

# Information and Resource Guide for New Hampshire GrandFamilies



For every child who is in the foster care system right now, there are 20 more kids being raised by their grandparent and/or an extended family support system outside of foster care.



## The Children

More than one million children across the United States have their grandparents as their sole parental influence.

- ▶ 28% of children being raised by their grandparents were victims of abuse, abandonment, or neglect by their parents.
- ▶ Approximately 60% of children removed from parental care in NH in 2016 had an opioid-related allegation in the assessment.
- ▶ Five percent of children or youth removed from parental care in 2016 were born drug-exposed, up from 2% in 2012.
- ▶ Most all of these children have experienced trauma and have experienced a higher number of adverse childhood experiences (ACES)
- ▶ Boys are more likely to have externalized behavioral problems. Girls are more likely to internalize issues.
- ▶ Children who were raised by grandparents, starting between the ages of 2 and 6, had the same levels of emotional development as other children.



## *The Grandparents*



GrandFamilies help to save taxpayers over \$6 billion each year because they keep children out of the foster care system.

- ▶ It is estimated that more than 12,000 grandparents in NH are raising their grandchildren.
- ▶ A substantial number of grandparent caregivers reported that they have no one to turn to for day-to-day emotional support with parenting.
- ▶ 49% of grandparents raising their grandchildren in NH are living at twice the poverty level or lower.
- ▶ The average income for a home where only the grandmother is present is less than \$20K a year.
- ▶ More than 50% of the NH grandparents raising their grandchildren are in the workforce, making child-care an issue for many of them.
- ▶ The 2016 American Community Survey gave this picture of NH GrandFamilies: The majority of grandparents raising grandchildren were female, married, and white, non-Hispanic. Seventy-three percent were 45 to 64 years old, and one-fifth are 65 and older. Sixty percent resided in a rural area.
- ▶ 36% of grandparents who are raising their grandchildren have done so for more than five years.



# Types of GrandFamilies

In New Hampshire there are different types of grandparent caregiver arrangements; each of which provides different levels of assistance, rights, and responsibilities. (All of the following options are presented in general terms.)



**ADOPTION** - With adoption, the grandparent becomes the parent in the eyes of the law. This fact makes access to services on behalf of the child the same as for any parent. Adoption ends all of the birth parents' rights and responsibilities, which means that birth parents cannot go to court later and reclaim those rights and responsibilities.



**LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP** - The biggest difference between adoption and legal guardianship is that guardianship does not take away all of the birth parents' rights and responsibilities. In NH Legal Guardianship is done in Family Court. Legal guardianship can be granted with the consent of the parents or without it depending upon the circumstances. Parents typically keep certain rights. Unlike adoption, the parents can go back to court and ask for the guardianship to be ended. For caregivers, legal guardianship means the Family Court grants the legal guardian the ability to make important decisions for the child along with custody. This will allow them to enroll the child in school, consent to medical treatment, and apply for benefits on behalf of the child.



**INFORMAL ARRANGEMENT** - Informal arrangements are made between the parents and grandparents without the involvement of either the court or child welfare system. An informal arrangement does not have the force of a court order and does not grant "legal custody" to the grandparents. The parents retain legal custody and may take the children home at any time. While informal arrangements may be appropriate for short-term situations, they are generally not appropriate for longer-term ones. Caregivers can have difficulty enrolling children in school, consenting to medical care, and getting benefits for the children.

**RELATIVE CARE PLACEMENT AND LICENSED FOSTER CARE** - The Division for Children, Youth and Families is required by law to make efforts to identify and notify all adult relatives of a child within 30 days of a child going into placement. Relative care is the placement of a child who has a legal relationship with DCYF, in a home in which one of the responsible caregivers is a person related to the child by blood, marriage, or adoption. Relative caregivers must abide by the same rules as licensed foster parents.



When a grandparent is identified as an appropriate caretaker for a child in DCYF custody, he or she can become licensed by DCYF to provide foster care for the child. While not a requirement, the grandparent(s) may become a licensed relative foster home and receive financial assistance as well as other support services.

If a child in DCYF custody is placed with a grandparent:

- ▶ The grandparents must comply with DCYF foster care regulations;
- ▶ A caseworker would be assigned to help the grandparent and the child's parents to carry out the plan for the child;
- ▶ The child's parent may get services to help them reunify with their child;
- ▶ DCYF will be involved in many of the decisions that need to be made for the child;
- ▶ DCYF may remove the child from your care if there are concerns about the child's safety and well-being.



## *Resources for GrandFamilies*

### *Financial, Child Care, Health, Nutrition*

Based on the type of caregiver arrangement grandparents may have, the services and resources listed below may not be available for some GrandFamilies.

**Family Assistance Program** - (Also known as Child Only Cash Assistance) - The Family Assistance Program (FAP) assists needy children who are being cared for by relatives other than their parents, such as grandparents. The FAP program can provide cash assistance as well as Medicaid. The grandparents' income does not count towards eligibility for FAP. Only the income of the child(ren), such as child support, would be used in determining eligibility. There are no work requirements for FAP.

Eligible children are:

- ▶ Under age 18;
- ▶ Not in foster care;
- ▶ With little or no income of their own;
- ▶ Living with and being cared for by someone other than a biological parent, step or adoptive parent, including: grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, cousins. <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/grandparent-resources/index.htm>

**Financial Assistance to Needy Families (FANF)** - Financial Assistance to Needy Families offers financial assistance to eligible families with dependent children and certain relatives, including grandparents, who need help caring for related children. Most able-bodied adults receiving financial assistance are expected to meet work participation requirements. One or both parents in the family must be disabled, deceased, or absent from the home. Receipt of FANF cash benefits is limited to 60 months over a lifetime. In most cases, parents must cooperate with Child Support Services in establishing paternity, if unknown, and establishing medical and financial child support. Some parents may also have to assign all rights to child support to DHHS while receiving financial assistance.

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/documents/fam-asst-fact-sheet.pdf>



**Social Security** - A multigenerational program, Social Security provides income benefits to adults, older adults and children. In addition to Retirement and Disability benefits, Survivor's Benefits are based on a child's parent's earnings and may help if a child's parents die. Your grandchild may also qualify for benefits based on your work record. The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program pays benefits to disabled adults and children who have limited income and resources. SSI benefits are also payable to people 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial limits. Online Directory - To find your local Social Security Administration office. 1-800-772-1213 (toll-free) <https://secure.ssa.gov/>

**Child Care** - Grandparents may be eligible for child care in one of two ways: NH Child Care Scholarship - NH Child Care Scholarship helps pay for child care needed for training, education, or employment. Costs are reimbursed up to established maximums that differ based on the level of service, the age of the child, and the type of care provided. There are monthly income limits for the NH Child Care Scholarship and all families are expected to help with the cost share when receiving the scholarship. <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/documents/fam-asst-fact-sheet.pdf>

**Preventive Child Care** - GrandFamilies need to apply for this type of childcare through a Comprehensive Family Support Services program (CFSS). An individual service plan is developed with the grandparent and the CFSS program that will establish services based on the needs of the child and family. There is no work or training requirement for this type of childcare and no cost share for the family. Find the Comprehensive Family Support Services Program near you in the chart below.



## Comprehensive Family Support Services Programs

Region	Agency	Phone Number
Berlin	The Family Resource Center at Gorham	603-466-5190
Claremont	TLC Family Resource Center	603-542-1848
Concord	Waypoint NH	603-224-7479
Conway	Children Unlimited Family Resource Center	603-447-6356
Keene	Home Healthcare, Hospice & Community Services	603-352-2253
Laconia	Lakes Region Family Resource Center	603-524-8811
Littleton	The Family Resource Center at Gorham	603-466-5190
Manchester	Waypoint NH	603-518-4000
Seacoast	Families First Family Resource Center	603-422-8209
Southern District (Nashua)	Waypoint NH	603-889-7189
Rochester	Strafford County Community Action Program	603-435-2500

**Grandparents as Licensed Foster Parents** - There are several types of foster family care. Some are administered by the Department of Health and Human Services Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), and others are administered by private child placing agencies. Basic foster care is called General Care. Reimbursement for the board and care for children in foster care is based on the category of care that foster parents provide.  
<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/grandparent-resources/index.htm>

**Medicaid** - Grandparents can apply for Medicaid for their grandchild online at <https://nheasy.nh.gov>. Medicaid will help cover the costs of doctor's visits, prescriptions, mental health services, dental care, and more. The only income to list when applying is the child's.

**National School Breakfast and Lunch Program** - The National School Breakfast/School Lunch Program provides a nutritious meal for school age children each school day. When applying for this program only list the child's income on the application, as they are eligible for free meals. Applications are available through your child's school.



**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** - The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides assistance to eligible families to purchase food items essential for good health. Eligibility for SNAP depends on the household's income, resources, and expenses. Most households must meet gross and net income limits. Households with all members who are elderly or disabled need only meet the net income test. Households with a member who is elderly and/or disabled have higher gross income limits. If all members of the household receive SSI, FANF and/or SSP, there are no income or resource limits. <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dfa/documents/fam-asst-fact-sheet.pdf>

**Women, Infants, Children (WIC) Nutrition Program** - WIC provides healthy foods and nutrition resources to eligible people in NH. Relative caregivers may apply for the children under age 5 if they are:

- ▶ In foster care
- ▶ Receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), TANF, or Medicaid
- ▶ Meet income eligibility guidelines

[www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/wic/inde.htm](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/wic/inde.htm) Or call: 1-800-942-4321





*NH Department of Health and Human Services District Offices*  
<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/contactus/districtoffices.htm>

**Lobby hours for District Offices are 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM, Monday - Friday**

Berlin District  
650 Main St., Suite 200, Berlin  
603-752-7800

Littleton District  
80 North Littleton Rd., Littleton  
603-444-6786

Claremont District  
17 Water St., Suite 301 Claremont  
603-542-9544

Manchester District  
1050 Perimeter Rd., Suite 501  
Manchester - 603-668-2330

Concord District  
40 Terrill Park Dr., Concord  
603-271-6200

Rochester District  
150 Wakefield St, Ste. 22  
Rochester - 603-332-9120

Conway District  
73 Hobbs St., Conway  
603-447-3841

Seacoast District  
50 International Dr., Portsmouth  
603-433-8300

Keene District  
111 Key Rd, Keene  
603-357-3510

Southern District  
26 Whipple St., Nashua  
603-883-7726

Laconia District  
65 Beacon St. West, Laconia  
603-524-4485

**Don't know which District Office serves your town?  
See the Catchment Area List for more information.**



## Community Resources

The following agencies provide a variety of programs and support services to children and families across New Hampshire.

**Child Care Aware of New Hampshire** - Child Care Aware of NH provides free and confidential referrals that are tailored to fit the needs of each individual family seeking child care. Additionally, they provide families with consumer education to assist them in choosing a quality child care program. Their Child Care Resource and Referral Outreach Specialists strive to ensure that families are receiving consistent, high quality consumer education and referral services. <http://nh.childcareaware.org/>

**Family Support New Hampshire (FSNH)** - Family Support NH is a coalition of non-profit family resource centers (FRC) and family support programs (FSP) that are designed to meet the needs of the communities they serve. Programs and services provided by FRC and FSP vary, but they all seek to strengthen families by promoting health, wellbeing, self-sufficiency, and positive parenting through support and education. <http://www.fsnh.org/>

**Head Start/Early Head Start** - A range of comprehensive early education, health, nutrition, parental involvement/engagement and family support services primarily for at-risk children from birth to age five and their families. NH Head Start has 43 sites throughout the state. <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/headstart>

**Legal Advice and Referral Center (LARC)** - The Legal Advice and Referral Center provides legal services to low income people in NH in the areas of housing, family law, consumer law, public benefits and related matters through telephone advice and counsel, brief service and direct representation. [www.larcnh.org](http://www.larcnh.org) or call 603-224-3333

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI NH)** - NAMI NH is a grassroots organization working to improve the quality of life for all by providing support, education and advocacy for people affected by mental illness. [www.naminh.org](http://www.naminh.org) or call the Information & Resources Line 1-800-242-6264

**New Hampshire 2-1-1** - Dial 2-1-1 from anywhere in New Hampshire and a call specialist can help you find resources 24/7. <http://www.211nh.org>

**New Hampshire Family Voices** - NH Family Voices provides free, confidential services to families and professionals caring for children with chronic health, physical, cognitive, behavioral or emotional challenges that can make their lives and their family's lives more challenging. [www.nhfv.org](http://www.nhfv.org) 1-800-852-3345 ext. 4525



**NH Foster and Adoptive Parent Association** – The mission of the NH Foster & Adoptive Parent Association is to support foster and adoptive parents, and remain a consistent strong voice on behalf of all children.  
<https://www.nhfapa.org> or call 603-717-5899

**Parent Information Center** - The Parent Information Center (PIC), a New Hampshire state-wide family organization, strives to achieve positive outcomes for children and youth, with a focus on those with disabilities and special healthcare needs. This is achieved through its partnerships with families, educators, youth, professionals and organizations.  
<https://picnh.org/>

**ServiceLink Aging and Disability Resource Center** – ServiceLink is a program of the NH Department of Health and Human Services. Through contracts with local agencies around the state, ServiceLink helps individuals access and make connections to long term services and supports, access family caregiver information and supports, explore options and understand and access Medicare and Medicaid.

**The New Hampshire Family Caregiver Support Program** provides assistance to family members and others who provide day to day care for another individual without compensation. Services include information, counseling, education and respite care, and are coordinated through the ServiceLink Aging and Disability Resource Centers throughout New Hampshire. Grandparents raising their grand children may be eligible for these services. [www.servicelink.nh.gov](http://www.servicelink.nh.gov)

**Step Up Parents** – Step Up Parents was formed to offer financial assistance and support to relative caregivers in New Hampshire who have selflessly stepped up to be surrogate parents to kids whose biological parents are struggling with addiction.

Apply for aid online at: [www.stepupparents.net](http://www.stepupparents.net)

Mail Application to: Step Up Parents, PO Box 1603, Portsmouth, NH 03801

Email: [info@stepupparents.net](mailto:info@stepupparents.net)

Call: 603-319-4739

**Waypoint** - Formerly known as Child and Family Services of NH, Waypoint is an independent agency that provides a lifeline across the lifespan. Our dedicated staff is known for compassion, professionalism, and ingenuity. We work collaboratively in the community, creating a social safety net for all who live here. We find solutions to problems through our dual roles as practitioners and advocates—a truly holistic approach to our practice. We make a positive, long-lasting impact that improves our communities and every life within them. <https://waypointnh.org/>



## *Community Action Programs (CAP)*

The following agencies help lower-income New Hampshire residents meet their basic needs and move toward self-sufficiency. Services may include emergency food help, fuel and utility assistance, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, housing assistance and training.

Community Action Program of Belknap-Merrimack Counties, Inc.  
[www.bm-cap.org](http://www.bm-cap.org)  
603-225-3295  
1-800-856-5525

Community Action Partnership of Strafford County  
[www.straffordcap.org](http://www.straffordcap.org)  
603-435-2500

Southern New Hampshire Services  
[www.snhs.org](http://www.snhs.org)  
603-668-8010  
1-800-322-1073

Southwestern Community Services, Inc.  
[www.scshehelps.org](http://www.scshehelps.org)  
1-800-529-0005  
Keene - 603-352-7512  
Claremont - 603-542-9528

Tri-County Community Action Program, Inc.  
[www.tccap.org](http://www.tccap.org)  
603-752-7001



## *Area Agencies in New Hampshire*

**There are 10 Area Agencies that are divided into geographical regions throughout New Hampshire to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities, people with acquired brain disorder, and their families. Each Area Agency is designated by the State to provide services in their respective region.**

### REGION I

Northern Human Services  
87 Washington Street  
Conway, NH 03818  
(603) 447-3347

### REGION II

PathWays of the River Valley  
654 Main Street  
Claremont, NH 03743  
(603) 542-8706

### REGION III

Lakes Region Community Services  
719 North Main Street  
PO Box 509  
Laconia, NH 03247  
(603) 524-8811 or (800) 649-8817

### REGION IV

Community Bridges  
70 Pembroke Road  
Concord, NH 03301  
(603) 225-4153 or (800) 499-4153

### REGION V

Monadnock Developmental Services, Inc.  
121 Railroad Street  
Keene, NH 03431  
(603) 352-1304 or (800) 469-6082

### REGION VI

Gateways Community Services  
144 Canal Street  
Nashua, NH 03064  
(603) 882-6333

### REGION VII

Moore Center Services, Inc.  
195 McGregor Street, Unit 400  
Manchester, NH 03102  
(603) 668-5423

### REGION VIII

One Sky Community Services  
755 Banfield Road, Suite 3  
Portsmouth, NH 03801  
(603) 436-6111

### REGION IX

Community Partners  
Forum Court  
113 Crosby Road, Suite #1  
Dover, NH 03820-4375  
(603) 749-4015

### REGION X

Community Crossroads  
8 Commerce Drive  
Atkinson, NH 03811  
(603) 893-1299



## *Community Mental Health Centers*

<http://www.naminh.org/find-support/mental-health-centers/>

**Each area of New Hampshire is served by community mental health centers that provide services to children and families.**

### REGION I

Northern Human Services  
Conway  
[www.northernhs.org](http://www.northernhs.org)  
603-447-3347

### REGION III

The Lakes Region Mental Health Ctr.  
Laconia  
[www.genesisbh.org](http://www.genesisbh.org)  
603-524-1100

### REGION V

Monadnock Family Services  
64 Main Street  
Keene  
[www.mfs.org](http://www.mfs.org)  
603-357-4400

### REGION VII

The Mental Health Center of  
Greater Manchester  
[www.mhcgmm.org](http://www.mhcgmm.org)  
603-668-4111

### REGION IX

Community Partners of Strafford Cty.  
Dover  
[www.communitypartners.org](http://www.communitypartners.org)  
603-516-9300

### REGION II

West Central Behavioral Health  
Lebanon  
<http://www.wcbh.org>  
603-448-0126 X2101

### REGION IV

Riverbend Community Mental Health  
Concord  
[www.riverbendcmhc.org](http://www.riverbendcmhc.org)  
603-226-7505

### REGION VI

Greater Nashua Mental Health  
Community Center  
Nashua  
[www.gnmhc.org](http://www.gnmhc.org)  
603-889-6147

### REGION VIII

Seacoast Mental Health Center, Inc  
Portsmouth  
[www.smh-nh.org](http://www.smh-nh.org)  
603-431-6703

### REGION X

The Center for Life Management  
Derry  
[www.clmnh.org](http://www.clmnh.org)  
603-434-1577



## *GrandFamily Support Groups*

The following grandfamily peer groups are members of the NH GrandFamily Advisory Council and have received funding from the NH Charitable Foundation to assist in:

- ▶ Providing accessible support groups and other supportive services and programming to grandparents and the children in their care
- ▶ Providing opportunities for peer-to-peer support among GrandFamilies
- ▶ Empowering grandparent caregivers to advocate at all levels for their needs and the needs of their grandchildren

For information about meeting times and location please reach out to the contact person listed for each group.

**Antrim, NH**  
**Grapevine Family Resource Center**  
Contact - Carol Lunan  
603-558-2620  
caroll@grapevinenh.org

**Seabrook, NH**  
**Families First Health and Support Center**  
Contact - Patrice Baker  
603-422-8208  
pbaker@familiesfirstseacoast.org

**Concord, NH**  
**Waypoint NH**  
Contact - Joan Valk  
603-518-4210  
valkj@waypointnh.org

**Somersworth, NH**  
**Families First Health and Support Center**  
Contact - Patrice Baker  
603-422-8208  
pbaker@familiesfirstseacoast.org

**Keene, NH**  
**Grapevine Family Resource Center**  
Contact - Carol Lunan  
603-558-2620  
caroll@grapevinenh.org

**Tilton, NH**  
**Greater Tilton Area Family Resource Center**  
Contact - Michelle Lennon  
603-286-4255  
familyresourcecentertilton@gmail.com

**Manchester, NH**  
**Waypoint NH**  
Contact - Melissa Oglebay  
603-518-4292  
oglebaym@waypointnh.org

**Nashua, NH**  
**Waypoint NH**  
Contact - Lucinda (Cindy) Blanchard  
603-518-4211  
BlanchardL@waypointnh.org



## *National Center on Grandfamilies*

**Generations United** – Generations United’s mission is to improve the lives of older people through intergenerational collaboration, public policies and programs for the enduring benefit of all. Generations United’s National Center on Grandfamilies offers tools, training and capacity building to support organizations serving grandfamilies and helps elevate voices of these families around a range of economic, social and legal issues.  
[www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)



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**WAYPOINT**  
Help Along the Way