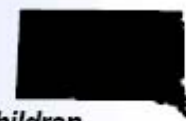




SOUTH DAKOTA

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 South Dakota, there are 8,349 children living in grandparent-headed households (4.1% of all children in the state). There are another 2,367 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 South Dakota, 5,146 are living there without either parent present.

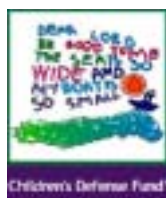
The Grandparents

- 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 South Dakota, 4,632 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [537 in Sioux Falls]: .5% of these grandparents are African American; 1% are Hispanic/Latino; 47% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; 1% are Asian; and 49% are White. 38% of these grandparents live in household 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 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 Grandparents as Parents Support Group* is facilitated by grandparents and other relatives caring for children in the Sioux Falls area. Begun five years ago through the Southeast Mental Health Center in Sioux Falls, this support group has also engaged in broader advocacy efforts including speaking engagements, meetings with local media representatives, and reaching out to other kinship care families through the local AARP office and the Center for Active Generations. The group meets monthly and regularly invites expert speakers to talk about issues affecting kinship care families. *Contact:* Sharon Hall at (605) 361-2645 or slh@sio.midco.net.

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 South Dakota, the Department of Social Services, Child Protection Services reports:

Number of children in kinship care: As of December 31, 2004, there were a total of 1,558 children in out-of-home placements under the supervision of the South Dakota Department of Social Services and in Tribal and private agency custody. Of these children, 207 are in unpaid kinship placements and 72 are in licensed kinship placements.

Preferences for kinship care: South Dakota state procedures require that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for an abused or neglected child, either “as temporary placement until the child(ren) can be returned to the home of the parent(s) or guardian(s)” or as “the permanent plan for the child(ren).”

Kinship care licensing: There is no separate licensing program for kinship foster parents. Kin have to meet the same licensing standards and training requirements and receive the same foster care payment rate as non-kin foster parents. In some cases, kinship foster parents are eligible for one-time funds to purchase beds, dressers, and other items that they need in order to care for the children.

Subsidized guardianship programs: In addition to foster care payments and other benefits available to kin raising children in the foster care system, some state also have subsidized guardianship programs. South Dakota has a subsidized guardianship program that provides a subsidy to eligible children who are at least twelve years of age (with some exceptions) and children who have been in foster care for at least six months. The subsidy amount is based on the needs of the child, not to exceed the current foster care rate for the child. The state must document that the child cannot return home and that adoption is not possible or in the child’s best interest. Medical coverage is not provided. *Contact:* Duane E. Jenner, ACSW, Foster Care Program Specialist, at (605) 773-3227 or Duane.Jenner@state.sd.us.

State kinship care contact: Questions about kin foster care placements should be directed to Duane E. Jenner, ACSW, Foster Care Program Specialist, at (605) 773-3227 or Duane.Jenner@state.sd.us.



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 other relative caregivers through South Dakota’s Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).

- 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 (605) 773-4678 or log on to www.state.sd.us/social.

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 (605) 773-3493 or log on to www.state.sd.us/social.

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 South Dakota 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 to the Children’s Health Insurance Program, call (800) 305-3064 or log on to www.state.sd.us/social/medical/chip.



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 website at www.benefitscheckup.org.

State Laws

South Dakota currently does not have any state laws in effect specifically directed at kinship care families.

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.