



DELAWARE

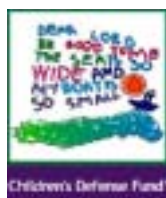
A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



September 2005

Across the United States, more than 6 million children are being raised in households headed by grandparents and other relatives; 2.5 million children are in these households without any parents present. As the children's parents struggle with substance abuse, mental illness, incarceration, economic hardship, divorce, domestic violence, and other challenges, these caregivers provide a vital safety net to children inside and outside of the foster care system. This fact sheet provides important information and resources for the grandparents and other relatives raising children in your state.

The Brookdale Foundation



National and State Data*

The Children

- Nationally, 4.5 million children are living in grandparent-headed households (6.3% of all children under age 18). This represents a 30% increase from 1990 to 2000.
- There are another 1.5 million children in the United States who are living in households headed by other relatives (2.1% of all children under 18).
- In Delaware there are 13,726 children living in grandparent-headed households (7.1% of all children in the state). There are another 3,743 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.9% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Delaware, 7,803 are living there without either parent present.

The Grandparents

- Nationally, 2.4 million grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them: 29% of these grandparents are African American; 17% are Hispanic/Latino; 2% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; 3% are Asian; and 47% are White. 34% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 71% are under the age of 60; 19% live in poverty.
- In Delaware, 7,204 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them 40% of these grandparents are African American; 6% are Hispanic/Latino; and 52% are White. 38% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present.

Additional Information

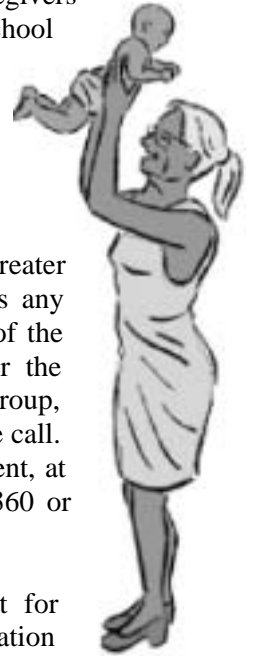
- United States Census data on grandparents who are responsible for meeting the basic needs of their grandchildren can also be broken down by county, congressional district, and other categories. Log on to <http://factfinder.census.gov>. Additional data on grandparents and grandchildren are available at www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/grandparents.html.
- Additional national and state data on grandparents raising children is available on AARP's website at www.aarp.org/families/grandparents/.

* These data are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau Table DP-2. Profile Selected Social Characteristics: 2000.



Programs That Can Help

- *The Delaware Health & Social Services Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities* provides grandparents and relative caregivers with services, information, and advocacy through its Joining Generations (JG) program. *Family Circles* is Delaware's support and education program for relative caregivers, with groups meeting throughout the state. Two other relative caregiver programs operate under the Joining Generations umbrella: Grand Time Off (GTO) and Camp Respite (CR). GTO is an as-needed childcare program for relative caregivers administered by The Family & Workplace Connection (800 537-5557). CR is a summer and school holiday camp administered by the YMCA of Delaware. Joining Generations has also developed two publications: "Grandparents Raising And Nurturing Dependent Children" (GRAND) and "Delaware's Legal Handbook for Grandparents & Other Relatives Raising Children". Both books are available at <http://www.state.de.us/dhss/dsaap/publica.html> *Contact:* Carol Boyer, Joining Generations, at (302) 255-9390 or carol.boyer@state.de.us.
- *GrandParents United DE* is an advocacy organization that is responsible for bringing the need for greater services for relative caregivers to the attention of Delaware legislators. The organization assists any caregiver that is in need of support and direction. This group was instrumental in the formation of the state's Kinship Care Task Force and continues to lobby for expanded financial assistance for the caregivers of children outside the foster care system. The group also has an on-line support group, "Delawaregrands." The group is "secure," meaning you must be approved following a routine phone call. You can join at delawaregrands-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. *Contacts:* Nina McGonegal, President, at (302) 791-7715 or Mnmcgonegal1117@aol.com; or Tina Light, Vice President, at (302) 234-0360 or CL0802@aol.com or <http://www.geocities.com/grandparentsunitedde/index.html>.
- *Wilmington Senior Center's Grandparent Resource Center* provides comprehensive support for grandparents through a weekly support group, personalized contact and case management, information and referrals to community resources, and a monthly newsletter. *Contact:* Patricia Anderson, Director, at (302) 651-3420 or log on to www.wilmingtonseniorcenter.org/grc.html. Wilmington Senior Center also has a Caregiver Resource Center that provides information and referrals to community resources, videos and other materials for caregivers' use, and a monthly support group. *Contact:* Joyce Shores, Coordinator, at (302) 651-3401.



Children in Foster Care

Sometimes state child welfare agencies place children in foster care with grandparents or other relatives. Most state agencies call these placements "kinship care." In Delaware, the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families reports:

Number of children in kinship care: As of February 2005, there were 703 children in out-of-home placements. Of these children, 106 children were placed with relatives. Of the 80 relative providers, four are Foster Care Approved Relatives.

Preferences for kinship care: State policy requires that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for a child under the Department's care.

Kinship care licensing: There is no separate licensing program for kinship foster parents. Kin have to meet the same licensing standards and requirements and receive the same foster care payment rate as non-kin foster parents.

Assisted Guardianship: Delaware no longer has an assisted guardianship program.

State kinship care contact: Questions about kinship foster placements should be directed to Darlene Lantz, Foster Care Administrator, at (302) 633-2674 or Darlene.Lantz@state.de.us.

Training and support for kinship foster parents: Any person applying to become a foster parent must complete 24 hours of pre-service training. Additional parent training is required each year. Call Darlene Lantz at (302) 633-2674 or

Public Benefits

Children are often eligible for state and federal benefits even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody. These programs include:

Financial Assistance: Cash assistance may be available to children and their grandparents and relative caregivers through Delaware’s Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program.

- A “child-only grant” is for the child and based *only* on the child’s income.
- An adult caregiver may also be included in the grant — based on their income and subject to work requirements and time limits.

Call (800) 372-2022 or log on to www.delawarehelpline.org/helpline/index.jsp.



Food Stamps: Kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet their children’s food and nutrition needs. For more information, relative caregivers should call (800) 372-2022 or log on to www.state.de.us/dhss/foodstamps.html.

Health Insurance: Grandparents and other relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health insurance on behalf of the children they are raising through the Delaware Medicaid and Healthy Children programs. In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under the Medicaid program. For more information about how to apply for Medicaid, call 1-800-372-2022 or log on to www.state.de.us/dhss/medast.html. For more information about Delaware Healthy Children Program, call (800) 996-9969 or log on to www.state.de.us/dhss/dss/dhpc.html.

Other Benefits: The Kinship Care Program provides limited funds for eligible relatives who are raising children to purchase necessary items such as clothing, beds, linen, safety equipment, etc. to care for children. The child must have come to reside with the caregiver within 180 days of the application. For more information, contact (302) 255-9675 or the nearest State Service Center.

State Laws

The following state laws may be helpful to grandparents and other relatives raising children¹:

Medical Consent (Del. Code Ann. tit. 13 § 707): This law allows a grandparent, adult aunt or uncle, adult brother or sister, or stepparent (or any person with power of attorney) to consent to medical care on behalf of a child: (1) after the treatment provider has made a reasonable attempt to contact the child’s parent or legal guardian and that person cannot be contacted; and (2) if the parent or legal guardian has not given the treatment provider notice that they oppose the treatment. The relative caregiver must complete and have notarized a “Caregivers Medical Authorization” affidavit.

Educational Consent (Del. Code Ann. tit. 14, § 202): This law allows a child who resides with anyone other than his or her parent(s) to be enrolled in a school district based on the residence of the child’s guardian with a proper “Caregivers’ School Authorization” affidavit.

Guardianship and Permanent Guardianship (Del. Code Ann. Tit. 13 § 23): This law provides a framework for filing, granting and modifying guardianships in Family Court. It also creates a new legal status of permanent guardian, assuring permanency for older foster children and/or children living with relatives for whom adoption is not possible or appropriate.

¹Laws change and are subject to different interpretations. These general descriptions are not intended as legal advice in any particular situation.

National Resources

AARP Grandparent Information Center	(888) 687-2277	www.aarp.org/grandparents
Adoption Information Clearinghouse	(888) 251-0075	http://naic.acf.hhs.gov/
The Brookdale Foundation Group	(212) 308 -7355	www.brookdalefoundation.org
Child Welfare League of America	(202) 638-2952	www.cwla.org
Children's Defense Fund	(202) 628-8787	www.childrensdefense.org
Generations United	(202) 289-3979	www.gu.org
GrandsPlace	860) 763-5789	www.grandsplace.com
KINship Information Network	(772) 501-0502	www.kinsupport.org
National Aging Information Center	(202) 619-0724	www.aoa.dhhs.gov
National Committee of Grandparents For Children's Rights	(866) 624-9900	www.grandparentsforchildren.org
The Urban Institute	(202) 833-7200	www.urban.org

Fact sheets are updated quarterly. Changes or additions should be e-mailed to the AARP Grandparent Information Center at gic@aarp.org. Please write "State Fact Sheets" on your e-mail subject line.