



## **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Partnership of Wisconsin**

Dear Grandparents, Relatives, and Professionals,

The Wisconsin Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Partnership, in collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Children and Family Services, is concerned about our state's children. During the last decade, Wisconsin has experienced an increase in the number of children being raised by grandparents and other relatives, who give of themselves, their time, and their resources as they parent and care for children.

The GRAND (Grandparents/Relatives Raising and Nurturing Dependent Children Resource Guide) has been developed to help grandparents and relatives as they assume new roles and responsibilities. It is designed to provide vital information concerning issues such as childcare, legal concerns, finances, and parenting again. It provides information on local, state, and national resources and services available to these caregivers and the children they are raising.

GRAND was partially funded by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Children and Family Services. Numerous state and local agencies/organizations contributed to the information in GRAND or reviewed its content for accuracy. Grandparents and relatives caregivers have also reviewed the information for its useful application in the day-to-day rewards and challenges of parenting again.

We are confident that you, whether a grandparent or other relative who is parenting again or a professional who is working with these grandparents and the children they are caring for, will find GRAND a helpful resource.

Sincerely,

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Partnership of Wisconsin

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# Introduction



## Introduction

The practice of grandparents and relatives caring for children is not new. Throughout history, when adult parents died, grandparents and relatives stepped forward to raise the children. However, a new picture of this familiar arrangement is emerging.

In the years from 1980–1990, the number and percentage of children living with grandparents or relatives has grown from 2.3 million (3.6%) of all children to 3.2 million children (4.9%). In 1998, about one third of the children living with their grandparents did not have a parent living in the home with them (Lugaila, 1998). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, between 1990 and 1997 the number of families with children under the age of 18 (and no parents present) headed by two grandparents grew by 31%.

These numbers are expected to continue growing in the next decade. Grandparents or relatives who take on the job of raising their grandchildren or kin often need help meeting the needs of their grandchildren, especially with the legal, financial, medical, educational, and emotional issues that come with this new role.

While there are many different kinds of needs and care giving situations, these grandparents or other relatives who are raising their grandchildren seem to need information about what resources are available to them.

To meet this need for information, the **Wisconsin Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Partnership** (Bureau of Aging and Long Term Care Resources; Grandparents United for Children's Rights, Inc.; and University of Wisconsin Extension), with a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Children and Family Services, developed the *Grandparents/Relatives Raising And Nurturing Dependent Children (GRAND) Resource Guide* for families who are parenting again. The Wisconsin Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Partnership coordinated the efforts of the agencies and services that provided the information for this Resource Guide.

## Purpose of GRAND Resource Guide

If you are a grandparent or relative who has become the primary caregiver for one or more children, help is available. To get that help, you need to learn how to work with public systems such as the school system, the child welfare system, and the legal system. Be aware that most of these public systems are not set up to recognize relatives or grandparents parenting again. Which organizations you will be involved with vary greatly from community to community. When looking for help, insist that people in charge of the organization listen to you about your needs and the needs of your grandchildren. Get help from family members, friends, and grandparent support groups.

This new publication, *Grandparents/Relatives Raising And Nurturing Dependent Children*, gives caring adult relatives the information they need about the resources and services that are available for the children they are raising. **GRAND** also gives important information about issues such as child care, school registration requirements, and immunizations.

**GRAND** answers frequently asked questions and lists local and state resources available to grandparents/relatives who are raising children in either formal or informal situations. While these grandparents/relatives are the intended audience, this resource guide also is available to professionals who give help to grandparents and relatives as they parent again.

## Organization of GRAND Resource Guide

This resource book is intended to give you a quick overview of services, programs and places to start looking for resources and how to access them. The guide also provides tips and general information that you, as grandparents, may want to think about as you courageously take on the responsibility of raising your grandchildren. It can also help you plan for the future. The **GRAND** Resource Guide may remind you of information that you may have forgotten or that may have changed since you brought up your children, such as registering a child for school or keeping immunizations up-to-date.

The **GRAND** Resource Guide is organized into chapters on issues and problems common to grandparents and relatives raising their grandchildren or kin. Each chapter contains questions you may have about services or programs available for the child or children you are raising. Each chapter is followed by a list of local resources. The guide begins with a list of numbers to help you in an emergency. The first chapter gives you information on child care. The second chapter deals with counseling and how to find help for emotional problems, drug or alcohol abuse, and where to find a support group. The third chapter examines educational resources for the child you are caring for; the fourth chapter answers questions and lists resources related to financial assistance. The fifth chapter looks at health resources, and is followed by the sixth chapter that gives information on housing. Legal questions and resources are in the seventh chapter, and the resource guide concludes with a chapter on parenting questions and resources.

Impact, Inc. of Milwaukee County, a resource and information referral agency, has identified key support services for each chapter. Wherever possible, statewide organizations or local government agencies/departments where grandparents/relatives could receive referral to specific local support (e.g., “Contact your local housing authority at \_\_\_\_\_”) have been identified.

The contents page of **GRAND** lists the order for finding the individual chapters, emergency phone numbers, and glossary of terms. Each section has a quick reference at the beginning to let you know which question addresses a particular concern. The index in the back of the book will help you find information on the same topic in the different sections, or help you locate a particular agency or service.

To make the guide easier to read, the term *grandparents* has been used to include all relative caregivers, such as aunts, uncles, sisters, step-relatives, and so forth. In the same way,

*grandchild* is used to mean any child that you may be taking care of, such as niece or nephew, brother or sister, or a stepchild or step-grandchild.

Note: The guide does not list every agency and service available to grandparents raising grandchildren. It has tried to provide statewide resources and services that can give you information about or referrals that you may need. If you know of statewide services that would benefit grandparents raising grandchildren, please enter the information on the GRG Web site at: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grandparent/grand.html>

## **With Grateful Appreciation**

- The Wisconsin Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Partnership (Bureau of Aging and Long Term Care Resources; Grandparents United for Children's Rights, Inc.; and University of Wisconsin Extension) has developed *the Grandparents/Relatives Raising And Nurturing Dependent Children (GRAND) Resource Guide* for grandparents and relatives raising children.

The Wisconsin GRG Partnership could not have developed the **GRAND** Resource Guide without assistance from numerous individuals and organizations. Appreciation is extended to the following individuals and organizations:

- **Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Children and Family Services.** Without their financial contribution, the publication of **GRAND** would not have been possible.
- **Susan Dreyfus, Administrator, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Children and Family Services,** who recognized the need for a resource guide for relatives and grandparents who are parenting again.
- **Milwaukee Advisory Committee**  
The committee was invaluable in helping identify the content and resources of the GRAND Resource Guide. Members of the Committee are:  
Annie Davidson-Banks, Perez-Pena, Limited  
Arlette DeVine, The Parenting Network  
Kenneth Germanson, Community Advocates  
Sally Kehl, Jewish Family Services  
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A special thank you to **Kathy Thomas, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Children and Family Services**, for her ongoing support to the **GRAND** Resource Guide production team. She also helped link the production team to other state organizations and agencies.

- **Delaware GRAND Resource Guide Task Force**

The Delaware GRAND Resource Guide was used as a model for Wisconsin's GRAND Resource Guide. The Delaware Health and Social Services, Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities, gave Wisconsin GRG Partnership permission to adapt and revise the Delaware Guide. Carol Boyer, Program Coordinator, was an invaluable resource, providing guidance and direction based on her experience in developing the Delaware Resource Guide.

- **Authors**

Professionals with expertise evaluated the Delaware GRAND Resource Guide to determine if its information was accurate for Wisconsin. As key authors of the different chapters, they wrote revisions and, where necessary, added questions and answers. These individuals are recognized at the end of each chapter.

- **Reviewers**

Each chapter was reviewed by at least two individuals with expertise in the chapter's content. These individuals are recognized at the end of each chapter.

- **Milwaukee County Research and Focus Groups**

Analysis of research findings from three different surveys (one with service providers, one with individuals in Milwaukee County's Kinship Care program, and the third with Milwaukee County grandparents), conducted last year by Milwaukee County Extension faculty member Cathy Nelson and UW-Milwaukee staff members Paul Hausman and Teresa Bellone, provided valuable information to the development of the resource guide. Two focus groups were held to gather additional information on Hispanic and African American families. Thanks go to Janie Gonzalez (grandparent), Virginia Walker (grandparent), and Kalyani Rai (UW-Milwaukee) for conducting the focus groups.

A research report is available at the following Internet address:

*<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grandparent/milresearch.pdf>*

- **GRAND Resource Guide Production Team**

Without the efforts of the production team, **GRAND** could not have been developed. Feel free to contact any one of them for information regarding the guide.

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Individual listings appearing in this publication cannot be construed as an endorsement or accreditation of any program, nor does omission indicate disapproval by the publisher. The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Partnership of Wisconsin accepts no responsibility for the quality of service provided by an agency or service in this publication. Your comments should be sent to:

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Madison, WI 53706-1498  
608.262-5871  
*<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grgp/>*



# Emergency Contact Numbers



## Emergency Contact Numbers:

**Alcohol and other Drug Abuse Crisis**      IMPACT Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services  
276-8487, or

- “I think my grandchild has a drug problem and I don’t know what to do!”      Community Information Line  
773-0211
- “How do I know if my grandchild is using drugs?”

**Child Abuse/Neglect**      Child Protective Services  
220-7233

- “I think my grandchild was abused. What should I do now?”
- “My grandchild tell me she is left home by herself at night. Is this neglect?”

**Domestic Violence**      Milwaukee Women’s Center  
671-6140

- “My \_\_\_\_\_ has just hit me and I am afraid to stay here.”      Sojourner Truth House  
933-2722

Call 911 if you are in immediate danger!!

**Homeless Crisis**      ACALL – Homeless Hotline  
302-6633

- “I am being evicted and I have nowhere to stay.”

**Mental Health Crisis**

- “My grandchild is always sad. Does he need some help?”
- “I just can’t stop crying.”
- “I just can’t get out of bed today.”

Milwaukee County Mental Health Division (MCMHD) –  
Psychiatric Crisis Service  
257-7222 (24/7)

Crisis Walk-in Service  
257-7665

Mobile Urgent Team (MUTT)  
257-7621

**Missing Child**

- “My grandchild hasn’t come home from school!”

Call your local Police Department

**Runaways**

- “What do I do if I think my grandchild has run away?”

Pathfinders for Runaways – runaways - shelter  
271-1560

Walker’s Point Youth and Family Center – runaways -  
shelter  
647-8200  
National Runaway Switchboard  
800-621-4000

**Medical Crisis**

- “I can’t move.”
- “I think I am having a heart attack!”
- “My grandchild won’t stop bleeding!”

Call 911 if you or your grandchild needs  
immediate medical attention!!

**Parenting Crisis**

- “My grandchild is out of control!”
- “I can’t handle my grandchild’s behavior anymore!”

Parents Helpline  
671-0566

**Poisoning**

- “My grandchild ate something that isn’t food!”
- “My grandchild got into the medicine cabinet and took some pills!”

Poison Center – Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin  
266-2222  
266-2542 TDD

**Sexual Assault**

- “I suspect my grandchild was raped.”
- “My grandchild says she was touched.”

Sexual Assault Treatment Center  
219-5555

Call 911 if you or your grandchild is in immediate danger or need immediate medical attention!!

**For other situations or if you are unsure.**

Community Information Line  
773-0211



