



IDAHO

A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



September 2005

The Brookdale Foundation

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.

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 Idaho, there are 13,636 children living in grandparent-headed households (3.7% of all children in the state). There are another 4,128 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.1% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Idaho, 7,087 are living there without either parent present.

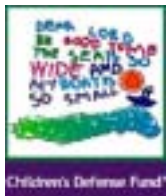
The Grandparents

- 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 Idaho, 8,110 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [717 in Boise]: .2% of these grandparents are African American; 12% are Hispanic/Latino; 1% are Asian; 4% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; and 79% are White. 43% 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

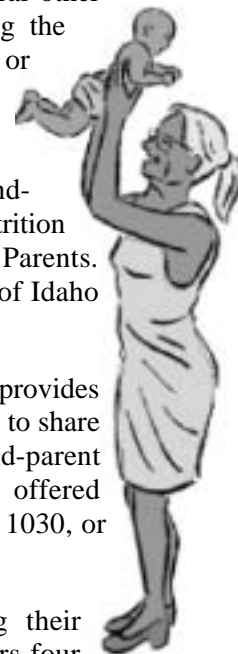
The Idaho KinCare Coalition is a group of individuals and organizations, public and private, with connections statewide. The mission of the organization is to promote legislative and social change through advocacy and education and to provide the social supports needed by grandparents and other relatives raising the children in their care. Members include the facilitating organization, the Idaho Commission on Aging, the Idaho Headstart Association, Idaho Bar Association, Families First, Idaho Education Association, AARP Idaho, the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension, as well as other child advocacy organizations like the Family Advocate Program, relatives as parents support groups, Area Agencies on Aging and others. The Coalition's website of emerging support groups or those groups underway is at www.idahoaging.com. *Contact:* Tina Rice, Idaho KinCare Coalition, at (208) 334-3833 or trice@aging.idaho.gov.

AARP's Idaho State Office is currently working with the Idaho Commission on Aging and several other organizations to establish support groups across the state for grandparents and other kin raising the children of relatives. *Contact:* Cheryl Tussey, Associate State Director, at (208) 855-4004 or ctussey@aarp.org.

The Idaho Cooperative Extension sponsors several programs to educate kinship care families about the benefits and services available to them. The Cooperative Extension incorporates grandparents raising grandchildren into many of its educational programs, including parenting and nutrition education programs. It has also sponsored two national videoconferences on Grandparents as Parents. *Contact:* Harriet Shaklee, Margaret Ritchie School of Family and Consumer Sciences, University of Idaho Cooperative Extension, at (208) 364-4016 or hshaklee@uidaho.edu.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren along with The Area VI Agency on Aging in Eastern Idaho provides a monthly support group for grandparents raising grandchildren. The support group allows caregivers to share concerns about legal, medical, behavioral, and school issues. It will also look at coping skills as grand-parent participants revisit parenting issues, whether caring for a toddler or a teen. Guest speakers are offered depending on the caregivers' needs. *Contacts:* Emily Hoyt, I&A Director, at (208) 522-5391, ext. 1030, or ehoyt@eicap.org.

Grandparents as Parents (GAP) is a support and advocacy group for grandparents raising their grandchildren in the Southwest Idaho area. The support group meets each month and also sponsors four functions each year for children to meet other children raised by someone other than their parents. In addition to providing emotional support, the group educates grandparents about and advocates for proposed legislation on behalf of kinship care families. *Contact:* W.L. (Smitty) Smith at (208) 362-4126 OR Tracee Crawford at (208) 323-7538. The website is http://gap_boise.tripod.com/GAP/.



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 Idaho, the Department of Health and Welfare, Bureau of Children and Family Services reports:

Number of children in kinship care: As of May 2004, 2,904 children were placed in foster care in Idaho. The Department of Health and Welfare rules include non-relatives with a significant "family-like relationship" with the child as kin. Idaho defines "relative care" as a person related to the child who is providing alternate care.

Preferences for kinship care: State policy requires that placement priority be given to relatives or immediate family, next to extended family, and then to non-family members with a significant established relationship with a child when an out-of-home placement is sought for a child under the Department's care.

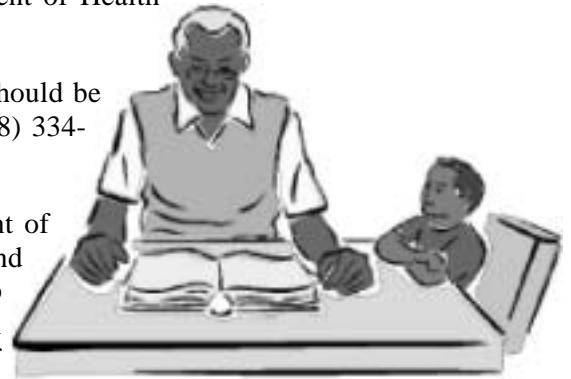
Kinship care licensing: Kin have to meet the same licensing standards and receive the same foster care payment rate as non-kin foster parents.

Subsidized guardianship programs: In addition to foster care payments and other benefits available to kin raising children in foster care, some states also have subsidized guardianship programs. Idaho's Department of Health and

Welfare provides Guardianship Assistance benefits to certain children. In order to be eligible for these benefits, the child must be under the guardianship of the Department and the child's parents must have their parental rights terminated. The Department must have also documented its efforts to place the child for adoption. Guardianship Assistance pays for the one-time costs necessary to finalize the guardianship, Medicaid benefits, and a negotiated monthly cash payment that cannot exceed the amount the child was receiving while in an Idaho foster family. Relatives who are caring for their relative children who meet the above specifications can talk to their child's social worker about this program (Idaho Code Ann. § 56-802 et seq.). *Contact:* Susan Dwello, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, at (208) 334-5700 or dwellos@idhw.state.id.us.

State kinship care contact: Questions about kinship foster placements should be directed to Shirley Alexander, Child Welfare Program Manager, at (208) 334-6618 or alexande@idhw.state.id.us.

Training and support for kinship foster parents: The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare partners with the Idaho Child Welfare Research and Training Center to provide foster care training and resources to kinship care families. All foster parents, including relatives, must participate in the 27-hour PRIDE pre-service training. *Contact:* Idaho Department of Health and Welfare at (208) 334-5700.



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 payments may be available to children and their grandparents and other relative caregivers through the Temporary Assistance for Families in Idaho (TAFI):

- 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 TANF grant — based on their income and subject to work requirements and time limits.

Call (800) 926-2588, the Idaho CareLine, or log on to www2.state.id.us/dhw/.

Food Stamps: Based on the family's income, kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet food and nutrition needs. For more information, call (800) 926-2588, the Idaho CareLine, or log on to www.state.id.us.

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 Idaho's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under Medicaid. For more information about how to apply for these programs, call (800) 926-2588, the Idaho CareLine, or log on to www.idahohealth.org.

Other Benefits: Other state and federal benefits may also be available to eligible children, such as child care subsidies, disability benefits, and special education services. For more information about these, download CDF's benefit guides for grandparents and other relatives raising children at www.childrensdefense.org or call (202) 662-3568. For more information on the federal benefits that may be available to caregivers, log on to the National Council on Aging's Benefits CheckUp web site at www.benefitscheckup.org.

State Laws

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

Medical Consent (Idaho Code Ann. § 39-4303): This law allows a parent, spouse, or legal guardian to give consent for hospital, medical, dental or surgical care, treatment or procedures for a child, incompetent person, or other persons unable to consent to such treatment. If there is no parent, spouse, or legal guardian available, the next living relative

may consent to any of these procedures on the child's behalf.

Testamentary Appointment of Guardian of Minor (Idaho Code Ann. § 39-15-5-202): This law allows parents to provide in their will for a guardian to care for their child upon both parents' death or determination of the parents' incapacity. The guardian must accept this appointment with the court where the will is probated for the guardianship to be effective or file acceptance prior to the death of the parent. A child 14 or over may contest the appointment process.

Delegation of Powers by Parent or Guardian (Idaho Code § 15-5-104): This law allows a parent or guardian to delegate to another person the parent's or guardian's powers regarding care, which include medical and educational care. This parent may delegate this power for no longer than 6 months or 12 months for military personnel serving beyond the territorial limits of the U.S. A power of attorney can set the expiration of the delegation of powers to a grandparent of the minor, sibling of the minor, or sibling of either parent to the minor.

¹ *Laws 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.