

# GrandFacts

## A State Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children



## Wyoming

September 2008

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](http://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 Wyoming...

- There are 5,150 children living in grandparent-headed households (4.0% of all children in the state). There are another 1,229 children living in households headed by other relatives (1.0% of all children in the state). Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in Wyoming, 2,738 are living there without either parent present.
- 3,582 grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them [340 in Cheyenne and 267 in Casper]: 1% of these grandparents are African American; 10% are Hispanic/Latino; 13% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; 2% are Asian; and 73% are White. 38% of these grandparents live in households without the children's parents present. 74% are under the age of 60; 13% 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

#### Circle of Parents – Circle of Grandparents

<b>Sponsoring Organization:</b>	Wyoming Department of Family Services and Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming
<b>Contact:</b>	Jenny Allen, Social Services Consultant
<b>Phone:</b>	307-777-1921
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:jallen4@state.wy.us">jallen4@state.wy.us</a>
<b>Contact:</b>	Charlene Smith, Executive Director, Prevent Child Abuse Wyoming
<b>Phone:</b>	307-637-8622
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@pcawyoming.org">info@pcawyoming.org</a>
<b>Service area:</b>	Statewide

## Circle of Parents – Circle of Grandparents – cont.

### Services offered:

- Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) support groups for kinship care families raising children outside the child welfare system – groups currently in Cheyenne and Laramie, planning for additional groups
- Service network of local organizations
- Kinship care training for support group facilitators

## Wyoming Department of Health, Aging Division

**Contact:** Tim Ernst, National Family Caregiver Support Program (Interim)

**Phone:** 1-800-442-2766

**Email:** [Tim.Ernst@health.wyo.gov](mailto:Tim.Ernst@health.wyo.gov)

**Service area:** Statewide

### Services offered:

- Respite care
- Counseling
- Information and referrals

## Wyoming Kinship Advocacy

**Sponsoring Organization:** Community Action of Laramie County and Casey Family Programs

**Contact:** Alice Carter

**Phone:** 307-632-6197

**Email:** [alice@calc.net](mailto:alice@calc.net)

**Contact:** Dianne Johnson

**Phone:** 307-632-6197

**Email:** [dianne@calc.net](mailto:dianne@calc.net)

**Web:** [www.calc.net](http://www.calc.net)

**Service area:** Statewide

### Services offered:

- Monthly conversations and dialogue among kinship care families
  - 3rd Thursday of the month, 6:00-8:00pm at the Senior Activity Center in Cheyenne
  - Meal and child care provided
  - Issues discussed include medical assistance, legal matters child care, financial resources

## 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 – 2008

- There were 1,316 children in all types of out-of-home placements (including juvenile justice placements) under the supervision of the Department of Family Services.
- Of these children, 196 were placed with relatives.

## Preferences for kinship care

- State policy requires that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for an abused or neglected child.
- There is no separate licensing program for kinship foster parents.
- Kin must meet the same licensing standards and training requirements and receive the same foster care payment rate as non-kin foster parents.

## Subsidized guardianship programs

- In addition to foster care payments and other benefits available to kin raising children in the foster care system, some states also have subsidized guardianship programs. Most of these programs offer ongoing subsidies to children who have left foster care to live permanently under the legal custody or guardianship of relatives.
- In Wyoming, if family financial concerns are the only barrier to legal guardianship, DFS may negotiate a subsidy with the family caring for the child. The amount of the subsidy will be negotiated between the family and the local field office staff, similar to an adoption subsidy. The subsidy may be initiated once the guardianship is ordered.
- Funding for the program is contingent upon the availability of state money and is subject to termination at the annual review if funds are not available.
- Contact: Jenny Allen, Social Services Consultant, Wyoming Department of Family Services
  - Phone: 307-777-1921
  - Email: [jallen4@state.wy.us](mailto:jallen4@state.wy.us)

## 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 Wyoming's Personal Opportunities With Employment Responsibility (POWER) program.
- Contact:
  - Phone: 307-777-7290 or 307-777-5841
  - Web: <http://dfsweb.state.wy.us/POWER.html>

## Food Stamps

- Kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet their children's food and nutrition needs.
- Contact:
  - Phone: 1-800-457-3659 or (307) 777-6786
  - Web: <http://dfsweb.state.wy.us/foodstampinfo.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 the Wyoming Medicaid and Kid Care programs. In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free coverage under Medicaid.
- Contact for Medicaid:
  - Phone: 1-800-251-1269 (in Cheyenne, call 307-772-8401)
  - Web: <http://wyequalitycare.acs-inc.com>
- Contact for Kid Care:
  - Phone: 1-877-543-7669
  - Web: <http://kidcare.state.wy.us>

## 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](http://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](http://www.childrensdefense.org) (Kinship Care Resource Kit)
- National Council on Aging – Benefits CheckUp
  - Web: [www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org)

## State Laws

The following state law may be helpful to grandparents and other relatives raising children<sup>1</sup>:

### Standby Guardianship

#### WYO. STAT. § 3-2-108

- Allows a child’s parent or legal guardian to appoint a standby guardian to assume the care of the child upon the death or incapacity of the parent or guardian

<sup>1</sup>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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