

NJ Kinship Connections

A Publication of the NJ Kinship Legal Guardianship Resource Clearing House



A PROGRAM OF CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

WINTER 2022

Kinship: Tips on Taking Care of Yourself

Taking in a child who needs you can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life – but it can also be stressful for you and the rest of your family. Whether you are a formal kinship care provider through the child welfare system, or you informally agree to care for the child of a family member, you play a vital role. Taking care of yourself is critically important, for your own well-being and for the well-being of the child(ren) you're caring for and others in your household.

For a child, being removed from their parents and home is stressful and can be traumatic. Even when you provide loving care, a child may have difficulty adjusting. They will likely miss their parents and their home. This very natural reaction can make it hard for them to respond positively to you and may impact their behavior in many ways.

To help kinship caregivers, the Center for the Study of Social Policy created a "Taking Care of Yourself: Tips for Kinship Care Providers" worksheet.

The following are the main tips from this guide.

1- Resilience: *To Be strong, even when you're stressed.*

Being resilient as a parent or caregiver means:

- Taking care of and feeling good about yourself
- Asking for help when you need it
 - Being hopeful and preparing for the future
 - Not allowing stress to get in the way of providing loving care for the child
- Taking time to really enjoy the child and do activities together.

2- Social connections: *Get and give support.*

It's easier to handle parenting challenges when you have positive relationships with family, friends and neighbors. Having a network of caring people in your life helps you feel secure, confident and empowered – and will help you become a better parent or caregiver. You can strengthen connections by:

- Focusing on relationships where you feel respected and appreciated

- Accepting help from others and looking for opportunities to help them back

- Building your network so you have multiple friends and connections to turn to no matter the situation.

3. Knowledge of parenting and child development: *Learn more so you can parent better.*

Knowing what to expect makes taking care of a child a lot easier. Knowledge of parenting and child development helps you to:

- Understand what children and youth need to help them learn and thrive
- Recognize a child's unique needs, strengths and interests
- Understand how to respond in a positive and effective way when a child misbehaves.

4- Concrete support in times of need: *Get help when you need it.*

All families go through tough times and need help at times from their extended families, friends, faith community or other community services.

Inside this issue:

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF	1, 2
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR	2
LIBRARY KINKORNER	3
SUPPORTS FOR RELATIVES RAISING CHILDREN OF RELATIVES	4
COLA UPDATE/MULTIGENERATIONAL HOME LIFE	5
NJ FAMILY CARE	6

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!

FOR 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

Tips in Taking Care of Yourself (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



This is a time when your family may need more support. Knowing where to get help in the community can make things a lot easier. It is important to be able to:

- Know what help is available
- Ask for help when you need it – such as financial help, a break from work or home responsibilities, or seek therapy for yourself, a child or another family member
- Get what you need to keep your family healthy and safe
- Help others when possible In terms of

concrete supports. Join a support group, informal or formal, reach out to your church community, neighbors and friends.

5. Stay healthy: Make time for proper care of yourself physically and emotionally.

- Get the exercise you need; take walks each day, (perhaps with another caregiver)
- Make and keep those doctor and dentists appointments
- Eat nutritious meals.

Just like you are directed on an airplane in an emergency to place the oxygen mask on yourself first and then help your child, it is im-

portant to take care of yourself first so in turn, you can take care of those you love. You are special, and important. Make it a priority to get the supports you need to be healthy and there for the child or children in your care.

To download the full publication, visit:

<https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Self-Care-for-Kinship-Care-Providers.pdf>

www.strengtheningfamilies.net



Center for the Study of Social Policy
Ideas into Action

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. Last, 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.

Our Library “Kin” Korner, Book Review

Welcome readers!

According to Grandfacts from Grandfamilies.org, over 41,000 grandparents are currently raising their grandchildren in New Jersey.



In Elaine K. Williams's book, **The Sacred Work of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**, the challenges faced by these grandparents are explored. The generation gap between grandchildren and grandparent is tremendous, especially in our technologically advanced society. Elaine K. Williams stated, “We need to remember that we knew a different world; our grandchildren did not.” Acknowledging the differences and realizing that neither world is better or worse is important. Ms. Williams helps her readers to embrace the changes and learn to evolve in the world of today. This book also examines the different developmental stages of children and how grandparents can match expectations with their grandchildren's abilities. This includes a better understanding of the adolescent brain. Loss and trauma are very much a part of the equation when grandparents are parenting their children's children. The absence of a parent is an incredible loss

for a child, but there is also a loss for the grandparent, who is now giving up the role of “grandparent” to become a parent once again. Ms. Williams's book helps grandparents take on all the challenges of parenting again with optimism and understanding. She reminds her reader to “be intentional about your life. When your grandkids are grown, they will reflect back and say, ‘My success as a person was birthed in my grandparents’ positive, hopeful, and confident attitude toward life, despite their many challenges.’”

I Call My Grandparents “Mom and Dad” by Carilyn Rouyer, is a children's book written from the perspective of Kayden, a young boy being raised by his grandparents. In his words, he explains that his mom and dad are really his grandparents. Although they look older, they still do all the things that moms and dads do. He matter-of-factly explains that lots of kids are being raised by their grandparents and

details some of the reasons why. He concludes by stating, “My parents are just like any other mom and dad except with laugh lines on their face and snow in their hair.”

Our Grandfamily: A Flip-Sided Book About Grandchildren Being Raised By Grandparents by Sandra Werle, M.Ed. is a wonderful children's book that explores the daily life and emotions of grandchildren being raised by their grandparents. Flip the book over and the story is told from the grandparents' perspective. This book helps the reader to normalize the concerns and thoughts of both grandparents and grandchildren and to put labels to all their feelings. The chapters end by stating, “Sometimes it's hard to be a skip-generation. Mostly it's just fine- because we love each other. This is our normal.”

We invite you to give us a call to find a perfect book to borrow for you and your family.

-Cynthia Lapidus CSW, BSW



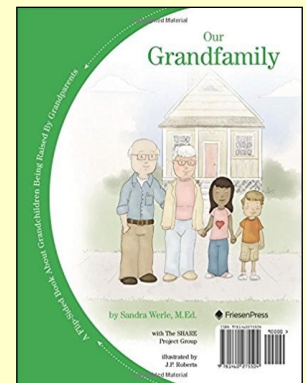
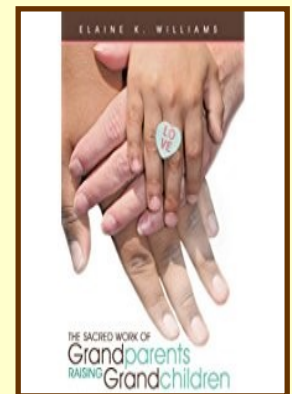
The KinKconnect **Free Lending** **Library**

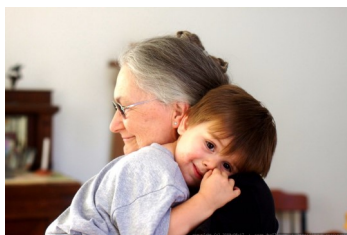
Call us to borrow
a book!

1-877-KLG-LINE
(1-877-554-5463)

www.kinkconnect.org

**We have many
books that focus on
Kinship!
Here are a couple....**





NJ Kinship Connections

Supports for Relatives Raising Relative's Children

DID YOU KNOW?

THAT ALMOST 3 MILLION
CHILDREN IN THE U. S
ARE LIVING IN
GRANDFAMILY/KINSHIP
HOUSEHOLDS;
OVER 200,000 IN NJ.

DUE TO THE ADDITIONAL
CHALLENGES DURING THE
PANDEMIC, GENERATIONS
UNITED, CREATED A
"COVID-19 FACT SHEET FOR
GRANDFAMILIES AND
MULTIGENERATIONAL
FAMILIES."

TO VIEW THE
FACT SHEETS VISIT:

[HTTPS://WWW.GU.ORG/APP
/UPLOADS/2020/03/COVI
D-19-FACT-SHEET-3-17-
20.PDF](https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-FACT-SHEET-3-17-20.pdf)

AND

[HTTPS:// GENERA-
TIONS.ASAGING.ORG/
GRANDPARENTS-RAISING-
GRANDCHILDREN-COVID-19](https://generations.asaging.org/grandparents-raising-grandchildren-covid-19)

**generations
united**

Because we're stronger together®

Are you raising your grandchild, niece/ nephew or other relative? During the pandemic, many agencies have been offering virtual supports, trainings and more. Below is a partial list of agencies that may be offering grand-parent/caregiver support groups and/or trainings:

embrella (formally Foster and Adoptive Family Services- FAFS): Most NJ counties offer support groups for those who are adoptive parents, currently licensed foster parents and/or Kinship Legal Guardians (KLG) through the Division (DCP&P). To locate a group in your area, contact embrella at 1-800-222-0047 or visit their website at www.embrella.org.

The needs of children can seem overwhelming, especially if you are unexpectedly thrust into the role of being their primary caregiver. According to the AARP's article "Grandparents raising Grandchildren," it's helpful to create a binder with important papers so you can easily find them when you need them. Some of the recommended documents include:

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group: Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cape May County, call 609-465-5115 X 3603.

Caretakers Support Group sponsored by the Family Partners of Morris and Sussex Counties, call 973-940-3194.

Caregiver Support Group meetings in English and Spanish sponsored by Family Support Organization of Hunterdon, Somerset and Warren Counties, call 908-223-1191.

In addition, many more groups are offering meetings and supports virtually through Zoom or by phone. To see our current list of these groups, please visit www.kinkconnect.org and select "Virtual Support" towards the top/middle of the Home page to check out a support group that may be right for you.

You are also welcome to contact our KinKconnect warmline at warm-line@kinkconnect.org or call us at 877-KLG-LINE (877-554-5463) to speak to a warm line representative.

Keeping Track of All the Facts

- Birth certificates
- Death certificate (if grandchild's parent is deceased)
- Marriage records/ divorce decrees from their parents
- Social Security Cards or numbers for the children
- Medical/dental records
- Power of Attorney, custody, guardianship, adoption or other legal papers.
- Consent forms signed by parents for medical care and education

- School papers such as report cards, evaluations, registration, etc.
- Proof of your income and assets
- Citizenship papers for you or your grandchildren
- Military papers for you or their parents.

For more info visit:
[https://www.aarp.org/relations
hips/friends-family/info-08-
2011/grandfamilies-guide-
getting-
started.html?cmp=RDRCT-
cc951396-20210406](https://www.aarp.org/relationships/friends-family/info-08-2011/grandfamilies-guide-getting-started.html?cmp=RDRCT-cc951396-20210406)

Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) Update for 2022

As of January 2022, a 5.9% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) began with benefits payable to more than 64 million Social Security beneficiaries as well as over 8 million beneficiaries who receive Social Security Income (SSI) benefits. Some of the same people receive both Social Security and SSI benefits. * The maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum)



increased from \$142,800 in 2021 to \$147,000 in 2022. The earnings limit for workers who are younger than “full” retirement age in 2022 increased to \$19,560. The Social Security Administration will deduct \$1 from benefits for each \$2

earned over \$19,560 until the month the worker turns “full” retirement age. There is no limit on earnings for workers who are “full” retirement age or older for the entire year. To read more about COLA, tax, benefit and earning amounts as well as SSI thresholds, visit <https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/factsheets/colafacts2022.pdf>.

* <https://www.ssa.gov/cola/>

NJ Family Support Organizations

Are you raising a child with special needs and/or working with the State Care Management System (CMO) or Perform Care? Consider checking out the Family Support Organizations (FSO) in your area. FSO's are 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 challenges. Many offer virtual and in-person support groups and services where parents can gather with other parents of

special needs children. This may be a great way to exchange ideas and find resources that may be helpful to your family. Here is a partial list of the Family Support Organizations in NJ that may offer Caretaker support groups:

Atlantic/Cape May Family Support Organization:
www.acfamsupport.org/

Family Support Organization of Bergen County: www.fsobergen.org/

Family Partners of Morris and Sussex Counties:
www.familypartnersms.org/

Family Support Organizations of Hunterdon, Somerset and Warren Counties: www.fso-hsw.org/

Ocean County Family Support Organization:
www.oceanfso.org/

Family Support Organization of Union County:
www.fso-union.org/

For a full list of FSO's in the state, visit:
<https://www.nj.gov/dcf/families/support/support/>



SUICIDE PREVENTION

During the past year, the suicide rate among young people has increased.

Ideas to help child(ren) in your care:

- Help them stay connected to you and others
- Use On-line Therapy and Apps
- Limit News and Social Media
- Encourage Them to be Easy on Themselves and Others
- Do Something Together to Break the Monotony

Want to Talk?

Contact: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1-800-273-8255

New Jersey Hopeline:
1-855-654-6735

PerformCare:
1-877-652-7624



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.



Affordable health coverage. Quality care.

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, multi-lingual operators are available. The number for hearing impaired individuals is 1-800-701-0720.

Easily navigate the new online NJ FamilyCare application with:

- ◆ New menus, subheadings and smart technology.

Applicants can register to:

- ◆ Save partially completed applications
- ◆ View submitted applications, and
- ◆ Receive future Medicaid notifications electronically.

Children 18 and under are eligible with higher incomes up to 355% FPL (\$7,840/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.

Adults age 19-64 with income up to 138% FPL (\$1,482/month for a single person and \$2,004/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. Some immigrant adults can be eligible if they are lawfully present, regardless of when they entered the US. Examples are refugees and asylees, and there are others. Immigrants age 19 and 20 who are lawfully present and have very low income (\$509/month for a single person and \$805/month for a family of 2) can also be eligible.

Pregnant Women up to 205% FPL (\$4,528/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.

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.

To see if you are financially eligible based on your income visit

http://www.njfamilycare.org/who_eligibl.aspx

People over 65, blind or permanently disabled, including long term care visit

<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmahs/clients/medicaid/abd/index.html>