

GRANDFACTS

STATE FACT SHEETS FOR GRANDFAMILIES



The GrandFacts state fact sheets for grandfamilies include state-specific data and programs as well as information about public benefits, educational assistance, legal relationship options and state laws. Visit www.grandfamilies.org to find this and all GrandFacts state fact sheets.

North Carolina

Grandfamilies Data

235,300

Children living in homes where a relative is head of household

99,000

Children being raised by kin with no parent present

3,316

Children in foster care being raised by kin

77,588

Grandparents responsible for their grandchildren in North Carolina

For every **1** child raised by kin in foster care, there are **29** being raised by kin outside of foster care

The data presented in these graphics is from the [United States Census Bureau](#), the [Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center](#) and the [Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System \(AFCARS\)](#).

For more information on kinship care and caregivers, and for detailed instructions on accessing and interpreting this data, please visit: [Kinship/Grandfamilies Data - Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network](#).

Programs That May 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.

Key Programs in North Carolina

[Albemarle Commission Area Agency on Aging- Family Caregiver Support Program](#)

Website: <https://albemarlecommission.org/area-agency-on-aging/family-caregiver-support-program/>

Phone: 252-404-7090 or (252) 426-5753

Email: info@accog.org

Service Area: Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington Counties

Description: Information, assistance in gaining access to services, individual counseling, support groups, trainings, education, respite care and limited supplemental services.

[The Bair Foundation Child & Family Ministries](#)

Website: www.bair.org/services/kinship/

Phone: 828-350-5197

Email: info@bair.org

Service Area: Asheville, Raleigh, Wilmington – locate the closest office to you [here](#)

Description: The Bair Foundation works to place children in kinship homes to affirm connections to family, community and culture. Partnerships with local churches provide services such as babysitting, bonding activities, home repairs, food donations, meals, clothing, school supplies and meeting spaces for support groups.

[Children's Home Society of North Carolina](#)

Website: <https://www.chsnc.org/>

Phone: 800-632-1400

Email: kinship@chsnc.org

Description: Children's Home Society of NC has a dedicated kinship team that works in partnership with kinship families and their DSS social workers to locate and enroll in Caring for Our Own support groups, supporting families every step of the journey. Children's Home Society's offers training and foster care licensure for kinship caregivers. Their primary focus is on kinship families involved with child welfare.

[Creating a Family - Support Groups](#)

Website: <https://creatingafamily.org/kinship-care-resources/>

Contact: Jamie Gilmore

Email: jamie@creatingafamily.org

Service Area: Statewide – learn more and register for a support group [here](#)

Description: Creating a Family offers monthly online and in person support groups for kin caregivers. These groups provide a way for grandparents and other relatives to connect with peers who understand the unique joys and challenges of raising a relative child. The virtual and in-person support groups provide a welcoming space to share experiences, learn practical parenting strategies, discover community resources, and reduce the isolate many kinship caregivers feel.

Creating a Family- Kinship Legal Clinics

Website: <https://creatingafamily.org/kinship-legal-options/legal-clinics-for-kin/>

Contact: Cressa Megown

Email: cressa@creatingafamily.org

Description: Kinship Legal Clinics are available for all NC kinship caregivers. These free, virtual legal clinics assist grandparents raising grandchildren (and other relatives raising kin) living in North Carolina with making well-informed decisions based on clear knowledge of their legal rights and responsibilities as they move through life transitions. Licensed attorneys will be available to answer questions. Interested caregivers must register via Zoom to attend.

Creating a Family- Legal Options for Kinship Caregivers

Website: <https://creatingafamily.org/kinship-legal-options/>

Contact: Cressa Megown

Email: cressa@creatingafamily.org

Service Area: Statewide

Description: Compares legal options for permanency for kinship families in North Carolina. This is a multi-media website featuring expert videos, kinship caregiver videos, tipsheets, and other resources to help kinship caregivers consider their best options when making permanency decisions.

Eastern Carolina Council Area Agency on Aging- Family Caregiver Support Program

Website: <https://eccog.org/human-services-area-agency-on-aging/family-caregiver-support-program/>

Contact: January Brown

Phone: 252-638-3185, ext. 3011

Email: jbrown@eccog.org

Service Area: Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Pamlico and Wayne Counties

Description: Information, assistance in gaining access to services, individual counseling, support groups, trainings, education, respite care and limited supplemental services.

Foster Family Alliance of North Carolina

Website: www.ffa-nc.org

Phone: 1-800-578-7770 (toll-free)

Service Area: Statewide

Description: Resources for grandfamilies, including training and conferences.

High Country Area Agency on Aging- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Website: www.highcountryaging.org/services/grandparents-raising-grandchildren

Contact: Sarah Price

Phone: 828-278-9126

Email: sprice@hccog.org

Service Area: Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey Counties

Description: Services offered include camp/after school support, clothing/shoes, counseling, support group referral, educational support, household items/cleaning supplies, self-care items, legal assistance referral and respite vouchers.

High Country Caregivers

Website: <https://www.highcountrycaregivers.org/>

Contact: Marty Wilson

Phone: 828-555-1212

Email: marty@highcountrycaregivers.org

Service Area: Avery County, Mitchell County, Watauga County, Wilkes County, Yancey County

Description: Services include case management, support groups, counseling, respite care and social events, and peer-to-peer connection.

Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments- Family Caregiver Support Program

Website: <https://www.kerrtarcog.org/area-agency-aging/caregiving>

Phone: 252-436-2040; or 866-506-6223

Email: info@kerrtarcog.org

Service Area: Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance and Warren Counties

Description: Information, assistance in gaining access to services, individual counseling, support groups, trainings, education, respite care and limited supplemental services. Offers PASTA (Parenting A Second Time Around) trainings.

Land of Sky Regional Council- Area Agency on Aging

Website: www.landofsky.org/fcsp.html

Phone: 828-251-7441

Email: info@landofsky.org

Service Area: Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties

Description: Education, referral services and grants for eligible kinship caregivers.

Legal Aid of North Carolina

Website: www.legalaidnc.org

Phone: 1-866-219-LANC (toll-free)

Service Area: Statewide through 18 offices

Description: Provides free legal services in civil matters, including child custody, government benefits and housing, to low-income individuals and families. Runs the Senior Law Project, which serves North Carolinians aged 60 and over.

Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services- Kinship Care

Website: <https://cfas.mecknc.gov/services/kinship-care>

Phone: 704-336-3000

Service Area: Mecklenburg County

Description: Offers parenting education, foster care and adoptive services, assistance with school attendance issues, a kinship care conference, and additional services such as respite and training.

Parents of Addicted Loved Ones (PAL)

Website: <https://palgroup.org/>; find a local meeting [here](#).

Phone: 480-300-4712

Email: info@palgroup.org

Service Area: Apex, Benson, Charlotte, Clemmons, Greensboro, King, Mount Airy, New Bern, Raleigh, Thomasville, Walnut Cove, Weddington and Wilmington

Description: PAL is a national faith-based nonprofit that helps families learn healthy ways to deal with an adult child struggling with addiction. Meetings are facilitated by parents who complete the training program and receive ongoing education. Weekly meetings include an evidence-based educational component using a curriculum written by a licensed Substance Abuse Counselor, and peer-to-peer support. Meetings are offered free of charge to both the facilitator and the attendees.

Piedmont Triad Regional Council- Family Caregiver Services

Website: <https://www.ptrc.org/services/area-agency-on-aging/care-giving>

Phone: 336-904-0300

Service Area: Alamance, Caswell, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Montgomery, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin Counties

Description: Information, assistance with access to resources and benefits, counseling, support groups, trainings, respite care and supplemental services.

Find support groups here: www.ptrc.org/services/area-agency-on-aging/care-giving/support-groups

Senior Resources of Guilford- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Website: www.senior-resources-guilford.org/grandparents-raising-grandchildren

Phone: 336-373-4816, extension 240

Email: caregiver2@senior-resources-guilford.org

Service Area: Guilford County

Description: Senior Resources sponsors activities and provides referrals to community resources for grandparents 55+ raising grandchildren. Assists caregivers identify resources to help with legal, financial and medical issues. Monthly meetings that include presentations, peer support, a free meal, and provided childcare and transportation.

Upper Coastal Plain Area Agency on Aging- Family Caregiver Support Program

Website: https://ucpcog.org/area_agency_on_aging/aaa_programs/index.php

Phone: 252-234-5984 (Family Caregiver Resource Specialist) or 252-234-5900 (main line)

Email: aglover@ucpcog.org

Service Area: Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton and Wilson Counties

Description: Information, assistance in gaining access to services, respite care services, supplemental services and support services such as individual counseling, support groups and caregiver training.

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

guardianship or legal custody. Relative caregivers may become eligible for benefits programs when their household size increases.

Help with Public Benefits

BenefitsCheckUp

Powered by the National Council on Aging, BenefitsCheckUp offers a free and private way to complete a questionnaire to find out if older adults and people with disabilities qualify for certain programs that pay for food, increase income, and cover home and health care costs. The specific programs covered by the questionnaire on the website are listed below. Once the questionnaire is completed, the website generates a list of eligible programs and contact information. BenefitsCheckUp does not currently connect individuals to programs for grandparents raising their grandchildren, but their [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) includes links to websites for the [Children's Health Insurance Program \(CHIP\)](#), the [State Children's Health Insurance Program \(SCHIP\)](#), [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF, Child Only Grant\)](#), and [Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\) for Children](#).

<https://benefitscheckup.org/>

BenefitsCheckUp State, Territory, and Federal Public Benefits
• 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) • Employment Programs • Telephone and Cellphone Assistance • Transportation Assistance

Benefits.gov

An official website of the federal government, this resource has state specific information on benefits, in addition to a screening tool to find out which programs you may be eligible to receive.

www.benefits.gov

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, local programs and other services for older adults.

1-800-677-1116 (toll-free)

eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx

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. There are two types of TANF grants: child-only and family grants. Under virtually all states' policies, caregiver income is not considered in determining eligibility for TANF child-only grants. TANF child-only grants are based solely on the income of the child, and are designed to help meet the needs of just the child. Child-only grants are not subject to time limits and work requirements like TANF family grants.

North Carolina Work First Program

North Carolina's Division of Social Services

919-527-6335

www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/workfirst/wfea.htm

Generations United's Grand Resources:

A Fact Sheet for Grandparent and Relative Caregivers to Help Access Support through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program

www.gu.org/resources/

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. Your grandchild may also qualify for benefits based on your work record. 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)

<https://secure.ssa.gov/>

Key Public Benefits: 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.

North Carolina Food and Nutrition Services

North Carolina Division of Social Services

919-527-6335

www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/low-income-services/food-nutrition-services-food-stamps

Food and Nutrition Services of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

School Meal Programs - 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 School Meal Program, which provides breakfast, lunch, snacks, summer meals and milk. Contact the school, center or program to ask if they participate in any of the school meal programs and 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 School Meal Programs.
www.fns.usda.gov/contacts

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 check eligibility and apply for WIC:
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/child-and-family-well-being/community-nutrition-services-section/wic/apply-wic>

Foodbanks

Organizations that provide free food and sometimes other items, such as diapers, to families in need.

Online State Directory - To find local food banks.
www.feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx

Key Public Benefits: Health Care

Relative caregivers and the children they are raising may be eligible for health insurance through Medicare and/or Medicaid and help with prescription drugs. **BenefitsCheckUp** can help you find these benefits.

<https://benefitscheckup.org/>

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 Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which provides health coverage to eligible children through both Medicaid and separate CHIP programs. CHIP and Medicaid are the national names, and your state may use different names.

North Carolina Medicaid

North Carolina Division of Health Benefits
888-245-0179
<https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/>

Consent to Obtain Health Care

Even with insurance, consenting to health care for a child can be a challenge for relative caregivers who do not have legal custody. Some states have laws that allow these caregivers to "consent" to such treatment.

[Grandfamilies.org Online Database](http://www.grandfamilies.org/Online-Database) - To see if your state has such a law.
www.grandfamilies.org/Search-Laws

Key Public Benefits: Tax Credits

The following information is about tax credits from the federal government available throughout the United States. Similar tax credits may exist in your state for state taxes. For example, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), 29 states and the District of Columbia offer a state tax credit based on the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and four states offer a Child Tax Credit. See CBPP's "[Get it Back Campaign](#)" for more information on state tax credits.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is an income tax credit for workers who do not have high incomes. It is a refundable tax credit, which means you could get a refund check from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) even if you don't earn enough to pay taxes.

Child Tax Credit is a tax credit per dependent child. But, it is not refundable.

Additional Child Tax Credit may help if you don't owe enough taxes to benefit from the child tax credit. Unlike the child tax credit, this tax credit is refundable.

Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit may help you if you've hired someone to help care for the child so you could work or look for work. If so, you may be able to claim a portion of expenses per child.

Adoption Tax Credit can help if you have adopted your grandchild or other relative. It can give you a credit for the money you spent to adopt. If you adopted a child from the foster care system with special needs, you may be eligible for the maximum amount of credit for the year you adopted regardless of whether you had any qualifying expenses. If you did not adopt from the foster care system, you must have qualifying expenses like legal fees.

Please note that tax credits themselves are not counted as income. They will not be counted when you apply for financial help.

Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) – To find out about tax credits in your state.
www.cbpp.org

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) – To find out more information about each of these tax credits
www.irs.gov

Education

The **U.S. Department of Education** offers [resources for parents and family](#) with 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

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

984-236-2100

www.dpi.nc.gov

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 without legal custody or guardianship to enroll the children they are raising in school. These laws are often called education "consent" laws, but they may be called something else in your state.

Grandfamilies.org Online Database - To find out if your state has an education consent law.

www.grandfamilies.org/Search-Laws

Early Intervention, Special Education and Related Services

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

The IDEA requires that states identify, locate and evaluate all children ages 3 to 21 with disabilities who may need special education and related services. Once the evaluation team, which includes a child's caregivers, has decided if a child is eligible for early intervention, preschool or special education services, an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP; birth to three years of age) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP; three to 21 years of age) is developed and services should begin shortly.

Public Schools of North Carolina- Exceptional Children Division

984-236-2550

<https://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/>

Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC)

800-962-6817

www.ecac-parentcenter.org

North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority

Provides educational financial assistance for children in grades K-12. Some assistance is based on financial need and other is based on the child's special needs (e.g., if a child has an IEP, they may qualify for a disabilities grant).

www.ncseaa.edu

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.

www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/

Generations United's Grand Resources:

A Grandparent's and Other Relative's Guide to Raising Children with Disabilities

www.gu.org/resources/

Early Childhood Education

Head Start and **Early Head Start** are 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)

eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/center-locator

Child Care Aware provides information, resources and connection to local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R) that help you find local child care.

Online Directory - To find your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency.

1- 800-424-2246 (toll-free)

www.childcareaware.org/families/

Legal

The following legal relationships may be options for both those children exiting the foster care system and those outside the system. For those families who do not want to establish a legal relationship, consent and power of attorney laws are available in several states.

All of the following options are presented in general terms. This area of the law is created at the state level, so how these options are defined and which ones are available can vary significantly by state.

Adoption

With adoption, the relative caregiver becomes the parent in the eyes of the law. This fact makes access to services on behalf of the child the same as for any parent. Adoption ends all of the birth parents' rights and responsibilities, which means that birth parents cannot go to court later and reclaim those rights and responsibilities.

Adoption assistance payments may be available to relative caregivers who choose to adopt children in their care from the child welfare system.

Families Rising - To get information about your state's subsidy, in addition to other adoption information.

<https://wearefamiliesrising.org/>

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption - To find adoption resources that may be helpful to you.

www.davethomasfoundation.org

Guardianship

The biggest difference between adoption and guardianship is that guardianship does not take away all the birth parents' rights and responsibilities. Parents typically keep certain rights and the obligation to financially support the child. Unlike adoption, the parents can go back to court and ask for the guardianship to be ended. For caregivers, a guardianship allows them to access services on behalf of the child that otherwise might prove impossible while not changing family relationships, like making grandma legally mom.

Guardianship assistance payments may be available to relative caregivers who choose to get guardianship of the children in their care who are exiting the child welfare system.

Guardianship assistance payments:

Subsidized Guardianship- North Carolina has an approved Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP)

Comparing Adoption and Guardianship

This chart, created by Generations United with support from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, is designed to help kinship foster parents compare adoption and guardianship as two options that you and the children in your care can pursue to exit foster care and create permanent families.

<https://www.gu.org/resources/adoption-and-guardianship-for-children-in-kinship-foster-care/>

Legal Custody

Legal custody is similar to guardianship, but it is usually granted by a different court that has different procedures.

Other Options

In some states, relative caregivers who do not want or have a legal relationship to the children in their care have laws that make it possible to access health care treatment and educational services on behalf of the children without going to court.

For more information on all these options, and to see what exists in your state, see www.grandfamilies.org.

State Laws

Grandfamilies.org is a collaboration between [Generations United](#), the [American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law](#) and [Casey Family Programs](#). It contains an easy-to-use, searchable [database](#) of state laws and legislation directly impacting kinship families. You will also find explanations of legal topic areas, practical implementation ideas, personal stories and many other resources.

Topics Covered:

- Adoption
- Care and Custody
- Education

- Federal Laws
- Foster Care Licensing
- Financial Assistance
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Kinship Navigator Programs
- National Family Caregiver Support Program
- Notification of Relatives
- Subsidized Guardianship

The online database of laws and legislation is at www.grandfamilies.org/Search-Laws

Updates

If you have an update or a resource to be included in this or any of the other GrandFacts State Fact Sheets, please email grandfamilies@gu.org.

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Disclaimers: None of the sponsoring organizations or foundations of this fact sheet assessed or evaluated listed programs for their responsiveness or effectiveness. Consequently, none of the sponsoring organizations or foundations assume any liability for any program's usefulness or accuracy of their listed information. The programs are included solely based on their own claim that they provide services or supports to grandfamilies. Omission of any relevant program is not intentional. We welcome feedback and updates via email to grandfamilies@gu.org.

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