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 Nevada, there are 30,580 children living in grandparent-headed households (6.0% of all children in the state). There are another 14,318 children living in households headed by other relatives (2.8% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Nevada, 19,278 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 Nevada, 18,685 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [4,812 in Las Vegas and 1,292 in Reno]: 12% of these grandparents are African American; 22% are Hispanic/Latino; 5% are Asian; 2% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; and 57% are White. 33% 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

• **Grandparents as Parents of Nevada** began as a support group for Nevada grandparents and other relatives raising children. The group also provides information about public benefits and other programs available to kinship care families. More recently, the group was instrumental in the passage of Nevada’s first subsidized guardianship program for children raised by kin in the child welfare system (see the “subsidized guardianship” section below for a description of this program). **Contact:** Jane Horner, Founder, Grand-parents as Parents of Nevada, at (702) 293-0890 or rteb@cox.net.

• **Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents and the Caring Community Project** offer a wide variety of supports to kinship families. Kinship families are linked to past or present kinship caregivers who can understand their needs. Monthly support groups are held at several locations in the Las Vegas community, not only for the convenience of families but to facilitate networking with other kinship families in their own neighborhoods. The program also offers a wide variety of trainings, resource information and assistance in accessing services. **Contact:** Kinship Care Coordinator, Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents, at (702) 388-8899 or www.nvpep.org.

• **The Nevada Dual Sensory Impairment Project** is a federally funded, statewide technical assistance project. The purpose of the project is to enhance the educational services provided to children and youth, birth through 21 years, with vision and hearing impairments. The project provides statewide technical assistance to support parents and grandparents and other relatives raising children, service providers, and service agencies for children who have dual sensory impairments. Information about the project can be obtained by calling (775) 784-6471 or visiting the website at www.unr.edu/educ/ndsip.

• **The Five Eagles Corporation** supports the HUGS program in Nevada, which offers support groups across 17 counties. Aside from regular support group meetings, the program offers education through seminars and information sessions on subjects ranging from legislative issues to parenting. A website is available at www.npbdc.com. **Contact:** Linda Sapp-Cox, at (702) 649-8774 or lsappcox@npbdc.com.

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 Nevada, the Department of Human Resources, Division of Child and Family Services reports:

**Number of children in kinship care:** As of July 2005, there were 4,754 children in out-of-home placements. Of these children, 1,404 children were placed with kin, who are called “Parent-Relative Guardians” in Nevada.

**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:** Kinship caregivers are assessed based on the same standards as non-kin foster parents, but DHS may modify or waive one or more standards that do not affect the safety of the child on a case-by-case basis.

**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. Nevada recently established a subsidized guardianship program for children inside or outside of the child welfare system who have been living with a relative caregiver for at least six months. The relative caregiver must be at least 62 years of age and have legal guardianship of the child. The monthly subsidy is funded through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds and the payments are 90% of the foster care rate. (NV A.B. 15) **Contact:** Rebecca Richard-Maley, Division of Child and Family Services, at (775) 684-4450.
State kinship care contact: Questions about kinship foster placements should be directed to Rebecca Richard-Maley, Division of Child and Family Services, at (775) 684-4450.

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 (775) 684-0500 or log on to www.welfare.state.nv.us.

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 (775) 684-0500 or log on to www.welfare.state.nv.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 the Nevada Medicaid and Nevada Check Up programs. In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free health coverage. For more information about how to apply for Medicaid and the Child Health Assurance Program (CHAP), call (775) 684-0500 or log on to www.welfare.state.nv.us/. For information on the Nevada Check Up Program, call (800) 360-6044 or log on to www.welfare.state.nv.us/.

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 law may be helpful to grandparents and other relatives raising children:

Medical Consent (Nev. Rev. Stat. § 129.040): This law allows any person standing in loco parentis 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 parents or legal guardian and that person cannot be contacted; and (2) if the parents or legal guardian has not given the treatment provider notice that they oppose the treatment.

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
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.