

# GrandFacts

## A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



The Brookdale Foundation  
Group  
www.brookdalefoundation.org



## Arkansas

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The AARP Foundation, The Brookdale Foundation Group, Casey Family Programs, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund, and Generations United have partnered to produce fact sheets for grandparents and other relatives raising children that include state-specific data, programs, and public policies. This and other state fact sheets can be viewed and printed from the website at [www.grandfactsheets.org](http://www.grandfactsheets.org). Fact sheets are updated annually. Updates can be sent directly from the website via email. Please write "State Fact Sheets" on your Email subject line.

### In Arkansas...

- 50,286 children are living in grandparent-headed households (7.4% of all children in the state). There are another 11,881 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.7% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Arkansas, 30,111 are living there without either parent present.
- 33,618 grandparents report they are responsible for grandchildren living with them [2,271 in Little Rock]: 33% of these grandparents are African American; 2% are Hispanic/Latino; and 62% are White. 45% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 71% are under the age of 60; 22% live in poverty.
- Additional data on grandparents raising children are available from the United States Census at <http://factfinder.census.gov> or <http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/phc-t17.html>

### Programs That Can Help

#### Arkansas AARP

**Contact:** Susan Keuhner, Associate State Director  
**Phone:** 501-217-1625 (cell 501-258-7732)  
**Email:** [skuehner@aarp.org](mailto:skuehner@aarp.org)  
**Website:** [www.aarp.org/ar](http://www.aarp.org/ar)  
**Service Area:** Statewide  
**Services Offered:**

- Information/referral

## Arkansas Voices for Children Left Behind, Inc.

**Address:** 3700 Kavanaugh Blvd. Little Rock, AR 72205  
**Contact:** Dee Ann Newel (P: 501-603-0244)  
**Phone:** 1-866-9-VOICES Staffed 9-4 weekdays  
**Email:** [deeannlr@aol.com](mailto:deeannlr@aol.com)  
**Website:** [www.arkansasvoices.org](http://www.arkansasvoices.org)  
**Service Area:** Statewide

### Services Offered:

- Support groups meet weekly in Little Rock, Forrest City, Helena, Fayetteville
- Support groups for children
- Family reunification services
- Weekend camps
- Tutoring, counseling, family literacy
- Respite care
- Legal services
- Leadership and advocacy training
- Demonstration project for grandparents receiving assistance through TANF-child only
- Relative Caregiver Resource Center – Little Rock

## Grandparents As Parents Share and Care Group (GAP)

**Sponsoring Organization** Center for Effective Parenting, Arkansas Parent Information Resource  
**Contact:** Suzann Dahl Hernandez  
**Phone:** 479-751-6168 or 1-800-727-3680  
**Email:** [shernand@jtlshop.jonesnet.org](mailto:shernand@jtlshop.jonesnet.org)  
**Website:** [www.parenting-ed.org](http://www.parenting-ed.org)  
**Service Area:** Northwest Arkansas

### Services Offered:

- GAP meets first Tuesday of each month at Jones Center in Springdale (childcare provided)
- Resources available online
- Guest speakers

## Targeting Our People's Priorities with Services, Inc. (TOPPS)

**Contact:** Annette Dove  
**Phone:** 870-534-5078  
**Email:** [ToppsINcDove@aol.com](mailto:ToppsINcDove@aol.com)  
**Service Area:** Jefferson, Prairie Counties

### Services Offered:

- Educational and literacy activities
- Child care
- Case management

## Children in Foster Care

### Numbers

- 3,468 children in out-of-home placements under the supervision of Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services. Of these children, 8 were placed with kin. (March 2006)

## Preferences

- State preference is to place the child with relatives. All children must be placed in a licensed or approved foster home.

## Kinship care licensing

- 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.
- State may waive or modify the space requirements for kinship foster parents on a case-by-case basis.

## Subsidized guardianship programs

- Arkansas has approved a subsidized guardianship program for kinship care but it is not yet funded.

## State kinship care contact

- Ed Wallace, Foster Care Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services
  - Phone: 501 - 682-1569
  - Email: [ed.wallace@arkansas.gov](mailto:ed.wallace@arkansas.gov)

## Public Benefits

Children are often eligible for state and federal benefits even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody.

## Financial Assistance

- Cash assistance may be available to children and their grandparents and other relative caregivers through the Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) program.
- Contact
  - Phone: 800-482-8988
  - Web: [www.arkansas.gov/dhs/dco/](http://www.arkansas.gov/dhs/dco/).

## Food Stamps

- Kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet their children's food and nutrition needs.
- Contact
  - Phone: 501-682-1469 or 800-482-8988
  - Web: [www.arkansas.gov/dhs/dco/](http://www.arkansas.gov/dhs/dco/).

## Health Insurance

- Grandparents and other relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health insurance on behalf of the children in their care through Arkansas' ARKids First Program. Some caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under the state's Medicaid program.
- ARKids First:
  - Phone: 888-474-8275
  - Web: [www.arkidsfirst.com/](http://www.arkidsfirst.com/)
- Medicaid
  - Phone: 800-482-8988

## Benefits QuickLINK

- Screens you and/or the children you are raising for 15 major public benefits for older adults and families with children
  - Web: [www.aarp.org/quicklink](http://www.aarp.org/quicklink)

## Other Benefits – child care, disabilities, special education, older adult benefits, etc.

- Children's Defense Fund benefit guides for grandparents and other relatives for information about state and federal benefits.
  - Phone: 202-662-3568
  - Web: [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org) (Kinship Care Resource Kit)
- National Council on Aging – Benefits CheckUp
  - Web: [www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org)

## State Laws

The following state laws may be helpful to grandparents and other relatives raising children. Laws change and are subject to different interpretations. These general descriptions are not intended as legal advice in any particular situation.

### Standby Guardianship (ARK Code §28-65-221)

- Any parent chronically ill or near death may nominate a standby guardian to be legally responsible for his or her child. The parent and guardian share legal authority.

### Incarceration Prevention (ARK Code §9-30-102 et seq.)

- Services to prevent child abuse and neglect and prevent children of prisoners from future incarceration. Funds are available for support programs for the caregivers of children whose parent is incarcerated in a detention or correctional facility.

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