

Grandparents and Relatives as Caregivers

In New Jersey and across the country, many grandparents and relatives are providing care to children who are unable to live with their birth parents. Parenting can be challenging as a lot may have changed since you raised your own child. Don't be afraid to reach out for help. Many agencies and organizations can offer you assistance in dealing with problems all caregivers have. Below are just a few links to resources that may be able to assist.



In addition, DCF provides publications about parenting and other topics of interest to families. All literature is provided at no cost and may be ordered in reasonable quantities. Click on the publications link to the right to download or order materials.

Support Groups

Below are just a few local support groups for grandparents and kinship caregivers. Call the NJ Self-Help Group Clearinghouse for additional resources in your community.

New Jersey Self-Help Group Clearinghouse

The clearinghouse is an information service that can provide kinship caregivers with information on local community support groups. **Call 1-800-367-6274.**

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (Bergen County)

The Family Support Organization of Bergen County, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Monthly Support Group meets every third Thursday, September through June, 10:00-11:30a.m. for mutual support, educational speakers and resources. For more information, including meeting locations, call 201-796-6209 ext. 102.

Grandparent Support Group (Camden County)

Support Groups held at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Audubon, NJ on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Through self-help, people who have in common a similar life situation come together to share feelings, experiences, resources, and networking skills. For more information, call 856-662-2600.

Burlington County Community Action Program Head Start (serves Burlington County)

Monthly support group meetings held once a month from September through June. Call 609-261-2323 for more information.

Grandma K.A.R.E.S (serves South Orange)

Monthly support groups held at the South Orange Library. Call 973-327-4114 for more information.

Grandparents Support Group (Mercer County only)

Support Groups held at the Lawrence Senior Center on the first Thursday of the month. In-Home Consultations provide information, referrals, education and support for each unique family situation.

For more information contact:
Barbara Stender, Med. Caregiver Support Specialist
Greater Trenton Behavioral HealthCare
Phone: 609-396-6788 x 241
E-mail: bstender@gtbhc.org

Grandparent Resources and Caregiver Initiative Alliance (GRACIA) – Passaic County

GRACIA offers information, referrals and support for grandparents and relatives raising children. Services include referrals for health exam and health counseling by a registered nurse, stress management and health education, counseling for caregivers, group counseling for school-age children and parenting support workshops. For more information, contact 973-720-2604.

Grandparents as Parents of Passaic County (GAP)

GAP is a network of health and human service professionals, grandparents, agency representatives and elected officials. The purpose of GAP is to identify the needs of non-parental adults raising children, recommend programs, identify public policy issues and recommend legislative changes. Grandparents and other kinship caregivers are encouraged to join GAP so that their concerns and experiences are reflected in GAP's initiatives. For more information, call the Institute for Creative Aging, William Paterson University at 973-720-3690 or Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Passaic County at 973-305-5742.

Other Supports and Helpful Links

Kinship Navigator Program

This program helps kinship caregivers navigate through various government networks to find supports and services such as a help with paying child care, referrals to support groups, help with getting medical coverage, legal services and housing assistance. *(This program is administered by the Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development and serves children who have not been placed by DYFS.)*

Family Success Centers

Family Success Centers are "one-stop" shops that provide wrap-around resources and supports for families before they find themselves in crisis. These centers are neighborhood-based gathering places where parents and grandparents can find family support. Some of the services include: employment, information and referral, parent education, health care, parent-child activities, home visiting, life skills training, advocacy and housing. Click [HERE](#) to find locations in your county for these centers and other programs.

Child Behavioral Health Services

Need help managing your grandchild's behavior? The Division of Child Behavioral Health Services serves children and teens with emotional and behavioral health care challenges, as well as their families. Learn more about services [HERE](#) or call **1-877-652-7624**.

Family Support Organizations

Family Support Organizations (FSO's) are family-run, county-based organizations that provide direct family-to-family peer support, education, advocacy and other services to family members of children with emotional and behavioral problems.

Parents Anonymous

Parents Anonymous is a self-help group that offers parenting support and referral to resources in your community. If you are feeling stressed out, you can call the **Family Helpline at 1-800-THE-KIDS**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and speak to a specially trained volunteer to help you work through your frustrations before a crisis occurs.

New Jersey Parents Caucus

The New Jersey Parents Caucus is a family-driven statewide organization that provides information & referral, peer support, advocacy, training, education, and direct services for the most underserved disability group: children and youth (0-21) who struggle with emotional, behavioral and mental health challenges and their families.

Services expand the mental health, juvenile justice, child welfare/DYFS, special education, and developmental disabilities systems. **Call 973-989-8866.**

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211 provides callers with information about various human services agencies and programs in their community.

NJ Helps

This site helps you find out about services and programs for children, families and individuals. You can also prescreen to see if you are eligible for programs such as Food Stamps, Medicaid and others.

AARP Grandparent Information Center

This site offers information and referral to other resources that help grandparents raising grandchildren.

U.S. Government website: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

FirstGov is the official website of the US Government. This website links to benefits and assistance information, health and safety resources, reports and publications, and state resources for grandparent.

Generations United

This site offers information and referral to other resources that help grandparents raising grandchildren.

Raising Your Grandchildren

This website is designed to help guide grandparents and kinship caregivers in their efforts to raise these children and to find needed resources for the children as well as themselves.

New Jersey Family Care

This program provides free or low-cost health insurance for uninsured children.

New Jersey Health Link

New Jersey Health Link is a comprehensive healthcare consumer information web site serving seniors, families, children and healthcare professionals.

Legal Services of New Jersey

This site offers information, advice and referrals for low-income people with civil legal problems.