

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.

Washington

The Children

- 39,000 (2%) children live with a relative with no parent present.
- 117,798 (7.4%) children under 18 live in homes where householders are grandparents or other relatives.
 - 87,553 (5.5%) of these children live with grandparents.
 - 30,245 (1.9%) of these children live with other relatives.

The Grandparents

- 42,896 grandparents are householders responsible for their grandchildren who live with them. Of these:
 - 15,179 (35.4%) do not have parents present.
 - 26,784 (62.4%) are under age 60.
 - 26,553 (61.9%) are in the workforce.
 - 6,735 (15.7%) are in poverty.
 - 10,544 (24.6%) have a disability.
 - 12,054 (28.1%) are unmarried.
 - Race/Ethnicity:
 - 28,483 (66.4%) are white (not Hispanic or Latino)
 - 2,316 (5.4%) are black or African American
 - 6,563 (15.3%) are Hispanic or Latino origin
 - 2,145 (5.0%) are Asian
 - 1,759 (4.1%) are American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 686 (1.6%) are Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - 1,416 (3.3%) are multiracial
 - 2,488 (5.8%) are some other race

Children in Kinship Foster Care

For data on children in kinship care within the child welfare system, see the [Child Trends fact sheet for Washington](#).

www.childtrends.org

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.

Key Programs in Washington

Catholic Community Services of Western Washington – Kinship Services

Website: www.ccsww.org

Phone: 206-328-6858

Email: info@ccsww.org

Service Area: King, Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Island, King, Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, Grays Harbor, Mason, Thurston, Pierce, Pacific, Lewis, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Clark and Skamania Counties

Description: Information and referral, kinship navigator, and financial assistance.

Catholic Family & Child Service

Website: www.cfcsyakima.org

Phone: 509-965-7100 or 1-800-246-2962 (toll-free)

Service Area: Yakima, Benton and Chelan Counties

Description: Information and assistance, legal information, bi-monthly newsletters, referrals to support groups and limited financial assistance to qualifying families.

Children's Home Society of Washington

Website: www.chs-wa.org

Phone: 206-695-3200 or 1-800-456-3339 (toll-free)

Service Area: Wenatchee/East Wenatchee and Chelan/Douglas Counties

Description: Information and referral, newsletter, and family activities.

Clark County Kinship Care Coalition

Website: <http://kinshipnavigator.org>

Phone: 1-877-799-2546 (toll-free)

Service Area: Clark County

Description: Provide referrals and assistance, networking, advocacy, and financial assistance.

Family Education and Support Services – Kinship Programs

Website: <http://familyess.org/program-list/kinship/>

Phone: 360-754-7629 and 1-877-813-2828 (toll-free)

Service Area: Lewis, Thurston, Mason and Pierce Counties

Description: Support groups, training, case management, emergency financial aid, and respite care. Bilingual staff.

HopeSparks- Pierce County Relatives Raising Children Program

Website: www.hopesparks.org

Phone: 253-565-4484

Email: info@hopesparks.org

Service Area: Pierce County

Description: Information and referral, resources and advocacy, parenting seminars, clothing, social and family activities, counseling, monthly support groups, scholarships for youth activities, emergency assistance and community resources.

King County Bar Association - Kinship Care Solutions Project

Website: www.kcba.org/pbs/KC.aspx

Phone: 206-267-7086 leave call back information on intake screening line

Email: PBS@kcba.org

Service Area: King County

Description: Screens cases for referral to volunteer attorneys in non-parental custody cases (also known as third party custody); income eligibility requirement.

Northwest Justice Project (NJP)

Website: <https://nwjustice.org>

Phone: King County residents: 206-464-1519 (press 0 or 1)

Over age 60 and any income level: 1-800-387-7111 (toll-free)

Under age 60 and low-income: 1-888-201-1014 (toll-free)

Service Area: Statewide

Description: Free self-help information including a website and a toll-free hotline. NJP's Coordinated Legal Education, Advice, and Referral (CLEAR) program provides free legal assistance with civil legal problems for eligible low-income people.

Northwest Regional Council – Kinship Caregivers Support Program

Website: <http://www.nwrcwa.org/kinship-caregiver-services/>

Phone: 360-676-6749

Service Area: Island, San Juan, Skagit and Whatcom Counties

Description: Financial help for kinship caregivers who are income eligible to meet needs such as first/last month rent deposit, legal fees, utility costs and school clothes.

Parent Help 123

Website: <http://parenthelp123.org/>

Phone: 1-800-322-2588 (toll-free) (TTY 711)

Service Area: Statewide

Description: "WithinReach" hotline provides information and referrals on many health and social services related to raising children of all ages including health insurance, nutrition, immunization, child care, child development, and children with special needs. Families can also find and apply for programs using a benefit finder.

Olympic Area Agency on Aging – Kinship Care Support Program

Website: www.o3a.org

Phone: 360-379-5064

Service Area: Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson and Pacific Counties

Description: Once a year funding to help meet the needs of the child(ren) in relative care, information and telephone referrals and individual and group meetings.

Renton Area Youth and Family Services- Kinship Care Support Program

Website: <http://rays.org/programs/kincare/>

Phone: 206-772-2050

Service Area: South Seattle and South King County (Skyway)

Description: Twice monthly meetings for kinship caregivers to connect and receive support. A light meal is included. Also provides information and referral.

University of Washington, Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence

Website: <https://allianceforchildwelfare.org/>

Service Area: Statewide

Description: Free training classes for both relatives and foster parents. Classes are often held on weeknights and weekends and some on-line trainings are available.

Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Aging and Long Term Support Administration – Kinship Care

Website: www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare

Phone: 360-725-2556 or 1-800-422-3263 (toll-free)

Service Area: Statewide

Description: A variety of kinship resources, including links with specific contact information for Kinship Navigators, Tribal Navigators, Resource Persons, and support groups around the state. Also oversees the Kinship Caregivers Support Program (KCSP), which provides short-term funds to relatives whose children are not involved in the child welfare system to help pay for basic needs.

Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration – Relatives Caring for Kids

Website: www.dshs.wa.gov/CA/fos/relatives-caring-for-kids

Service Area: Statewide

Description: Oversees Relative Support Service Funds, which provide emergency short-term funds to unlicensed relatives and other approved caregivers with a state-dependent child (state-dependent children are in the legal custody of the state, have an open case with the Children's Administration and an assigned social worker). Funds can pay for furniture, clothing, gas, deposits, school supplies, etc.

Washington Law Help

Website: www.washingtonlawhelp.org

Service Area: Statewide

Description: Free legal services for low-income persons and seniors in Washington. Legal education materials and tools that give basic information on legal problems and detailed instructions and forms to help you represent yourself in court. You can also locate information on free legal aid programs, basic eligibility, and contact information.

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**AARP Foundation's Benefits QuickLink**

Benefits QuickLINK, powered by BenefitsCheckUp of the National Council on Aging, offers a free and private way to complete a questionnaire to find out if relatives and/or the children they are raising qualify for certain programs that pay for food, increase income and cover home and healthcare costs. The specific programs covered by the questionnaire in the website are listed below. Once the questionnaire is completed, the website generates a list of eligible programs and contact information.

www.aarp.org/quicklink

Benefits QuickLINK State and Federal Public Benefits	Benefits QuickLINK Public Benefits for Families Raising Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicaid for Children • State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) • TANF-Child Only Grants • Supplemental Security Income for Children • Child Care 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)

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.

Washington TANF and Support Services

Department of Social and Health Services

1-877-501-2233 (toll-free)

www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/TANF_Support_Services.shtml

To see if you qualify and to apply online – go to www.washingtonconnection.org/

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.aspx

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.

Washington Basic Food Program

Department of Social and Health Services

1-877-501-2233 (toll-free)

www.dshs.wa.gov/onlinecso/Food_Assistance_Program.shtml

To see if you qualify and to apply online – go to www.washingtonconnection.org/

Food and Nutrition Services of the U.S. 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, center or program to ask if they participate in any of the child nutrition 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 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/wic-contacts

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. **Benefits QuickLINK** can help you find these benefits.

www.aarp.org/quicklink

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.

Washington Apple Health for Kids

1-855-923-4633

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/free-or-low-cost-health-care/apple-health-medicaid-coverage/children>

To see if you qualify and to apply online – Go to www.wahealthplanfinder.org

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 - 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), 26 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 for up to \$1,000 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 up to \$3,000 in 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. This tax credit allows adoptive parents to claim up to \$13,460 per child.

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 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

Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

360-725-6000
www.k12.wa.us

The Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO)

1-866-297-2597 (toll-free)
www.oeo.wa.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.

Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Special Education

360-725-6075

<http://www.k12.wa.us/specialed/>

Washington State Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT),

Washington State Department of Early Learning

1-866-482-4325 (toll-free)

<https://del.wa.gov/esit>

Child Profile

Washington State Department of Health

1-866-397-0337 (toll-free)

www.childprofile.org

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.aspx

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)

www.eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices

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.

North American Council on Adoptable Children - To get information about your state's subsidy, in addition to other adoption information.

www.nacac.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.

www.grandfamilies.org - To find out more about whether your state has guardianship assistance.

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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Data Sources:

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