

Polk/Burnett Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Newsletter



Edited and published quarterly by:
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Grandchildren with Special Needs (Part 2)

Inside this issue:

- *Where to go for Help?*
- *Public Benefits*
- *Local Benefits*
- *Through the Eyes of a Child*
- *Newsletter Survey due back August 10, 2005*

Special points of interest:

Help is available through the Internet, from state and local agencies.

Through the Eyes of a Child: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren is a series of fact sheets designed especially for grandparents.

Newsletter Survey Request – Return by August 10, 2005. Thanks!

Grandparents caring for grandchildren face special challenges and other stresses of physical problems, depression, isolation, lack of social support, financial strain, and any number of other problems.

Grandchildren with disabilities add additional stresses for grandparents which can be compounded. These may include emotional strains, sibling conflicts, difficult developmental transitions, increased financial burden, medical needs, special education programs, social service agencies, and the demanding needs of the child.

Where to go for help?

Where does a grandparent turn for help? The internet has a wealth of information on children with disabilities. The AARP web site has information specifically for grandparents raising grandchildren.

www.aarp.org/families/grandparents

Resources for grandparents of grandchildren with disabilities or special needs were listed in the Spring 2005 issue of this newsletter.

Public Benefits

Children are often eligible for state and federal benefits, even if their caregivers do not have legal guardianship or custody. These programs may include:

- **Financial Assistance:** Cash assistance may be available to

children and their grandparents or other relative caregivers through Wisconsin's Kinship Care Payment Program. Log on to www.dhfs.state.wi.us.

- **Food Stamps:** Kinship care families may also be eligible for food stamps to help meet their children's food and nutritional needs.

- **Health Insurance:** Grandparents and other relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health insurance on behalf of the children they are raising through Wisconsin's Medicaid and BadgerCare programs. In some cases, caregivers may also be eligible for free health coverage under Medicaid. For more information contact www.dhfs.state.wi.us.

Other Benefits: Other state and federal benefits may also be available to eligible children, such as child care subsidies, disabilities benefits, and special education services. For more information about these, download Children's Defense Fund's benefits guides for grandparents and other relatives raising children at www.childrensdefense.org or call (202) 662-3568. You may also log on to the National Council on Aging's

Websites:

<http://www.aarp.org/families/grandparents>

<http://www.uwex.edu/relationships>

For more information on grandparenting issues contact:

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Benefits CheckUp website at
www.benefitscheckup.org

Local Benefits

Your county Health and Human Services Department may have programs for which you qualify. Check with that department for local information and assistance.



Through the Eyes of a Child

Another resource available through the University of Wisconsin-Extension is the fact sheet series "Through the Eyes of a Child: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren." This series includes nine fact sheets:

1. Understanding children's development
2. The importance of close relationships
3. Relationships expectations: Now and in the future
4. Disruptions in close relationships: How they affect a child's behaviors, thoughts, and feelings
5. The importance of open communication
6. Understanding children's behaviors
7. Children's contact with their parents
8. The cycle of family patterns
9. Additional resources

This series of fact sheets can be obtained from your local UW-Extension office or downloaded from the web site www.uwex.edu/relationships.

Newsletter Survey

Being mailed with this issue of the Polk/Burnett Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Newsletter is a survey for you to complete and return. Please return this survey before **August 10, 2005** to: Marilyn Kooiker, Burnett County UW-Extension Office, 7410 County Rd. K, #107, Siren, WI 54872. Thank you for your input!

Sources:

AARP web site
<http://www.aarp.org/families/grandparents>.

Controlled Evaluation of Support Groups for Grandparent Caregivers of children with Developmental Disabilities and Delays, McCallion P. Janicki, M., & Kolomer, S., Sept. 2004, American Journal of Mental Retardation, Vol. 109, Vol. 5: 352-361.

"Through the Eyes of a Child: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren." Brintnall-Peterson, M., University of Wisconsin-Extension, 2003
www.uwex.edu/relationships/.

