Final article will be about 600 words, so keep that in mind as you are crafting your answers.

With your answers, if you can just let me know who is saying what, as I will have quotes coming from your mouths, etc. I will share a draft with you before it goes to the publisher.

**State your full names, (so I am positive I have the correct spelling).**

Denyse Richter

Kathy Terry

**What is your website url?**

www.stepupparents.net

**What is the name of your nonprofit?**

Step Up Parents

**What is your mission?**

Step Up Parents provides financial assistance to kinship caregivers in New Hampshire who are raising the children of drug addicted parents.

**Why did you form this organization and when?**

I first had the idea for Step Up Parents in 2017 as I watched a friend struggle with her own child’s drug addiction while being a parent to her innocent grandchild. I felt a call to help. She and her husband stepped up to raise their granddaughter all while trying to get their own daughter the help she needed. I quickly learned that with the explosion of the opioid crisis, my friend was not alone in facing this most heart wrenching and difficult situation.

To me, these people are everyday heroes. They put aside their own hopes and dreams to raise a young child or children late in their lives. For many kinship caregivers, income is limited and resources scarce, so they face a constant financial struggle. This is where I thought I could help, but I couldn’t do it alone. I approached my friend Kathy Terry about undertaking this project with me. Thankfully, she too was inspired to help and be involved. We started in early 2018 to craft our mission, goals and team. We recruited three other board members (want names?) who each bring a unique perspective, knowledge and experience to our board. We formally created Step Up Parents and registered with the State of NH in early spring 2018. We received from the IRS our 501(c)(3) status in late 2018 and formally launched Step Up Parents in January 2019.

**Ideally--what do you hope to achieve in this first year?**

In our first year, we hope to spread the word about who we are and the help we provide. Through our website, social media, press, and alliances with other nonprofits, we hope to be able to have a positive impact in our area and beyond. We have started our individual donor campaign and will start our corporate donation campaign in the coming weeks. By the end of year one, we hope to have helped as many families as our resources allow and the ways in which we help will be determined by the needs of our families. We definitely plan on sponsoring a local support group for caregivers as this has been a request of many of the kinship caregivers we have had the privilege of meeting.

**Any plans to collaborate with agencies? You can mention Chase Home possibly or you can keep it vague.**

One of Step Up Parents core strategies for success and sustainability is to collaborate with other nonprofits and agencies. We are in our infancy and know the value in learning from such well-established and respected nonprofits as the Chase Home for Children. By collaborating with other nonprofits whose purposes and work align with ours, we can be more impactful to those in need and broaden our outreach much more quickly than we can on our own.

**Lastly, what is the most important takeaway for our readers--what do you want people to remember about your agency above all else?**

I would like people to remember that even heroes need a hand. These grandparents and relative caregivers are everyday heroes and what they are doing is helping all of us. Studies show children who stay in the care of a relative have much better emotional and behavioral outcomes. This is obviously most beneficial to these children, but it is extremely beneficial to our entire society as a whole. Furthermore, many of these kinship caregivers are raising these children outside the foster care system and receive little to no local or federal assistance. They have taken on a momentous and lifelong task with little support. Along with the everyday costs of raising a family, expenses such as legal fees for guardianship can be crippling. Step Up Parents wants to give back to these people who have been through so much and have given so much.

Let me know if anything is unclear--and feel free to go on tangents--Ill make anything work. I would need answers back by next Monday--and I would love a picture of you two, if possible.