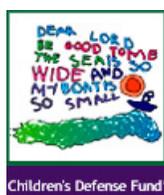


### The Brookdale Foundation



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 South Dakota, there are 8,349 children living in grandparent-headed households (4.1% of all children in the state). There are another 2,367 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.2% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in South Dakota, 5,146 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 South Dakota, 4,632 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [537 in Sioux Falls]: .5% of these grandparents are African American; 1% are Hispanic/Latino; 47% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; 1% are Asian; and 49% are White. 38% of these grandparents live in household without the children's parents present. 71% are under the age of 60; 29% 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 [factfinder.census.gov](http://factfinder.census.gov). Additional data on grandparents and grandchildren are available at [www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/cen2000/briefs.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/cen2000/briefs.html).



- Additional national and state data on grandparents raising children is available on AARP’s website at [www.aarp.org/grandparents](http://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

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- *The Grandparents as Parents Support Group* is facilitated by grandparents and other relatives caring for children in the Sioux Falls area. Established through the Southeast Mental Health Center in Sioux Falls, this support group has also engaged in broader advocacy efforts and reaches out to grandfamilies across the state. The support group meets based on the needs of its members and the size of the group. *Contact:* Sharon Hall at (605) 361-2645 or [slh@sio.midco.net](mailto:slh@sio.midco.net).

## Children in Foster Care

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Sometimes state child welfare agencies place children in foster care with grandparents or other relatives. Most state agencies call these placements “kinship care.” In South Dakota, the Department of Social Services, Child Protection Services reports:

*Number of children in kinship care:* As of June 2006, there were a total of 1,777 children in out-of-home placements under the supervision of the South Dakota Department of Social Services and in Tribal and private agency custody. Of these children, 240 are in unlicensed kinship placements and 99 children are placed in a licensed kinship home.

*Preferences for kinship care:* South Dakota state procedures require that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for an abused or neglected child, either “as temporary placement until the child(ren) can be returned to the home of the parent(s) or guardian(s)” or as “the permanent plan for the child(ren).”

*Kinship care licensing:* There is 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. In some cases, kinship foster parents are eligible for one-time funds to purchase beds, dressers, and other items that they need in order to care for the children.

*Subsidized guardianship programs:* In addition to foster care payments and other benefits available to kin raising children in the foster care system, some state also have subsidized guardianship programs. South Dakota has a subsidized guardianship program that provides a subsidy to eligible children who are at least twelve years of age (with some exceptions) and children who have been in foster care for at least six months. The subsidy amount is based on the needs of the child, not to exceed the current foster care rate for the child. The state must document that the child cannot return home and that adoption is not possible or in the child’s best interest. Medical coverage is not provided. *Contact:* Stephanie Roberts, ACSW, Foster Care Program Specialist, at (605) 773-3227 or [Stephanie.Roberts@state.sd.us](mailto:Stephanie.Roberts@state.sd.us).

*State kinship care contact:* Questions about kin foster care placements should be directed to Stephanie Roberts ACSW, Foster Care Program Specialist, at (605) 773-3227 or [Stephanie.Roberts@state.sd.us](mailto:Stephanie.Roberts@state.sd.us).

## Public Benefits

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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 South Dakota’s Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).

- 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 (605) 773-4678 or 1-877-999-5612 or log on to [www.state.sd.us/tanf/](http://www.state.sd.us/tanf/).

**Food Stamps:** Kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet their children's food and nutrition needs. For more information, call (605) 773-3493 or 1-877-999-5612 or log on to [www.state.sd.us/foodstamps/](http://www.state.sd.us/foodstamps/).

**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 South Dakota 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 to the Children's Health Insurance Program, call (800) 305-3064 or log on to <http://dss.sd.gov/medicalservices/chip/>.

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

## State Laws

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South Dakota currently does not have any state laws in effect specifically directed at kinship care families.

## National Resources

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AARP Grandparent Information Center	(888) 687-2277	<a href="http://www.aarp.org/grandparents">www.aarp.org/grandparents</a>
The Brookdale Foundation	(212) 308-7355	<a href="http://www.brookdalefoundation.org">www.brookdalefoundation.org</a>
Child Welfare Information Gateway	(800) 394-3366	<a href="http://www.childwelfare.gov">www.childwelfare.gov</a>
Child Welfare League of America	(202) 638-2952	<a href="http://www.cwla.org">www.cwla.org</a>
Children's Defense Fund	(202) 628-8787	<a href="http://www.childrensdefense.org">www.childrensdefense.org</a>
Generations United	(202) 289-3979	<a href="http://www.gu.org">www.gu.org</a>
Grandfamilies of America	(866) 272-3761	<a href="http://www.grandfamiliesofamerica.com">www.grandfamiliesofamerica.com</a>
GrandsPlace	(860) 763-5789	<a href="http://www.grandsplace.org">www.grandsplace.org</a>
National Aging Information Center	(202) 619-0724	<a href="http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov">www.aoa.dhhs.gov</a>
National Committee of Grandparents For Children's Rights	(866) 624-9900	<a href="http://www.grandparentsforchildren.org">www.grandparentsforchildren.org</a>
National Eldercare Locator	(800) 677-1116	<a href="http://www.eldercare.gov">www.eldercare.gov</a>

*Fact sheets are updated annually. Changes or additions should be e-mailed to the AARP Grandparent Information Center at [gic@aarp.org](mailto:gic@aarp.org). Please write "State Fact Sheets" on your e-mail subject line.*