Raising the Children of Florida’s Opioid Epidemic: Support and Solutions for Grandfamilies

November 29, 2018

Objectives

- Consider the opioid epidemic’s impact on FL children and the kinship caregivers, or grandfamilies, that step in to care for them.
- Discuss the effects of opioid use disorders (and other substance use disorders) across generations and the special challenges of raising the children of a parent with an opioid use disorder.
- Learn what programs can benefit the grandfamilies served.
“For my 50th birthday…….. 
…………I got a two-year old.”

- Pamela Livengood, grandparent caregiver

Grandfamilies
Children Thrive in Grandfamilies


Children in Grandfamilies

7.7 million
Number of children who live with a relative who is the head of the household

2.6 million
Number of children who are being raised by a relative or close family friend and do not have a parent living in the household

139,017
Number of children being raised by relatives in the child welfare system

Ref. 1
For every 1 child in foster care with relatives there are 19 children being raised by grandparents or other relatives outside of the foster care system.  

Ref. 1

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Grandparents in Grandfamilies

GRANDPARENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR GRANDCHILDREN (2016)
2,519,737 Grandparents are responsible for grandchildren

- 57% of them are in the workforce
- 19% of them live below the poverty line
- 26% of them have a disability
- 43% of them have provided care for 3 years or more
- 41% of them are over 60

Ref. 1
### Children in Kinship Care in FL

- **179,000 (4%)** of children are being raised by grandparents, other relatives or close family friends (2015-2017)

- **10,474 (44%)** of children in foster care are being raised in kinship care (2016)
Parental Causal Factors

- Substance use
- Death
- Child abuse and/or neglect
- Teenage pregnancy
- HIV/AIDS
- Military deployment
- Unemployment
- Incarceration
- Divorce
- Mental health problems
- Violence
- Poverty

Children in Child Welfare System with Relatives Because of Substance Use

- About 36% of children in foster care because of parental substance use are with relatives
- Children in family foster care because of parental substance use are now more likely to be placed with relatives than non-relatives

Ref. 4
Florida

- 52% of children in foster care in FL because of parental drug or alcohol use are with relatives

- 33% of children in foster care in FL because of parental drug or alcohol use are with non-relatives
**Substance Use and Grandfamilies**

- Number one reason grandfamilies come together
- Impacting grandfamilies for decades - alcohol, crack cocaine, meth, opioids
- Recent elevated attention to families because of the opioid crisis

**State of Grandfamilies Report: Opioid Epidemic**

- Impact on rural America
- Visible impact on white and middle class families
- Role of prescription medications
29%

Between 2015 and 2016 there was a 29% increase in overdose death rate among adults of childbearing age.\textsuperscript{71}

Opioids Impact on Urban and African American Families

Not just a rural, white issue. There has also been a sharp increase among African Americans in urban counties (41% increase in 2016)\textsuperscript{2}

More than $\frac{1}{3}$ of all children placed in foster care because of parental substance use are placed with relatives.
Survey of Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) Network

- As part of this report, we conducted a survey of the RAPP network.
- They reported:
  - Almost all of their programs serve families impacted by parental alcohol or drug use
  - More than 70% of the programs identified opioids as one of the most common drugs
  - Most frequently requested services by grandfamilies impacted by substance use:
    - Kinship navigator services
    - Mental health services
    - Financial assistance/counseling

Impact of Opioids on Grandfamilies
Chris and Kenny’s Family

Grandfamilies Raising Children Who Have Experienced Trauma
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Number of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) of Children in Child Welfare System Compared to General Population

- No ACEs: 1% (Child Welfare) vs. 36% (General Population)
- 4 or more ACEs: 51% (Child Welfare) vs. 13% (General Population)

Children in foster care in the U.S. are at least 5 times more likely to have anxiety, depression and/or behavioral problems than children not in foster care.

Children Under Age 3

38% of children under 3 in the child welfare system have 4 or more ACEs.
**Impact on Children**

“I thought because my grandkids were babies (6 month, 1 ½, 2 ½) they were not going to have any problems. Boy was I wrong! They had problems with separation anxiety; it was so painful to see them go through this. I had to tell them a hundred times a day how much I loved them and was never going to leave them”

— Delia, grandmother raising her grandchildren

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**Childrens’ Mental Health/ Social Issues**

- Attachment
- Abandonment
- Grief/Loss
- Behavior
- Mental Health
- Physical Health
“One thing I know to be true: you can’t love away the effects of trauma from neglect and abuse.....we need [support] to help the children heal.”

-Jan Wagner, grandparent caregiver

**Caregiver Mental Health & Social Issues**

- Grieving Loss of:
  - Adult child
  - Expected life of/relationship with adult child
  - Expectation of “healthy” grandchild
  - Traditional grandparent role
  - Peer friendships
  - Expected retirement experience
  - Retirement savings/financial security
Caregiver Mental Health & Social Issues

- Feeling isolated
- Stigma/feeling shame
- Concerns about child’s risk of substance use disorder
- Dual loyalties/managing dynamics with birth parents
- Juggling challenges of other family members/serving as the rock of the family

Other Challenges

- Caregiver’s physical health
- Inadequate supportive services/respite
- Financial
- Housing
- Legal issues/educational and medical consent
- Poor access to information/navigation services
- Left out of treatment plans
Chad Dingle

“…most people go to grandma’s house and get spoiled, but for me it was the only safe place I had…getting to live with grandma was like ‘going to grandma’s house’ all the time. I had more love there than anywhere else in my life.”
New Opportunities to Serve Grandfamilies – Recently Passed Laws and Supportive Policies

Current Policy Opportunities

- Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

- Kinship Navigator Funds - 46 states (including FL) applied for and received 2018 funds. Additional funds will be made available in 2019.

- Supporting the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act
Themes of the FFPSA

- PREVENTION is important – Previously, the majority of federal child welfare dollars were available only after a child was in foster care
- Children do best in FAMILIES
- REDUCE OVER-RELIANCE ON CONGREGATE CARE – should be short term, high quality, treatment-oriented
- Investments in EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS – federal funds for proven approaches

FFPSA - Important Progress for Kinship Families

Prevention services – states have the option to use federal child welfare dollars for evidence-based services and programs to prevent children from entering foster care. These services support children, kinship caregivers and parents.

- Services include:
  - Substance use prevention and treatment
  - Mental health services
  - In-home parent skill-based services
- Available as a state option beginning Oct. 1, 2019
- For children, caregivers, and parents of children at imminent risk of entering foster care
FFPSA - Important Progress for Kinship Families

Group care – states will not be federally reimbursed for inappropriate group placements – the law encourages placement of children in family-like settings, and includes quality measures

Improving Licensing Standards for Placements with Relatives

- Goal to address barriers to licensing relatives
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will identify model standards
- States will be required to report back to HHS on the licensing standards, and use of waivers
- HHS will release the proposed standards in August for public comment, based on the National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA) model

Package of NARA Model Licensing Standards

Available free of charge at www.grandfamilies.org and www.naralicensing.org. Includes:

- a purpose statement
- ten guiding principles
- the model standards
- an interpretive guide
- a crosswalk tool
FFPSA - Kinship Navigator Programs

- As of October 1, 2018, states can receive federal reimbursement for up to 50% of their expenditures to provide kinship navigator programs that meet evidence-based requirements of promising, supported or well-supported practices
- Can serve children inside or outside the system - children do not need to meet Title IV-E requirements

Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 and FY 2019 Federal Dollars Available - Kinship Navigator Programs

- To develop, enhance, or evaluate kinship navigator programs
- No matching funds required
- Straightforward application for FY 2018 funds – all applicants received money
- Expect the same process for FY 2019 funds
Kinship Navigator Programs – Lessons Learned

- A variety of programs around the country
- At least 70 we know of – list at www.grandfamilies.org/Resources/Kinship-Navigator-Programs
- Generally better not to house the Kinship Navigator at the child welfare agency –
  - Trust issues
  - Limited reach
- Combination of peer-to-peer and professionals is important
- Not just a phone line

Supporting the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act of 2018

- Establishes an Advisory Council at HHS, consisting of relative caregivers and federal agencies that impact grandfamilies
- Will work to better coordinate federal resources, and support grandfamilies
- Nominations open for grandfamily caregivers to serve on the task force
New Kinship Legislation in FL

- Promote the use of kinship navigation services
- Guardianship Assistance Program beginning in July 2019

Supports and Services for Families
Diane’s Family

Helpful Supports and Services for Families

- Navigators
- Financial supports
- Physical and mental Health
- Substance use services
- Support groups
- Respite
- Housing
- Legal services
Creating a Kin First Child Welfare System - wikiHow

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<td>Lead with a kin first philosophy</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Develop written policies and protocols that reflect equity for children with kin and recognize their unique circumstances</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Identify and engage kin for kids at every step</td>
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<td>Create a sense of urgency for making the first placement a kin placement</td>
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<td>Make licensing kin a priority</td>
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<td>Support permanent families for children</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Create a strong community network to support kin families</td>
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Proven and Promising Program Models
Kinship Navigator Program – FL

- **Children’s Home Network** in Tampa has a kinship navigator program with several unique features:
  - one-e-application
  - peer-to-peer support
  - an interdisciplinary team
- Uses an array of standardized assessments to address family needs
- Incorporates a wrap-around model, and family-driven approach that partners with key community partners
Evaluation of the FL Program

The five-year evaluation of FL's 2012 kinship navigator grant showed compelling results for its nearly 3,000 participants:

- **Low Rates of Re-Entry**: 99 percent of participants' children did not enter the child welfare system at the 12 month follow-up, showing placement stability and child safety.

- **Cost-Savings**: Cost of the program is less than half the costs associated with adjudicating a child dependent:
  - Non-relative foster care is six-times more expensive
  - Group care is 21-times more expensive

Grandfamilies: Children’s Services Society, Salt Lake City, Utah (UT)
GRANDFAMILIES ADULT SUPPORT GROUP is a 10-week series of classes that meet weekly throughout the year. Some of the topics discussed are, unique family dynamics of kinship care giving, understanding drug and alcohol addiction, understanding your legal rights and how to deal with the emotional issues of the children in your care.

FRIEND 2 FRIEND is an activity and support group that is available to families who have completed the Grandfamilies First classes. We have an annual Holiday Party with Santa, Halloween Party, Easter Egg Hunt, Summer Picnic, and occasional free tickets to professional sporting events and other community activities. We also provide guest speakers to inform Grandfamilies members on pertinent topics such as domestic violence, legal issues regarding adoption, guardianship and custody, internet safety, and many other subjects or topics of concern.

CHILDREN’S GROUPS are held at the same time as the adult groups. These groups are for children ages 4 through 11. The children’s groups are psycho-social classes lead by trained professionals. Some topics discussed are, drug and alcohol prevention, family dynamics, feelings, communication skills, stress reduction, anger management and other social skills.

ADVOCACY and CRISIS INTERVENTION is provided by trained and licensed professionals. Staff is trained to assist clients in obtaining financial assistance for kinship caregivers and Medicaid for children, school enrollment, and interaction with government agencies. We also offer brief solution focused therapy and limited mediation services for families in crisis by mental health professionals.

Foster Kinship, Las Vegas, Nevada (NV)
Program Summary

The Kinship Navigator program increases kinship caregiver capacity to provide safe, stable, and nurturing homes for children by providing the immediate needs of kinship children, focusing on the most critical legal status for the family, ensuring families receive financial support, and increasing the quality of parenting kinship caregivers provide. Learn more about our effective, evidenced-based models here.

Kinship Resource Center

Located at 1401 W Cheyenne, Las Vegas 89122, the Kinship Resource Center is a starting point for anyone who has questions about parenting a relative child. Kinship families have free walk-in or call during our open office hours to consult on questions relating to kinship care, kinship foster care, guardianship, TaPHP, the Department of Family Services, resources in Clark County, and more. Professional staff are available to assist you, phone or in person.

Kinship Center Hours:

- Monday through Friday: 9 AM to 5 PM
- Saturday: 9 AM to 12 PM

Appointments are strongly recommended. Please call (702) 464-9900.

Kinship Center Services:

- Family intake and Resource Locator Tool
- Interpretation assistance
- Guardianship support and temporary guardianship forms
- Child-Only TaPHP applications
- Foster kinship conference notes can be reviewed for family meetings. A facilitator will be provided to assist. Please provide 48-hour notice.
- Income services
- Writing, copying, printing, mailing/faxing services
- Free pre-trial CD copy of "Taking Your Schoolkids to Court: How to Find Help" manual.
- Emergency resource: Food, diapers, formula, and clothing
- Computer Lab for QM training

Kinship Telephone Number

(702) 464-9900

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We really appreciate the support that Kinship Caregivers provide. It’s comforting to know that there are so many relatives willing to take on this responsibility. I hope that the more who become involved, we can not only help each other, but be heard by the various agencies who have the means to assist us. Thanks to Foster Kinship for taking on this challenge.” – J.K., caregiver of two biologic grandchildren.

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Child Welfare Training

Program Summary

The Child Welfare Training Program includes new caregiver information sessions, training licensing classes, case safety classes, CPR classes, and QM online training for kinship families involved with Clark County Department of Family Services. All trainings are designed to increase the safety, stability, and nurturing capacity of kinship families.

Kinship Information Sessions

Accurate information early on will allow kinship caregivers working with the child welfare system to make the best decisions for their family at the right time.

Kinship Information Sessions are held twice a month for those who have recently received a relative placement through the Clark County Department of Family Services (DFS). Sessions cover information on the Kinship Care Road Map, the kinship licensing process, child-Only TaPHP, Foster Kinship Navigation, and resources for kin families. The 90-minute sessions are free and inclusive for Kinship Caregiver families. The 90-minute sessions are free and inclusive for Kinship Caregiver families. Register here.

- The 3rd Saturday of each month at 2:00 PM in the Red Room at 7040 N. Las Vegas Blvd, 89115 (Boulder City Campus).
- The 1st Tuesday of each month at 3:00 PM in the Center City Room at 123 S. 4th Ave, 89101 (Central Campus).

Kinship Care Road Map

The Kinship Care Roadmap is designed to guide new kinship caregivers with Clark County DCF, Department of Family Services a clear and straightforward overview of the services they need, month by month, and provides necessary information on financial and legal assistance so they can make the best choices for their family at the right time. It also outlines the rights and responsibilities of working with the child welfare system and the court timeline. For an overview of the Roadmap, please attend a Kinship Information Session. Download a copy of the Kinship Care Road Map. 2015-07-01 – 707 Kinship Roadmap Brochure.
Camp Mariposa, St. Petersburg & Sarasota/Manatee, FL

Resources
Generations United
www.gu.org

We believe in a world that values and engages all generations.

Grandfamilies.org OR grandfactsheets.org

A collaboration of Generations United, the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, and Casey Family Programs
Source: www.GrandFamilies.org
FACT SHEET

Grand Resources:
A Fact Sheet for Grandparents and Relative Caregivers to Help Access Support Through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program

Introduction

TANF is a federal program, so it is available in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. TANF is a block grant program that states use to fund their own programs. States set their own eligibility and grant requirements.

TANF programs are designed to help siblings and relatives care for children who are living with them. TANF programs are run by the states, so each state has different rules for who is eligible for TANF and what benefits they receive.

Siblings and relatives who are caring for children who are not related to them may be able to receive TANF benefits, depending on the state where they live and the specific requirements of the TANF program.

Questions and Answers That Apply No Matter Where You Live

1. How does TANF work?
   TANF is a federal program that provides financial assistance to families with children who are living with them and are not related to them. TANF is available in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

2. What are the eligibility requirements for TANF?
   The eligibility requirements for TANF vary by state. Generally, families must meet the following criteria to be eligible for TANF:
   - The head of the household must be a U.S. citizen or a legal resident
   - The family must have income below the federal poverty level
   - The family must not have access to enough resources to meet their basic needs

3. What benefits can families receive through TANF?
   Families who receive TANF benefits may receive cash assistance, food stamps, health care, education assistance, and other services. The exact benefits available vary by state.

4. How long can families receive TANF benefits?
   Families can receive TANF benefits for a limited time, typically up to 60 months. However, families may be able to extend their TANF benefits if they meet certain requirements.

5. Can children also receive TANF benefits?
   Yes, children who are living with siblings or relatives may also receive TANF benefits. The benefits available to children are determined by the rules of the TANF program in the state where they live.

6. Can adults receive TANF benefits without children?
   No, TANF is primarily designed to provide financial assistance to families with children. However, states may have certain exceptions, such as allowing adults who are caring for a relative to receive TANF benefits.

7. How can families apply for TANF benefits?
   Families interested in applying for TANF benefits should contact the TANF program in their state. They can typically apply in person, by phone, or online.

8. How long does it take to receive TANF benefits?
   The time it takes to receive TANF benefits varies depending on the state and the individual circumstances of the family. Generally, families can receive TANF benefits within a few weeks if they meet all requirements.

9. What happens if a family fails to meet the requirements of the TANF program?
   If a family fails to meet the requirements of the TANF program, their benefits may be terminated. However, states may offer certain exceptions or alternative programs to help families meet the requirements.

10. Can families receive TANF benefits if they are not a U.S. citizen?
    Yes, families who are not U.S. citizens may be eligible for TANF benefits if they meet the eligibility requirements and are granted legal status.

11. What are the consequences of not following TANF rules?
    If a family fails to follow the rules of the TANF program, their benefits may be terminated. Additionally, failure to follow TANF rules may result in legal actions, such as fines or the loss of immigration status.

12. How can families appeal TANF decisions?
    Families who disagree with a TANF decision may appeal it through the state's TANF appeals process. They can typically file an appeal within a certain time frame and attend a hearing to present their case.

13. What happens if a family's TANF benefits are terminated?
    If a family's TANF benefits are terminated, they may be eligible for other forms of assistance, such as food stamps or medical assistance. The family may also be eligible for TANF benefits again in the future if their circumstances change.

14. What is the effect of TANF on a family's immigration status?
    TANF benefits do not affect a family's immigration status. However, families may be required to provide documentation of their immigration status to receive TANF benefits.

15. How can families receive help in an emergency?
    Families in need of emergency assistance may contact their local TANF office or search for emergency assistance programs in their area.

16. How can families access educational opportunities?
    Families can access educational opportunities through TANF-funded programs, such as parenting classes or education assistance.

17. How can families access health care?
    Families can receive health care through TANF-funded programs, such as Medicaid or low-cost health insurance.

18. How can families access employment assistance?
    Families can receive employment assistance through TANF-funded programs, such as job training or employment support services.

19. How can families access transportation assistance?
    Families can receive transportation assistance through TANF-funded programs, such as bus passes or ride-sharing services.

20. How can families access legal assistance?
    Families can receive legal assistance through TANF-funded programs, such as legal aid services or immigration assistance.

Appendix

Additional resources for families caring for children who are not related to them may be available through other federal programs, such as the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Families can contact their local TANF office or search for these programs online to learn more.
Coming Soon from Generations United……

Tip sheets for grandparents and other relatives raising children because of parental substance use:
- Interacting with birth parents
- Self-care
- Substance use prevention for children
- Talking with children about their birth parent who is using/in recovery
- Trauma

Other Grandfamilies Resources

- AARP
  www.aarp.org/
- American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law
  www.americanbar.org/groups/child_law/
- Brookdale Foundation Group
  www.brookdalefoundation.org/
- Children’s Defense Fund
  www.childrensdefense.org/
- Grandfamilies of America
  www.grandfamiliesofamerica.org/
- National Kinship Alliance for Children
  kinshipalliance.org/
Other Substance/Trauma Resources

- Addiction Policy Forum
  www.addictionpolicy.org/
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network
  www.nctsn.org/
- SAMHSA
  www.usa.gov/mental-health-substance-abuse
- Parents of Addicted Loved Ones (PAL)
  palgroup.org/
- National Association for Children of Addiction
  nacoa.org

Grand Successes
More Grand Successes

- Gloria Estefan
- Pierce Brosnan
- Tiffany Haddish
- Vanna White
- James Earl Jones
- Mary Tyler Moore
- Marisa Tomei
- Cuba Gooding Jr.
- Morgan Freeman
- Henry Winkler
- Asst. Secretary Lance Robertson (ACL)
- Sen. Tammy Baldwin
- General Wesley Clark
- Langston Hughes
- Maya Angelou
- Frederick Douglass
“Today, people are so disconnected that they feel they are blades of grass, but when they know who their grandparents and great-grandparents were, they become trees, they have roots, they can no longer be mowed down.”
- Maya Angelou

Jaia Lent
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References


References

5. www.childrenshomenetwork.org
6. https://cssutah.org/services/kinship-care/
7. www.fosterkinship.org
Photography credits

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