

# GrandFacts

## A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



The Brookdale Foundation  
Group  
www.brookdalefoundation.org



## District of Columbia

September 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. This and other state fact sheets can be viewed and printed from the website at [www.grandfactsheets.org](http://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 Email subject line.

### In the District of Columbia...

- 16,723 children live in grandparent-headed households (14.5% of all children in the District). There are another 5,374 children living in households headed by other relatives (4.7 % of all children in the District). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in the District of Columbia, 10,702 are living there without either parent present.
- 8,183 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them: 91% of these grandparents are African American; 5% are Hispanic/Latino; and 1% are White. 37% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 59% are under age 60; 23% 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

#### AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly

**Contact:** Yvonne Tobias  
**Phone:** LCE Hotline 202-434-2120  
**Service Area:** District of Columbia

**Services Offered:**

- Free legal services to eligible caregivers

#### Bread for the City

**Phone:** 202-265-2400  
**Website:** [www.breadforthecity.org](http://www.breadforthecity.org)  
**Service Area:** District of Columbia

**Services Offered:**

- Medical and legal clinics, clothing room, food pantry, social services

## Children's Law Center

**Address:** 616 H St NW, Washington, D.C.

**Phone:** 202-467-4900 x 4

**Website:** [www.childrenslawcenter.org](http://www.childrenslawcenter.org)

**Service Area:** District of Columbia

**Services Offered:**

- Legal assistance to foster parents, grandparents, and other relatives who wish to adopt or obtain guardianship or custody of children in the child welfare system (Family Permanency Project)
- Information for DC Grandparent Caregiver Pilot Program

## D.C. Metropolitan Foster and Adoptive Parent Association

**Phone:** 202-299-0900

**Email:** [president@dcmfapa.org](mailto:president@dcmfapa.org)

**Website:** <http://www.dcmfapa.org/programs.htm>

**Service Area:** District of Columbia

**Services Offered:**

- Family activities for foster/adoptive/kinship caregivers and children
- Kinicare support groups

## Family Connections Program – CARA House

**Sponsoring Organization** National Center for Children and Families

**Address:** 603 50th St NE, Washington, D.C. 20019

**Phone:** 202-396-9330

**Service Area:** District of Columbia

**Services Offered:**

- KinNet and Nurturing Parent Programs support relatives in assisting vulnerable families at risk of being separated from their children
- Parenting education

## Family Ties Project

**Sponsoring Organization** Consortium for Child Welfare

**Contact:** Michelle Palmer, Project Director

**Phone:** 202-547-3349

**Email:** [mpalmer@familytiesproject.org](mailto:mpalmer@familytiesproject.org)

**Website:** [www.familtiesproject.org](http://www.familtiesproject.org)

**Service Area:** District of Columbia

**Services Offered:**

- Permanency planning for families affected by HIV/AIDS
- Free legal services
- Kinship care management
- Art therapy
- Individual and family counseling
- Professional training materials

## Grandparent Caregiver Pilot Program

**Sponsoring Organization** D.C. Child and Family Services Agency (DCFS)  
**Address:** 400 6th St SW, Washington, DC 20024-2753  
**Contact:** Valorie Gainer  
**Phone:** 202-442-6009  
**Email:** [Valorie.gainer@dc.gov](mailto:Valorie.gainer@dc.gov)  
**Service Area:** District of Columbia

**Services Offered:**

- Services available to eligible grandparents who are legal guardians of grandchildren
- Provides subsidy in addition to Social Security and TANF to eligible participants (eligibility based on income)
- Fact sheet available at <http://www.cfssa.dc.gov/cfssa/lib/cfssa/frames/pdf/gpccfactsheet.pdf>

## Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives

**Sponsoring Organization** Partnerships through the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency  
**Contacts:** Intensive support services to families in seven neighborhoods

**1. Columbia Heights/Shaw Collaborative**

Marian Urquilla  
1816 12th St NW 2nd floor, Washington DC 20009  
202-518-6737

**2. East River Family Strengthening Collaborative**

Mae Best  
3742 Minnesota Ave NE Washington DC 20019  
202-397-7300

**3. Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative**

Louvenia Williams  
1345 Saratoga Ave NE # 2 Washington DC 20018  
202-832-9400 x3007

**4. Far Southeast Collaborative**

Perry Moon  
2041 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE #304 Washington DC 20020  
202-889-1425

**5. Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek East Family Support Collaborative**

Karen Feinstein  
4422 Georgia Ave NW Washington DC 20011  
202-722-1815

**6. North Capitol Collaborative**

Carmen Robles-Rman  
1190 First Place NW Washington DC 20002  
202-588-1800

**7. South Washington/West River Collaborative**

Samuel Tramel  
1501 Half ST SW #31 Washington DC 20024  
202-488-7997

**Website:** [www.dccollaboratives.org](http://www.dccollaboratives.org)

## Greater Washington Urban League

**Contact:** Audrey Epperson  
**Phone:** 202-265-8200  
**Email:** [aepperson@gwul.org](mailto:aepperson@gwul.org)  
**Service Area:** District of Columbia  
**Services Offered:**

- Information /referral
- One-on-one counseling
- Publications

## Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia

**Phone:** 202-628-1161  
**Website:** <http://www.legalaiddc.org/>  
**Service Area:** District of Columbia  
**Services Offered:**

- Free legal services to eligible individuals (child custody, family issues, public benefits, domestic violence, landlord-tenant issues)

## National Center for Children and Families

**Address:** 603 50th St NW, Washington, D.C.  
**Contact:** Melba Williams, Parent Educator  
**Phone:** 202-396-9330x12  
**Service Area:** District of Columbia  
**Services Offered:**

- Information /referral by parent educator and advocate
- Support group meets twice a month – dinner/child care provided

## National Center on Permanency for African American Children

**Sponsoring Organization** Howard University  
**Contact:** Jacqueline Kidd, Director  
**Phone:** 202-806-8100  
**Email:** [ncpaac@howard.edu](mailto:ncpaac@howard.edu)  
**Service Area:** District of Columbia  
**Services Offered:**

- Local and national information and resources on permanency issues (research, training materials, trends, policy, legislation)

## Whitman-Walker Clinic

**Phone:** 202-939-7627  
**Website:** [www.wwc.org](http://www.wwc.org)  
**Service Area:** District of Columbia  
**Services Offered:**

- Free legal services to people who are HIV-positive
- Permanency planning for children of people who are ill or dying (estate planning, child custody)

## Children in Foster Care

### Numbers – August 2007

- 2,261 children in out-of-home placements supervised by the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency. Of these children, 346 were placed with kin.

### Preferences

- District of Columbia policy requires that kin be sought out and given preference when an out-of-home placement is needed for a child under the Agency's care.

### Kinship care licensing

- 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.

### Subsidized guardianship programs

- In the District of Columbia, subsidized guardianship may be offered for children under the care of the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), if:
  - The caregiver has been awarded permanent guardianship by the District of Columbia Superior Court;
  - The caregiver has been an approved kinship caregiver for at least 6 continuous months immediately preceding application for the guardianship subsidy;
  - The caregiver has continued to be the child's approved kinship caregiver since the court entered the permanent guardianship order;
  - The caregiver has a financial need for a permanent guardianship subsidy.
  - The child must have been adjudicated neglected or abused and placed in the legal custody of the agency.
  - The child must be either: (a) a member of a sibling group; (b) difficult to place for adoption; (c) at least two years old; or (d) not be placed in a permanent placement outside of applicant's family.
  - The Agency must also determine that the child's best interest is not met by either reunification or adoption.
  - The Agency must find that legal guardianship with the applicant is in the child's best interest  
(District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, Chapter 61, sections 6100-619)

### Contacts in D.C. Child and Family Services Agency Subsidized guardianship

- Contact: Ritu Atwal
  - Phone: 202-727-3777
  - Email: [ritu.atwal@dc.gov](mailto:ritu.atwal@dc.gov)

### Kinship care/training/support

- Contact: Jesse Winston, Administrator for In-home and Reunification Services
  - Phone: 202-727-2844
  - Email: [jesse.winston@dc.gov](mailto:jesse.winston@dc.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:

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

### Financial Assistance

- Cash payments may be available to children and their grandparents and other relative caregivers through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program:
- Contact
  - Phone: 202-576-8000
  - Web: <http://dhs.dc.gov/dhs/site/default.asp>  
(click “Income Maintenance” in left column)

### Food Stamps

- Kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet their children’s food and nutrition needs.
- Contact
  - Phone: 202-576-8000
  - Web: <http://dhs.dc.gov/dhs/site/default.asp>  
(click “Income Maintenance” in left column)

### 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 DC Healthy Families Insurance Program. In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage.
- Contact DC Healthy Families
  - Phone: 1-888-557-1116
  - Web: <http://dchealth.dc.gov/>  
(click on “Health care for uninsured” in left column)

### 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
- Contact:
  - Phone: 202-662-3568
  - Web: [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org) (Kinship Care Resource Kit)
- National Council on Aging – Benefits CheckUp [www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org)

## State Laws and Policies

The following D.C. laws may be helpful to grandparents and other relatives raising children

### **Medical Consent (DC Code Ann. § 16-4901)**

- Allows parents or guardians to sign a consent form authorizing a grandparent, other relative caregiver, or other third party to obtain medical care on behalf of a child without obtaining legal custody or guardianship. Authorized medical care includes all necessary immunizations, mental health treatment, routine care, or emergency treatment, including surgery.

### **Educational Consent**

- Provides that grandparents and other relatives who are the full-time caregivers of children they are raising do not need court-ordered legal custody in order to enroll them in the DC public and charter schools. To enroll the children in school, relative caregivers must prove that they are D.C. residents and provide full-time care for the children.

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

### **Disclaimer:**

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