms. Judy Key.



Ms. Judy has 3 children and 15 grandchildren. She has attended the Kids and Kin program for five years. She said she has learned so much that she has applied to life lessons with her grandchildren. She loves to do crafts with them and when she is not busy with the grands, she likes to crochet to relax.

Ms. Key said that she enjoys the fellowship and trainings that the Kids and Kin program offers. Thank you, Ms. Key for participating in our Kids and Kin group.

Routines and Fall Transitions

As the school year settles in, October is the perfect time to revisit daily routines. Children thrive on predictability, especially during busy fall months when schedules tighten and daylight shortens. Caregivers can help by creating simple visual schedules, offering gentle reminders, and building in transition time between school, homework, and evening activities. A consistent bedtime routine--dim lights, quiet activities, and a predictable sequence--helps children wind down and improves morning readiness. Small adjustments now can make the rest of the school year smoother for everyone.



A heartfelt tribute to all who have served or continue to serve our country—your courage, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment safeguard the freedoms we cherish. Today and always, we honor you with deep gratitude.



Fall & Winter Celebrations: Safety, Gratitude, and Honoring Traditions

As the fall season arrives, many children get excited about Halloween. Caregivers can help keep the evening fun and safe by choosing bright or reflective costumes, using flashlights or glow sticks, and sticking to well-lit paths. It's also important to remind kids to stay close to trusted adults and to let an adult check treats before eating them.

November brings a natural opportunity to pause and reflect. Whether families gather for Thanksgiving or simply enjoy a quiet day together, it's a meaningful time to practice gratitude, share stories, and help children notice the people and moments they appreciate. Even small traditions—like cooking a favorite food or writing thank-you notes—can make the season feel special.

In December, families may celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, or other winter holidays, each with its own traditions and meaning. Caregivers can support children by honoring what their family values, encouraging them to share their traditions, and keeping routines steady during busy days. No matter which holidays a family observes, the season offers a chance to focus on connection, kindness, and creating warm, safe spaces for children to thrive.

This Quarter our Staff Spotlight is on Our Relative Care Specialist:

Tammy Ross



Tammy Ross has been a Relative Care Specialist with the Kids and Kin Program for 10 years. She began serving Tuscaloosa, Hale, Bibb and Perry Counties. She now serves Fayette, Lamar, Marion, and Pickens Counties. Just a little bit about Tammy: she is a native of Tennessee, she is a two time cancer survivor, her favorite color is pink, and her life mantra is “God is Good, All the Time, and All the Time, God is Good!” Tammy has worked with children for over 30 years and in addition to working with the Kids and Kin program, she serves Fayette First Baptist Church as their Children’s Minister. Tammy said that she loves serving her providers and their families. She cares about every provider and does all that she can to make a difference in their lives and in her community. We are proud to have Tammy Ross working at FGC’s Kids and Kin Program!



Kids and Kin Welcomes Rebecca Dye, Relative Care Specialist Serving Tuscaloosa, Bibb, Hale, and Perry Counties.

Rebecca lives in the Tuscaloosa area with her husband, Chance, and their 2 children, Willow and Logan, and their 3 dogs. She is an avid reader who always has at least one book nearby. She enjoys exploring local bookstores and thrift shops, practicing mindfulness and grounding techniques, journaling, and spending quality time with her family. Rebecca said that she is passionate about supporting children and families, and that she looks forward to serving relative care providers and making a positive impact in our communities.

Gratitude, Connection and Holiday Preparation: Gratitude doesn't have to be complicated. Young children learn it through noticing small moments of kindness, while older children can reflect on people who support them. Try a 'Gratitude Jar', a 'Thankful Tree', or a simple daily prompt like "What made you smile today?" Practicing gratitude strengthens emotional resilience and helps children recognize positive experiences--even during stressful seasons.



Managing Holiday Excitement and Overstimulation: December brings bright lights, busy schedules, and high emotions. Children may feel overstimulated or struggle with changes in routine. Visual schedules, quiet corners, and predictable daily rhythms help maintain calm. Offer breaks from noise, keep snacks handy, and build in downtime between events. When caregivers stay attuned to children's sensory needs, holiday activities become more enjoyable for everyone.



Meaningful Traditions on Any Budget

Festive holidays don't have to be expensive to be memorable. Children often treasure the small rituals: baking together, making handmade decorations, or choosing a special ornament each year. You can build new family traditions that honor the child's history while creating fresh, joyful memories. These low-cost activities help kids feel included, valued, and connected to the family's rhythm.

- Neighborhood Light Tour
- Holiday Movie Marathon
- Cookie Swap
- Decorate one small space
- Puzzle or game afternoon
- Take an annual photo
- Memory sharing time

Kids and Kin Statewide Evening Zoom Trainings

If you are interested in attending any of our Statewide Evening Zoom trainings, let your Relative Care Specialist know you are interested and she will send you a Zoom link to attend the training. We look forward to seeing you online!

Monday	Oct. 5	6:00 p.m.	Peer Pressure From Toddler to Teen
Monday	Oct. 19	6:00 p.m.	A Guide to Safe Sleep of Infants
Monday	Nov. 9	6:00 p.m.	Financial Literacy 101 for Kids and Teens
Monday	Nov. 16	6:00 p.m.	How to Potty Train Children with Special Needs
Monday	Dec. 7	6:00 p.m.	APT: Multisensory Learning Techniques: What is it?
Monday	Dec. 14	6:00 p.m.	Laughter is the Best Medicine



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Complete the Kids and Kin Survey and your name will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Wal Mart gift card!



At Kids and Kin, we love our providers and we value your input! Without relative care providers like you, there would be no Kids and Kin Program. Please help us improve the Kids and Kin Program by scanning this QR code and completing the survey by October 31, 2026. By completing this short survey you will be helping us improve our program and you will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Wal Mart gift card! Contact your Relative Care Provider for more details. Thank you!

Fall Reading List

Preschool-Kindergarten:

- *Room on the Broom* by Julia Donaldson
- *Bear Snores On* by Karma Wilson

1st - 2nd Grade:

- *Mr Popper's Penguins* by Richard & Florence Atwater
- *Arthur's Halloween* by Marc Brown

3rd - 5th Grade:

- *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis
- *The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate

