Family values in Kentucky are more than just talk.

All children deserve a safe and nurturing place to call home. Sometimes children are unable to stay in their home with their parents for a variety of reasons:

- Parental death
- Parental substance abuse
- Military deployment
- Abuse and neglect
- Parental physical or mental health issues
- Parental disability

During these difficult times grandparents and other relatives often step up to provide care for these children, known as kinship care.

KINSHIP CARE IS GOOD FOR CHILDREN:

Research shows that children raised in kinship care:

- Keep ties to family
- Experience less trauma at parental separation
- Have fewer educational disruptions
- Have fewer behavioral problems

How many Kentucky children are being raised by kin?

6% of Kentucky children are raised in kinship care; no state has a higher rate.

59,000 children raised by kinship caregivers.

The great majority of children in kinship care are being raised by their grandparents.

Percent of children being raised by grandparents by area development district, 2009-2013:

- Eastern Kentucky has the highest rates of children being raised by grandparents.

What do we know about Kentucky children who are being raised by their grandparents?

- More than 1 in 3 (37%) is under age 6 and potentially needs child care.
- Lower median family income $40,600 compared to $52,000.
- The racial and ethnic composition of children being raised by grandparents is similar to that of the overall child population.
- More likely to receive public assistance 54% compared to 33%.

The racial and ethnic composition of children being raised by grandparents is similar to that of the overall child population:

- White, non-Hispanic 80%
- Hispanic/Latino 5.5%
- African American 9%
- Two or more races 4.4%
- 9% compared to 3.4%
- 12% compared to 5.5%
- 5% compared to 12%
- 5.2% compared to 5.6%
- 6% compared to 9%
**WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT KENTUCKY GRANDPARENTS WHO ARE RAISING GRANDCHILDREN?**

- *Almost half (49%) are in the labor force.*
- *More than half (63%) are between ages 30-59.*
- *More than five years (73%) are married.*

**CHILDREN IN THE KENTUCKY KINSHIP CARE PROGRAM**

- *9% Kinship foster care*
- *75% foster care with unrelated caregivers*
- *16% institutional placements*

**CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE**

- In 2013, the Kentucky Kinship Care Program kept almost 11,000 children out of foster care but due to budget cuts, no new participants have been enrolled since April 2013.

**WHAT SUPPORTS ARE CHILDREN AND THEIR CAREGIVERS AUTOMATICALLY ELIGIBLE FOR REGARDLESS OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME?**

- Training for caregivers
- Services for caregivers
- Services for children
- Financial assistance

**TRAINING FOR CAREGIVERS**

- Free training on things like trauma, child development, and managing difficult behaviors
- On-going training

**SERVICES FOR CAREGIVERS**

- Reprieve care
- On-going parent support groups
- 24-hour on-call assistance

**SERVICES FOR CHILDREN**

- Case management
- Mental health services
- Screening and assessments
- Medical transportation
- Training on independent living skills
- Tuition waiver for higher education

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

- $690/month, per child*
- Medicaid
- Child care assistance
- Free/reduced school lunch
- Clothing allowance
- Child care allowance
- WIC
- Tax credits
- Reimbursement for graduation expenses, birthday & holiday gifts
- School supplies, Livebook
- case management
- Services for biological parents
- Parent mentors
- Services for biological parents to support reunification
- $186/month, for one child***

**COMMUNITY EFFORTS**

- Develop peer support groups
- Encourage local businesses and organizations to pool resources to help kinship families
- Offer to provide occasional child care for kinship caregivers when they need a break
- Advocate for increased supports for kinship families

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Lift the moratorium on the Kentucky Kinship Care Program so that more kinship caregivers can get the financial support they need to raise children
- Increase supports for children being raised in kinship care to match the level of supports provided to children in foster care
- Ensure kinship families receive full, written disclosure of the available services and supports, legal options, and how to access the courts to ensure safety, permanency and well-being for the child

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK OUT:**

- [www.kinshipky.org](http://www.kinshipky.org)
- 888-825-5592

**SOURCES**

3. Ibid.
4. Annie E. Casey Foundation’s KIDS COUNT Data Center, Grandchildren in the Care of Grandparents, 2013.
5. 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Rates calculated by dividing grandchildren under 18 years living with a grandparent householder who has responsibility for the grandchild (Table B09002) by children under 18 years in households (Table B09003). Only Kentucky counties are included in the KIPDA percentage.
6. 2013 American Community Survey 1-year estimates.
7. Ibid.
10. Kentucky Administrative Regulations, Title 921, Chapter 1, Numbers 15, 140, and 355; Title 931, Chapter 2, Number 016.