

NJ Kinship Connections

A Publication of the NJ Kinship Legal Guardianship Resource Clearing House



A PROGRAM OF CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

Winter 2018

Tips for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

When parents are absent or unable to raise their children, grandparents are often the ones who step in. Raising a second generation brings many rewards, including the fulfillment of giving your grandkids a sense of security, developing a deeper relationship, and keeping the family together. It also comes with many challenges. No matter how much you love your grandkids, taking them into your home requires major adjustments. But with the right guidelines and support, you can make a real difference in the lives of your grandchildren.



“kinship care,” a growing number of grandparents are now taking on the parenting role for their grandchildren, thus foregoing the traditional grandparent/grandchild relationship. This often means giving up your leisure time, the option of traveling, and many other aspects of your independence. Instead, you once again take on responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance of a home, schedules, meals, homework, and play dates. And if it was tragic circumstances that required you to step into the role of parent, you’ll face many other stress factors, such as coping with your own and your grandchildren’s grief.

But raising your grandchildren, while challeng-

ing, can also be incredibly rewarding. Yes, you may have to deal with colicky babies or moody teenagers, but you’ll also experience a much greater connection to your grandchild’s world, including their school and leisure activities. You may also find yourself rolling back the years, rejuvenated by the constant companionship of much younger people. And you can derive immense satisfaction from providing your grandchildren with a safe, nurturing, and structured home environment in which to grow and feel loved. The prospect of raising grandchildren is bound to trigger a range of emotions. The following are some tips that may be helpful: 1 - Acknowledge your feelings about parenting again; the good and the bad. 2 - Take care of yourself. A healthy you means healthy grandchildren.

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No PC?
No Problem!

Contact a KinKONNECT warm-line representative at 877-KLG-LINE ((877) 554-5463) to request a book or ask a question about statewide resources!

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

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (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



If you don't take care of your health, you won't be able to take care of your grandchildren.

Make it a priority to eat nutritious meals, exercise regularly, and get adequate sleep. Don't let doctor's appointments or medication refills slide.

3 -Support makes all the difference. Talk to a friend, connect with a grandparent support group, reach out to community for child care help, and connect with other parents raising children. 4- Through it all, your grandchildren have mixed feelings too. When children are dealing with the loss of regular contact with their

parent or parents, the move is even harder. It will take some time for your grandchildren to adjust, and in the meantime, they may act especially contrary and difficult. If the children have suffered from emotional neglect, trauma, or abuse, those wounds will not disappear just because they are now in a safe place. They will need time to heal. 5 - Your grandkids may resent being separated from their parent and wish to return, even if their home situation was dangerous or abusive. Don't take this personally. The parent-child bond is powerful. Even if the

children are old enough to understand that they're better off with you, they will still miss their parent and struggle with feelings of abandonment. Your grandkids' feelings may come out in many ways, including behavior, and no matter what, they need comfort and support. 6 - Focus on a stable environment; children thrive on predictability, including routines and age appropriate house rules. 7- Offer your time and attention and keep an open line of communication. For more tips, please visit: www.helpguide.org/articles/parenting-family/grandparents-raising-grandchildren.htm.

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. Secondly, 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. Finally, 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 49,000 grandparents are raising their grandchildren in New Jersey.

In Elaine K. William’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. William’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.

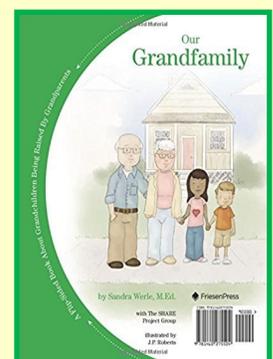
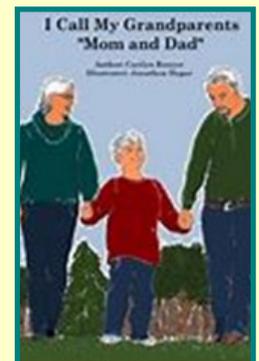
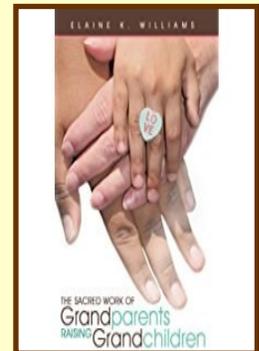
-Cynthia Lapidus CSW, BSW

The KinKconnect Free Lending Library

Call us to borrow a book!

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

www.kinkconnect.org





NJ Kinship Connections

Supports for Relatives Raising Relative's Children

DID YOU KNOW?

IN ADDITION TO THE RESOURCES INCLUDED ON THIS PAGE, THE DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CHILDREN SYSTEM OF CARE (CSOC) ALSO SERVES:

- CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE CHALLENGES AND THEIR FAMILIES
- CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES
- CHILDREN WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND THEIR FAMILIES

FOR INFORMATION CALL 1-877-652-7624.

NEED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES? CONTACT THE KINKONNECT WARM LINE AT 877-KLG-LINE (877-554-5463)



Are you raising your grandchild, your niece/nephew or other relative? The below services may help you find some emotional support and help answer some questions and gain additional confidence.

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

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Monthly Support Group: Family Support Organization of Bergen County; Meetings in Englewood, NJ. Call 201-796-6209 Ext. 102 for information.

Grandparents Support Group sponsored by the Family Partners of Morris and Sussex Counties. For information call 973-940-3194.

Family Support Organizations (FSO's) and/or Family Success Centers may offer parent/grandparent support groups. Visit www.state.nj.us/dcf/families/support/support/ or www.state.nj.us/dcf/families/support/success/ for a list by county. You may also contact KinKconnect to find a support group near you.

Grandma K.A.R.E.S. located in Essex County www.grandmakares.org.

Caregiver Connections: Family Connections of the Essex County Division of Senior Services. Free in-home counseling for seniors over 65 and caring for a relative. Contact Miriam at mtaunean@familyconnectionsny.org. For more information visit www.familyconnectionsny.org.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension— Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program, Cape May. 609-465-5115 x 3609.

Obtained Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG) through DCP&P?

Consider contacting one of the following agencies and ask about their free KLG counseling services:

Bergen, Passaic and Essex Counties (excluding Newark): Children's Aid and Family Services, (201) 740-7124

Hudson County: Catholic Charities, Dioceses of Newark Family Resource Center, (201) 798-9900

Middlesex, Suburban Essex and Union Counties: Family and Children's Services, (908) 352-7474

Morris/ Sussex/Essex Counties: Family Intervention Services, (973) 586-5243/(973)940-0105/(973)324-7880

Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties, Oaks Community Services, (609) 953-5714

Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset Counties, Children's Home Society, (609) 695-6274

Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties, Robins Nest, (856)881-8689

Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) Update for 2018

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for more than 66 million Americans increased by 2.0 percent in 2018.

Starting in January 2018, a 2.0 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) began with benefits payable to more than 61 million Social Security beneficiaries as well as over 8 million beneficiaries who receive 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) was increased from \$127,200 to \$128,400 in 2018.

The earnings limit for workers who are younger than "full" retirement age (age 66 for people born in 1943 through 1954) increased to \$17,040. (Social Security deducts \$1 from benefits for each \$2 earned over \$17,040.)

The earnings limit for people turning 66 in 2018 increased to

\$45,360. (Social Security deducts \$1 from benefits for each \$3 earned over \$45,360 until the month the worker turns age 66.) There is no limit on earnings for workers who are "full" retirement age or older for the entire year.

For more information on the Cost of Living Increase, please visit: <https://www.ssa.gov/news/cola/> and <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/COLA/cbb.html>.

NJ Connect for Recovery Call Line

Have a loved one who is involved with drugs? Need some help or guidance?

Consider contacting the NJ Connect for Recovery Call Line. This line was established to support two distinct groups across the state of New Jersey: those concerned with their own opiate use; and those who are experiencing distress related to the opiate

use of a friend or family member.

This service is a safe, confidential, nonjudgmental forum for people to connect, grow and transform through a unique combination of supportive counseling from certified alcohol and drug counselors and peer specialists. They also offer support groups around the state.

For more information, please give them a call at 855-652-3737 and/or visit their website at www.njconnectforrecovery.org/.



Looking for a Summer Camp?

Now is the time to check them out and reserve your spot!

Visit our website or call our KinConnect Warm Line at 877-KLG-LINE (877-554-5463) for a list of Summer Camps

Touched by Adoption?

Visit the NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House at www.njarch.org

Are you a woman who loves a person with a substance use disorder?

New support groups to start in Bergen County.

For Information please call 201-740-7069 or email TheCenter@cafsnj.org



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

KLK 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. Number for hearing impaired individuals please call 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.

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.

Children 18 and under are eligible with higher incomes up to 355% FPL (\$7,278/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.

Parents/Caretaker Relatives with income up to 138% FPL (\$2,829/month for a family of four) must have tax dependent children in their household in order to be eligible under this category. The dependent children in the household must be insured also. Immigrant adults must have Legal Permanent Resident status in the US for at least five years in order to be eligible for NJ FamilyCare.

Adults without dependent children with ages 19-64 and income up to 138% FPL (\$1,387/month for a single person and \$1,868/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.

Pregnant Women up to 205% FPL (\$4,203/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. *

*www.njfamilycare.org/income.aspx

Aged, Blind, Disabled program including Long Term Care
Individuals ineligible for NJ FamilyCare can find information on other insurance affordability programs at www.healthcare.gov.