



OREGON

A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



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The Brookdale
Foundation



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 Oregon, there are 37,536 children living in grandparent-headed households (4.4% of all children in the state). There are another 14,081 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 Oregon, 20,735 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 Oregon, 22,103 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [3,112 in Portland]: 3% of these grandparents are African American; 9% are Hispanic/Latino; 3% are Asian; 3% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; and 79% are White. 40% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 69% are under the age of 60; 13% live in poverty.

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.cen2000/briefs.html.
- Additional national and state data on grandparents raising children is available on AARP's website at www.aarp.org/grandparents.

* These data are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau Table DP-2. Profile Selected Social Characteristics: 2000.



Programs That Can Help

- ***The Oregon State University (OSU) Extension Family and Community Development Program***, in collaboration with the Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) at the state (Oregon Seniors and People with Disabilities) and regional (Mid-Willamette Valley Senior Services Agency) levels, has established a statewide Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) Task Force composed of various social service agency representatives. *The Oregon Legal Guide for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children* was produced through a collaborative effort by OSU, AARP, the Department of Human Services, and other members of the statewide Task Force and is available to relative caregivers free of charge by calling their local county extension office. OSU has sponsored several educational events and conferences for grandparent caregivers and has developed a statewide network of support groups. They are in the process of developing the *Oregon Resource Guide for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children*. *Contact:* Sally Bowman, OSU Extension Family and Community Development Program, at (541) 737-1020 or bowmans@oregonstate.edu, or Debbie Foote, Community Resource Coordinator, Department of Human Services, District 2 at (503)872-5586 or Debbie.foote@state.or.us.
- ***The Center for Family and Adolescent Research (CFAR)*** in downtown Portland offers free counseling to help qualifying parents/caregivers engage treatment-refusing youth (ages 15-20) in their free outpatient drug treatment program. Clients receive between 12 and 26 one-hour, weekly outpatient sessions and can be assisted with transportation costs. Services are provided as part of a study funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Families contribute to CFAR's research efforts by participating in pretreatment and follow-up assessments. *Contact:* Erica Finstad, Project Manager at (503) 243-1065 or cfarportland@ori.org.
- ***Grandparents ROCK (Raising our Children's Kids)*** is a support group for relatives raising children that meets at the Faith Lutheran Church in North Bend on the last Friday of each month at 5:30 pm. Child care is provided and dinner is available. Speakers are invited and grandparents and other relatives receive information about issues they are confronting raising children. *Contact:* Char Luther at (541)266-0806 or ckluther@hotmail.com.
- ***Grandparents as Parents of Klamath County*** provides individual peer support, workshops and training, support groups, advocacy, education services, legal referrals and information services to grandparents and other relatives raising children. Support groups run based on interest in the community. *Contact:* Lloyd King, Director at (877)215-4576 or lvking@cvc.net.
- ***Old Mill Center for Children and Families*** in Corvallis sponsors the Kinship Care Group, an education and support group for relatives raising their relative children. The group meets weekly, on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. for three 9-week sessions during the school year. There is no fee for the group and child care is also provided free of charge. The group is facilitated by Katy Trautman, MA, Marriage & Family Therapist. Registration is required prior to group attendance. The website is www.oldmillcenter.org. *Contact:* Katy Trautman at 541-757-2027 or CapstoneCoach@peak.org.
- ***The North Clackamas Family Support Center (part of the North Clackamas School District)*** has established a Relatives as Parents Program in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), Clackamas Branch, and the Gladstone Park Seventh Day Adventist Church, holds a monthly Grandparents Raising Grandchildren support group at the church. Each support group meeting ends with a potluck dinner at the church. *Contact:* Kristin Kinnie at (503) 353-5663 or kinniek@nclack.k12.or.us.
- ***Urban League Adult and Senior Services*** provides support groups on the second Tuesday of every month, information, and referrals for kinship care families in Portland. Staff travels throughout the state to speak about issues affecting kinship care families. The organization also offers legal services to eligible kinship care providers ages 60 and over. *Contact:* D'Norgia Price, Director, at (503) 280-2638 or dprice@ulpdx.org.
- ***The Swindells Center (Providence Child Center)*** offers families and friends of children with disabilities information, training and resources at no cost. The Swindells Center has a full lending library, parenting education classes, professional speaker series and much more. *Contact:* Anne Faraceno, Coordinator at 503.215.2429 or swindells@providence.org.

- **Grandfamilies of Yamhill County** offers support groups in collaboration with Family & Youth Services of Yamhill County in two of its chapters. The McMinnville Chapter meets at the Family and Youth Services Office in the early afternoon. The contact is Patti Sullivan at (503)472-1938 or Patti_778@msn.com. The Newberg Chapter meets in the evenings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Newberg Christian Center. Contact: Jim and Lilly Pinneo at (503)537-0458 or jspinneo@netscape.net. For more information contact Wilma and Gene Ludwig at (503) 434-5586 or Eugene.ludwig@verizon.net.
- **YWCA North Center** runs a monthly support and activist group for grandparents raising grandchildren in the Portland-St. John's area. The organization collaborates with Urban League of Portland and Lifespan Respite network for speakers and training. The organization also provides special workshops for kinship care families. *Contact:* Abby Kennedy, Program Coordinator, at (503) 721-6779 or abbyk@YWCA-pdx.org.
- **The Oregon Lifespan Respite Care Program** assists counties in developing and implementing community-based Lifespan Respite Care networks. The network offers families a break from their caregiving responsibilities. The Lifespan networks help families and caregivers locate respite care services in their communities, offering individually-tailored care to each family as needed. Some of the services offered include: providing respite-related information and access to services, recruitment and training of paid and volunteer providers, and linking families with respite payment resources. More information about this program including a list of county Lifespan locations and phone numbers can be found at www.oregon.gov/DHS/spd/caregiving/ls_respite.shtml. *Contact:* Judy Bowen at (503) 373-1842 or Judy.Bowen@state.or.us.

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 Oregon, the Department of Human Services, Children, Adults, and Families refers to these individuals as “relative caregivers” and reports:

Number of children in kinship care: During federal fiscal year 2006, Oregon had an average daily population of 7,734 children in family foster care. Of these children, 2,358 were in placements with relatives.

Preferences for kinship care: State policy requires that relatives be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for a child under the Department's care.

Kinship care licensing: Relatives have to meet the same standards as non-relative foster parents. Relatives caring for children who are eligible for federal IV-E foster care funding receive a foster care payment. Relatives caring for children who are not eligible for this federal funding are eligible to receive a Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) payment.

Subsidized guardianship programs: In addition to foster care payments and other benefits available to relatives raising children in foster care, some states also have subsidized guardianship programs. Oregon offers Guardianship Assistance under a Title IV-E Demonstration Project. This project will operate through April 30, 2009. This program provides ongoing subsidies and medical coverage for Title IV-eligible children of caregivers that choose to become permanent guardians of children from the foster care system. The Guardianship Assistance Program is only available to children who are entitled to federal IV-E foster care funding. The program provides monthly payments up to the amount granted for foster care families for children up to age 18 for as long as the child remains under the care of the family. Other benefits may include cash, Medicaid coverage, and non-recurring legal costs.. Individual Guardianship Assistance is subject to a case review annually. *Contact:* IV-E Waiver Project Manager, Department of Human Services, Children, Adults, and Families, at (503) 945-5358.

State kinship care contact: Questions about relative care should be directed to Kevin George, Foster Care Manager, DHS – Children, Adults, and Families, at (503) 945-5987 or kevin.george@state.or.us.

Training and support for kinship foster parents: The Oregon Foster Parent Association provides information and referrals to all foster parents, including relative care families. *Contact:* OFPAoffice@aol.com. The website is www.OFPA.com.

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 assistance may be available to children and their grandparents and other relative caregivers through Oregon’s Temporary Assistance to 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 grant — based on their income and subject to work requirements and time limits.

Call (503) 945-5651 or log on to www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/cash/tanf.shtml.

Food Stamps: Relatives caring for children may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet their children’s food and nutrition needs. For more information, call ((800) 723-3638 or log on to www.oregon.gov/assistance/foodstamps/foodstamps.shtml.

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 Oregon Health Plan and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under Medicaid. For more information about how to apply for these programs, call (800) 359-9517 or log on to www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthplan/app_benefits/ohp4u.shtml.

AARP Foundation Benefits QuickLINK: Other state and federal benefits may also be available to eligible children and caregivers, such as disability benefits, prescription drug coverage and support from other programs. To help connect grandfamilies with the programs that are right for them, the AARP Foundation Benefits Outreach Program offers Benefits QuickLINK, a free and easy-to-use on-line tool at www.aarp.org/quicklink.

State Laws

The following state law may be helpful to grandparents and other relatives raising children¹:

Placement of child or ward; preference given to relatives and certain other persons (ORS 419B.192): This law says that if the court finds that a child or ward is in need of placement or continuation in substitute care, there shall be a preference given to placement with relatives and persons who have a caregiver relationship with the child or ward as defined in ORS 419B.116. The Department of Human Services shall make reasonable efforts to place the child or ward with such persons and shall report to the court what efforts were made to effectuate such a placement. Other laws that are taken into consideration regarding relative caregivers for children in the legal custody of the state are found through Chapter 419B Juvenile Code: Dependency Chapters.

¹ *Laws change and are subject to different interpretations. These general descriptions are not intended as legal advice in any particular situation.*

National Resources

AARP Grandparent Information Center	(888) 687-2277	www.aarp.org/grandparents
The Brookdale Foundation	(212) 308 -7355	www.brookdalefoundation.org
Child Welfare Information Gateway	(800) 394-3366	www.childwelfare.gov

Child Welfare League of America	(202) 638-2952	www.cwla.org
Children's Defense Fund	(202) 628-8787	www.childrensdefense.org
Generations United	(202) 289-3979	www.gu.org
Grandfamilies of America	(866) 272-3761	www.grandfamiliesofamerica.com
GrandsPlace	(860) 763-5789	www.grandsplace.org
National Aging Information Center	(202) 619-0724	www.aoa.dhhs.gov
National Committee of Grandparents For Children's Rights	(866) 624-9900	www.grandparentsforchildren.org
National Eldercare Locator	(800) 677-1116	www.eldercare.gov

Fact sheets are updated annually. 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.