

GrandFacts

State fact sheets for grandparents and other relatives raising children

AARP, The Brookdale Foundation Group, Casey Family Programs, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund, and Generations United have partnered to produce state and national **GrandFacts** fact sheets for grandparents and other relatives raising children. The state fact sheets include state-specific data and programs as well as information about foster care, public benefits, educational assistance and state laws. Visit www.grandfactsheets.org to find this and all **GrandFacts** state fact sheets.

Pennsylvania

The Children

- 239,819 children under age 18 live in homes where the householders are grandparents or other relatives (8.6% of the children in the state.) (*U.S. 2010 Census*)
 - Of these, 191,532 live with grandparents who are the householders (6.9% of the children in the state) and 48,287 live with other relatives who are the householders (1.7% of the children in the state). (*U.S. 2010 Census*)
- 81,112 children live in homes with grandparent householders where grandparents are responsible for them*
 - Of these children, 30,656 have no parents present in the home.*

The Grandparents*

- 79,440 grandparents are the householders and are responsible for their grandchildren living with them. Of these:
 - 65% of the grandparents are White and not Hispanic, 25% are Black/African American, 2% are Asian, and 8% are Hispanic/Latino, and may be of any race.
 - 38% have no parents of the children present in the home.
 - 68% are under age 60.
 - 19% live in poverty.**
- 16,818 grandparents in Philadelphia city are the householders and are responsible for their grandchildren living with them.

*Comparable data are not currently available for homes where other relatives are the householders.

**100% of poverty level.

Data not specifically cited are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Detailed Table B09006 and Subject Tables S1001 and S1002. Additional data on related topics and sub-state areas can be found on the Census Bureau website at <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Programs That Can Help

Local programs that provide support, resources and assistance to grandfamilies can often be found by contacting your local school, area agency on aging, community center, faith-based organization or children's services office.

The AARP GrandCare Support Locator is a free online service where programs can self-list their services and resources. Search by your city, state or zip code. www.giclocalsupport.org

Key Programs in Pennsylvania

A Second Chance Inc. (ASCI) – Allegheny County Children, Youth & Families

Contact: Brace Lowe, Sr., Vice President, Child and Family Services
Phone: 412-342-0600
Email: BraceL@asecondchance-kinship.com
Website: www.asecondchance-kinship.com
Service area: Allegheny County
Description: Kinship foster care, adoptive and support services, medical screening, crisis intervention and counseling, and other services.

Butler County Area Agency on Aging

Contact: Jo Donaldson
Phone: 724-282-3008
Email: jdonalds@co.butler.pa.us
Service area: Butler County
Description: Provide information and referral and/or financial reimbursement for costs related to care-giving for a family member age 17 or younger.

Family and Community Service of Delaware County

Contact: Cheryl Thomas, Supervisor
Phone: 610-566-7540
Email: cthomas@fcsdc.org
Website: www.fcsdc.org
Service area: Delaware County
Description: Second Time Around Parents program, support groups, workshops, counseling, peer support, education in advocacy, and other services.

Family Caregiver Support Program – Jefferson County Area Agency on Aging

Contact: Karen Warner
Phone: 1-800-852-8036 (toll-free)
Service area: Jefferson County
Description: Provides financial support for children with disabilities and families may be reimbursed up to \$200/month depending on household income for other expenses

Family Support of Central Pennsylvania

Contact: Deborah Lidle
Phone: 717-541-0828 or 1-800-984-9923 (toll-free)
Email: deb@familysupportcentralpa.org
Service area: Perry County (Newport) and Dauphin County (Harrisburg)
Description: Grandparents Raising Minor Children is a free support and education group and includes free childcare during group sessions.

Franklin County Office on Aging

Phone: 717-263-2153
Service area: Franklin County
Description: Reimbursement for childcare expenses depending on household income and caregiver support group

Grand Central

Contact: Chartan Nelson, Executive Director
Phone: 215-557-1554
Email: grandcentralinc@msn.com
Description: Information on various health and social services, individualized, peer to peer and specialized support to help with appointments, paperwork completion, etc.

Grandma's Kids – Center for Intergenerational Learning at Temple University

Contact: Joy Woods-Jones, Program Manager
Phone: 215-204-3105
Email: joyjones@temple.edu
Contact: Shanelle Minaya, Project Coordinator
Phone: 215-204-3554
Service area: Philadelphia
Description: School based after school services to children in out-of-home placements including tutorial assistance, group counseling, caregiver assistance, etc.

Greater Erie Community Action Committee – Family Caregiver Support Program

Phone: 814-459-4581, Extension 400
Web: www.gecac.org
Service area: Erie County
Description: Reimbursement for certain expenses related to raising children; income-based for those over 55 raising children under 18

Mifflin-Juniata Area Agency on Aging

Contact: Kathleen Graham
Phone: 717-242-0315
Email: mifjunconf@mjaaa.com
Service area: Mifflin, Juniata Counties
Description: Financial reimbursement may be provided for payment for respite, supplies and medically-necessary home modifications for those over 60.

Northeast Pennsylvania Intergenerational Coalition/Community Involvement Network

Contact: Howard Grossman, Executive Director
Phone: 570-823-5137
Email: jfswb71@aol.com
Website: www.raisingourgrandchildren.org
Service area: Wilkes Barre, Hazleton – Wyoming Valley
Description: Support groups and annual conference

Parent-Child Home Program

Contact: Shelley Panebaker
Phone: 717-633-3547
Email: panebakers@hanoverhospital.org
Service area: Greater Hanover Area
Description: Free home visiting program with an emphasis on early literacy to help with development of school readiness behavior

Penn State Extension Offices – Northwest Region

Lawrence Contact: Janice Hassen
Phone: 724-654-8370
Email: Jma2@psu.edu
Erie Contact: Lynn Clint
Phone: 814-825-0900
Email: lbc10@psu.edu
Service area: Erie, Lawrence, Beaver and Butler Counties
Description: Monthly support group meetings (food and children activities provided), biannual family retreat, referral and information service; services vary by office

Philadelphia Office of Community Family Support

Contact: Michele Preston
Phone: 215-683-4082
Email: michele.b.preston@phila.gov
Service area: Philadelphia
Description: Funds Kids n' Kin (see Philadelphia Society for Services to Children), case management, and kinship information and referral

Turning Points for Children – PreARS (Pre Alternative Response System)

Kids n' Kin

Contact: Carla Neal, Program Director
Phone: 215-875-4961
Email: cneal@turningpointsforchildren.org
Website: www.turningpointsforchildren.org
Service area: Philadelphia
Description: In home case management and legal support for families who are not part of the foster care system and do not have an open case with DHS

SeniorLAW Center

Contact: Karen C. Buck, Executive Director
Phone: 215-988-1244 (general)
215-988-1242 (intake)
1-877-PA SR LAW (1-877-727-7529 – toll-free)
Email: kbuck@seniorlawcenter.org
Website: www.seniorlawcenter.org
Service area: Statewide (Note: direct individual representation in Philadelphia only)
Description: Legal representation, education, and advocacy related to housing, consumer protection, family law, domestic violence, financial exploitation, and others.

Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging

Contact: Irene Zubach, Care Manager, Family Caregiver Support Program
Phone: 724-489-8082, Extension 4646 or 1-888-300-2704 (toll-free)
Email: izubach@swpa-aaa.org
Service area: Washington, Greene, and Fayette Counties
Description: Relatives as Parents and grandparent programs, benefits counseling, information and referral, case management, support groups, and limited financial reimbursement for emergency supplies

Supportive Older Women's Network – SOWN – Philadelphia

Contact: Richelle Phillips
Phone: 215-487-3000 or 215-235-2900, Extension 6206
Email: rphillips@sown.org
Web: www.sown.org
Service area: Philadelphia
Description: Grandparent Support Program and GrandFamily Resource Center, workshops, support groups, counseling, and legislative advocacy.

Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging

Contact: Toni McGovern
Phone: 724-830-4444
Email: tmcgover@co.westmoreland.pa.us
Service area: Westmoreland County
Description: Services offered on a cost-sharing basis depending on income and eligibility, referral for training/counseling, and other services

Children in Foster Care

- Sometimes state child welfare agencies place children in foster care with grandparents or other relatives. This is often called “kinship care.”
- Federal law requires states to notify all known relatives within 30 days of children’s removal from their parents.

In 2010 in Pennsylvania:

- 14,848 children in out-of-home placement through county children and youth agencies which are supervised by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth, and Families
- 3,410 of these children were placed in licensed kinship homes

Placement Policies

- State policy requires that kin be considered first when an out-of-home placement is sought for a child under a county children and youth agency’s care.
- There is no separate approval policy for kinship foster parents.
- Kin must meet the same approval standards and receive the same foster care payment as non-kin foster parents in their county.
- Anyone seeking to become a foster parent, including kinship caregivers, must participate annually in six hours of agency-approved training.

Subsidized Guardianship

Pennsylvania is implementing the Federal Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP), called Subsidized Permanent Legal Custodianship (SPLC) in the state. SPLC provides guardianship subsidies for eligible children who have been living with relatives in foster care and for whom return to their parents and adoption have been ruled out. Children receiving guardianship subsidies are in permanent placement with relatives and are no longer in foster care.

Foster Care and Relative/Kinship Care Contacts

Pennsylvania Program Policy Unit, Office of Children, Youth and Families

Cindi E Horshaw

717-783-7287

Email: chorshaw@state.pa.us

www.dpw.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Fiscal Policy and Support Unit, Office of Children, Youth and Families

TaWonda Jones-Williams

717-787-5199

Email: tjoneswill@state.pa.us

Public Benefits

Federal and state public benefits programs can help with income, food, healthcare, home energy, telephone and other needs for those who are eligible. Eligibility requirements vary with each public benefit and sometimes are different from state to state. Some benefits are for the family and others are for children or older adults individually. Children are often eligible for public benefits even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody. Grandparents may become eligible for benefits programs when their household size increases.

Help with Public Benefits

AARP Foundation's Benefits QuickLINK

A free and private way to find out if relatives or the children they are raising qualify for programs that pay for food, increase income and cover home and healthcare costs (listed below). It gives quick results, application forms and the address and phone number of the closest office.

www.aarp.org/quicklink

Public Benefits for Older Americans:*

- Medicare Savings Programs
- Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage
- Medicare Rx Extra Help
- State Pharmaceutical Assistance programs (SPAP)
- Medicaid for Aged, Blind, and Disabled
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)
- State Property Tax Relief/Rebates
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Telephone Assistance (Link-Up and Lifeline)

Public Benefits for Families Raising Children*

- Medicaid for Children
- State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- TANF-Child Only Grants
- Supplemental Security Income for Children

*Some of these programs may have age and income restrictions.

Eldercare Locator

The National Eldercare Locator service helps you find your local area agency on aging and other state and local resources that can help with public benefits, and other services for older adults.

1-800-677-1116 (toll-free) www.eldercare.gov

Key Public Benefits

Income

Each state administers federal funds that provide cash assistance to families in need. Some states also offer other forms of financial assistance.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

Cash assistance may be available to eligible children and their relative caregivers.

Pennsylvania Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

1-800-692-7462 (toll-free)

www.dpw.state.pa.us/forchildren/cashassistance/index.htm

Social Security

A multigenerational program, Social Security provides income benefits to adults, older adults and children. In addition to [Retirement](#) and [Disability](#) benefits, [Survivor's Benefits](#) are based on a child's parent's earnings and may help if a child's parents die. The [Supplemental Security Income](#) (SSI) program pays benefits to disabled [adults](#) and [children](#) who have limited income and resources. SSI benefits are also payable to people 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial limits.

Online Directory – To find your local Social Security Administration office.
1-800-772-1213 (toll-free)
www.socialsecurity.gov/locator

Nutrition

Relative caregivers and their families may be eligible for assistance with groceries, meals, infant formula and nutrition education. These are some of the key nutrition benefits programs and resources.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

SNAP is the new name for the federal Food Stamp Program. It helps low-income individuals and families buy the food they need for good health. Although SNAP is the national name, your state may use a different name.

Pennsylvania Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
1-800-692-7462 (toll-free)
www.dpw.state.pa.us/forfamilies/snap

Food and Nutrition Services of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- **Child Nutrition Program** - The schools, early childhood education programs, child care centers, afterschool programs or other programs that children attend may offer free or reduced meals through the federal Child Nutrition Program, which provides breakfast, lunch, snacks, summer meals and milk. Contact the school or program to ask if they participate in any of the child nutrition programs and ask how to apply. Relative caregivers should inform the program that they are raising the child and whether or not they are doing so through a court order.

Online State Directory - To find your state office that manages the Child Nutrition program.
www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm

- **Women, Infant and Children (WIC)** - States administer federal funds for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

Online State Directory - To find your state office that manages the WIC program.
www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Contacts/statealpha.HTM

Foodbanks - Organizations that provide free food and sometimes other items, such as diapers to families in need. Feeding America is an organization that fights hunger and has a food bank locator.

Online State Directory - To find local food banks.
1-800-771-2303 (toll-free)
www.feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx

Health Care

Relative caregivers and the children they are raising may be eligible for health insurance and help with prescription drugs. [Benefits QuickLINK](#) can help you find these benefits.

Health Insurance for Children

Relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health and dental insurance for the children they are raising through the federal Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Although CHIP is the national name, your state may use a different name.

Pennsylvania Medicaid, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
1-800-692-7462 (toll-free)
www.dpw.state.pa.us/forchildren/healthcaremedicalassistance

Pennsylvania Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
1-800-986-KIDS
www.chipcoverspakids.com/

Education

- **U.S. Department of Education** - Offers a [Parent Site](#) that has a wide range of helpful information for parents *and* caregivers regarding children's education from early childhood through college, special needs, disabilities, language challenges and gifted students.
1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327 – toll-free)
www.ed.gov/parents
- **State Department of Education** - Relative caregivers may find helpful information about the education of children they are raising
Pennsylvania Department of Education
717-783-6788
www.pde.state.pa.us

Educational Enrollment

Relative caregivers can contact their local school district's administrative office or their local school to find out how to register the child and what paperwork is needed. Caregivers may need birth records, health records or previous school records. Some states have laws that allow relative caregivers to enroll children they are raising in school. These laws are often called "education consent" laws, but may be called something else in your state.

Grandfamilies State Law and Policy Resource Center
Online Directory - To find out if your state has an education consent law.
www.grandfamilies.org

Early Intervention, Special Education and Related Services

What you need to know:

- **The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)** - From birth to age 21, children who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities or other special needs may be able to get special early intervention, preschool and special education services in school through the federal IDEA. Services may include speech, physical, and occupational therapies.

- **Child Find** – A part of the IDEA that requires states to identify, locate and evaluate children in the areas of cognitive and physical functioning, hearing and vision, speech and language and social and emotional development as early as possible. Once the Child Find evaluation team, which includes a child's caregivers, has decided if a child is eligible for early intervention or preschool special education services, an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP; birth to three years of age) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP; three to five years of age) is developed and services begin shortly at no cost.

Where to find help for children with special needs:

- **Pennsylvania Bureau of Special Education**, Pennsylvania Department of Education
1-800-879-2301 (toll-free in-state) or (717) 657-5842 (out-of-state)
www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/special_education/
- **Pennsylvania Early Intervention Services**, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
1-800-692-7462 (toll-free)
www.dpw.state.pa.us/forchildren/earlyinterventionservices/
- **The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities** guides caregivers to organizations and resources in each state and offers both English and Spanish language information.
Online State Directory – To find state and other disability organizations in your state.
1-800-695-0285 (toll-free)
www.nichcy.org/pages/statespecificinfo.aspx
- **Parent Centers** across the country provide information to help parents *and* caregivers with children who have special education needs and disabilities.
Online State Directory – To find Parent Centers in your state.
National Parent Technical Assistance Center 1-888-248-0822 (toll-free)
www.parentcenternetwork.org/parentcenterlisting

Early Childhood Education

- **Head Start and Early Head Start** – Early education programs for eligible children.
Online Directory – To find Head Start or Early Head Start centers in your state.
1-866-763-6481 (toll-free)
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>
- **The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)** - Information, resources and connection to local Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies (CCR&R) that help you find local child care through the Child Care Aware program.
Online Directory – To find your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency.
1-800-424-2246 (toll-free)
www.childcareaware.org/parents-and-guardians

Educational Activities

Verizon Thinkfinity - Support a child's success in school with fun learning activities and interactive games you can do together using this free online resource.

www.thinkfinity.org

State Laws

Grandfamilies State Law and Policy Resource Center

Provides an up-to-date online listing of state laws, policies and legislation that affect grandfamilies. A collaboration between [Casey Family Programs](#), the [American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law](#) and [Generations United](#), the website includes a searchable database of current laws and pending legislation by state, including:

- Adoption
- Care and Custody
- Education
- Financial Assistance
- Housing
- Kinship Navigator Programs
- Medical
- National Family Caregivers Support Programs
- Relative Foster Care
- Subsidized Guardianship
- Notification of Relatives

[Online Directory](#) – To find your state's laws affecting grandfamilies.

www.grandfamilies.org

GrandFacts Updates

If you have an update or a resource to be included in this or any of the other GrandFacts fact sheets, please visit www.grandfactsheets.org to submit updates or email grandfacts@aarp.org. Fact sheets are updated regularly.

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