

GrandFacts

A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children

Iowa

December 2007



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. Fact sheets are updated annually. Updates can be sent to gic@aarp.org. This and other state fact sheets can be viewed and printed from www.grandfactsheets.org. Please write "State Fact Sheets" on your e-mail subject line.

In Iowa...

- 22,985 children live in grandparent-headed households (3.1% of all the children in the state). There are another 6,312 children living in households headed by other relatives (.9% of all the children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Iowa, 11,230 are living there without either parent present.
- 13,073 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them (1,484 in Des Moines): 6% of these grandparents are African American; 4% are Hispanic/Latino; 1% are Asian; 1% are American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 85% are White. 42% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 73% are under the age of 60; 11% 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

Iowa Department of Elder Affairs (DEA)

Contact: Nicki Stajcar, Consumer Protection Advocate
Phone: 515-725-3320
Email: nicki.stajcar@iowa.gov
Web: <http://www.state.ia.us/elderaffairs/>
Service area: Statewide

Services offered:

- Information/referral to support groups, public benefits and other government Services; services provided to people age 55 and above

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - Muscatine

Sponsoring Organization: Muscatine Community Y (Brookdale Relatives as Parents Program)
Contact: Diana Broderson, Program Director
Phone: 563-263-9996
Email: dbroderson@muscatiney.org
Web: www.muscatiney.org
Service area: Muscatine area

Services offered:

- Support group
- Individual and group counseling
- Educational seminars
- Group recreational activities
- Legal and medical guidance
- Free child care and transportation to all meetings

Children in Foster Care

State child welfare agencies sometimes place children in foster care with grandparents or other relatives. Most state agencies call these placements “kinship care.”

Numbers – September 2007

- 8,087 children in out-of-home placements under the supervision of the Iowa Department of Human Services, Division of Child and Family Services.
- 1,634 of these children were placed with relatives.

Preferences

- State policy requires that kinship care be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought.

Kinship care licensing

- No separate licensing for kinship foster parents.
- Same licensing standards and training requirements as non-kin foster parents.
- Same foster care payment rate.
- Kinship foster care contact: Heather Davidson, Foster Care and Adoptive Care Manager
 - Phone: 515-242-5215
 - Email: hdavids@dhs.state.ia.us

Subsidized guardianship Iowa Subsidized Guardianship Title IV-E Waiver Program

- Five-year demonstration project started in 2006
- Provides financial assistance to guardians of eligible children who are not able to return home and are not able to be adopted.
- Assistance will be provided to eligible children until they reach the age of 18.
- Permits the use of federal Title IV-E foster care money for subsidized guardianships.
- More details at http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/policyanalysis/PolicyManualPages/Manual_Documents/Letters/Circular/56_Z-472-CFS.pdf or http://dhs.iowa.gov/docs/Subsidized_Guardianship.pdf (Facts and Myths)
- Contact county/tribal agency social worker to apply (http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/Consumers/Find_Help/MapLocations.html)

Public Benefits

Children are often eligible for state and federal benefits even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody. To access information on resources and support services for your area, click on your county at <http://www3.irisoft.com/iowa/>.

Financial Assistance

- Cash assistance may be available to children and their relative caregivers through Iowa's Family Investment Program (FIP).
 - Phone: 800-972-2017 or 515-281-6899
 - Web: www.dhs.state.ia.us/dhs2005/dhs_homepage/financial_support

Food Stamps

- Kinship care families may be eligible for food stamps.
 - Phone: 1-877-YES-FOOD or 1-877-937-3663
 - Web: <http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/>

Health Insurance

- Relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health insurance through Medicaid or HAWK-1 (Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa)
 - Phone: 800-257-8563
 - Web: www.hawk-i.org

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

Iowa Code § 633.560

- Allows a parent to designate in writing a standby guardian to take over the day-to-day care of a child without limiting the rights of other living parents

Open Educational Enrollment

Iowa Code § 282.18

- Allows caregiver to enroll child in a public school in a district where the parent or guardian does not reside (under certain circumstances)

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