

# THE Poverty Truth Commission

*We are deeply dismayed by the statutory support provided for children being looked after by kinship carers. We call upon all levels of government - and all political parties - to work together to **give these children the support and resources** that they deserve.*

20 years ago when my son was troubled with addiction his other granny took my grandson into her care. He was 2 years old. Throughout his life he suffered the effects of his parent's choices and the environment he was exposed to, and at 17 he was the victim of a murder. I feel that if there had been support and recognition for us to intervene earlier in his life this tragic story may not have happened. Kinship carers are doing a free service for the state and they would do nothing less for these children. But they deserve at minimum psychological help, basic allowances and support and recognition to prevent another lost generation. Many kinship carers don't come forward to jump the hurdles for support that they desperately need, because they would feel like failures in their natural duty to the kids in their care.

When we decided to form a kinship care support group 6 years ago we had no idea that any help was available. We have come a long way with talks and meetings with the relevant people but barriers keep appearing and blame gets passed from pillar to post. Nobody wants responsibility for these children's rights as human beings, and seem to forget that they're the future of the UK. Through the Poverty Truth Commission kinship carers have now got a strong voice on behalf of the children they love and care for, and also a vision to end the discrimination and stigma that kinship children are suffering through ignorance and inequality. People in power should realise that they are not being accountable to the children's needs. Invest in early intervention and we can look forward to fine upstanding citizens that we can be very proud of in the future.

**Jean Forrester**