

GrandFacts

A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



The Brookdale Foundation
Group
www.brookdalefoundation.org



Virginia

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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 e-mail subject line.

In Virginia...

- There are 107,602 children living in grandparent-headed households (6.2% of all children in the state). There are another 31,076 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.8 % of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Virginia, 56,663 are living there without either parent present.
- 59,464 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [3,603 in Virginia Beach and 2,825 in Norfolk]: 40% of these grandparents are African American; 3% are Hispanic/Latino; 3% are Asian; and 52% are White. 40% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 71% are under the age of 60; 15% 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>

These data are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau Table DP-2. Profile Selected Social Characteristics:2000.

Programs That Can Help

Alexandria Department of Human Services

- Contact:** Linda Cotton, Information and Referral Specialist
Phone: 703-838-0900
Email: LindaCotton@alexandriava.gov
Service area: Alexandria
Services offered:
- Information and referral
 - Brochures, pamphlets about resources in the community

AIDS Care Center for Education and Support Services (ACCESS)

Contact: Stacie Walls Beegle
Phone: 757-640-0929
Email: Stacie@accessaids.org
Service area: Norfolk, Hampton, Newport News, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach

Services offered:

- HIV-related support services with family-centered focus for children, teens and caregivers
- Case management, children's services, transportation, support groups, housing, emergency rental and utility assistance, HIV testing and outreach
- Community HIV prevention education for youth and at-risk teens

Brighton's Solid Rock, Inc.

Contact: Reverend Clifford Barnett or Suzette Leathers
Phone: 757-393-0570
Email: pgap@brightonrock.hrcoxmail.com
Service area: Portsmouth

Services offered:

- Kinship caregiver support groups in local elementary schools; many offer children's activities during the meetings

Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia, Inc.

Contact: Kathy Dial
Phone: 757-533-5217
Email: kdial@cceva.org
Service area: Hampton Roads

Services offered:

- Support groups
- Educational seminars
- Case management
- Advocacy
- Quarterly respite activities
- Mediation
- Resource library
- Information and referral
- Parenting plans and cooperative parenting
- Emergency resources

Crater District Area Agency on Aging

Contact: Helen Terry
Phone: 804 732-7020
Email: herry@cdaaa.org
Contact: Mattie Robertson
Phone: 804-861-3185
Email: FGPINC@aol.com
Service area: Petersburg

Services offered:

- Caregiver support group on 3rd Tuesday of the month
- Information and referral
- Programs available to eligible participants

Fairfax County Kinship Care Committee

Sponsoring Organization: Fairfax County Department of Family Services and Fairfax County Public Schools

Contact: Robin Hamby
Phone: 703-277-2640
Contact: Nancy Coffey
Phone: 703-324-7723
Email: Nancy.Coffey@fairfaxcounty.gov
Contact: Colleen Turner
Phone: 703-324-5489
Service area: Fairfax County

Services offered:

- Grandparents Day Off – respite for caregivers with programs for children (information at 703-324-3517)
- Free guide Kinship Care Resource Guide for Grandparents and Other Relatives raising children
 - Order by calling 703-324-5870 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs
- Kinship Support Groups offered in Fairfax and Alexandria – for information call 703-277--2640

Grandmombdaddy Program

Sponsoring Organization: Family Service of Roanoke Valley
Contact: Cathy Thompson
Phone: 540-563-5316
Email: cthompson@fsrv.org
Web: <http://www.fsrv.org/>
Service area: Roanoke Valley

Services offered:

- Individual and family counseling
- Educational resources
- Information and referral
- Resource guide

GrandPEAS

Sponsoring Organizations: Rockingham Memorial Hospital and Strong Families Great Youth Coalition

Contact: Tonya Osinkosky

Phone: 540-564-7388

Email: tonya.osinkosky.6567@rhcc.com

Web: www.uwhr.org/strongfamilies

Service area: Harrisonburg-Rockingham area

Services offered:

- GrandPEAS = Grand Parenting Education and Support Program
- Three active GrandPEAS support groups – one school-based programs in Rockingham County and two at Rockingham Hospital (including one in Spanish)
- Two Hispanic groups supported by Brookdale Foundation – one in Rockingham County, one in Harrisonburg
- Monthly educational newsletter
- Information and referral
- Children’s programs offered during GrandPEAS meetings
- Three annual events – summer picnic, holiday party in December, respite in May

Greater Richmond SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now)

Contact: Melissa McGinn, Family Support Coordinator

Phone: 804-257-7226

Email: MMcGinn@grscan.com

Service area: Richmond area

Services offered:

- Support and education group meets twice a month for grandparents; children meet at the same time

Kinship Care Initiative – Statewide Task Force and Information Network

Sponsoring Organization: Virginia Department for the Aging

Contact: Elaine Nau, Human Services Program Coordinator

Phone: 804-662-9340

Web: www.vda.virginia.gov

Email: Ellen.Nau@vda.virginia.gov

Service area: Statewide

Mountain Empire Older Citizens Inc. KinCare Program

Contact: Patty Bailey

Phone: 276-523-4202

Email: pbailey@meoc.org

Web: www.meoc.org/

Service area: Lee, Scott, Wise Counties, City of Norton

Mountain Empire Older Citizens Inc. KinCare Program – cont.

Services offered:

- Monthly support groups
- Advocacy
- Family Fun events
- Back to school supplies
- Counseling/care coordination/case management
- Legal assistance
- Parenting education and information

Prevent Child Abuse Virginia

Phone: 804-359-6166
Email: 1-800-CHILDREN@PCAV.ORG
Web: <http://preventchildabuseva.org>
Service area: Statewide

Services offered:

- Database of other support groups, services, information in your area
- Information and referral via telephone, mail or in person
- Se habla Español

Children in Foster Care

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

Numbers – December 2007

- 7,959 children were in out-of-home placements under the supervision of the Virginia Department of Social Services.
- Of these children, 442 children were placed with kin.

Preferences for kinship care

- State policy requires that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for a child under the Department’s care.
- Kinship caregivers have to meet the same approval standards and receive the same foster care payment rate as non-related foster parents.
- Contact: Therese Wolf, Foster Care Program Manager
 - Phone: 804-726-7522
 - Email: therese.wolf@dss.virginia.gov

Subsidized guardianship programs

- Virginia has been approved for a federal waiver for subsidized guardianship. Implementation is expected to begin July 1, 2008.

Other state kinship care services and supports

- Under the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, local departments of social services can provide services to kinship care families that include counseling, youth mentoring, tutoring, parent training, psychological assessments, case management, and information and referral.
- Contact: Lyndell Lewis, Family Preservation Supervisor
 - Phone: 804-726-7531
 - Email: lyndell.lewis@dss.virginia.gov

Public Benefits

Children are often eligible for state and federal benefits even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody.

Financial Assistance

- Cash assistance may be available to children and their grandparents and other relative caregivers through Virginia's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
- Contact:
 - Phone: 804- 726-7000
 - Web: www.dss.state.va.us/benefit/index.html

Food Stamps

- Kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet the family's food and nutrition needs.
- Contact:
 - Phone: 804-726-7378
 - Web: www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/foodstamp.html

Health Insurance

- Grandparents and other relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health insurance on behalf of the children they are raising through Virginia's Medicaid or Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS) Plan.
- In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under the Medicaid plan.
- Contact:
 - Phone: 866-873-2647 (1-866-87FAMIS)
 - Web: www.famis.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
 - Phone: 202-662-3568
 - Web: www.childrensdefense.org (Kinship Care Resource Kit)
- National Council on Aging – Benefits CheckUp www.benefitscheckup.org

State Laws

The following state laws may be helpful to grandparents and other relatives raising children¹:

Medical Consent

Va. Code § 54.1-2969

- Allows a custodian, conservator, or other person standing in loco parentis to authorize medical treatment or surgery for a minor who has been separated from the custody of his parent or guardian

Standby Guardianship

Va. Code § 16.1-349 – 352

- Authorizes a parent to designate an alternate or “standby guardian” to act temporarily on the parents’ behalf regarding the child’s personal care, custody, and support in the event that his or her parent becomes debilitated or dies

Disclosure of Information in Records

Va. Code §32.1-271

- Provides that the state registrar or city or county registrar shall issue a certified copy of a birth certificate of a child to the child’s grandparent upon written request based on evidence of need as prescribed by regulation

¹Laws change and are subject to different interpretations. These general descriptions are not intended as legal advice in any particular situation.

Disclaimer:

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