

OBJECTIVES

1. Explore how kinship family feedback can guide comprehensive support efforts to support grandparents raising their grandchildren, other kinship caregivers, and the children in their care
2. Examine specific kinship support strategies including enhanced outreach, family enrichment opportunities, peer networks, and emergency crisis funds
3. Identify opportunities and potential partnerships in your local communities to support and provide services to kinship families





DEMOGRAPHICS

- **United States:**
 - Approximately **2.6 million** grandparents are responsible for grandchildren
 - **2.5 million** children raised in grandfamilies or kinship care (**3% of U.S. children**)
- **California:** Over **287,000** children live in homes in which grandparents are responsible for them
- **San Diego County:** Approximately **21,000-24,000** grandparents have primary responsibility for raising their grandchildren



WHO ARE THESE RELATIVES?

- Older Adults – 39% of relative caregivers are over the age of 60
- Limited income – 21% of the households are below the federal poverty line
- Disabled – 26% of the caregivers have a disabling condition
- More common among black and Hispanic families



CHALLENGES FOR THIS POPULATION

- **Financial stress**
 - Fixed income
- **Legal/Systems issues**
 - Difficulty registering children for insurance or school
- **Insufficient or unaffordable respite**
 - Daycare options
- **Physical and mental health issues**
 - Children suffer from a higher rate of physical, behavioral, and emotional problems compared to the general population



CHALLENGES FOR THIS POPULATION

- **Parental role:**
 - Some grandparents are legal guardians
 - Some have accepted responsibility for the children informally
 - Some have had a child placed with them by Child Welfare Services
- **Lack of familiarity with the ‘System’**
 - No roadmap to learn about available resources
- **Previous lives are turned ‘upside down’**
 - May need to find new housing
 - May have limited income – insufficient to meet child’s needs



MY STORY

September 2010

- 4 grandchildren – ages 2,4,5, & 8 suddenly ours
 - New worries- child care, toilet training, school
 - More new worries
 - Trauma
 - Behavior



TRAUMA

Adverse Childhood Experiences:

<http://www.acestudy.org/index.html>

- Some of “ours”
 - Neglect
 - Parental/drug alcohol use
 - Parents divorced
 - Mother died at age 26

THE GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN INITIATIVE IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY

- Spear-headed by Supervisor Greg Cox in 2011
- Goal of identifying needs, resources, and solutions for grandparents raising grandchildren (and other kinship caregivers)
- Development of an advisory committee





PARTNERS

- 2-1-1 San Diego
- Assertive Family Solutions
- Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council (CAPCC)
- Grandparent's Connection
- Health & Human Services Agency
- Housing & Community Development
- Rose House Kinship Center
- San Diego County Office of Education
- SAY San Diego
- YMCA Kinship Program

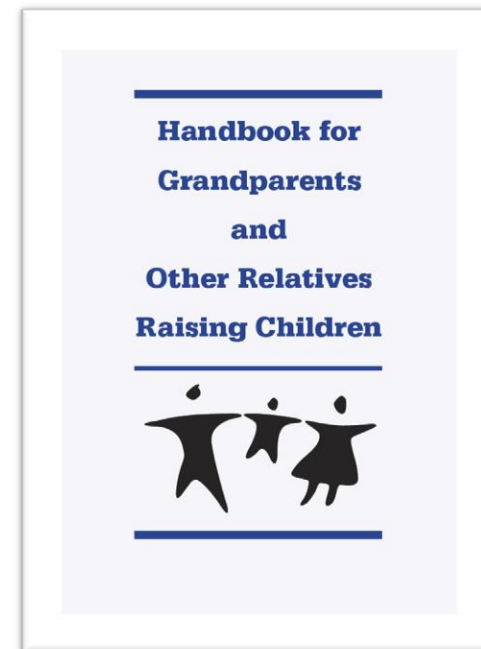
And many more community organizations!

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Partnership with 211

www.211sandiego.org/grandparents

- Resource Handbook





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Symposiums
- Grandparent's Voices – Community Dialogues
- Respite Opportunities
- Family Enrichment Activities



STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Quarterly Workgroup
 - Networking
 - Data Collection/Analysis
 - Resource Development
 - Policy and Legislation

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- POEM Sub-Committee
 - Planning
 - Outreach
 - Education
 - Marketing



YMCA KINSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAM

Funded by the Child Welfare Services and Aging & Independence Services departments of the County Health and Human Services Agency

Serve kinship caregivers throughout San Diego County

Services include:

- Navigation and Case Management
- Support Groups
- Respite Care
- Emergency Funding
- Family Activities



NAVIGATION AND CASE MANAGEMENT

7 Full-time Kinship Navigators and 3-6 part-time MSW Interns

Home visiting and telephone support

Assessment of needs and Case Plan development

Information and referral

- Guardianship and adoption
- Public benefits
- Childcare resources
- Mental health services
- School resources



SUPPORT GROUPS

Weekly groups facilitated by a Kinship Navigator

Provide peer support, mentoring, education, and resources

Formal training (via partnership with Grossmont College Foster Adoptive & Kinship Care Education Program)

Childcare

Light meal



RESPIRE CARE

Temporary break or rest for kinship caregivers (age 55 and over) via payment for:

- Childcare
- AM/PM care
- Day camps
- Overnight camps
- Special needs camps



EMERGENCY FUNDS

One-time funding to purchase items or services that remove barriers to making or maintaining stable kinship placements. Emergency funds are often used for:

- Cribs/Beds
- Dressers
- Pool Fences
- Security Deposits
- Rental Payments
- Childcare
- Utility Bills
- Baby supplies/clothing



FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Fun, free events for kinship caregivers and children

Caregivers can bond with their own children and network with other caregivers in their community

One per quarter in a different region of the county

Examples include:

- Horse of the Sun Ranch
- Mission Trails Regional Park
- Mission Bay Park BBQ
- Chula Vista Nature Center



ACCESSING KINSHIP SUPPORT SERVICES

You can help clients access Kinship Support Services by:

Completing and submitting a referral form

Giving out our flyer





ONE FOR EACH OTHER / UNO PARA EL OTRO

A PROGRAM DEVELOPED BY ASSERTIVE FAMILY SOLUTIONS

- Support groups for grandparents and relatives raising children
- A safe place to vent and share their experiences / learn from each other
- Two groups since January 2016, one in English and one in Spanish
- Meeting place: MountainView / Beckwourth City Library branch; once a month
- Grandparents are the Leaders. They know what they need.
- The purpose:
 - Hear each other's voices and needs
 - Establish healthy relationships with the community, the system of care, the authorities (City, County, Housing) and find resources



ONE FOR EACH OTHER / UNO PARA EL OTRO

- At the end of each session, there is an evaluation and they can write what topic they would like to hear about and what need they would like fulfilled
- More often than not, they write: Something for US
- We heard before there are thousands of grandfamilies in the County---very few of them have just one grandchild---usually there are 2 ,3, 4
- Thousands of children being raised with LOVE and COMMITMENT
- Grandparents raising grandchildren are on the job 24/7---365 days a year; not a 9 to 5 job, no weekends to recharge
- Most of these children have had Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) **AFS**



ONE FOR EACH OTHER/ UNO PARA EL OTRO

WHAT THEY NEED

- To be recognized as a CATEGORY or GROUP
- To be able to access Respite Time, regardless of AGE, if they work or not, if they have a case opened by Child Welfare Services or not
- To get housing as a group (like the 55+, LGBT, or Veteran populations)
- To get access to affordable childcare, regardless if they work or not, their age or income
- Activities for their grandchildren during school vacations



ONE FOR EACH OTHER/ UNO PARA EL OTRO

WHAT THEY NEED

- A crossover from institutions
- An awareness as a community of the services we need to take care of them
- Also:
 - Let them know they are not ALONE in this
 - Instill in Grandfamilies the value of caregiving as a two-way street:

I am here for you, you are here for me too: ONE FOR EACH OTHER



A QUESTION FOR YOU:

**WHAT ARE OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR OWN LOCAL
COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT KINSHIP FAMILIES?**

QUESTIONS FOR US?

KINSHIP FAMILIES



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