



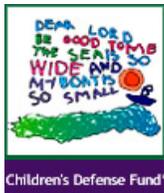
TEXAS

A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



May 2007

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 Texas, there are 448,439 children living in grandparent-headed households (7.6% of all children in the state). There are another 153,381 children living in households headed by other relatives (2.6% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Texas, 244,100 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 Texas, 257,074 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [25,347 in Houston, 15,075 in San Antonio, and 15,019 in Dallas]: 21% of these grandparents are African American; 42% are Hispanic/Latino; 1% are Asian; and 35% are White. 32% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 74% are under the age of 60; 21% 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 Texas Department of Aging & Disability Services, Access & Assistance - Area Agencies on Aging (DADS A/AAA)* offer information and referrals for all Texas seniors, including grandparents raising grandchildren. Referrals are available for support groups, respite care, and other support services. Older individuals, family members and other caregivers should contact the Area Agency on Agency (AAA) in their region to check for the availability of kinship care services for families. Texas has 28 AAAs and kinship services vary based on the needs within the AAA's region. Contact: DADS AAA hotline at (800) 252-9240 - connects you to the Area Agency on Aging within your area if your call is in-state. If the call is from outside the State of Texas, it is answered by the DADS AI-AAA assistance line; the AAA listing (<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/contact/combined.cfm>) on the DADS website; or Betty Ford, Director, Area Agencies on Aging Section, at (512) 438-4120 or betty.ford@dads.state.tx.us.
- *The Texas Department on Aging & Disability Services (DADS)* initiated a Brookdale Foundation-funded State Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) in 2002, which functions in collaboration with Texas Legal Services Center to establish a Kincare Taskforce. The Texas Kincare Taskforce, comprised of organizations and individuals, is dedicated to assisting relatives as parents - grandparents, aunts and uncles raising minor children - in knowing what services may be available to the child or the adult. In addition to gaining knowledge about available services, the Texas Kincare Taskforce assists kincare families and those who serve kincare families in understanding rights and responsibilities and in accessing available services. The Texas Kincare Taskforce welcomes requests for community workshops on topics of importance to kincare families. DADS continues to support the Kincare Taskforce through participation on the Taskforce. Information pertinent to kincare in Texas can be found at the Web site at <http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/aging/grg/>. Contact: Bruce Bower, Texas Legal Services at (512) 477-6000.
- *Elder Options of Texas* is another on-line information and referral resource for senior housing and elder care information. The site offers information on support groups, respite care, and contact information based on location. Contact: Log on to <http://elderoptionsoftexas.com>.
- *Children's Connections* offers free information, resources and referral on grandparent adoption to grandparents across the state. Homes studies and post placement services are also available on a fee basis. Contact: Deborah Phillips at (806)745-7995 or childrensconnect@aol.com.
- *The City of Dallas Office of Senior Affairs* has partnerships with representatives from the school system, community organizations, governmental entities, faith-based organizations, and non-profit agencies to provide materials and resources to relative caregivers in the Dallas Metropolitan area. They help to connect relative caregivers to local services and provide general information on public benefits, legal issues, support groups, and coalition-building efforts in the area. Contact: Belinda Glenn at (214) 670-7882 or bglenn@mail.ci.dallas.tx.us.
- *The Urban League of Greater Dallas* has formed the Grandparents Resource Group to provide a support network of services to grandparents and other relatives raising children. They offer quarterly support group meetings, benefits check-up, information and referral services, computer training, and GED preparation Contact: Jill Payne at (214) 915-4609 or jpayne@ulgdntx.com.
- *The Dallas County KinCare Network* offers support groups through libraries in the Dallas area. The Pleasant Grove Library has a support group on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 11:00 a.m. Sign up is at the library. Contact: Lynne Craddock at (214)670-0965. The Audeilia Library has a support group on the 1st Thursday of each month at 11:30, and also has a resource center for grandparents. Contact: call (214) 670-6446.
- *The Parent Education Project of the University of Houston*, one of The Brookdale Foundation's local Relatives As Parents Program (RAPP) sites, offers a variety of services for grandparents and other relatives raising children: two support groups, an at-home "parenting" course for relative caregivers seeking legal custody of the children in their care, information and referral services, a RAPP Resource Guide, and technical assistance to other groups interested in forming RAPPs in the Houston area. Contact: Angie Grindon at (713) 743-5491 or agrindon@uh.edu.
- *Trinity Fellowship Church* has a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren "lifegroup" that meets twice a month in Amarillo



on the 1st and 3rd Mondays at noon. The group is led by grandparent caregivers. *Contact:* John and Joyce Boland at (806) 352-5080 or jjboland@suddenlink.net.

- ***ESCAPE Family Resource Center*** offers Circle of Love, a parenting course for kinship caregivers and the children they are raising in the Houston area. The seven-week course includes such topics as how to deal with the absence of the biological parents, caregivers' loss of their roles as traditional grandparents, how to ease transitions for children, helping everyone to maintain a positive relationship with the biological parent, and a broad range of communication, problem solving, and family living skills. Caregivers and children are divided into separate discussion groups and are then brought back together at the end of class to explore relevant issues as a family. Classes are \$70 per family. *Contact:* Paul Sahlman, Director, at (713) 942-9500 (ext. 38) or pauls@escapefrc.org.
- ***The Bexar Area Agency on Aging (AAA)*** offers a Grandparent/Kinship Program, using funds from the National Family Caregiver Support Program. Grandparents or other relatives, aged 55 or older, who are providing primary care for the children in their homes can receive services including: information about services available in Bexar County for themselves and their grandchildren or other relatives under 18 years old; service coordination to assist caregivers in gaining access to available services; individual and peer counseling, support groups, parenting classes; respite care; supplemental services, on a limited basis, to complement the support provided by the program; a Resources Book of available services for kinship families. and referrals to other resources and additional information. *Contact:* Nellie J. Garay, Caregiver Specialist, at (210) 362-5271, or Information and Assistance Line at (210) 362-5254.
- ***Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area (AAACAP); a program of the Capital Area Council of Governments*** offers a Grandparent/Kinship Program for grandparents or other relatives, aged 55 or older, who are providing primary care for the children in their homes. Counties served include Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Llano, Travis and Williamson). A care coordinator assesses needs and develops a care plan to assist with those needs. Services are available on a short-term limited basis and may include: Caregiver resource information and support groups, respite care, assistance with the purchase of clothing and/or school supplies, connections to counseling resources for the whole family, limited assistance with utilities or other basic needs, and connections to legal and benefits information services. *Contact:* Patricia Bordie, (512) 916-6060 or 1-888-622-9111.
- ***Kinship Care Coalition of the Greater Austin Area*** is a coalition of local non-profits, government organizations and kinship caregivers. The coalition operates a Helpline to assist kinship caregivers in accessing services and resource information. The coalition holds an annual Kinship family Affair in October as well as other special caregiver education and training events throughout the year. Partner agencies also coordinate two Austin area support groups. For more information about resources and/or support groups call the Help line, at 1-800-304-6427.
- ***The Area Agency on Aging of the Coastal Bend*** provides information, referral and advocacy for grandparents raising grandchildren in 12 counties in the coastal Texas area. Services are provided through the National Family Caregiver Support Program. Grandparents receive assistance with receiving state financial resources, as well as a quarterly newsletter. *Contact:* Felipa Wilmette at (361)883-3935, Ext. 262 or felipa@cbcogaaa.org.
- ***The Area Agency on Aging of the Panhandle*** provides information and services to grandparents and other senior caregivers ages 55 and over who are raising children under the age of 18. Serving 26 counties in the Texas Panhandle, the organization provides basic information on public benefits, support groups and limited funding for respite services. *Contact:* Teana Waller, Caregiver Specialist, at (806) 331-2227 or twaller@theprpc.org.
- ***The Calvary Baptist Church*** in Longview offers a support group for relative caregivers on the 1st Thursday of every month from 6:30 to 8:30. Child care is provided. *Contact:* Marilyn Beeded at (903)759-0475 or (903)235-7775 (cell) or mbeede@sbcglobal.net.
- ***The Collin County Children's Advocacy Center*** in Plano offers a weekly kinship support group for grandparents and other relatives raising children. The meeting is open to any full-time relative caregiver residing in Collin County. The group provides emotional support as well as helps caregivers to deal with financial concerns, legal issues, childcare concerns, discipline problems, health insurance issues, and issues with the schools. Childcare is provided during the group meeting. *Contact:* Summer Land, M.Ed, LPC, at (972) 633-6688.



- *The Liberty-Eylau Independent School District* sponsors a support group for parents, grandparents, teachers and others to discuss the needs of kinship caregivers, including health, nutrition, stress management and more. It is held the last Tuesday of each month from 6:30-7:30 pm at the Texarkana school at 2300 Buchanan Road. Child care is provided. *Contact:* Joan Strutton at (903)831-5347, Ext. 4160 or joan.strutton@leisd.net.
- *The Texoma Kinicare Support Network Caregiver Program*, a local RAPP operated by the Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Texoma, offers services to grandparents and other relative caregivers including support groups, mental wellness classes, a monthly newsletter, individual counseling, and educational and recreational activities for both grandparents and grandchildren. They serve Cooke, Grayson, and Fannin counties. *Contact:* Judy E. Conner, Caregiver Specialist at (903) 813-3575 or jconner@texoma.cog.tx.us.
- *The Abuelos Con Cariño Program in El Paso*, a local RAPP operated by the Child Crisis Center of El Paso, offers parenting and support classes to grandparents raising their grandchildren. Activities include educational workshops, support groups, recreational activities, ESL classes, participation in health fairs and partnerships with several local elementary schools. They also offer emergency respite for grandchildren *Contact:* Grace Garcia at(915)849-1943 or Suzanne Bristow at (915)562-7955 or zbristow@childcrisiselp.org.
- *La Voz Del Anciano* provides outreach, support and referral to grandparents and other relatives raising children in the Dallas area. La Voz identifies grandparents and other relatives through the local school systems and churches. They offer educational workshops and monthly support groups, and are available to help seniors 60 and over meet their basic needs and the needs of their grandchildren or relative children. Spanish speaking assistance is also available. *Contact:* Trini Garza, director, at (214)741-5700 or lavoz@sbcglobal.net.

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 Texas, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) reports:

Number of children in kinship care: At the end of FY 2006, there were 29,504 children in out-of-home placements in Texas. Of these children, 8,138 were placed with kin.

Preferences for kinship care: State law requires that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for a child under DFPS’s care.

Kinship care licensing: There is no separate verification program for kinship foster parents. Kin have to meet the same licensing standards and receive the same foster care payment rate as non-kin foster parents.

The Relative and Other Designated Caregiver Program (Texas Kinship Program): For relatives and fictive kin (individuals who have a longstanding relationship with the family) there are other benefits available. The Texas Kinship Program offers a one-time integration payment of \$1,000 to qualified caregivers upon placement to be used to purchase items needed to support the placement; supportive services to qualified caregivers; supportive family counseling not covered by Medicaid; day care services to qualified children; reimbursement for flexible expenses incurred by the kinship family up to a maximum of \$500 per child per year; and referral to determine eligibility for additional public assistance. Additionally, after the caregiver obtains legal conservatorship, DFPS provides reimbursement benefits of up to \$500 per year per child for up to 3 years or until the child reaches age 18, whichever comes first.

Subsidized guardianship programs: In addition to foster care payments and other benefits available to kin raising children in the foster care system, some states also have subsidized guardianship programs. Most of these programs offer ongoing subsidies to children who have left foster care to live permanently under the legal custody of guardianship of relatives. Texas currently does not have an ongoing subsidized guardianship program.

State kinship care contact: Questions about kinship foster placements should be directed to (512) 438-3312.

Training and support for kinship foster parents: The State Foster Parent Association in Texas, Texas FosterFamily



Association. (TFFA), serves kin and non-kin foster parents. Contact: Roy Block, President, at (210) 493 - 7567 or royblocktsfpi@aol.com. The website is www.TFFA.org.

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 the Texas Works 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 (800) 448-3927 or log on to www.dhs.state.tx.us/programs/TexasWorks/TANF.html or call “211” for information about all the health and human services in your community.

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 (800) 448-3927 or log on to www.dhs.state.tx.us/programs/TexasWorks/index.html.

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 TexCare Partnership, which includes Medicaid and the 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 Medicaid, call (800) 647-6558 or log on to www.chipmedicaid.com.

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:

Medical Consent (Tex. Fam. Code Ann. §§ 32.001 et seq.): This law allows a child’s grandparent, adult sibling, aunt, or uncle and designated others to consent to medical, dental, psychological, and surgical treatment for a child when the child’s parent or guardian cannot be contacted and has not given notice that he or she opposes the treatment.

¹Laws 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@arp.org. Please write "State Fact Sheets" on your e-mail subject line.

