

# GrandFacts

State fact sheets for grandparents and other relatives raising children

AARP, The Brookdale Foundation Group, Casey Family Programs, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund, and Generations United have partnered to produce state and national **GrandFacts** fact sheets for grandparents and other relatives raising children. The state fact sheets include state-specific data and programs as well as information about foster care, public benefits, educational assistance and state laws. Visit [www.grandfactsheets.org](http://www.grandfactsheets.org) to find this and all **GrandFacts** state fact sheets.

## Georgia

### The Children

- 301,254 children under age 18 live in homes where the householders are grandparents or other relatives (12.1% of the children in the state.) (*U.S. 2010 Census*)
  - Of these, 224,606 live with grandparents who are the householders (9% of the children in the state) and 76,648 live with other relatives who are the householders (3.1% of the children in the state). (*U.S. 2010 Census*)
- 116,071 children live in homes with grandparent householders where grandparents are responsible for them.\*
  - Of these children, 48,213 have no parents present in the home.\*

### The Grandparents\*

- 102,126 grandparents are the householders and are responsible for their grandchildren living with them. Of these:
  - 47% of the grandparents are White and not Hispanic, 46% are Black/African American, 1% are Asian, 4% are Hispanic/Latino, and may be of any race.
  - 41% have no parents of the children present in the home.
  - 69% are under age 60.
  - 25% live in poverty.\*\*
- 4,198 grandparents in Atlanta city and 2,191 in Columbus city are the householders and are responsible for their grandchildren living with them.

\*Comparable data are not currently available for homes where other relatives are the householders.

\*\*100% of poverty level.

Data not specifically cited are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Detailed Table B09006 and Subject Tables S1001 and S1002. Additional data on related topics and sub-state areas can be found on the Census Bureau website at <http://factfinder.census.gov>

## Programs That Can Help

Local programs that provide support, resources and assistance to grandfamilies can often be found by contacting your local school, area agency on aging, community center, faith-based organization or children's services office.

**The AARP GrandCare Support Locator** is a free online service where programs can self-list their services and resources. Search by your city, state or zip code. [www.giclocalsupport.org](http://www.giclocalsupport.org)

## Key Programs in Georgia

### Clayton County Kinship Resource Center

**Contact:** Angela Burda  
**Phone:** 770-477-3417  
**Email:** [angela.burda@co.clayton.ga.us](mailto:angela.burda@co.clayton.ga.us)  
**Service Area:** Clayton County  
**Description:** Offers support groups, case management, information/referral, computer classes, clothes closet, activities and celebrations

### Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services

**Website:** [www.dhr.georgia.gov/grg](http://www.dhr.georgia.gov/grg) - (Georgia Department of Human Services – Grandparents Raising Grandchildren)

**Service Area:** Statewide through 12 Area Agencies on Aging – contact your local agency:

- 1. Atlanta Regional Commission- AAA (Atlanta, GA)**  
Mary Lou Vergara, 404-463-3524, [mvergara@atlantaregional.com](mailto:mvergara@atlantaregional.com)
- 2. Central Savannah River Area– AAA (Augusta, GA)**  
Janice Adams, 706-650-5654, [jadams@csrarc.ga.gov](mailto:jadams@csrarc.ga.gov) and  
Mike Patton, 706-721-9626, [mpatton@mail.mcg.edu](mailto:mpatton@mail.mcg.edu)
- 3. Coastal Georgia – AAA (Brunswick, GA)**  
Marvara Green, 912-264-7363, [mgreen@crc.ga.gov](mailto:mgreen@crc.ga.gov)
- 4. Northwest Georgia- AAA (Rome, GA)**  
Julia Kimple (Grands Who Care), 706-291-8496, [jkimple@sjha.org](mailto:jkimple@sjha.org)
- 5. Legacy Link – AAA (Gainesville, GA)**  
Julia Jessee, 770-538-2650, [jjessee@legacylink.org](mailto:jjessee@legacylink.org)
- 6. Heart of Georgia – Altamaha AAA (Baxley, GA)**  
Kathy Keith, 912-367-3648, [keith@hogarc.org](mailto:keith@hogarc.org)
- 7. River Valley – AAA (Columbus, GA)**  
Katy Bridges, 706 256-2910, [kbridges@rivervalleyrcaaa.org](mailto:kbridges@rivervalleyrcaaa.org)
- 8. Middle Georgia – AAA (Macon, GA)**  
Natalie Prater, 478-751-6509, [nprater@mg-rc.org](mailto:nprater@mg-rc.org)
- 9. Northeast Georgia – AAA (Athens, GA)**  
Anne Hansen, 706-369-5650, [ahansen@negrc.org](mailto:ahansen@negrc.org)
- 10. Southern Georgia – AAA (Waycross, GA)**  
Marsha Stacy, 888-732-4464 or 912-285-6097, [mlstacy@sgrc.us](mailto:mlstacy@sgrc.us)
- 11. Southern Crescent – AAA (Franklin, GA)**  
Gloria Sanford, 706-407-0021, [gdsanford@threeriversrc.com](mailto:gdsanford@threeriversrc.com)
- 12. Southwest Georgia – AAA (Albany, GA)**  
Monica Posey, 229-432-1124, [monicarposey@gmail.com](mailto:monicarposey@gmail.com)

**Description:** Provide information and referral, support groups, and community education. Some agencies provide respite, camp scholarships, tutoring, case management and counseling, and clothing and food vouchers.

## **Grandparent/Relative Caregiver Project – Atlanta Legal Aid**

**Contact:** Lindsay Verity, Director  
**Phone:** 404-524-5811  
**Email:** [lcverity@atlantalegalaid.org](mailto:lcverity@atlantalegalaid.org)  
**Service Area:** Metro Atlanta area  
**Description:** Legal advice and representation for low-income caregivers, primarily in adoption or custody cases

## **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Publication Series – University of Georgia Cooperative Extension**

**Contact:** Diana Bales, Child and Family Development Specialist  
**Phone:** 706-542-7566  
**Email:** [dbales@uga.edu](mailto:dbales@uga.edu)  
**Website:** [www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/e.cd.php?category=Grandparents Raising Grandchildren](http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/e.cd.php?category=Grandparents Raising Grandchildren)  
**Service Area:** Statewide  
**Description:** Offers series of publications addressing parenting issues. Available in English and Spanish

## **Healthy Grandparents Program – Medical College of Georgia School of Nursing**

**Contact:** Mike Patton  
**Email:** [mpatton@mail.mcg.edu](mailto:mpatton@mail.mcg.edu)  
**Phone:** 706-721-6227  
**Service Area:** Richmond and Columbia County  
**Description:** Provides information and referral, support groups, case management, health screening, benefits counseling, and safety education

## **Jewish Family and Career Services**

**Contact:** Beth Asher, MS, Service & Assistance Coordinator  
**Phone:** 770-677-9300  
**Email:** [info@jfcs-atlanta.org](mailto:info@jfcs-atlanta.org)  
**Description:** Individual and group support/counseling

## **Kinship Care Center – Medical College of Georgia School of Nursing**

**Contact:** Mike Patton  
**Phone:** 706-721-6227  
**Email:** [mpatton@mail.mcg.edu](mailto:mpatton@mail.mcg.edu)  
**Description:** Offers support groups in Augusta, newsletter, summer respite care, legal counseling

## **Kinship Families of Dahlonega – Legacy Link, Inc.**

**Contact:** Jocelyn Joaquim, Grandparent Facilitator  
**Phone:** 706-864-2768 or 770-538-2650  
**Email:** [jaywolfsister@aol.com](mailto:jaywolfsister@aol.com)  
**Service Area:** Dahlonega  
**Description:** Offers monthly support group

## **Project GRANDD(Grandparents Raising and Nurturing Dependents with Disabilities) – Institute for the Study of Disadvantage and Disabilities**

**Contact:** Janice Nodvin  
**Phone:** 678-595-4854  
**Email:** [jnodvin@aol.com](mailto:jnodvin@aol.com)  
**Service Area:** Metro Atlanta  
**Description:** Offers case management, monthly support groups, education groups, counseling, newsletter, information and referral, training, and family events

## **Project Healthy Grandparents – Georgia State University**

**Contact:** Judy Perdue, Community Partnerships Coordinator  
**Phone:** 404-413-1118  
**Email:** [jperdue@gsu.edu](mailto:jperdue@gsu.edu)  
**Website:** [www.gsu.edu/phg](http://www.gsu.edu/phg)  
**Service Area:** City of Atlanta, South Fulton and South DeKalb Counties  
**Description:** Provide home visits, support groups, parent education classes, early intervention services, and legal service referrals

## **Project Kincare – Gainesville-Hall County Community Service Center & Legacy Link, Inc.**

**Contact:** Jenise Proctor, Program Director  
**Phone:** 770-503-3330  
**Email:** [jproctor@gainesville.org](mailto:jproctor@gainesville.org)  
**Service Area:** Hall County  
**Description:** Offer support groups, education seminars, recreational activities, individual and family counseling

## **Relative Caregiver Legal Hotline – Atlanta Legal Aid’s Senior Legal Hotline**

**Phone:** 1-888-257-9519 (toll-free)  
**Service Area:** Statewide  
**Description:** Provides legal advice. Calls accepted 9am-2pm Monday-Thursday. No income, age or geographic restrictions

## **Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) – Gordon County – Family Resource Center**

**Contact:** Carol Vedrody  
**Phone:** 706-625-3311  
**Email:** [cv\\_gcccy@bellsouth.net](mailto:cv_gcccy@bellsouth.net)  
**Service Area:** Gordon County  
**Description:** Offers monthly support group meetings, education programs, social and recreational activities

## Rockdale County Kinship Care Program – Rockdale County Senior Services

**Contact:** Georgia Oxford  
**Phone:** 770-278-7262  
**Email:** [Georgia.oxford@rockdalecounty.org](mailto:Georgia.oxford@rockdalecounty.org)  
**Service Area:** Rockdale County  
**Description:** Offers case management, support groups, information/referral, respite, recreation, parent education

## Cobb County Kinship Care Program – Cobb County Senior Services

**Contact:** Margie Castillo  
**Phone:** 770-528-5364  
**Email:** [Margie.castillo-carbaugh@cobbcounty.org](mailto:Margie.castillo-carbaugh@cobbcounty.org)  
**Service Area:** Cobb County  
**Description:** Offers monthly support groups, educational programs, information and referral

## Grandparents and Kin Raising Children (GKRC)

**Contact:** Betty Davis  
**Phone:** 770-487-9802  
**Email:** [grandbb1@comcast.net](mailto:grandbb1@comcast.net)  
**Service Area:** Fayette County  
**Description:** Offers support groups, case management, information and referral, education workshop, and family activities

## Children in Foster Care

- Sometimes state child welfare agencies place children in foster care with grandparents or other relatives. This is often called “kinship care.”
- Federal law requires states to notify all known relatives within 30 days of children’s removal from their parents.

### **In January 2011 in Georgia:**

- 7,124 children/youth spent some time in out-of-home care
- 783 of these children/youth were placed in relative/kinship care.

### **Placement Policies**

- State policy requires that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for a child under the Department’s care if the relative caregiver can provide safe environment for the child and meet all the state’s child protection standards
- There is an expedited process for licensing kinship foster parents.
- Any person applying for foster care licensing must complete 20 hours of pre-service training; 10 hours in-service training required annually for license renewal.
- Relative foster homes receive 80% of the foster care per diem.

### **Subsidized Guardianship**

In Georgia, the Relative Care Subsidy Program is available for children transferred from state custody to the permanent custody of an approved relative caregiver and for whom the court has issued a non-reunification order. Caregivers’ homes are reviewed annually by the agency and every 3 years by the court. The Relative Care Subsidy Program is supported by Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF.)

## Georgia Foster Care and Relative/Kinship Care Contacts

### Georgia Department of Family and Child Services

Post Adoption Services Programs/Adoption Assistance/RAC

Deborah Burrus

404-463-3957

Email: [deburrus@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:deburrus@dhr.state.ga.us)

<http://dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov/portal/site/DHS-DFCS>

## Public Benefits

Federal and state public benefits programs can help with income, food, healthcare, home energy, telephone and other needs for those who are eligible. Eligibility requirements vary with each public benefit and sometimes are different from state to state. Some benefits are for the family and others are for children or older adults individually. Children are often eligible for public benefits even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody. Grandparents may become eligible for benefits programs when their household size increases.

## Help with Public Benefits

### AARP Foundation's **Benefits QuickLINK**

A free and private way to find out if relatives or the children they are raising qualify for programs that pay for food, increase income and cover home and healthcare costs (listed below). It gives quick results, application forms and the address and phone number of the closest office.

[www.aarp.org/quicklink](http://www.aarp.org/quicklink)

#### Public Benefits for Older Americans:\*

- Medicare Savings Programs
- Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage
- Medicare Rx Extra Help
- State Pharmaceutical Assistance programs (SPAP)
- Medicaid for Aged, Blind, and Disabled
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)
- State Property Tax Relief/Rebates
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Telephone Assistance (Link-Up and Lifeline)

#### Public Benefits for Families Raising Children\*

- Medicaid for Children
- State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)
- TANF-Child Only Grants
- Supplemental Security Income for Children

\*Some of these programs may have age and income restrictions.

## Eldercare Locator

The National Eldercare Locator service helps you find your local area agency on aging and other state and local resources that can help with public benefits, local programs and other services for older adults.

1-800-677-1116 (toll-free)

[www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov)

## Key Public Benefits

### Income

Each state administers federal funds that provide cash assistance to families in need. Some states also offer other forms of financial assistance.

#### **Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)**

Cash assistance may be available to eligible children and their relative caregivers.

##### **Georgia Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)**

Department of Human Services- Division of Family and Children Services  
404-651-6316 or 1-800-869-1150 (toll-free)

[www.dhr.georgia.gov](http://www.dhr.georgia.gov)

To Apply: [www.compass.ga.gov](http://www.compass.ga.gov)

### Child Care

**The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Subsidized Childcare (CAPS) Program** is for low-income families in Georgia. Eligible children receive priority services without regard to program funding. Grandparents are exempt from work or training activity requirement if they are age 60 or older and or disabled.

404-657-3434

<http://dfcs.dhr.georgia.gov/caps>

### Social Security

A multigenerational program, Social Security provides income benefits to adults, older adults and children. In addition to [Retirement](#) and [Disability](#) benefits, [Survivor's Benefits](#) are based on a child's parent's earnings and may help if a child's parents die. The [Supplemental Security Income](#) (SSI) program pays benefits to disabled [adults](#) and [children](#) who have limited income and resources. SSI benefits are also payable to people 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial limits.

**Online Directory** – To find your local Social Security Administration office.

1-800-772-1213 (toll-free)

[www.socialsecurity.gov/locator](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/locator)

### Nutrition

Relative caregivers and their families may be eligible for assistance with groceries, meals, infant formula and nutrition education. These are some of the key nutrition benefits programs and resources.

#### **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

SNAP is the new name for the federal Food Stamp Program. It helps low-income individuals and families buy the food they need for good health. Although SNAP is the national name, your state may use a different name.

##### **Georgia Food Stamps**

Department of Human Services- Division of Family and Children Services  
404-651-6316 or 1-800-869-1150 (toll-free)

[www.dhr.georgia.gov](http://www.dhr.georgia.gov)

To Apply: [www.compass.ga.gov](http://www.compass.ga.gov)

## **Food and Nutrition Services of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

- **Child Nutrition Program** - The schools, early childhood education programs, child care centers, afterschool programs or other programs that children attend may offer free or reduced meals through the federal Child Nutrition Program, which provides breakfast, lunch, snacks, summer meals and milk. Contact the school or program to ask if they participate in any of the child nutrition programs and ask how to apply. Relative caregivers should inform the program that they are raising the child and whether or not they are doing so through a court order.

**Online State Directory** - To find your state office that manages the Child Nutrition program.

[www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm)

- **Women, Infant and Children (WIC)** - States administer federal funds for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

**Online State Directory** - To find your state office that manages the WIC program.

[www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Contacts/statealpha.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Contacts/statealpha.htm)

**Foodbanks** - Organizations that provide free food and sometimes other items, such as diapers to families in need. Feeding America is an organization that fights hunger and has a food bank locator.

**Online State Directory** - To find local food banks.

1-800-771-2303 (toll-free)

[www.feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx](http://www.feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx)

## **Health Care**

Relative caregivers and the children they are raising may be eligible for health insurance and help with prescription drugs. [Benefits QuickLINK](#) can help you find these benefits.

### **Health Insurance for Children**

Relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health and dental insurance for the children they are raising through the federal Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Although CHIP is the national name, your state may use a different name.

#### **Georgia Medicaid**

Georgia Department of Community Health

1-800-809-7276 (toll-free)

<http://dch.georgia.gov>

#### **Peachcare for Kids**

Department of Community Health

Phone: 1-877-GAPEACH (427-3224) (toll-free)

[www.peachcare.org](http://www.peachcare.org)



## Education

- **U.S. Department of Education** - Offers a [Parent Site](#) that has a wide range of helpful information for parents *and* caregivers regarding children's education from early childhood through college, special needs, disabilities, language challenges and gifted students.  
1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327 – toll-free)  
[www.ed.gov/parents](http://www.ed.gov/parents)
- **State Department of Education** - Relative caregivers may find helpful information about the education of children they are raising  
**Georgia Department of Education**  
404-656-2800 or 800- 311-3627 (GA)  
Email: [askdoe@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:askdoe@doe.k12.ga.us)  
[www.doe.k12.ga.us](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us)

## Educational Enrollment

Relative caregivers can contact their local school district's administrative office or their local school to find out how to register the child and what paperwork is needed. Caregivers may need birth records, health records or previous school records. Some states have laws that allow relative caregivers to enroll children they are raising in school. These laws are often called "education consent" laws, but may be called something else in your state.

### **Grandfamilies State Law and Policy Resource Center**

**Online Directory** - To find out if your state has an education consent law.

[www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org)

## Early Intervention, Special Education and Related Services

### What you need to know:

- **The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)** - From birth to age 21, children who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities or other special needs may be able to get special early intervention, preschool and special education services in school through the federal IDEA. Services may include speech, physical, and occupational therapies.
- **Child Find** – A part of the IDEA that requires states to identify, locate and evaluate children in the areas of cognitive and physical functioning, hearing and vision, speech and language and social and emotional development as early as possible. Once the Child Find evaluation team, which includes a child's caregivers, has decided if a child is eligible for early intervention or preschool special education services, an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP; birth to three years of age) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP; three to five years of age) is developed and services begin shortly at no cost.

### Where to find help for children with special needs:

- **Special Education Services and Supports** - Georgia Department of Education  
Debbie Gay  
404-656-3963  
Email: [dgay@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:dgay@doe.k12.ga.us)  
[www.doe.k12.ga.us/ci\\_exceptional.aspx](http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/ci_exceptional.aspx)

- **Georgia Learning Resources Center**  
1-800-282-7552  
[www.glrs.org/location.htm](http://www.glrs.org/location.htm)
- **The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities** guides caregivers to organizations and resources in each state and offers both English and Spanish language information.  
**Online State Directory** – To find state and other disability organizations in your state.  
1-800-695-0285 (toll-free)  
[www.nichcy.org/pages/statespecificinfo.aspx](http://www.nichcy.org/pages/statespecificinfo.aspx)
- **Parent Centers** across the country provide information to help parents *and* caregivers with children who have special education needs and disabilities.  
**Online State Directory** – To find Parent Centers in your state.  
National Parent Technical Assistance Center 1-888-248-0822 (toll-free)  
[www.parentcenternetwork.org/parentcenterlisting](http://www.parentcenternetwork.org/parentcenterlisting)

## Early Childhood Education

- **Head Start and Early Head Start** – Early education programs for eligible children.  
**Online Directory** – To find Head Start or Early Head Start centers in your state.  
1-866-763-6481 (toll-free)  
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>
- **The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)** - Information, resources and connection to local Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies (CCR&R) that help you find local child care through the Child Care Aware program.  
**Online Directory** – To find your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency.  
1-800-424-2246 (toll-free)  
[www.childcareaware.org/parents-and-guardians](http://www.childcareaware.org/parents-and-guardians)

## Educational Activities

**Verizon Thinkfinity** - Support a child's success in school with fun learning activities and interactive games you can do together using this free online resource.

[www.thinkfinity.org](http://www.thinkfinity.org)

## GrandFacts Updates

If you have an update or a resource to be included in this or any of the other GrandFacts fact sheets, please visit [www.grandfactsheets.org](http://www.grandfactsheets.org) to submit updates or email [grandfacts@aarp.org](mailto:grandfacts@aarp.org). Fact sheets are updated regularly.

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