

Family Resource Center Services and Supports for Kinship/Grandfamilies

This fact sheet is for professionals working within an array of government systems and nonprofit organizations that support (or want to support) kinship/grandfamilies. It highlights services that Family Resource Centers commonly offer, which could benefit the families you serve.

Introduction to Kinship Families and Grandfamilies

Kinship families, also known as grandfamilies, are families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children whose parents are unable to do so.

While many kin/grandfamily caregivers experience great satisfaction and pride in taking on this important role, doing so can also be stressful and bring about challenges. About 66 percent of grandparent caregivers are age 55 or older and almost half are no longer in the work force. These retired and older caregivers likely experience financial strain, challenges in making their homes child-friendly, and feelings of social isolation from their peers who are no longer raising children.

About Family Resource Centers

A [Family Resource Center](#) (FRC) is a community or school-based welcoming hub of support, services, and opportunities for families that:

- ▶ Utilizes an approach that is multi-generational, strengths-based, and family-centered
- ▶ Reflects and is responsive to community needs and interests
- ▶ Provides support at no or low cost for participants
- ▶ Builds communities of peer support for families to develop social connections that reduce isolation and stress

There are more than 3,000 FRCs around the country and, in [39 states and the District of Columbia](#), they have been organized into FRC Networks.

As conveniently located community or school-based hubs, FRCs bundle and co-locate many services, such as home visiting, parenting education, health screenings, child care resource and referral, playgroups, family counseling, government benefits screening, healthy eating and living activities, and food pantries.

Services and Supports that Kinship/Grandfamilies Can Access at FRCs

Kinship/grandfamilies typically form unexpectedly, and resources and support provided by FRCs can have an enormous, positive impact to smooth what can be a sudden transition.

- ▶ FRCs can help kinship/grandfamilies with concrete supports, such as food, clothing, and housing assistance. The FRC may provide these resources directly or may help families navigate access to them.
- ▶ FRCs can provide kinship/grandfamilies with tools, resources, and strategies to help them raise the children in their care through supports such as workshops, support groups, parenting education classes, and home visiting. These resources can be especially useful for grandparents who are taking care of children in a landscape that may feel very different than the one in which they raised their children.
- ▶ FRCs can help families build the protective factor of social connections by connecting kinship/grandfamilies with each other, and other families, such as through support groups and family activities. Being part of the FRC community can help them to form friendships, access peer-to-peer support, feel less isolated, and reduce their stress.
- ▶ Some FRCs may provide specific programming to welcome, engage, and support kinship/grandfamilies, such as a kinship parenting class, a kinship support group, or a kin kids group.
- ▶ Kin/grandfamily caregivers can serve on an FRC's Parent Advisory Committee to ensure that it is listening and responsive to their interests and needs.

The Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center (Network) helps government agencies and nonprofits in states, tribes, and territories work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries to improve supports and services for families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children whose parents are unable to do so. For more information, please visit www.GKSNetwork.org.

The Network is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$9,950,000 with 95 percentage funded by ACL/HHS and \$523,684 and 5 percentage funded by non-government sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

The Network is a project of
Generations United.

**generations
united**
Because we're stronger together®

©Generations United, 2023