

Grandparent Resource Guide

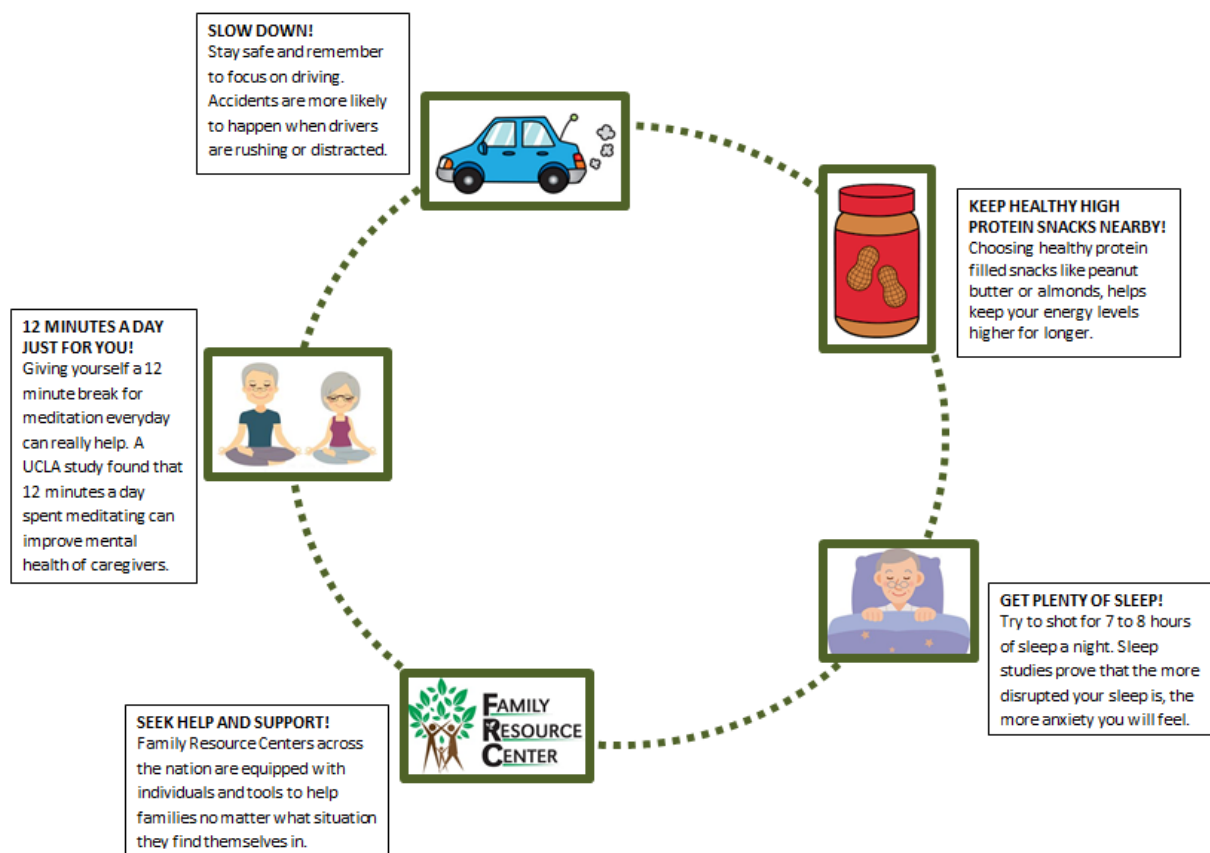


FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

CATALYST FOR GROWTH

Across the United States, millions of children are being raised in households headed by grandparents and other relatives, many without the presence of the parents. As the child'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 the children inside and outside of the foster care system. This guide provides information and resources for the grandparents and other relatives raising children.

IMPORTANT TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS



SUPPORT SERVICES

You may be able to find services and support for you and/or your grandchildren in your community. Start by checking out these resources:

- Schools. Talk to the social worker at your grandchild's school about what kind of help might be available
- Children's Services, Children and Families or Child Welfare Office. Call your town or county government offices to find out about available help
- Faith-based organizations (religious organizations often have programs to help families even if they are not members of their faith)

- Community Centers
- Recreation Centers
- Libraries
- YMCA and YWCA
- County Extension Offices
- Boys and Girls Clubs, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and other youth groups
- Mentoring programs, like Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- Local colleges and universities (for example, they may have free legal clinics in their law schools, or students who can work with your grandchildren)

Family Resource Centers

If you are seeking services or need assistance, contact your local Family Resource Center. They have many programs and services available for families. For information regarding the Family Resource Center Program and to find one near you, contact the statewide coordinator of the Family Resource Centers at the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Partnerships and Grants. Phone: (775) 684-4000 Email: gmu@dhhs.nv.gov

Family Support Council

This organization in Gardnerville, NV has a support group, information and referrals. Phone: 775-782-8692. Web site: www.family-support.org

CHILD CARE

The Division of Public and Behavioral Health-Child Care Licensing serves Nevada's communities by ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of children in licensed child care facilities. See http://dpbh.nv.gov/Reg/ChildCare/Child_Care_Licensing_-_Home/ then click on the "Provider" link on the right hand side of the page for a list of all licenses child care facilities in Nevada. Phone: 775-684-4463 or call toll-free from all Counties except Clark County, 1-800-992-0900.

The Children's Cabinet, Inc.

This organization provides family counseling, child care subsidies and referrals, caregiver support network and a quarterly newsletter. Phone: 775-856-6200 or 1-800-753-5500.

Website: www.childrenscabinet.org

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities

The Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (NGCDD) engages in advocacy, system's change and capacity building activities for people with developmental disabilities and

their families in order to promote equal opportunity, self-determination, and community inclusion.
Phone: (775) 684-8619 Email: smanning@dhhs.nv.gov

Nevada PEP

This nonprofit organization provides information, services and training to Nevada families of children with disabilities. Nevada PEP developed and operates Nevada's Statewide Family Network. Nevada PEP employs family members of children with behavioral health care needs as Family Specialists. Family Specialists can help you find information, support and resources, provide compassion and understanding of the unique experiences and needs of your child and family, and assists you in advocating for your child, family to access support and services for help at home, in the community and at school. Satellite Office Reno/Sparks, 4600 Kietzke Lane, Suite I-202, Reno, NV. Phone: 775-448-9950 or 1-800-216-5188.

EDUCATION

U.S. Department of Education - Offers a Parent Site that has a wide range of helpful information for parents *and* caregivers regarding children's education from early childhood through college, special needs, disabilities, language challenges and gifted students. Phone: 1-800-872-5327
Website: www.ed.gov/parents

Nevada Department of Education

Relative caregivers may find helpful information about the education of children they are raising
Phone: 775-687-9200 Website: www.doe.nv.gov

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Kinship Care Program

This Nevada program, available through the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, provides cash benefits for children living with relatives other than parents.

Payment Allowances:

- Up to \$417 per month when the only child is 0-12 years of age;
- Up to \$400 per month for each child when there are two or more children 0-12 years of age
- Up to \$462 per month for each child age 13 and older

To be eligible for a Kinship Care payment, you must:

- Be age 62 or older
- Be a non-parent, non-needy relative caregiver (not requesting assistance for yourself)
- Be caring for and residing with a child who is related by blood, adoption or marriage for at least six months

- File for and obtain Nevada court approval of legal guardianship
- Comply with court imposed requirements
- Relative household members must have combined income below 275% federal poverty level AND The child(ren) must meet the age, citizenship, and resource eligibility requirements for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program

The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services can help you qualify for Kinship Care by:

- Assisting you in the application and verification process
- Referring you to legal counsel, contracted with the state of Nevada, who will assist you in pursuing guardianship at little or no cost to you
- Reimburse the relative caregiver up to \$600 for legal counsel sought independently, to obtain guardianship

Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, 775-684-0500 Email: welfare@dwss.nv.gov

Web site: <https://dwss.nv.gov>

Temporary Assistance For Needy Families

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal program that is administered by state government based on a plan each state submits outlining how the state will use the money. In some states TANF funds are used to fund a kinship care program while in others the funds may be used to provide monthly stipends to relative caregivers. Most states also provide other types of supports to relative caregivers based on the family's TANF eligibility. These supports may be childcare, Medicaid, and other supports. Nevada Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Department of Health and Human Services (775) 684-0500 Email: welfare@dwss.nv.gov Website: <https://dwss.nv.gov>

Social Security Benefits For Children

There are two types of social security benefits. Supplement Security Income (SSI) is based on the child having a chronic disability. Qualifying for SSI depends on income and assets. When children are in the foster care system, the state is considered the parent so the Social Security Administration (SSA) will determine a child's eligibility solely based on the disability, rather than income, since the state has no income or asset to attribute to the child. If you have legal custody, eligibility will depend on your income and assets.

The other type of social security benefit is OASDI - Old Age, Survivor's, and Disability Insurance. A child is eligible for OASDI if their parent passed away or was disabled and if the parent contributed to the Social Security system when he or she was employed. These benefits are based on the amount the child's parent contributed to Social Security during their life.

When children are in the legal custody of the relative, the relative will be the person who receives either type of Social Security benefits as the child's representative payee. SSA requires that representative payees keep records of expenses, and when the SSA requests a report, a payee

must provide an accounting to SSA of how benefits were used or saved. This is done to ensure that beneficiaries are financially protected. To find your local Social Security Administration office call Website: www.socialsecurity.gov/locator

FOOD

The federal government has many programs to help with the nutrition needs of children and families with lower incomes, including the food stamp program, school meal program, summer food service program, child and adult care food program, and food distribution programs. Talk with your grandchildren's school about the school meal programs, and ask your local social service agency about the other nutrition programs. Some of these programs are listed below but you can also visit www.fns.usda.gov/fns to find out more about these programs.

Women, Infants, & Children Program (WIC)

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children Program helps women, infants and children up to age 5 who have low incomes and may not be able to eat well. The program has food, health care referrals, and nutrition education for pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding postpartum women. Contact your state or local WIC agency to apply for help. Call Nevada State WIC to find your closest WIC Clinic, 775-684-5942 or visit NevadaWic.org

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP is the new name for the federal Food Stamp Program. It helps low-income individuals and families buy the food they need for good health. Nevada Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Department of Health and Human Services, (775) 684-0500
Email: welfare@dwss.nv.gov Web site: <https://dwss.nv.gov>

Foodbanks - Organizations that provide free food and sometimes other items, such as diapers to families in need. Feeding America is an organization that fights hunger and has a food bank locator. To find local food banks call 1-800-771-2303

Website: www.feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx

Free or Reduced School Lunch

The National School Lunch Program is a meal program in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides healthy low-cost or free lunches each school day to children whose families have lower incomes. There is also a school breakfast program. Ask your grandchild's teacher or social worker about these programs.

MEDICAL INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN

Community Health Alliance

This Washoe County nonprofit provides an extensive range of health care screening and prevention services, comprehensive primary care for all ages, pharmacy, dental services (preventive and treatment), management of chronic diseases, episodic illness care, outreach to and services for homeless individuals and families, and behavioral health care. In addition, CHA manages a WIC Program (Women, Infants and Children's Program), the Northern Nevada Dental Health Program and Adopt a Vet Dental Program. To learn more call 775-329-6300.

Web site: chanevada.org

Care Consultation

This service is a telephone support program for caregivers of individuals, throughout the lifespan, living with a chronic condition. This service offers support to empower, educate and improve overall wellbeing. 702-333-1556 or 702-364-2273 Email: cgraham@nevadaseniorservices.org

The Family Support Center

Family Support Center welcomes everyone who walks through their doors. They provide learning and supportive skills training for a wide variety of personal challenges. They believe that everyone has the capacity to heal themselves if given the right tools and the appropriate level of support. They honor the natural strength and resilience that all children, individuals and families have and their primary goal is to help those they encounter realize their own greatness.

Website: www.thefamilysupportcenter.org Phone: (775) 623-1888

Hear Now

This program works with hearing healthcare providers to give their time and service to test, fit and follow up with patients who use hearing aids. This program is income based and has eligibility requirements. Applicants are responsible for finding their own provider in their area. The application fee is \$125 and once application is approved, aids are given to patients at no additional cost. For more information call Hear Now at 800-328-8602 or email

hearnow@starkey.com

Medicaid

This federal program provides health care coverage for many people including low income families with children whose family income is at or below 133% percent of poverty, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients, certain Medicare beneficiaries, and recipients of adoption assistance, foster care and some children aging out of foster care. The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) determines eligibility for the Medicaid program. Information regarding eligibility is available by calling toll free at 1-800-992-0900.

Web site: <https://dwss.nv.gov/or>

Nevada Check Up

The Mission of the Nevada Check Up program is to provide low-cost, comprehensive health care coverage to low income, uninsured children (birth through 18) who are not covered by private insurance or Medicaid; while (1) promoting health care coverage for children; (2) encouraging individual responsibility; and (3) working with public and private health care providers and community advocates for children. Department of Health and Human Services, 775-684-3777
Website: <http://nevadacheckup.nv.gov>

Nevada Health Centers

The team at Nevada Health Centers cares for more than 54,000 people every year. They operate on a sliding fee scale and have clinics throughout Northern Nevada. 800-787-2568
Website: www.nevadahealthcenters.org

Northern Nevada HOPES

This nonprofit community health center in downtown Reno, NV offers integrated medical care and wellness services. Services include primary care, chronic disease management, behavioral health counseling, social services, an on-site pharmacy, and more. For medically underserved populations, a one-stop-shop healthcare model reduces barriers to care and increases the likelihood of maintaining long-term health. HOPES accepts most insurance plans, Medicaid, Medicare, and the uninsured. For the uninsured, they offer discounted services based on a sliding fee scale. For eligibility and intake call 775-786-4673. Website: www.nnhopes.org

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Trauma impacts children differently and at different times. You may expect a child to need trauma informed parenting and care if they have:

- Had an unsafe or unstable home environment for long periods of time
- Experienced a long-term separation from family, including the birth parent who may have been responsible for the abuse, neglect, or abandonment
- Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- Repeatedly witnessed domestic violence

Children who have survived these conditions and are experiencing trauma as a result of those experiences may continually demonstrate:

- anger, irritability, or mood swings,
- sadness, depression, or regression
- withdrawal from friends, family or typical childhood social interactions
- anxiety, helplessness, fear, guilt, self-loathing/blaming themselves, or difficulty in concentrating
- In severe cases some children may begin starting fires

There may also be physical symptoms of trauma, in addition to any physical injury the child may have had from physical abuse:

- insomnia
- nightmares
- fatigue
- muscle stress
- enuresis (bed-wetting)

Until you can find a therapist for the child, help the child find a place for him/herself in your home. In providing responsibilities as well as privileges, the child may begin to feel a part of your home. Stability and connection can help throughout the therapeutic process as well as in daily life.

Give the child permission to express their feelings in words to you. Encourage a child, who is able to write, to keep a diary of how they are feeling. They may want to write letters to an old friend, an imaginary friend, Santa Claus, or their parent. If the child is interested in writing letters to express their feelings, work with them to create a mailbox outside your room or elsewhere in the house where they can deliver their letters. Promise to read them and talk with them about the letters when they are ready. Set up a time that might work for them to discuss the feelings they have shared, but be flexible; feelings don't run by the calendar or the clock.

As a trauma-informed caregiver, your patience will be tried. Sometimes you may feel lost or powerless. There will be much stress that comes with accepting this new responsibility. Seek out local, state or national support organizations. These organizations, can offer support from others who have experienced caring for a relative's child. Peer support can be one of the most freeing and healing experiences you can have for yourself. It is important that you take time to care for yourself as the caregiver.

The National Kinship Alliance for Children

This organization is a nationwide network of grandparents, community members, and professionals working together to provide education and support, advocacy, and thought leadership for children, grandparents, and kinship families. Website: kinshipalliance.org

WEB RESOURCES

AARP

AARP Grandparent Information Center has several links related to grandparents raising grandchildren. These include how to find a support group in your area, local resources, information on legal issues and more. Website: www.aarp.org/confacts/programs/gic.html

AARP Raising Grandchildren group provides relative caregivers a way to connect with others via the internet in online groups. Website: www.aarp.org/online-community

AARP Foundation's Benefits QuickLINK is a free and private way to find out if relatives or the children they are raising qualify for programs that pay for food, increase income, and cover home and healthcare costs. It gives quick results, application forms and the address and phone number of the closest office. Website: www.aarp.org/quicklink

AGA Grandparents

This website provides grandparents with information about grandkids, family relationships and gives different resources available including different community opportunities to grandparents raising grandchildren. Website: www.grandsplace.com



FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

CATALYST FOR GROWTH

331 7th St., Elko, NV 89801

775-753-7352

Website: www.elkofrc.org

Email: reception@elkofrc.org

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Childcare Reimbursements for Grandparents

Individualized Parenting Education

Family Advocacy

Community Connections

Hunger Relief

Teen Health Classes

WIC-Nutrition Education