



# UTAH

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 Utah, there are 31,099 children living in grandparent-headed households (4.3% of all children in the state). There are another 10,817 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.5% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Utah, 13,756 are living there without either parent present.

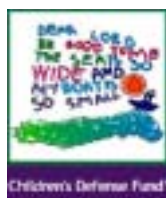
### The Grandparents

- Nationally, 2.4 million grandparents report they are responsible for their grand-children 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 Utah, 15,989 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [1,300 in Salt Lake City and 1,278 in West Valley City]: 1% of these grandparents are African American; 14% are Hispanic/Latino; 4% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; 2% are Asian; and 76% are White. 28% of these grand-parents 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](http://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/](http://www.aarp.org/families/grandparents/).

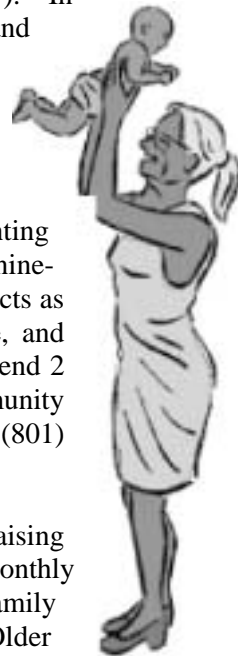
\* These data are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau Table DP-2. Profile Selected Social Characteristics:2000.



## Programs That Can Help

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- **The Utah Department of Human Services, Division of Family Services** in partnership with the Division of Aging and Adult Services is in the process of developing a number of support groups for grandparents and other relatives raising children across the state through its Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP). In addition, the RAPP is developing informational brochures, resource manuals, and Child and Family Team Kinship Information Packets to better support kinship families and building partnerships with local service providers and area agencies on aging throughout the state. *Contact:* Judy Miller, Department of Human Services, at (801) 538-4372 or judymiller@utah.gov.
- **The Children's Society of Utah** in Salt Lake City provides a support group for kinship parenting families called Grandfamilies. Services are available for caregivers and children and include nine-week information and support classes held three times each year. The classes cover such subjects as legal rights, dealing with dynamics unique to kinship families, preventing substance abuse, and parenting wounded children. The Society also provides a bi-monthly support group called Friend 2 Friend, quarterly family building activities, parenting classes, a monthly newsletter, community advocacy, and counseling for children and adults. *Contact:* Jacci Graham, Program Director, at (801) 355-7444 or Jacci@cssutah.org.
- **Jewish Family Services** in Salt Lake City offers a support group program for grandparents raising grandchildren, which consists of intensive meetings for a period of 3 to 4 weeks followed by monthly support group meetings. This family-building program is designed to enhance kinship care family relationships and address the unique issues they face. *Contact:* Robin Hersh, Director of Older Adult Services and Support Group Facilitator, at (801) 581-1330 or rhersh@jfs-ut.org.



## Children in Foster Care

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Sometimes state child welfare agencies place children in foster care with grandparents or other relatives. Most state agencies call these placements “kinship care.” In Utah, the Department of Human Services, Division of Child and Family Services reports:

**Number of children in kinship care:** As of June 2004, there were 2,182 children in kinship placements under the Department’s supervision. Of those children, 719 children were placed with relatives who became licensed service providers.

**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.

**Subsidized guardianship programs:** 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. Utah has a state-funded subsidized guardianship program that provides an ongoing permanency assistance payment to eligible kin and non-kin guardians who cannot qualify for a relative grant through TANF. The maximum monthly payment is only allowed up to the specialized foster care rate. *Contact:* Angela Oliver-Kairallah, Permanency Program Manager, Division of Child and Family Services, at (801) 538-4316 or angelakhairallah@utah.gov.

**State kinship care contact:** Questions about kinship foster care placements should be directed to Judy Miller, In-home/Kinship Program Manager, Division of Child and Family Services, at (801) 538-4372 or judymiller@utah.gov.

**Training and support for kinship foster parents:** The Utah Foster Care Foundation offers information/training and referrals to Utah kinship caregivers raising children in the foster care system. Caregivers have access to training on child development, grief and loss issues, and strategies for meeting a child’s special needs. In addition,

the Foundation also engages in policy advocacy on behalf of kinship care families and other foster families. Contact Judy Miller, In-home/Kinship Program Manager, Division of Child and Family Services, at (801) 538-4372 or judymiller@utah.gov.

## Public Benefits

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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 the Family Employment Program (FEP).

- 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 (801) 526-9760 or log on to <http://jobs.utah.gov/services/financial/fep.asp>.

**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 (801) 526-9675 or log on to <http://jobs.utah.gov/services/foodstamp/food.asp>.

**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 Utah Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under Medicaid. For more information about Medicaid or CHIP, call (800) 662-9651 (Medicaid) or [www.health.state.ut.us/html/utah\\_Medicaid.html](http://www.health.state.ut.us/html/utah_Medicaid.html) or 1-877-543-7669 (CHIP). Relative caregivers also may log on to [www.health.state.ut.us/chip/](http://www.health.state.ut.us/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](http://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](http://www.benefitscheckup.org).

## State Laws

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The following state laws may be helpful to grandparents and other relatives raising children<sup>1</sup>:

**Medical Consent (Utah CodeAnn. § 78-14-5):** This law allows a qualified adult acting in loco parentis, formally or informally, to consent to any medical care not prohibited by law, on behalf of the minor child.

**Educational Enrollment (Utah CodeAnn. § 53A-2-201(3)(A)):** This law defines a child’s school district of residence to be where custodial parent or legal guardian resides, or the school district where the child resides, if the child resides with a “responsible adult.” A responsible adult must be a resident of the district and “the noncustodial parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt” of the child. The district, however, may require the person with whom the child lives to be formally designated as the child’s custodian through a power of attorney.

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

## National Resources

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

*Fact sheets are updated quarterly. Changes or additions should be e-mailed to the AARP Grandparent Information Center at [gic@arp.org](mailto:gic@arp.org). Please write “State Fact Sheets” on your e-mail subject line.*