

Pointers For Grandparents

Helping Grandparents And Other Relatives Raise Children

(NAPSA)—According to the 2000 U.S. Census, more than 4.5 million children are living in households headed by grandparents, with 2.4 million of these grandparents taking primary responsibility for their grandchildren's basic needs. And the issue of grandparents raising grandchildren is expected to increase in coming years.

Yet for many grandparents, finding out where to go for help has not been easy; it can be difficult to locate information about the range of support services, benefits and policies available to help grandparents and other relatives in their caregiving roles. Fortunately, that changed in 2000 when a group of child and aging advocacy and research organizations developed the first edition of "GrandFacts: State Fact Sheets for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children."

The fact sheets are designed to help relative caregivers find out about resources in their states, and to reassure them that they are not alone. They are updated annually, and collectively compiled, edited and published by the AARP Foundation, The Brookdale Foundation Group, Casey Family Programs, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund and Generations United.

According to Barbara Kates, director of the Maine Kids-n-Kin program, Families and Children Together, the fact sheets are one of her best and most relied upon resources. "We often get calls from grandparents who are concerned about their grandchildren out of state. It is great to be able to refer



Grandparents now have a comprehensive online resource for caregiver support services.

them to the State Fact Sheets so they can find out who in that state can help them."

They are available in English and Spanish, and provide helpful state-specific data and information on services and policies for grandparents and other relatives raising children in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. They include:

- A list of selected state and local programs, services and other resources;
- A brief description of state foster care policies;
- Information about key public benefit programs;
- References to selected state laws; and
- Census data on the number of grandparent caregivers who are responsible for the children living with them, as well as the number of children in households headed by grandparents and other relatives.

The State Fact Sheets can be downloaded and printed in PDF format at www.grandfactsheets.org.