



The Nelson A. Rockefeller Center at Dartmouth College

The Center for Public Policy and the Social Sciences

The Class of 1964 Policy Research Shop

GRANDFAMILIES IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Examining Policy Alternatives

**Presented to the New Hampshire Senate Committee on Executive
Departments and Administration**

PRS Policy Brief 1819-12

April 1, 2019

Prepared By:

Sunny Drescher

Alex Fredman

Sam Zarkower

This report was written by undergraduate students at Dartmouth College under the direction of professors in the Rockefeller Center. Policy Research Shop (PRS) students produce non-partisan policy analyses and present their findings in a non-advocacy manner. The PRS is fully endowed by the Dartmouth Class of 1964 through a class gift in celebration of its 50th Anniversary given to the Center. This endowment ensures that the Policy Research Shop will continue to produce high-quality, non-partisan policy research for policymakers in New Hampshire and Vermont. The PRS was previously funded by major grants from the U.S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) and from the Ford Foundation and by initial seed grants from the Surdna Foundation, the Lintilhac Foundation, and the Ford Motor Company Fund. Since its inception in 2005, PRS students have invested more than 65,000 hours to produce more than 190 policy briefs for policymakers in New Hampshire and Vermont.



Contact:

Nelson A. Rockefeller Center, 6082 Rockefeller Hall, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH 03755

<http://rockefeller.dartmouth.edu/shop/> • Email: Ronald.G.Shaiko@Dartmouth.edu



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. OVERVIEW OF GRANDFAMILIES IN THE UNITED STATES	1
2. GRANDFAMILIES IN NEW HAMPSHIRE	3
2.1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	3
2.2.. CURRENT PROGRAMS IN PLACE	4
2.3. HB 629	5
3. POLICY OPTIONS	6
3.1. HOUSING OPTIONS	6
3.2. TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF) REFORM	8
3.3. GUARDIAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	9
3.4. INCREASING CAREGIVER SUPPORT OUTREACH FOR GRANDFAMILIES	10
4. CONCLUSION	11
REFERENCES	12



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Grandfamilies—families in which the grandparents raise their grandchildren when parents cannot—are unique family structures that neither match a nuclear family nor a foster family. In this report, we examine existing support for grandfamilies and provide additional options for New Hampshire to consider in supporting these families. First, we provide an overview of grandfamilies in the United States as well as in New Hampshire specifically. Next, we provide a number of policy options that the New Hampshire legislature could pursue. These involve improving and enhancing the resources available to grandfamilies such as improving grandfamilies’ access to housing, increasing the types of benefits available to grandfamilies, and enhancing outreach mechanisms in local communities to alert grandfamilies of existing resources.

1. OVERVIEW OF GRANDFAMILIES IN THE UNITED STATES

Grandparents fulfill an important role in the lives of their grandchildren in ways with which many of us are familiar—by providing love and support, whether from near or far distances. In some cases, the care grandparents provide to their grandchildren becomes a more formal responsibility when grandparents become the primary caregivers of their grandchildren instead of the children’s parents. These “grandfamily” arrangements are quite prevalent across the U.S., and grandfamilies therefore pose a unique policy question for state lawmakers due to the often-difficult challenges they face.

This report will use the following definition of a grandfamily from Generations United’s 2015 Report on the State of Grandfamilies in America: “[F]amilies where grandparents or other relatives step forward to raise children when parents are unable to care for them. Sometimes a parent is still living in the household but not providing for most of the basic needs of a child, such as a teen parent.”¹ A distinction must be made, then, between this definition of grandfamilies and scenarios in which grandparents live in the same household as their grandchildren (and are even possibly the owners of the house) but the children’s parents remain the primary caregivers. The latter scenarios are not within the scope of this report, which focuses specifically on cases in which grandparents are the primary caregivers.

According to the most recent report by Generations United, over 2.6 million children live in grandfamilies or in “kinship families” in which other relatives are the primary caregivers. Also, for every one child living with a relative within the formal foster care system, 19 children live with relatives outside of the system.² These statistics are significant enough to merit a discussion over policy options to support grandfamilies, especially in light of the recent opioid epidemic, which has caused a significant spike of children in foster care due to drug-related incidents.³ Yet even without the context of the opioid epidemic, aiding grandfamilies is an important public policy issue because state governments play a role in formally establishing guardianship, which in turn determines the extent to which grandparents may receive public financial assistance.

The benefits of children living in grandfamilies as opposed to living with non-relatives are, to a certain extent, self-evident, and thus merit only a limited discussion for the purposes of this report.



The fact that living with grandparents or other relatives instead of strangers helps children have safer and more stable childhoods with fewer risks of mental or behavioral health is a point that few would likely dispute.⁴ Previous studies have found that 51 percent of children living in the welfare system have experienced at least four of what are called “adverse childhood experiences,” or ACEs (compared to 13 percent of all children), and that children who experience four or more ACEs are 12 times more likely to experience negative health consequences as adults.⁵ At the same time, we know that grandfamilies can help reduce the effects of trauma from ACEs by providing children with positive relationships, a stable environment, and a sense of love and belonging.⁶

Yet grandfamilies face many problems that can hinder the ability of grandparents to provide adequate care for the children. That a grandparent must take primary care of his or her grandchild is most likely an indication that something has gone wrong—whether that be the death of the parent(s) or circumstances requiring that the child be removed from the parent(s) in order to ensure the safety of the child. Grandparents do not usually plan in advance for the possibility of raising their grandchildren, and since many elderly Americans are on a fixed income, if they are not still in the workforce themselves, raising children can cause an unwelcome financial burden.

A few statistics on the roughly 2.5 million grandparents in the U.S. who raise their grandchildren illuminate this point:⁷

- 57 percent are still in the workforce
- 20 percent live below the poverty line
- 25 percent have a disability
- 42 percent have been the primary caregiver for at least five years
- Just under half of single grandmothers raising grandchildren live below the poverty line

The problems faced by grandfamilies are compounded by the fact that access to financial assistance is often limited and/or complicated. The great majority of grandfamilies live outside of the formal child welfare system, but access to many support programs and services relies upon legal custody of the child—and the process for obtaining legal custody can often be a difficult one for grandfamilies.⁸ As stated above, for every one child living with a relative within the formal foster care system, 19 children live with relatives outside of the system—meaning those caregivers do not receive access to the financial stipend that foster caregivers receive from the state.⁹ Meanwhile, the best and sometimes only option for grandfamilies outside the child welfare system is to apply for TANF benefits, which not only can be a difficult application process but also can lead to child-support payments which may not be sufficient, especially for low-income grandparents.¹⁰

This section has provided background information on the state of grandfamilies in the U.S.; we now turn to examine more specifically the state of grandfamilies in New Hampshire.



2. GRANDFAMILIES IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

In this section, we provide background information specific to grandfamilies in New Hampshire, then describe some current programs that the state offers to grandfamilies and conclude with a discussion of HB 629, a law passed in 2017 meant to ease the custody process for grandparents.

2.1. Background Information

In New Hampshire, there are about 6,700 grandparents who are the primary caregivers of their grandchildren. Here are a few characteristics of these individuals:¹¹

- 37.1 percent do not have the parents of the grandchildren present in the household
- 62.5 percent are under 60 years old
- 59.9 percent are still in the workforce
- 8.4 percent live below the poverty line
- 27.7 percent are disabled
- 26.5 percent are not married

In 2016, about four percent of children in the U.S. were raised in kinship care, compared with three percent of children in New Hampshire. At the same time, while 32 percent of U.S. children in the foster care system were cared for by relatives, 24 percent of New Hampshire foster children lived with family.¹² This indicates that although New Hampshire has roughly similar proportions of children living in kinship families to the national average, a significantly larger amount of those families are not receiving the financial stipend the state provides to foster caregivers.

Grandfamilies in the state of New Hampshire face challenges in receiving adequate resources. MaryLou Beaver, the chair of the New Hampshire Grandfamilies Advisory Group, a non-governmental organization that provides resources for grandfamilies in the state, spoke to us about her experiences in helping these families. She told us that grandparents and children in New Hampshire face inadequate mental health and behavioral health resources, and that younger grandmothers who are forced to give up jobs in order to take care of grandchildren face the greatest challenges. Beaver said that basically all of the grandparents she has engaged with say that they lack somewhere to turn for emotional support on a day-to-day basis, which she said is essential for grandparents who need help with a variety of issues—for example, they may not understand how schools have changed since their own children were in the education system.

In addition to these concerns, Beaver mentioned two areas that distinguish the state of grandfamilies in New Hampshire. First, the opioid epidemic, which has hit New Hampshire especially hard, has had a disproportionate effect on grandfamilies, and Beaver said that New Hampshire generally has more cases of grandparents stepping in as caregivers due to drug overdoses compared to other states, which tend to have more cases due to the death of the parent, abuse, or neglect. Second, Beaver said that higher housing costs in New Hampshire provide an added difficulty for grandparents: since many downsized after their own children grew up, they



may struggle to afford buying a new property to accommodate the children they are now taking care of, and renting may be difficult because of restrictions on number of residents.

Having established this background information, we will analyze the programs offered to New Hampshire grandfamilies by the state government.

2.2. Current Programs in Place

On the website of the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), there is a page titled, “Resources for Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren.”¹³ The opening text on the page reads, “New Hampshire has programs that can help grandparents who care for their grandchildren. Grandparents can get cash assistance through either: Family Assistance Program (FAP); or Foster Care Stipend.”

The Family Assistance Program is essentially the extension of federal TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) benefits through the state. This program gives monthly cash payments dependent on the number of children in the household and any income the children receive. The monthly payment standard for a single-child household is listed as \$607, which increases by \$216 for every additional child in the household.

According to Beaver, many grandparents in New Hampshire do not know that this option even exists. For those who do, however, there is a complicating factor. Enrolling in the FAP means that the caregiver must fill out a child support application, which means the state will seek out the parents of the child to collect child support. Beaver said that many grandparents are reluctant to give out the information that would help the state track down the parent(s) because their relationship with the parent(s) has become fraught, and they are concerned about “throwing more wood on the fire.” As a result, these grandparents may choose not to apply for the FAP.

The other program listed is the foster care program, and the website states that “it is strongly advised that they become a licensed relative foster home as they may get extra cash assistance and supports.” Caregivers who become licensed foster parents receive a cash stipend from the state, and the children can get access to resources like counseling and health care. While these supports would be beneficial to grandfamilies, Beaver said that there are reasons grandparents may be reluctant to go through the foster care process. Registering as a foster parent requires the applicant to work with the state’s Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). Beaver said that many grandparents reported having bad experiences with DCYF, and that many find some of the regulations involved in the foster care process (such as the fact that the state has the legal right to the child’s records) to be off-putting.

Additionally, the New Hampshire Family Caregiver Support Program also serves grandfamilies, which was established under the National Family Caregiver Support Program. The national program originated in 2000 in an amendment to the Older Americans Act of 1965 to provide grants to states and territories to support family caregivers based on the proportion of the state’s



population that is seventy years or older.¹⁴ Within New Hampshire, this grant provides five types of services to eligible program participants.

The following caregivers are eligible for support through the program:¹⁵

- Family or other informal caregivers at least eighteen years of age providing care to a person with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia, regardless of the age of the person receiving care
- Family or other informal caregivers at least eighteen years of age providing care to a person at least sixty years of age
- Relative caregivers at least fifty-five years of age providing care to children under eighteen years of age

Under the New Hampshire Family Caregiver Support Program, eligible participants may be provided with the following services:¹⁶

- Information about local resources and programs
- Individual need assessment and assistance identifying and accessing options
- Counseling and access to support groups
- Caregiver training and education services
- Respite care services (i.e., providing a temporary break for full-time relative caregivers or providing limited services that “complement the care the family caregiver is providing”)

This program serves as a centralized resource for relative caregivers who are seeking some assistance or support in their caregiving duties but perhaps do not know how. It is administered through ServiceLink under the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, which is a program that works with local agencies throughout the state to “help individuals access and make connections to long term services and supports” and “access family caregiver information and supports.”¹⁷

2.3. HB 629

In May of 2017, Governor Sununu signed HB 629, a law that makes it easier for grandparents to take custody of their grandchildren in guardianship cases involving drug abuse.¹⁸ It does this by lowering the threshold of proof needed for grandparents in such cases to establish that it is in the child’s best interest that they take custody. The law was the first of its kind passed in the United States.¹⁹

Beaver said that she has not heard too much on the ground about how the law, which took force in 2018, has worked toward achieving its purpose. However, she said that she has heard from grandparents going through custody proceedings, who told her that after the law took effect, the judges handling these cases seemed to have a much clearer understanding of what the grandparents were going through.



3. POLICY OPTIONS

There are a number of policy options that New Hampshire could implement to provide further support for grandfamilies, which we outline in this section.

3.1. Housing Programs

Federal, state, and municipal governments have begun to subsidize the development and maintenance of low-income housing for grandfamilies throughout the country. Although low-income housing for the general populace already exists within these areas, these new properties have been specifically allocated for grandfamilies. Governmental actors in at least thirteen states and the District of Columbia financially support or directly manage grandfamily housing programs.

The District of Columbia has recently appropriated funds for the creation of 50 grandfamily apartment units.²⁰ These units have two or three bedrooms each. Participating grandfamilies must have “a household income of 30 to 40 percent of area median income.”²¹ The District of Columbia is using multiple funding sources in order to finance this project. In particular, it is relying on tax exempt bonds that were issued by the DC Housing Finance Agency—and later purchased by Citibank—four percent low income housing credits, private investment, and supplemental funds from “the DC Department of Housing and Community Development and the DC Department of Behavioral Health.”²²

Arizona funded the development of “56 two- and three-bedroom units.”²³ The project was funded by three primary sources: “HOME program funding from the City of Phoenix, Low Income Housing Tax Credits awarded by the Arizona Department of Housing and private lending by Chase and UCRC.”²⁴

Connecticut provides “multi-bedroom townhouses for grandparents with legal custody of their grandchildren.”²⁵ Participating grandfamilies are subject to “income limits.”²⁶ Connecticut relies on public and nonprofit funds in order to finance the program. In particular, they utilize funds from the Department of Health and Human Services, the North Central Area Agency on Aging, the City of Hartford, the People’s United Community Foundation, and the Village.²⁷

The federal government—specifically, the Department of Housing and Urban Development—has helped Mercy Housing build “six three-bedroom apartments and four four-bedroom apartments” for grandfamilies in Illinois.²⁸ The program requires that the participating “head of the household...be a grandparent or other relative 62 years or older.”²⁹ The program also requires the participants to pay rent. Currently, the “rent is based on 30 percent of adjusted monthly household income.”³⁰

Louisiana has worked with local nonprofit organizations to construct and maintain housing for grandfamilies. In particular, the state government, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Information Center of Louisiana and the Urban Restoration and Enhancement Corp. have



established 30 two-bedroom units for grandfamilies.³¹ The program is managed by the nonprofit organizations, but primarily funded by the state government. The project receives financial support from community donations, Entergy, the Office of Elderly Affairs within the Office of the Governor of Louisiana, and the Louisiana Children’s Trust Fund within the Governor’s Office of Programs and Planning.³²

Habitat America offers housing for grandfamilies at a centralized site within the state of Maryland. The program is supported by community donations and “rental assistance through the Section 8 Program.”³³ The site offers one, two, or four bedroom apartments for grandfamilies. However, it should be noted that there are income limits for participating grandfamilies.³⁴

Massachusetts has two housing programs for grandfamilies: the Franklin Field Housing Development and the Grandfamilies House. The Franklin Field Housing Development contains 16 apartment units for grandfamilies. Grandfamilies pay rents that are based on 30 percent of their household’s income at this site. The overall program is overseen by the Boston Housing Authority.³⁵ The Grandfamilies House offers “26 two- to four-bedroom apartments” for grandfamilies.³⁶ This program is funded by the Boston Housing Authority and the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.³⁷

In Missouri, the Kansas City Housing Authority funds and oversees a housing development for grandfamilies.³⁸ It includes “36...two, three and four-bedroom apartments.”³⁹ Private gap funding was provided by Cougar Capital.⁴⁰

In New York City, the federal, state, and city governments have jointly subsidized a housing development for grandfamilies. The development is overseen by a nonprofit organization and includes 50 apartments for grandfamilies and kinship families. The program is funded by the NYS Housing trust Fund, NYS Homes and Community Renewal, the NYC Housing Authority, the Bronx Borough President’s Office, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Community Preservation Corporation, the National Equity Fund, the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp., the Presbyterian Women of the Presbyterian Church USA, the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church and the Rutgers Presbyterian Church.⁴¹

Nonprofit organizations and governmental actors in Oregon, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin are currently planning to build or have already built low-income housing for grandfamilies as well.⁴²

The New Hampshire state government could implement a grandfamily housing program of its own based on the aforementioned programs. It could build, subsidize, or purchase the units at a central location or in several locations. Moreover, it could work alongside private companies, the federal government and nonprofit organizations in order to construct, maintain and fund the grandfamily housing. If New Hampshire wished to pursue this policy, then it could require the participants to contribute a percentage of their monthly income as rent. In addition, it could have income limits for the participating families. Policymakers in New Hampshire may look to other states for guidance on how to successfully implement this policy.



Of these programs, the most attractive model for New Hampshire might be the DC Model. In this model, the state government would partner with local nonprofit organizations and or private investors to build a limited number of grandfamily housing units. The state government would support the project through gap-funding tax credits or tax-exempt bonds, while the local nonprofit organizations and private companies would provide the majority of the program's capital. Furthermore, the nonprofit organizations and/or private companies would oversee the construction and maintenance of the properties.

3.2. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Reform

States disperse two types of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grants to their residents: family grants and child-only grants. Family grants include the “caregiver...on the grant” and thus afford greater discretion in how they are spent, have a “60 month time limit,” “require caregivers to assign child support to the state,” and are larger than child-only grants.⁴³ In comparison, child-only grants are “only for the care of the child,” are smaller than the family grants—the national average for one child was \$249 per month—and also “require caregivers to assign child support to the state.”⁴⁴

Currently, New Hampshire does not allow grandfamilies to apply for traditional TANF grants. In contrast, twenty-one other states allow grandparents in grandfamilies to apply for one or both types of TANF grants. These states include Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.⁴⁵

Of the twenty-one states, “at least four states—Colorado, Hawaii, Vermont and Washington—allow adults with a family-like relationship to be eligible as caregivers on family grants and to receive TANF child-only assistance on a child’s behalf.”⁴⁶ Moreover, “in Connecticut, Delaware, Michigan, Kansas and Wisconsin, these caregivers are included provided they have or are getting legal custody or guardianship of the children.”⁴⁷ In addition, Louisiana utilizes TANF funds to offer a “Kinship Care Subsidy Program,” in which grandparents can participate.⁴⁸ Louisiana’s Kinship Care Subsidy Program gives “low-income guardians, legal custodians, and kin with ‘provisional custody by mandate,’” \$222 per month.⁴⁹ Furthermore, “in Washington state, if the child in a grandfamily is on a TANF family grant or child-only grant, the household automatically qualifies for subsidized child care.”⁵⁰ This child care “is funded by a combination of TANF Maintenance of Effort and federal child care block grant monies.”⁵¹

The New Hampshire state government could allow grandparents of grandfamilies to apply for all or some TANF grants. If New Hampshire pursued this policy, then it could also raise or remove asset limits for eligible grandparents. Currently, nine states—Oregon, Colorado, Louisiana, Illinois, Ohio, Alabama, Virginia, Maryland and Delaware—do not use an asset test for eligibility.⁵² Other states have \$2,000 asset limits, while Alaska, California, New York and the District of Columbia allow the ‘elderly’ or those age 60 and older to have \$3,000 in assets.⁵³ It



should be noted that “only DC and Hawaii explicitly allow additional assets for retirement, although most allow for college or a home.”⁵⁴

New Hampshire could also add retirement savings to the permissible list of additional assets.⁵⁵ Moreover, the state government could increase income disregards for middle aged and elderly grandparents.⁵⁶ Additionally, New Hampshire could combine application forms for TANF and other major public benefits for grandfamilies.⁵⁷ This would streamline the process for applying for these programs. Currently, “several jurisdictions like Minnesota and the District of Columbia” combine their application forms for TANF, food stamps and medical assistance.⁵⁸

3.3. Guardian Assistance Program

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act was enacted in October 2008; this law has given states and tribes the option to finance guardianship assistance payments (GAP) through Federal Title IV-E of the Social Security Act.⁵⁹ The Title IV-E GAP programs provide assistance to states and tribal organizations (Title IV-E agencies) “who opt to provide guardianship assistance payments for the care of children by relatives who have assumed legal guardianship of eligible children for whom they previously cared as foster parents.”⁶⁰ These programs allow children who are under relatives’ care to exit the foster care system into permanent homes. The Title IV-E GAP programs are designed for children who have been “in foster care with a licensed relative providing the care for at least six months” and for whom it is inappropriate to reunite with their parents or be otherwise adopted.⁶¹

Several factors make a child and relative caregiver eligible for GAP benefits. It must be determined that it is inappropriate for the child to return home to their parents or be otherwise adopted; the child “demonstrates a strong attachment” to the prospective relative caregiver; the relative guardian is committed to caring for the child indefinitely; and, if the child is at least fourteen years old, the child has been consulted regarding the caregiver arrangement.⁶²

Before being eligible to receive GAP payments and obtain guardianship of a child, relative caregivers must have guardian assistance agreements.⁶³ These agreements must specify the following: the amount and manner in which the payment will be provided to the prospective guardian; the way in which the payment may be adjusted, based on the needs and circumstances of the guardian and child; additional services and assistance for which the guardian and child would be eligible given the agreement; and the process by which the guardian may apply for any additional applicable services.⁶⁴ The guardian assistance agreements must also provide “that the agreement will remain in effect without regard to the State residency of the relative guardian,” and that the state or tribe will subsidize the total cost of nonrecurring expenses (i.e., legal fees, court filing fees, travel expenses) up to \$2,000.⁶⁵ Once the guardian assistance agreement has been put in place, a relative caregiver may become a legal guardian of the child and may receive guardian assistance payments, as long as the agreement meets all aforementioned eligibility requirements.⁶⁶

With respect to siblings, the state or tribe may make “guardianship assistance payments pursuant to a kinship guardianship agreement on behalf of each sibling of an eligible child who is placed



with the same relative under the same kinship guardianship arrangement if the title IV-E agency and the relative guardian agree that placement is appropriate.”⁶⁷ The sibling does not need to meet eligibility criteria for the guardian to receive assistance payments or for nonrecurring legal expenses to be covered.

As of October 2010, the state or tribe may elect to extend the age that a child is eligible to receive guardian assistance payments to 19, 20, or 21, if the child has met the following conditions by the age of 18: (1) the child has completed secondary school or its equivalent; (2) the child is enrolled in a post-secondary or vocational school; (3) the child participates in a program or activity that is aimed to increase likelihood of employment; (4) the child is employed 80+ hours per month; or (5) the child is deemed incapable of any of the aforementioned criteria due to a documented medical condition.⁶⁸

States and tribes are required to propose a Title IV-E Plan to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Children’s Bureau in order to be approved to operate GAP programs.⁶⁹ These plans must reflect the statutory requirements for GAP programs to be implemented in a given state. As of December 2018, thirty-five states, eleven tribes, and the District of Columbia had received approval to run these programs.⁷⁰ States and tribes that operate GAP programs may also be eligible to receive funding to subsidize administrative and training costs “for the proper and efficient administration” of the programs so that the cost of administering the program should not preclude states or tribes from being able to use them to support grandfamilies.⁷¹

In addition to the federal funding provided through GAP programs, at least twenty-six of the states and the District of Columbia use their own funds to support non-Title IV-E eligible children exiting foster homes into permanent homes with relatives. This allows for states to implement their own criteria for who is eligible to receive funding. (As previously mentioned, funding provided by the federal government has its own eligibility criteria, namely that the child must have been residing with a foster care licensed family member for at least six months and neither reunification nor adoption are appropriate measures.⁷²)

3.4. Increasing Caregiver Support Outreach for Grandfamilies

Many grandfamily living arrangements do not meet all of the criteria or are too informal to qualify for benefits intended for foster care families. There are three primary types of kinship caregiver arrangements that may or may not be eligible for caregiver benefits: informal kinship care, voluntary kinship care, and formal kinship care.⁷³

Informal kinship care does not involve any formal third party between caregivers; parents may arrange for their children to stay with relatives for some amount of time without the involvement of a children’s welfare agency or juvenile court. Though the kinship caregivers lack the legal authority to enroll the children in school or authorize medical care, states typically offer consent forms that allow caregivers to make these kinds of decisions when the children’s parents are absent. If parents initiate the caregiver change, they may be able to acquire temporary guardianship for the kinship caregiver to be able to make educational and health-related decisions for the children



without a consent form. However, if the change in caregiving is unplanned or the parents are unwilling to assign temporary guardianship to the kinship caregiver, the caregiver has fewer options for how to obtain decision making abilities without involving the state.⁷⁴

Voluntary kinship care is an arrangement in which children live with kinship caregivers and a child welfare agency is involved, but the state does not take legal custody of the children. The state is involved because of some evidence that the parents are unable to care for their children but not enough to warrant the state forcibly removing the children from their parents' custody. Parents may consent to these voluntary agreements to avoid the state taking custody of their children.⁷⁵

Formal kinship care involves children being placed in the legal custody of the state by a judge and being placed in the physical custody of relatives by a child welfare agency. The child welfare agency is responsible for making decisions about the children's education, healthcare, and general welfare, sometimes in conjunction with the kinship caregivers' input. These caregivers are certified as foster parents and have similar rights and obligations as non-relative foster parents when it comes to children's care. Formal kinship care makes kinship caregivers eligible for benefits solely intended for foster care families.⁷⁶

The benefits allowed to formal kinship caregivers may in some ways incentivize caregivers to pursue these formal arrangements, but there is also a cost: relinquishing legal custody to the state. If grandfamilies do not want to pursue formal legal kinship caregiving arrangements, it is likely that they avoid interaction with the state and consequently are unaware of benefits available to them. It may be worth considering enhancing outreach done by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services to make grandfamilies or potential grandfamilies aware of what their options are. As formerly mentioned, many kinship caregivers are unaware of the potential benefits available to them. Should the state endeavor to provide more support to grandfamilies, it may want to consider to what extent grandfamilies are aware of benefits that may already exist.

The Institute for Local Government has identified a list of organizations through which to improve outreach; for the purposes of engaging with and educating grandfamilies regarding their potential mechanisms of support, the following groups may be most helpful for the state legislature to direct outreach: parent-teacher organizations, youth groups/clubs/leagues, local business associations, neighborhood organizations, seniors' groups, and internet-based groups/communities.⁷⁷

4. CONCLUSION

Though New Hampshire does offer some support mechanisms for grandfamilies to date, several additions to these offerings may be pursued. These include offering grandfamily specific housing units, expanding TANF grant applications to include grandfamilies, applying to receive GAP funding, and increasing outreach to make grandfamilies aware of the types of benefits available to them. From the overview of the state of grandfamilies to the potential policy options, we hope that the New Hampshire legislature can use this report to best serve its grandfamilies.



REFERENCES

- ¹ “The State of Grandfamilies in America.” Generations United, 2015. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/05/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF-2015.pdf>.
- ² “Love Without Borders: Grandfamilies and Immigration.” Generations United, 2018. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/10/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF2018.pdf>.
- ³ “Raising the Children of the Opioid Epidemic: Solutions and Support for Grandfamilies.” Generations United, 2018. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/09/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF-Updated.pdf>.
- ⁴ “Love Without Borders: Grandfamilies and Immigration.” Generations United, 2018. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/10/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF2018.pdf>.
- ⁵ “In Loving Arms.” Generations United, 2017. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/05/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF-2017.pdf>.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁸ “Love Without Borders: Grandfamilies and Immigration.” Generations United, 2018. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/10/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF2018.pdf>.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ “Grandfacts: New Hampshire.” Fact Sheet. Grandfamilies.org, n.d. <http://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/State%20Fact%20Sheets/Grandfamilies-Fact-Sheet-New-Hampshire.pdf>.
- ¹² “Love Without Borders: Grandfamilies and Immigration.” Generations United, 2018. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/10/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF2018.pdf>.
- ¹³ “Resources for Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren | Division of Family Assistance | NH Department of Health and Human Services.” <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/grandparent-resources/index.htm>.
- ¹⁴ “National Family Caregiver Support Program | ACL Administration for Community Living.” <https://acl.gov/programs/support-caregivers/national-family-caregiver-support-program>.
- ¹⁵ “New Hampshire Family Caregiver Support Program | ServiceLink.” <https://www.servicelink.nh.gov/about-us/nhfcsp.htm>.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ “About Us | ServiceLink.” <https://www.servicelink.nh.gov/about-us/index.htm>.
- ¹⁸ “New Hampshire HB629 | 2017 | Regular Session.” LegiScan. <https://legiscan.com/NH/text/HB629/id/1477073>.
- ¹⁹ Morris, Allie. “N.H. Becomes First State to Give Grandparents Preference in Guardianship Cases.” *Concord Monitor*, June 27, 2017. <https://www.concordmonitor.com/chris-sunni-signs-bills-for-foster-grandparents-10961736>.
- ²⁰ “New Affordable Housing Program Targets D.C. ‘grandfamilies’.” Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/10/03/new-affordable-housing-program-targets-dc-grandfamilies/?utm_term=.34e0e9ccf0e1.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² “Plaza West | Mission First Housing Group.” <http://missionfirsthousing.org/properties/plaza-west/>.
- ²³ “Grandfamilies Place of Phoenix: Award-Winning Affordable Senior Housing.” <http://www.grandfamiliesplacephoenix.com/>.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ “Grandparents Raising Grandchildren – Community Renewal Team, Inc.” <http://www.crtct.org/en/need-help/housing-a-shelters/grandparentgrandchildren>.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ “64 East 104th Street, Chicago, IL.” Mercy Housing. <https://www.mercyhousing.org/lakefront/roseland-village-apartments>



²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ “Grandparent House.” Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Information Center of Louisiana. GRGICL. <https://lagrg.org/grand-house>.

³² “Our Sponsors.” Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Information Center of Louisiana. GRGICL. <https://lagrg.org/our-sponsors>.

³³ “Clare Court – Apartments – Baltimore City.” Habitat America. <https://habitatamerica.com/communities/clare-court/>.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ “Boston Housing Authority – Boston Housing Authority.” <http://www.bostonhousing.org/en/HousingDevelopmentDetail.aspx?hid=113>.

³⁶ Gottlieb, A. G., and N. M. Silverstein. “GrandFamilies House: An Innovative Approach to Addressing Needs of Custodial Grandparents.” *Public Policy & Aging Report* 11, no. 1 (June 1, 2000): 17. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ppar/11.1.17>.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁸ “The Housing Authority of Kansas City, Missouri | Pemberton Park for Grandfamilies.” http://www.hakc.org/planning_development/recent_projects/pemberton_park_for_grandfamilies.aspx

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ “PSS/WSF GrandParent Family Apartments.” West Side Federation. <http://www.wsfssh.org/buildings/psswsf-grandparent-family-apartments/>.

⁴² Rausch, Ela. “Housing Developments for Grandfamilies.” Generations United, n.d. <https://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/documents/Resources/Housing%20Resources/Grandfamily%20Housing%20Developments%20for%20grandfamilies%20org%204%2014.pdf>.

⁴³ “Financial Support for Grandfamilies: Improving Access to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Other Supports.” presented at the Brookdale Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) 2014 National Training Conference, October 18, 2014. <http://www.brookdalefoundation.net/RAPP/2014%20conference/TANF-bdale.pdf>. Beltran, Ana. “Improving Grandfamilies’ Access to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.” Generations United. 2014. <http://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/documents/Home%20page/GU%20Policy%20Brief%20-%20TANF%20Assistance%20Final%202.pdf>.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ “The State of Grandfamilies in America.” Generations United, 2015. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/05/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF-2015.pdf>.

⁴⁶ “Financial Support for Grandfamilies: Improving Access to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Other Supports.” presented at the Brookdale Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) 2014 National Training Conference, October 18, 2014. <http://www.brookdalefoundation.net/RAPP/2014%20conference/TANF-bdale.pdf>.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² “Do Limits on Family Assets Affect Participation in, Costs of TANF?” <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2016/07/do-limits-on-family-assets-affect-participation-in-costs-of-tanf>. “The State of Grandfamilies in America.” Generations United, 2015. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2018/05/Grandfamilies-Report-SOGF-2015.pdf>.

⁵³ “Financial Support for Grandfamilies: Improving Access to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Other Supports.” presented at the Brookdale Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) 2014 National Training Conference, October 18, 2014. <http://www.brookdalefoundation.net/RAPP/2014%20conference/TANF-bdale.pdf>.



54 *Ibid.*

55 *Ibid.*

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Ibid.*

58 *Ibid.*

59 “Subsidized Guardianship – Summary and Analysis.” <http://www.grandfamilies.org/Topics/Subsidized-Guardianship/Subsidized-Guardianship-Summary-Analysis>.

60 *Ibid.*

61 *Ibid.*

62 Program Instruction. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Children, Youth and Families, February 28, 2010. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/pi1001.pdf>.

63 “Subsidized Guardianship – Summary and Analysis.” <http://www.grandfamilies.org/Topics/Subsidized-Guardianship/Subsidized-Guardianship-Summary-Analysis>.

64 Program Instruction. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Children, Youth and Families, February 28, 2010. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/pi1001.pdf>.

65 *Ibid.*

66 *Ibid.*

67 *Ibid.*

68 *Ibid.*

69 “Subsidized Guardianship – Summary and Analysis.” <http://www.grandfamilies.org/Topics/Subsidized-Guardianship/Subsidized-Guardianship-Summary-Analysis>.

70 *Ibid.*

71 Program Instruction. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Children, Youth and Families, February 28, 2010. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/pi1001.pdf>.

72 *Ibid.*

73 “Kinship Caregivers and the Child Welfare System.” Children’s Bureau, May 2016.

https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubpdfs/f_kinshi.pdf

74 *Ibid.*

75 *Ibid.*

76 *Ibid.*

77 “Expand Your Agency’s Community Connections.” Institute for Local Government, 2015. https://www.ca-ilg.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/expanding_community_network_march_2015.pdf.