

GrandFacts

A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



The Brookdale Foundation Group
www.brookdalefoundation.org



Kansas

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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. 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 Kansas...

- There are 29,026 children living in grandparent-headed households (4.1% of all children in the state). There are another 8,739 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.2 % of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Kansas, 16,184 are living there without either parent present.
- 17,873 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [3,303 in Wichita and 2,210 in Kansas City]: 17% of these grandparents are African American; 11% are Hispanic/Latino; 2% are Asian; 2% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; and 67% are White. 38% of these grand-parents live in households without the children's parents present. 75.6% are under the age of 60; 13.2% 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 Kansas

- Contact:** Mary Tritsch, AARP Kansas Communications Director
Phone: 785-234-1365
Email: MTritsch@aarp.org
Service Area: Statewide
Services Offered:
- Resource materials provided upon request
 - Assistance to start local grandparent support groups

Caring and Sharing Grandparents, Inc.

Contact: Judy Mitchell
Phone: 620-663-4134
Email: grandmajem@cox.net
Service Area: Hutchinson

Services Offered:

- Support groups by topic (raising grandchildren, visitation issues, special needs)
- Advocacy
- Parenting classes
- Legal and counseling referrals
- Online support group

Family Friends Grandparents as Parents Program

Sponsoring Organization Children's Mercy Hospital

Contact: Alice Kitchen
Phone: 816-234-3719
Email: akitchen@cmh.edu
Service Area: Kansas City

Services Offered:

- Support groups
- Guidance and education by phone or in the home from trained grandparents and professionals
- Links to community resources, including legal services
- Access to programs for children and youth
- Parenting education

Grandparents as Caregivers Program

Sponsoring Organization Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services and
Kansas Department on Aging
Phone: 1-888-369-4777
Website: www.srskansas.org/ISD/ees/grandparents_caregivers.htm
(information and applications provided in English and Spanish)
Service Area: Statewide

Services Offered:

- Financial assistance to grandparents or other relatives raising children if certain eligibility requirements are met including legal custody and income guidelines
- Applications taken on first come, first serve basis – funding is limited
- Program started in January 2007
- Referral to support groups through Kansas Department on Aging (1-800-432-3535)

Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL)

Contact: B.J. Gore (Phone:316-942-4261 x 1315)
Phone: Parent Helpline: 800-332-6378
Email: bjgore@kcsl.org
Website: www.kcsl.org
Service Area: Statewide

Services Offered:

- Network of support groups throughout the state
- Parenting education classes and foster caregiver training
- Kinship care resource materials
- Crisis hotline
- Assistance in starting a kinship care support group, family group conferences
- Assistance applying for financial and medical services
- Kinship Navigator program

Kansas Department of Aging

Contact: **Marva Williams**
785-291-3357 / marvawilliams@aging.state.ks.us
Sharon Dabzadeh
785-291-3806 / sharondabzadeh@aging.state.ks.us
Service Area: Statewide

Services Offered:

- Information and assistance to help relative caregivers navigate the system and locate support groups.
- RAPP (Relatives as Parents) Programs – many resources at <http://www.agingkansas.org/kdoa/programs/rapp.htm>

Kansas Elder Law Hotline

Sponsoring Organization Kansas Legal Services
Elder Law Hotline: 888-353-5337
Service Area: Statewide

Services Offered:

- Legal advice over the phone from volunteer attorneys; no income eligibility
- Additional legal services for eligible people over 60

KVC Behavioral Health Care

Address: 1223 Meadowlark Lane, Kansas City, KS 66102
Contact: Jean Constantine, LCPC, Kinship Care Coordinator
Phone: 913-890-7509
Email: jconstantine@kvc.org
Service Area: Kansas City

Services Offered:

- Support group
- Case management
- Resource referrals
- Transportation assistance
- Education on permanency options
- Annual family conference

Children in Foster Care

State child welfare agencies sometimes place children in foster care with grandparents or other relatives. Most state agencies call these placements “kinship care.”

Numbers in foster care – August 2007

- 5,866 children in out-of-home placements under the supervision of the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services (SRS).
- 1,493 of these children were placed with relatives.

Preferences

- State policy requires that kin be considered first for out-of-home placements.
- Kin may be allowed to care for a child informally but the home must be checked by a state agency which will conduct a walk through and background check of caregivers.
- Kin may be licensed as foster parent under same assessment procedures as non-kin foster parents.
- Licensed kin receive the same foster care payment as non-kin foster parents.
- State contracts with five private agencies to handle permanency placements of children in foster care system:
 - The Farm, Inc – Emporia
 - KVC Behavioral Health Care – Kansas City
 - Kansas Children’s Service League – Wichita
 - St Francis Academy – Salina
 - United Methodist Youthville – Newton

Contacts

- Foster Care - Debi Hatfield, LMSW, Child Placing Agency/Residential Programs
Bureau of Childcare and Health Facilities
 - Phone: 785-368-7015
 - Email: dhatfiel@kdhe.state.ks.us
- Kinship Care – Sharri Black, Kinship Care Consultant
 - Phone: 785-368-8163
 - Email: sxxb@srs.ks.gov

Permanent Custodianship

- Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services provides funding for eligible children in the foster care system who are placed with a relative in an approved home under a permanent guardianship.
- Contact Carolyn Godinez
 - Phone: 785-296-2732
 - Email: cjg@srs.ks.gov

Training and support

- Children’s Alliance of Kansas facilitates effective continuum of coverage for children in Kansas; coordinates programming with more than 20 member agencies, including emergency care, training for foster and adoptive parents, foster care recruitment and vocational rehabilitation services.
- Contact Denise Gibson, Training Coordinator
 - Phone: 785-235-5437
 - Email: dgibson@childally.org
 - Web: www.childally.org

Public Benefits

Children are often eligible for state and federal benefits even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody. The following public benefits programs are offered in Kansas:

Financial Assistance

- Cash assistance may be available to children and their relative caregivers through the Successful Families Program or Temporary Assistance for Families (TAF)
- Contact: 888-369-4777
 - Web: www.srskansas.org/ISD/ees/successful_families.htm

Food Stamps

- Kinship care families may be eligible for food stamps.
- Contact: 888-369-4777
 - Web: www.srskansas.org/ISD/ees/successful_families.htm

Health Insurance

- Relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health insurance through Kansas Medicaid and Health Wave programs
 - Contact: 800-792 – 4884
 - Web: www.kansashealthwave.org

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

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: 202-662-3568
 - Web: www.childrensdefense.org (Kinship Care Resource Kit)
- National Council on Aging – Benefits CheckUp www.benefitscheckup.org

State Laws

Grandparents as Caregivers

- New program approved by legislature to provide financial assistance to eligible grandparents caring for grandchildren – see Grandparents as Caregivers under “Programs That Can Help”
- Started January 2007

Medical Consent (Kan. Stat. Ann § 38-136, 137)

- Allows parents to sign a consent form authorizing grandparent or relative caregiver to obtain immunization of child without obtaining legal custody or guardianship

Standby Guardianship (Kan. Stat. Ann. § 59-3036)

- Temporary, emergency guardianship if court finds there is a threat to the health or safety of the child

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

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