

GrandFacts

A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children

Illinois

October 2007



The Brookdale Foundation
Group
www.brookdalefoundation.org



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. Fact sheets are updated annually. Updates can be sent directly from the website via email. Please write "State Fact Sheets" on your e-mail subject line.

In Illinois...

- There are 213, 465 children living in grandparent-headed households (6.6% of all children in the state). There are another 75,362 children living in households headed by other relatives (2.3% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Illinois, 119,676 are living there without either parent present.
- 103,717 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [41,328 in Chicago and 1,576 in Rockford]: 41% of these grandparents are African American; 16% are Hispanic/Latino; 2% are Asian; and 39% are White. 28% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 76% are under the age of 60; 12% 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

Area Agency on Aging –Cook County – Age Options

Contact: Sarah Stein
Phone: 708-383-0258
Email: sarah.stein@ageoptions.org
Web: www.ageoptions.org
Service area: Cook County area

Area Agency on Aging –Cook County – Age Options – cont.

Services offered:

- Information, resources, referrals, support groups
- Training and education
- Legal services through Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago
- Other services through network of 14 community-based agencies

Area Agency on Aging - Lincolnland

Contact: Debbie Deopere

Phone: 217-787-9234

Email: DDeopere@aginglinc.org

Service area: Cass, Christian, Greene, Jersey, Logan, Macoupin, Mason, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, Sangamon and Scott counties

Services offered:

- Respite
- Gap-filling
- Outreach, education and training

Area Agency on Aging – Central Illinois

Contact: Cathi Sipes, Caregiver Specialist

Phone: 309-674-2071

Email: cathi@ciaoa.com

Service area: Fulton, Marshall, Peoria, Stark, Tazewell and Woodford counties

Services offered:

- Support groups
- Outreach, training
- Respite

Area Agency on Aging - East Central Illinois

Contact: Susan Real

Phone: 309-829-2065

Email: sreal@eciaaa.org

Service area: Champaign, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Iroquois, Livingston, Macon, McLean, Moultrie, Piatt, Shelby and Vermillion counties

Services offered:

- Outreach and training
- Advocacy
- Gap-filling

Area Agency on Aging - Chicago

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program: Support for Parenting the Second Time Around

Sponsoring Organization: Chicago Department on Aging
Contact: Barbara Bouie-Scott,
Deputy Commissioner for Community Services
Phone: 312-742-4542
Email: bbouiescott@cityofchicago.org
Service area: Chicago
Services offered:

- Information, resources, referrals, advocacy, city-wide Task Force
- Family and individual counseling
- Benefits determinations for older Illinoisans
- Support groups in Avalon Park, Roseland, Englewood, West Englewood, Near West Side, Austin, Auburn Gresham, West Town

Area Agency on Aging - Egyptian

Contact: John M. Smith, Executive Director
Phone: 618-985-8311
Email: egyptianaaa@midamer.net
Service area: Alexander, Franklin, Gallatin, Hardin, Jackson, Johnson, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union and Williamson counties

Services offered:

- Gap-filling

Area Agency on Aging - Northeastern Illinois

Contact: Donna Copeland-Hill
Phone: 630-293-5990
Email: dchcaregiving@ageguide.org
Service area: DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will counties

Services offered:

- Information, referral, support groups, counseling, training
- Gap-filling
- Legal Assistance

Area Agency on Aging - Northwestern Illinois

Contact: Teresa Colvin
Phone: 815-226-4901
Email: tcolvin@nwilaaa.org
Service area: Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, JoDaviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside and Winnebago counties

Services offered:

- Support groups, educational programs, referrals
- Respite, gap-filling

Area Agency on Aging - Southeastern Illinois

Contact: Rita Thacker
Phone: 618-262-2306
Email: seiaoa_rita@verizon.net
Service area: Crawford, Edwards, Hamilton, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne and White counties

Services offered:

- Gap-filling

Caregiver Support Services

Sponsoring Organization: Family Service Senior Resource Center
Contact: Roxanna Webb, Caregiver Advisor
Phone: 217-352-5100
Email: rwebb@familyservicecc.org
Service area: Champaign and Piatt Counties

Services offered:

- Information, resources, referrals, advocacy

Children's Home and Aid Society of Illinois

Contact: Lisa Durzo
Phone: 618-452-8900 x112
Email: Ldurzo@swchasi.org
Service area: Bond, Clinton, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair and Washington counties

Services offered:

- Case management, respite care
- Emergency gap-filling funds
- Annual conference for caregivers and children
- Support groups in Belleville, Maryville and East St. Louis

Family Matters Program

Sponsoring Organization: Center for Law and Social Work
Contact: Dana L. Corman, JD, LCSW
Phone: 312-786-6000
Email: danacorman@aol.com
Service area: Chicago and Cook County

Family Matters Program – cont.

Services offered:

- Secure legal care and custody backup planning for grandparents caring for grandchildren who were formerly under state care
- Short term guardianship forms
- Standby and permanent guardianships
- Standby adoptions
- Subsidy reviews and negotiations
- Legal and social work services provided in home or in office
- Services provided at no cost to older or ill caregivers raising children formerly under the care of the state and at low cost to others
- FREE presentations to groups about Center services and legal options

GRANDFamilies Program of Chicago: Generations Creating a LegacySM

Sponsoring Program: GRANDFamilies Program of Chicago

Contact: Vivian Price

Phone: 1-888-GRAND-03

Email: info@grandfamilieschicago.org

Website: www.grandfamilieschicago.org

Service Area: Chicago Area

Services Offered:

- Resource and support center dedicated to meeting the needs of grandparents raising grandchildren.
- Empowerment Network (monthly grandparent support groups)
- Information and Assistance
- Intake/Case Management/Service coordination
- Referrals for counseling and legal assistance
- Short-term emergency financial assistance
- Housing assistance
- Respite
- Advocacy
- Speakers bureau

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program

Sponsoring Organization: Illinois State Department on Aging

Contact: Barb Schwartz, Project Director

Phone: 217-524-5327

Email: barb.schwartz@illinois.gov

Website: <http://www.state.il.us/aging>

Service area: Statewide

Services offered:

- Information, resources, referrals, advocacy, training, funding
- Senior Help Line 1-800-252-8966
- Email listserv
- TIP sheets/support group list/resource guide available at website
- Statewide and Chicago Task Force active on kinship care issues

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group

Sponsoring Organization: Evanston/Skokie Valley Senior Services
Contact: Mary Signator or Jolene Whiting
Phone: 847-864-3721
Service area: Evanston/Skokie Valley
Services offered:

- Information, resources, referrals
- Support and recreational activities
- Support group meets monthly

Guardianship Assistance Desk for Minors

Sponsoring Organization: Circuit Court of Cook County; Chicago Volunteer Legal Services
Contact: Rose Hale, Circuit Court of Cook County
Phone: 312-603-0135
Service area: Cook County
Services offered:

- Help in filing for guardianship in probate court
- Help in obtaining a TANF child-only grant (see financial assistance below)
- Help accessing other kinship care services

Guardianship Advocacy Program

Sponsoring Organization: The Parent Place
Contact: Christi Clifton
Phone: 217-546-5257
Email: theparentplace.christi@insightbb.com
Service area: Sangamon County
Services offered:

- Trained grandparent advocate at Office of the County Clerk – available 2 hours a day by appointment or walk-in to assist with paperwork, questions, referrals

Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago

Contact: Rich Cozzola
Phone: 312-341-1070
Email: rcozzola@lafchicago.org
Service area: Cook County
Services offered:

- Legal Assistance

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

Contact: Marilyn Hammond, Prisoner & Family Ministries Connections Coordinator
Phone: 312-567-9242 x18
Email: Marilyn.Hammond@lssi.org
Service area: Chicago area

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois – cont.

Services offered:

- Transportation for visits by children and caregivers to mothers in prison
- Support group for caregivers during these visits
- Resources and referrals

Macon County Relatives as Parents Program

Sponsoring Organization: University of Illinois Extension/Macon County,
Macon County Mental Health Board; Brookdale Foundation's Relatives as
Parents Initiative

Contact: Teresa Easterly-Adams

Phone: 217-877-6042

Email: easterly@uiuc.edu

Service area: Macon County

Services offered:

- Support group
- Information and referrals

Marion County Senior Services

Sponsoring Organization: Effingham County Committee on Aging

Contact: Kay Crooks, Coordinator

Phone: 618-533-4300

Email: kcrooks@eccoa.info

Service area: Marion and surrounding counties

Services offered:

- Information, resources, referrals, advocacy
- Support group (includes recreational activities in summer)
- Limited financial assistance

Mid-Illinois Senior Services

Contact: Kim Adamson

Phone: 217-728-8521

Email: kadamson@cebridge.net

Service area: Douglas, Moultrie and Shelby counties

Services offered:

- Support groups, advocacy, referrals
- Gap-filling
- Legal assistance

Sankofa Safe Child Initiative

Contact: Addie Celina Chandler
Phone: 773-542-8634
Email: wsafechild@sbcglobal.net
Service area: Austin, Lawndale, Chicago South Side, Garfield
Services offered:

- Information, referral
- 24-hour Helpline (1-877-838-9377)
- Home visits
- Support groups
- Case management

Senior Services Associates, Inc.

Sponsoring Organization: Northwestern Illinois Area Agency on Aging
Contact: Roxanne Walston o Kathy Nelson
Phone: 847-741-0404
Email: admin@seniorservicesassoc.org
Web: www.seniorservicesassoc.org
Service area: Kane, Kendall and McHenry Counties
Services offered:

Services Offered:

- Information and referral
- Respite care funds
- Emergency support
- Education (Powerful Tools for Caregivers)
- Range of services for senior citizens

The Parent Place

Contact: Christi Clifton
Phone: 217-546-5257
Email: theparentplace.christi@insightbb.com
Service area: Sangamon County
Services offered:

- Support group
- Information, referral, advocacy, respite and gap-filling

Children in Foster Care

Numbers – September 2007

- 15,776 children in substitute care under supervision of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).
- Of these children, 6,031 were in kinship foster care.

Preferences

- Placements should be consistent with the best interest, safety and special needs of a child. This may include placement with relatives
- There is no separate licensing program for kinship foster parents. Relatives must meet the same licensing standards and receive the same foster care payment rate as non-kin foster parents. A relative can be a non-licensed foster parent if certain safety standards are met and can receive 100% of the “standard of need” payment. The “standard of need” payment is more than a TANF child-only grant, but is lower than a foster care board payment.
- Extended Family Support Program (EFSP) provides services to kinship care families through collaboration with the probate court, the Department of Public Aid, the State Central Register and the public schools. The focus of the program is short-term, home stabilization to help relatives provide quality care. The program provides a small cash allowance and assists families in obtaining guardianship, getting public aid and enrolling in school.

Subsidized guardianship

- Subsidy for children who have been transferred from DCFS’s custody to the guardianship of a relative caregiver. The subsidy rate is the same as the state’s foster care and adoption subsidy rates.
- Eligible children include children who are living with kin, have been living in the home of the caregiver for one year and have been in the DCFS system for one year. Children over age 12 not living with kin are also eligible. DCFS must rule out return home and adoption before a child is eligible for this program. This program is a special project support by the federal government. Other criteria limit eligibility. Eligibility should be discussed with a child’s caseworker.
- Post-guardianship program is also available to provide resources and referrals as needed.
- Contact: June Dorn, Project Director, Subsidized Guardianship
 - Phone: 312-841-6800
 - Email: June.Dorn@illinois.gov

State kinship care information

- Foster Care Contact: John Egan, Coordinator
 - Phone: 312-814-1878
- Guardianship Contact: Mary Sue Morsch, Deputy Director of Placement and Permanency
 - Phone: 312 - 814-8626
 - Email: MarySue.Morsch@illinois.gov

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 who live with a relative through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program.
 - Phone: 800-834-6154
 - Web: www.state.il.us/agency/dhs

Child Care

- If a relative caregiver is working and the child in their care receives the TANF financial assistance, the caregiver is eligible for child care subsidy.
 - Phone: 800-379-7406
 - Web: www.ilchildcare.org

Food Stamps

- Kinship care families may be eligible for food stamps to help meet their children's food and nutrition needs.
 - Phone: 800-843-6154
 - Web: www.dhs.state.il.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 Illinois' All Kids program. Caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under Medicaid. For more information about how to apply for these programs
 - Phone: 866-255-5437
 - Web: www.allkidscovered.com

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

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 (Kinship Care Resource Kit)
- National Council on Aging – Benefits CheckUp www.benefitscheckup.org

State Laws

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

Standby Guardianship

IL Rev. Stat Ch. 755 § 5/11a-3.1

- Allows a parent to designate a standby guardian to assume the day-to-day care of a child in the event of a parent's inability to function as a parent. It does not limit the rights of other living parents.

Grandparent Visitation Act

Public Act 94-1026

- Amends the Illinois Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act. Provides that grandparents, great-grandparents and siblings of a minor child may petition the court for visitation in the county in which the child resides if the custodial parent denies visitation and the other parent is deceased, missing for 3 months or more, incompetent as a matter of law, or incarcerated for 3 months; the parents are divorced or legally separated or there is a pending dissolution proceeding involving custody or visitation of the child.

Relative Placement Act

Public Act 94-0880

- Provides that the Department may place a child with a relative if it determines that the relative will be able to adequately provide for the child's safety and welfare and if the placement is consistent with the child's best interests.
- The Department shall make reasonable efforts to identify and locate a relative who is ready, willing, and able to care for the child and these efforts are to be renewed each time the child requires a placement change.

Tuition Assistance Act

Public Act 94-0968

- Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act to provide that a person is entitled to a renewable, \$1,000.00 grant for each year he or she is enrolled full-time at an institution of higher learning.
- Students must be in the legal custody of their grandparent, receive public assistance under the Illinois Public Aid Code, graduated from high school with a cumulative grade point average of at least a 2.7 on a 4.0 scale, and be recommended by their high school principal.

Disclaimer:

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