



INDIANA

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 Indiana, there are 81,537 children living in grandparent-headed households (5.2% of all children in the state). There are another 18,767 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.2% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Indiana, 39,180 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 Indiana, 48,181 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [8,141 in Indianapolis]: 20% of these grandparents are African American; 4% are Hispanic/Latino; and 74% are White. 39% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present.

Additional Information

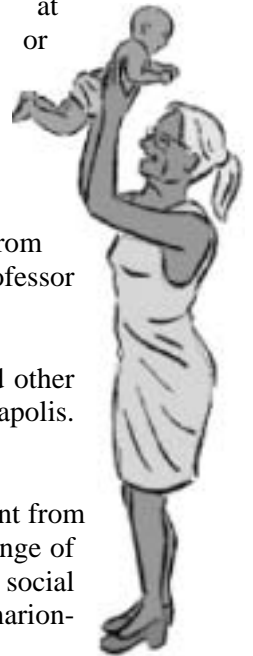
- United States Census data on grandparents who are responsible for meeting the basic needs of their grandchildren can also be broken down by county, congressional district, and other categories. Log on to <http://factfinder.census.gov>. Additional data on grandparents and grandchildren are available 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 Indiana Family and Social Services Administration and Perdue Extension*** established The Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) State Initiative. The program, funded by the Brookdale Foundation, initiated several kinship care support groups across the state. It also formed the RAPP Steering Committee with representatives from state and local service providers and agencies that serve kinship care families. One focus of the committee was to provide information and strengthen supports to kinship care families across the state. *Relatives as Parents: Answers to Basic Concerns*, a series of fact sheets, will be available in the Fall of 2005. The series contains information specific to Indiana on the following topics: education, finances, legal services, medical consent, medical services, mental health, and tips for working with agencies. *Contact:* The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration website at www.in.gov/fssa/ and the Purdue Extension/Consumer and Family Sciences website at www.ces.purdue.edu/cfs/topics/HD/index.htm or Kate Tewanger at (317) 232-7148 or Kathryn.tewanger@fssa.in.gov.
- ***Purdue Extension and the University of Wisconsin Extension*** co-developed a videoconference on grandparents raising grandchildren, which included local sites in Indiana. A video-based educational package based on the videoconference is available. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Legal and Policy Challenges (CFS-725) can be ordered for \$35 plus tax from <https://secure.agriculture.purdue.edu/store/item.asp?itemID=7159>. *Contact:* Dena B. Targ, Professor Emerita, Purdue University at dtarg@purdue.edu.
- ***Second Time Around: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*** is a support group for grandparents and other relatives raising children that takes place at the Martin Luther King Multi-Service Center in Indianapolis. Participants come from throughout the city. *Contact:* Alice Oliver at (317) 923-4581.
- ***The Family Service Society, Inc.*** in Marion offers a Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) under a grant from the Brookdale Foundation. The RAPP brings together more than 17 community partners to offer a range of resources and services to Grant County grandparents and other relatives raising children, including social and educational fora. *Contact:* Teresa Secrest, Program Director, at (765) 662-9971, or teresa@marion-law.com or Connie Rose, Executive Director, at (765) 662-9971 (ext. 108).
- ***Grandparents As Parents (G.A.P.)*** is based in St. Joseph County with chapters throughout the state. Its purpose is to assist relatives who are the primary caregivers of children who are not their own and provide emotional and legal support. G.A.P. is also active in bringing about policy changes to help kinship care families. *Contact:* Opal Bufford at GAPLTD1@aol.com or (574) 232-6890.



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 Indiana, the Family and Social Services Administration reports:

Number of children in kinship care: As of June 2004, there were 9,918 children in out-of-home placements. Of these children, 1,774 children were placed with relatives.

Preferences for kinship care: The court is required to consider placing a child in the home of an appropriate family member before any other type of placement. In the best interests of the child, the Department of Child Services must have as much information available as possible regarding suitable relatives with whom the child can be placed.

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

Assisted guardianship: In addition to foster care payments and other benefits available to kin raising children in the foster care system, some states also have subsidized guardianship programs. Indiana has an Assisted Guardianship

Program for children under the Administration’s supervision who have been placed with a relative who assumes legal guardianship of the child. The program is generally available to eligible children over the age of 13 under the care, custody and control of the Department of Child Services and the local juvenile court, who meet specific eligibility requirements. The relative seeking legal guardianship must also meet certain requirements (including the ability to provide for all the child’s needs except for the financial and medical subsidy). (Ind. Admin. Code Title 470 r.3-10-5). Call Angela Coulon, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, at (317) 232-4622 or email angela.coulon@fssa.in.gov.

State kinship care contact: Questions about kinship foster placements should be directed to Angela Coulon, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, at (317) 232-4622 or angela.coulon@fssa.in.gov.

Training and support for kinship foster parents: Support services for kinship foster parents are offered by the Indiana Foster and Adoption Association. Call Christina Morrison at (800) 468-4228 or (317) 524-2600. The Web site is www.ifcaa.org.

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



Call (317) 232-4919 or log on to www.in.gov/fssa/families/tanf/.

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, call (317) 232-4919 or log on to www.in.gov/fssa/families/stamps/.

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 Indiana’s Hoosier Healthwise program. In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under Medicaid. For more information about how to apply for Hoosier Healthwise, call (800) 889-9949 or log on to www.in.gov/fssa/healthcare/ or www.in.gov/fssa/hoosier_healthwise/.

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:

Educational Consent (Ind. Code § 20-8.1-6.1-1): This law states that a caregiver may enroll a child in school without being the child’s legal guardian. The caregiver must provide proof that the child is supported by, cared for by, and living with the caregiver. The caregiver also must sign a “Custodial Agreement Form” indicating that he or she is responsible for the child.

Medical Consent (Ind. Code § 16-36-1-5): This law states that a person acting in place of a parent may consent to health care on behalf of a child if no guardian has been appointed for health care purposes or the guardian is unavailable, refuses to act, or is unknown to the health care provider.

“De Facto” Custody (Ind. Code § 31-9-2-35.5 et seq.): This law applies to a grandparent or other relative who has been the primary caregiver of a child for six months (if the child is under three years old) or 12 months (if the child is over three years old). Grandparents and other relatives raising children who meet these criteria shall be entitled to apply for custody and may be awarded custody if a judge deems that to be in the best interest of the child. Please note that this statute has been challenged. Please contact a lawyer for details.

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.