

NJ Kinship Connections

A Publication of the NJ Kinship Legal Guardianship Resource Clearing House

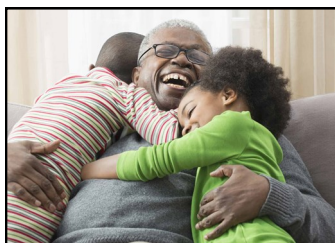


A PROGRAM OF CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

Winter 2019

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act

On July 7, 2018, the Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act was signed into law. First introduced by Senator Susan Collins and Senator Bob Casey, this bipartisan bill was unanimously passed by both the U.S. House and Senate. The new law recognized that the opioid epidemic in the United States is having a major impact on generations of families nationwide. Senator Collins stated, "Throughout history, grandparents have stepped in to provide safe and secure homes to their grandchildren, replacing traumatic pasts with loving and hopeful futures. With so many parents struggling with addiction, grandparents are increasingly coming to the rescue and assuming this role. It is essential that we do all that we can to help these families." She added, "The number of older Americans who are



delaying their retirement in order to care for grandchildren is on the rise due to the opioid crisis." Currently in the U.S., approximately 2.6 million children are reportedly being raised by their grandparents. Professionals estimate the real number is most likely much higher. Sometimes called the skipped-generation households, these families are facing many challenges including trauma, grief, health issues, school-related problems and poverty.

The new law creates a three-year Federal Advisory Council to Support Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children. "The council," Senator Bob

Casey explained, will "provide information to help grandparents address challenges that they may face, such as navigating the legal system, engaging school systems, and locating mental health providers." This council will be charged with identifying, promoting, coordinating and disseminating information publicly about resources and best practices to help families meet all their needs, including physical health, mental health, and emotional well-being. It will identify gaps in services as well. The council will then report back to Congress within 180 days with its findings. As part of the program, the council will also be ensuring that the needs of Native Americans are met.

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No PC? No Problem!

Contact a KinKonnekt warm-line representative at 877-KLG-LINE ((877) 554-5463) to request a book or ask a question about statewide resources!

THOSE WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS

FEDERAL APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA) DEADLINES VARY BY COLLEGE CHECK WITH THE COLLEGES YOUR CHILD IS APPLYING TO FOR THEIR DEADLINES. CONTACT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL FOR DETAILS.



NJ Kinship Connections

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (Con't)

DID YOU KNOW?

ARE YOU CARING FOR A CHILD/GRANDCHILD WHO HAS A BEHAVIORAL ISSUE, DEVELOPMENTAL OR INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY AND/OR NEEDS SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT SERVICES?

CONSIDER CONTACTING PERFORMCARE:

PERFORMCARE HELPS FAMILIES ACROSS NEW JERSEY BY OFFERING SERVICES TO ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SUCH AS:

- IN-HOME THERAPY
- FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES
- BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS
- MOBILE RESPONSE
- CARE MANAGEMENT
- OUT-OF-HOME TREATMENT
- SUMMER CAMP ASSISTANCE AND MORE

CALL
1-877-652-7624
24 HRS A DAY/ 7 DAYS
A WEEK

PerformCARE



The council will be composed of the following members:

- Secretary of Health and Human Services
- Secretary of Education
- Administrator for Community Living
- Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families

- The head of each federal agency department or other government entity identified by the secretary of HHS as having responsibilities for, or administering programs related to issues affecting grandparents and other relatives raising children in their care.

Also included will be a grandparent raising a grandchild and an older relative raising a relative child.

As part of the research, the advisory council will develop a process for the public to submit recommendations and provide feedback and comments. KinConnect will be on the lookout for this new process and will pass along to all our readers. Stay tuned!

Sources:

<https://ca.news.yahoo.com/apos-wouldn-apos-t-trade-090000683.html>

<https://www.collins.senate.gov/newsroom/bill-help-grandparents-raising-grandchildren-due-opioid-crisis-passes-senate>

NJ Kinship Navigator Programs

Kinship Navigator Programs:

Dial 2-1-1

By dialing 2-1-1, eligible Kinship caregivers can get help addressing immediate problems, and they will also be referred to a local New Jersey Kinship agency which will work with caregivers to access additional services.

The local kinship agencies serve three functions. First, staff from the agencies help caregivers navigate other forms of government assistance. Second, Kinship agencies determine if the caregiver's family is eligible for Kinship Navigator program benefits and help with short-term expenses for the relative child, such as furniture, moving expenses, and clothing. Finally, the Kinship agencies provide technical support and guide the family through the process of Kinship Legal Guardianship, if the caregiver wishes to make a legal commitment to the child.

Have other Kinship-related questions? Call KinConnect at 877-544-5463.

NJ Kinship Connections

Our Library “Kin” Korner, Book Review

Welcome Readers . . .



The Grandfamily Guidebook: Wisdom and Support for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren is a brand new book written by Dr. Andrew Adesman and Christine Adamec. Critics proclaim that it is a “must read” and a “comprehensive encyclopedia” for all things related to kinship care. The forward by acclaimed pediatrician, Dr. William Sears, deems this book a valuable tool. He writes, “The many practical pointers . . . come together as a toolbox with which new grandparents can tackle life’s many challenging situations.”

The book is broken into four parts. Section one, *Ready or Not, You’re Raising Your Grandchildren*, looks to help kinship caregivers through the crisis stage as they begin the process of raising another generation of children. This section validates emotions and offers strategies for dealing with the new dynamics in the

family, including how to handle relationships with the children’s birth parents. In section two, *Adjusting to the New Normal*, the authors tackle how to answer your grandchildren’s questions, how to manage difficult behaviors, and how to advocate for your grandchild in school. Section three, *Legal and Financial Resources: Using Them to Your Grandfamily’s Advantage*, sheds light on the differences between physical and legal custody, guardianship, adoption, and power of attorney. This section also navigates through the financial help at the federal, state and county levels looking at Medicaid, tax benefits, free school lunch programs, and home energy assistance programs. Finally, in section four, *Healthy in Body and Mind*, the authors address health issues for caregivers and children.

With real-life scenarios, well organized chapters, and easy-to-read text, this book offers a wealth of information and encouragement for all kinship providers.

Robert Lives With His Grandparents is a children’s book told from young Robert’s perspective just after he moves in with his grandparents. Although he misses his parents, he feels safe in his grandparents’ care. When “Parents’ Day” is announced at school, Robert worries what the other children will think when they find out he does not live with his parents: “His grandparents had wrinkles on their faces, and they even had gray hair. Though he loved them, he felt funny at the thought of their coming here with all the mothers and fathers.” When his grandmother comes to school, he discovers that she is accepted and welcomed and that there are other children in class who live with relatives. Robert is able to relax, smile, and hold his grandmother’s hand with pride.

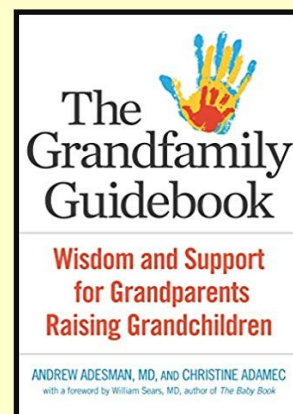
To borrow these or any other kinship, foster and/or kinship-focused book, please log onto our website www.kinkconnect.org and select “Lending Library” or call us and we will help you find a book!

- Cynthia Lapidus, CSW



DID YOU KNOW?

The NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House and Kinship Care Clearing House have over 1,500 books and videos to borrow for free?



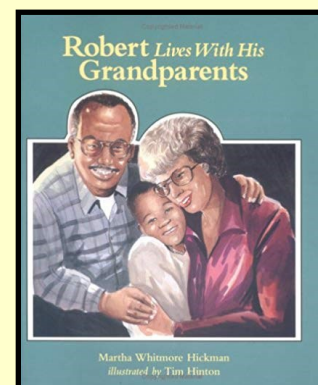
The KinConnect Free Lending Library

Call us to borrow a book!

1-877-KLG-LINE

(1-877-554-5463)

www.kinkconnect.org





NJ Kinship Connections

NJ's Family Success Centers

DID YOU KNOW?

IN ADDITION TO THE RESOURCES INCLUDED ON THESE PAGES THE DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CHILDREN SYSTEM OF CARE (CSOC) ALSO SERVES:

- CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE CHALLENGES AND THEIR FAMILIES
- CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES
- CHILDREN WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND THEIR FAMILIES

FOR INFORMATION CALL
1-877-652-7624



Support is available right in your own community! Every county in New Jersey has multiple Family Success Centers. Check out this information from <https://www.nj211.org/family-success-centers>.

Family Success Centers are community-based, family centered, neighborhood gathering places where any community resident can go for family support, information and services. Centers are designed to enrich the lives of children by strengthening families and neighborhoods; provide integrated, locally based services; reduce isolation and promote connections among family and community; and provide services in a warm and welcoming environment. Services are provided at no charge.



Core Services Include:

- * Access to information on child, maternal and family health services, including linkage to publicly funded health insurance programs and referrals to local health care services.
- * Development of "Family Success" plans that address challenges which threaten to undermine family stability.
- * Economic self-sufficiency/employment-related services/income security services.
- * Information & Referral Services (connection to off-site public and private resources).
- * Life Skills training including the teaching of skills involving budgeting, nutrition, etc.
- * Housing-related services.
- * Parent education.
- * Parent-child activities.
- * Advocacy.
- * Home visiting, consistent with the model of engagement approved by DCF's Family and Community Partnerships.

How do you find your Local Success Center?

You can find a Family Success Center in your county by accessing information from New Jersey's Department of Children and Families website at : <https://www.state.nj.us/dcf/families/support/success/>.



You can also call "2-1-1" on your phone and ask for your local Family Success Center.



Or call our KinConnect Warm Line at
1 (877) KLG.Line or
1 (877) 554-5463.



NJ Kinship Connections

Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG) Counseling

If you were awarded KLG through the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P), formally known as DYFS, there may be free KLG Counseling available in your area. The below is sorted by County:

Bergen, Passaic and Essex Counties (excluding Newark): Children's Aid and Family Services: 201-740-7124

Hudson County: Catholic Charities Diocese of Newark Family Resource Center: 201-798-9900

Union County, Middlesex, Suburban Essex: Family and Children's Services, 908-352-7474

Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Somerset Counties: Children's Home Society, 609-695-6274

Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties: Robins Nest, 856-881-8689 or Oaks Integrated Care, 609-953-5714 (all of above except Cape May County).

Family Intervention Services:
Passaic: 973-523-0089
Morris: 973-586-5243
Sussex: 973-940-0105
Essex: 973-324-7880



Do you care for a child who does not have health insurance? Are you a parent or guardian who cannot afford health insurance? NJ FamilyCare may be for you!

Affordable health coverage. Quality Care - NJ FamilyCare - New Jersey's publicly funded health insurance program - includes CHIP, Medicaid and Medicaid expansion populations. That means qualified NJ residents of any age may be eligible for free or low-cost health insurance that covers doctor visits, prescriptions, vision, dental care, mental health and substance use services and even hospitalization. NJ FamilyCare is for people who do not have employer insurance. The entire application process can be completed online at <https://njfc.force.com/familycare/quickstart> or call 1-800-701-0710 and multi-lingual operators are available.

Who is Eligible?

NJ Family Care includes: children, pregnant women, parents/caretaker relatives, single adults and childless couples. Financial eligibility will be determined by the latest federal tax return which, when filed, will be electronically verified.

Children ages 18 and under are eligible with higher incomes up to 355% FPL (\$7,278/month for a family of four). Parents still need to renew the coverage each year. Children age 18 and under who are lawfully admitted can be eligible even if they have lived in this country fewer than five years.

Parents/Caretaker Relatives with income up to 138% FPL (\$2,829/month for a family of four) must have tax dependent children in their household in order to be eligible under this category. The dependent children in the household must be insured also. Immigrant adults must

have Legal Permanent Resident status in the US for at least five years in order to be eligible for NJ FamilyCare.

Adults without dependent children with ages 19-64 and income up to 138% FPL (\$1,387/month for a single person and \$1,868/month for a couple). Immigrant adults must have Legal Permanent Resident status in the US for at least five years in order to be eligible for NJ FamilyCare.

Pregnant Women up to 205% FPL (\$4,203/month for a family of four). Pregnant women who are lawfully admitted can be eligible even if they have lived in this country fewer than five years. www.nifamilycare.org/income.aspx.

Aged, Blind, Disabled program including Long-Term Care Individuals ineligible for NJ FamilyCare can find information on other insurance affordability programs at www.healthcare.gov.



To download the Guide to Kinship Legal Guardianship Support Services by the NJ Department of Children and Families, visit:

<https://kinkconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/KLG-Subsidy-Program.pdf>

For information on NJ FamilyCare Health Insurance:

Call 1-800-701-0710
TTY: 1-800-701-0720

Hours of Operation:
Monday and Thursday
8:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M.
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.



NJ KINSHIP LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP
RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

WWW.KINKONNECT.ORG

A PROGRAM OF CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

WWW.CAFSNJ.ORG

Children's Aid and Family Services
76 South Orange Avenue, Suite 209
South Orange, NJ 07079

KLG Warmline: 877-KLG-LINE
877-554-5463

E-mail: warmline@kinkonnnect.org
Visit us at: www.kinkonnnect.org

Children's Aid and Family Services is one of northern New Jersey's leading non-profit human service agencies. Since 1899, we have built better lives for thousands of disadvantaged children who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned. For more information, visit our website: www.cafsnj.org.

DISCLAIMER

While NJ Kinship Legal Guardianship Resource Clearing House (KinKonnnect) or Children's Aid and Family Services makes every effort to present accurate and reliable information, neither KinKonnnect nor Children's Aid and Family Services guarantees the completeness, efficacy or timeliness of such information. In addition, reference herein to any specific product, process, service, organization, or viewpoint does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation or favoring by KinKonnnect or Children's Aid and Family Services.

Love Without Borders: Grandfamilies and Immigration

Generations United's recently released, "Love Without Borders: Grandfamilies and Immigration." According to the report, 2.6 million children are being raised in the U. S by grandparents, other relatives and close family friends with no parent in the household. These "grandfamilies" or kinship families are families in which relatives or close family friends raise children unexpectedly because their parents cannot due to opioid or other substance use, mental health challenges, incarceration, death or other issues. With increased immigration enforcement and children being separated from their parents at the U.S. border, grandparents and other relatives are stepping up to raise many of these children too. Although the exact number of grandfamilies formed as a result of a parent's detainment or deportation is not known, Generations United research indicates that about 21% of the 2.6 million children in grandfamilies or 544,000 children are living in immigrant grandfamilies, meaning the child, parent(s), and/or kinship care provider(s) are foreign born.

While the reasons grandfamilies come together differ, one thing is usually the same: children suffer loss and trauma from being removed or separated from their parents. The loss can cause harm to a child's development. Separation from a parent who is detained or deported can compound the child's existing trauma which children may experience as a result of living in a dangerous or violent environment in their home country or during their long journey to the U.S. Finding a

loving relative to care for the children can help buffer the effects of the children's stress and reduce the trauma of separation. Years of research confirms that children thrive in grandfamilies when they have the support they need.

Here is a brief look into the statistics:

- 1 in 5 children in grandfamilies live in an immigrant grandfamily.
- For every 1 child in foster care with relatives, 19 children are being raised by grandparents or other relatives outside of the foster care system.
- From 2008 to 2017 there has been a 9% increase of children in foster care being raised by relatives (24% to 33%).

To read the full handbook, "Love Without Borders: Grandfamilies and Immigration" published by Generations United, please download here: <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/10/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF2018.pdf>. Generations United National Center on Grandfamilies is a leading voice for kinship families in the United States. Check out their websites at www.gu.org and www.grandfamilies.org.