

GRANDFAMILY FACTS

There have always been Grandfamilies; grandparents, aunts, siblings, cousins, step-relatives and family friends who are raising other relatives' children.

Child welfare professionals categorize Grandfamilies into two groups.

Informal kinship care is when a member of the extended family steps into take care of a child, and the child does not go into state custody.

Formal kinship care occurs when a state agency takes custody of a child and then places the child with a member of the extended family.

Maine:

Over 11,350 children, or 3.8% of the children in Maine, live with relatives other than their parents. The overwhelming majority are in *informal kinship care*. 80% of the children live with grandparents, with over 5,000 Maine grandparents being the primary caretakers of their grandchildren. *

National:

Over 4.5 million children in the United States live with their grandparents, a 30% increase from 1990 to 2000. Another 1.5 million live in households headed by other relatives. 10% of all grandparents will have a grandchild live with them for at least six months. 5% will have a grandchild live with them for at least ten years. **

Cultural Implications:

The use of kinship care as an option is strongly related to cultural background. It is higher among African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic and Latinos, and Native Pacific Islanders.

Services:

In 2005, the Maine Kids-Kin program of Families And Children Together served over 400 Grandfamilies and provided training or consultation to over 60 other agency offices that provide assistance to Maine's Grandfamilies.

* These data are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau; 2000 census reports

** These data are taken from Generations United; www.gu.org

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