The GrandFacts state fact sheets for grandfamilies include state-specific data and programs as well as information about public benefits, educational assistance, legal relationship options and state laws. Visit www.grandfamilies.org to find this and all GrandFacts state fact sheets.

### California

#### The Children
- 269,000 (3%) children live with a relative with no parent present.
- 1,106,674 (12.1%) children under 18 live in homes where householders are grandparents or other relatives.
  - 777,416 (8.5%) of these children live with grandparents.
  - 329,258 (3.6%) of these children live with other relatives.

#### The Grandparents
- 293,980 grandparents are householders responsible for their grandchildren who live with them. Of these:
  - 67,573 (23.0%) do not have parents present.
  - 175,103 (59.6%) are under age 60.
  - 168,745 (57.4%) are in the workforce.
  - 52,618 (17.9%) are in poverty.
  - 57,905 (19.7%) have a disability.
  - 82,608 (28.1%) are unmarried.
  - Race/Ethnicity:
    - 82,902 (28.2%) are white (not Hispanic or Latino)
    - 26,164 (8.9%) are black or African American
    - 146,696 (49.9%) are Hispanic or Latino origin
    - 29,986 (10.2%) are Asian
    - 4,410 (1.5%) are American Indian or Alaska Native
    - 2,058 (0.7%) are Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
    - 9,407 (3.2%) are multiracial
    - 51,153 (17.4%) are some other race
Children in Kinship Foster Care
For data on children in kinship care within the child welfare system, see the Child Trends fact sheet for California.
www.childtrends.org

Programs That Can Help
Local programs that provide support, resources and assistance to grandfamilies can often be found by contacting your local school, area agency on aging, community center, faith-based organization or children’s services office.

Key Programs in California

Alliance for Children’s Rights
Website:  www.kids-alliance.org
Phone:  213-368-6010
Email:  info@kids-alliance.org
Service Area:  Los Angeles County
Description:  Legal services and advocacy for children in poverty and in foster care; assists relative and non-relative caregivers and foster parents with services that include guardianship, adoption, public benefits, healthcare, and education advocacy.

Area Agency on Aging, Napa and Solano – Grandparent Program
Website:  www.aaans.org
Phone:  707-643-1797 or 1-800-510-2020 (toll-free)
Service Area:  Napa and Solano Counties
Description:  Information and referral, assessment and case management and transportation, counseling, support groups, caregiver training, respite care and supplemental services, through the National Family Caregiver Support Program.

BANANAS, Inc.
Website:  http://bananasbunch.org/
Phone:  510-658-7353
Email:  bananas@bananasbunch.org
Service Area:  Northern Alameda County (based in Oakland)
Description:  Childcare information, support groups, and agency referral.
Bay Area Legal Aid, Youth Justice Project
Website: https://baylegal.org/what-we-do/our-clients/youth-justice/
Phone: 510-250-5277 (designated line for youth matters); 800-551-5554 (general legal advice line)
Email: youthjustice@baylegal.org
Service Area: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties
Description: Legal advice and assistance related to public benefits for relative caregivers, including some direct legal representation.

California Community Colleges – State Chancellor’s Office of the California Community Colleges
Website: http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/FosterandKinshipCareEducation.aspx
Phone: 916-322-5246
Email: FKCEhelp@cccco.edu
Service Area: 60 participating community colleges throughout the state
Description: Education and workshops for relative caregivers.

California Department of Social Services – Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) Program
Website: www.cdss.ca.gov
Phone: Go to www.cdss.ca.gov/County-Offices to find your county contact information.
Service Area: Statewide
Description: Monthly payments equal to the state foster care rate for approved relative caregivers of eligible foster children. Participation the program is optional for states, and you should contact your local Department of Social Services to see if your county offers ARC.

California Department of Social Services - Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC)
Website: www.cdss.ca.gov
Phone: Go to www.cdss.ca.gov/County-Offices to find your county contact information.
Service Area: Statewide
Description: Monthly payments equal to the state foster care rate for eligible children.

California Family Life Center (CFLC) – Kin Care
Website: www.cfckids.org/kin-care
Phone: 951-791-3557
Email: ihearu@cfckids.org
Service area: Riverside County
Description: Services that strengthen the family experience for children who are no longer with their natural parents. Services include permanency planning, link to legal services, advocacy, needs assessment, parenting and teen workshops, referrals and case management for families exiting foster care and moving into guardianship (KinGAP) and kin adoption assistance, respite, tutoring, counseling, preschool in a box, support groups, and recreational activities.
Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County – Kinship Care Resource Center
Website:  www.catholiccharitiesscc.org/kinship-resource-center-program
Phone:  408-200-0980
Email:  doris@catholiccharitiesscc.org
Service Area:  Santa Clara County
Description:  Case management, support groups, educational seminars recreation activities, information and referrals, and guidance with guardianships.

Children’s Institute International (CII) – Grandma’s House
Website:  www.childrensinstitute.org
Phone:  213-807-1821
Service Area:  Los Angeles area
Description:  Drop-in counseling and assessments, weekly support groups, mental health services, recreational activities, and other services.

Community Coalition – Kinship in Action
Website:  www.cocosouthla.org
Phone:  323-750-9087
Service Area:  South Los Angeles
Description:  Information and referral, education and training, respite, advocacy, and support.

Edgewood Center for Children and Families, Family Support Services of the Bay Area, EMQ Families First - California Kinship Navigator Program
Website:  www.cakinship.org
Contact:  Information for local kinship support services:  www.edgewood.org/kssp/
Phone:  1-800-KIN (546) 0047 (toll-free)
Service Area:  Statewide
Description:  Information and Referral, Monday through Friday 9 AM to 7 PM.

Focus on Kinship
Phone:  619-962-4470
Email:  sjnelson1@hotmail.com
Service Area:  South Bay San Diego County
Description:  Caregiver led supportive services.
**Grandparents as Parents (GAP)**

**Website:** [www.grandparentsasparents.org](http://www.grandparentsasparents.org)

**Phone:** 818-264-0880

**Email:** info@grandparentsasparents.org

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Description:** Weekly support groups, emergency referrals, resources assistance, crisis intervention, and other services.

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**Kids & Families Together**

**Website:** [www.kidsandfamilies.org](http://www.kidsandfamilies.org)

**Phone:** 805-643-1446

**Email:** connect@kidsandfamilies.org

**Service area:** Ventura County

**Description:** Clinical counseling and education support services to families that have come together through foster, kinship, and adoption. Services include: therapeutic counseling, pre-service training and orientation for resource parents, mentor program-peer partner and educator, food pantry, donation depots, housing assistance, caregiver training workshops and community events.

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**Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles**

**Website:** [www.lafla.org](http://www.lafla.org)

**Phone:** 800-399-4529

**Service Area:** Los Angeles County

**Description:** Direct legal representation for caregivers in benefits cases, including foster care benefits, KinGAP benefits, and Social Security benefits. Also legal representation in home approval cases.

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**Legal Assistance for Seniors**

**Website:** [www.lashicap.org/](http://www.lashicap.org/)

**Phone:** 510-832-3040

**Email:** las@lashicap.org

**Service Area:** Alameda County

**Description:** Legal advice and representation to assist with guardianship petitions for seniors who are caring for minor children. Also assist with elder abuse restraining orders, naturalization, and public benefits. Our attorneys are court-appointed to represent proposed conservatees in conservatorship cases. Also provide health insurance counseling, and community education.
Lilliput Families  
**Website:** www.lilliput.org  
**Phone:** 1-800-325-5359 (toll-free); 916-923-5444  
**Email:** info@lilliput.org  
**Service Area:** Sacramento, Butte, Placer, El Dorado, Napa, and Sonoma Counties  
**Description:** Support groups, advocacy, information and referrals, events, in-home support, guardianship assistance, reference library and more.

Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services – Kinship Care Services  
**Website:** http://lacdcfs.org/kinshippublic/default.html  
**Phone:** 626-430-3200 (Kinship West Covina) and 323-298-3515 (Kinship Los Angeles)  
**Service Area:** Los Angeles County  
**Description:** Two Kinship Resource Centers staffed with experienced Children’s Social Workers and Kinship Administrators are available to assist relative caregivers. Services are contracted with Community Agencies in LA County to assist relative caregivers in maintaining the kinship family unit and include: community outreach, community education, information and referral, family support through one-on-one intervention, advocacy during case planning activities to sustain and increase the success of the placement or informal arrangement, caregiver support groups, and respite opportunities and recreation.

Los Angeles Department of Aging  
**Website:** http://aging.lacity.org/index.php  
**Phone:** 1-800-510-2020 (toll-free)  
**Service Area:** Los Angeles  
**Description:** Kinship Care Resource Guide, legal assistance guide, information, and referral

Nevada County Superintendent of Schools – Grandparents, Relatives and Neighbors Raising Children  
**Website:** http://nevco.org/support-for-grandparents-who-are-parenting-children/  
**Phone:** 530-470-8510, Extension 2020  
**Email:** mmarcum@nevco.org  
**Service Area:** Nevada County  
**Description:** Information and referral, support groups, seasonal events, kin care class and other services.

Public Counsel's Skadden Arps Pro Per Guardianship Clinic  
**Website:** www.publiccounsel.org  
**Service Area:** Los Angeles  
**Description:** Located in the Probate Court in Downtown Los Angeles, Room 230. Assists with legal guardianship petitions for adults caring for children whose parents cannot care for them. The clinic also assists with petitions for visitation and termination of guardianship. Open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM and 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM.
GRANDFACTS: California

**Senior Legal Hotline of Legal Services of California – Grandparent Project**

**Website:**  [https://lsnc.net/slh](https://lsnc.net/slh)

**Phone:**  1-800-222-1753 (toll-free), Sacramento County: 916-551-2140

**Service Area:**  Statewide; some services Sacramento County only

**Description:**  Legal advice by phone or email about guardianship petitions for people over 60 or low income residents of Sacramento County.

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**Public Benefits**

Federal and state public benefits programs can help with income, food, healthcare, home energy, telephone and other needs for those who are eligible. Eligibility requirements vary with each public benefit and sometimes are different from state to state. Some benefits are for the family and others are for children or older adults individually. Children are often eligible for public benefits even if their caregivers do not have guardianship or legal custody. Relative caregivers may become eligible for benefits programs when their household size increases.

**Help with Public Benefits**

**AARP Foundation’s Benefits QuickLink**

Benefits QuickLINK, powered by BenefitsCheckUp of the National Council on Aging, offers a free and private way to complete a questionnaire to find out if relatives and/or the children they are raising qualify for certain programs that pay for food, increase income and cover home and healthcare costs. The specific programs covered by the questionnaire in the website are listed below. Once the questionnaire is completed, the website generates a list of eligible programs and contact information.

[www.aarp.org/quicklink](http://www.aarp.org/quicklink)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits QuickLINK State and Federal Public Benefits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicare Savings Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicare Rx Extra Help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs (SPAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid for Aged, Blind, and Disabled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Property Tax Relief/Rebates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Security Income (SSI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone and Cellphone Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Assistance</td>
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<th>Benefits QuickLINK Public Benefits for Families Raising Children</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid for Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TANF-Child Only Grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Security Income for Children</td>
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<td>Child Care Assistance</td>
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Benefits.gov
An official website of the federal government, this resource has state specific information on benefits, in addition to a screening tool to find out which programs you may be eligible to receive.

www.benefits.gov

Eldercare Locator
The National Eldercare Locator service helps you find your local area agency on aging and other state and local resources that can help with public benefits, local programs and other services for older adults.

1-800-677-1116 (toll-free)
www.eldercare.gov

Key Public Benefits: Income
Each state administers federal funds that provide cash assistance to families in need. Some states also offer other forms of financial assistance.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
Cash assistance may be available to eligible children and their relative caregivers.

California’s Cal Works Program
California Department of Social Services
916-657-2128
Email: piar@dss.ca.gov
www.cdss.ca.gov/calworks
To apply online – Go to www.benefitscal.org/.

PLEASE NOTE: In California, relatives caring for children in foster care should not rely on TANF, but instead get full foster care payments through California Department of Social Services – Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) Program and Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC). Please see above under “key programs” for information about those two programs.

Generations United’s Grand Resources:
A Fact Sheet for Grandparent and Relative Caregivers to Help Access Support through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program
www.gu.org/RESOURCES.aspx

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/

Key Public Benefits: Nutrition
Relative caregivers and their families may be eligible for assistance with groceries, meals, infant formula and nutrition education. These are some of the key nutrition benefits programs and resources.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
SNAP is the new name for the federal Food Stamp Program. It helps low-income individuals and families buy the food they need for good health. Although SNAP is the national name, your state may use a different name.

CalFresh Program
California Department of Social Services
916-657-2128
Email: piar@dss.ca.gov
www.dss.ca.gov/foodstamps
To apply online – Go to www.benefitsca.org/.

Food and Nutrition Services of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Child Nutrition Program - The schools, early childhood education programs, child care centers, afterschool programs or other programs that children attend may offer free or reduced meals through the federal Child Nutrition Program, which provides breakfast, lunch, snacks, summer meals and milk. Contact the school, center or program to ask if they participate in any of the child nutrition programs and how to apply. Relative caregivers should inform the program that they are raising the child and whether or not they are doing so through a court order.

Online State Directory - To find your state office that manages the Child Nutrition program.

Women, Infant and Children (WIC) - States administer federal funds for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

Online State Directory - To find your state office that manages the WIC program.
www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-contacts

Foodbanks
Organizations that provide free food and sometimes other items, such as diapers, to families in need.

Online State Directory - To find local food banks.
www.feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx
Key Public Benefits: Health Care
Relative caregivers and the children they are raising may be eligible for health insurance through Medicare and/or Medicaid and help with prescription drugs. Benefits QuickLINK can help you find these benefits.
www.aarp.org/quicklink

Health Insurance for Children
Relative caregivers may apply for free or low-cost health and dental insurance for the children they are raising through the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which provides health coverage to eligible children through both Medicaid and separate CHIP programs. CHIP and Medicaid are the national names, and your state may use different names.

Medi-Cal
California Department of Health Care Services
916-552-9200
www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/Pages/default.aspx
To apply online – Go to www.benefitscal.org/

Consent to Obtain Health Care
Even with insurance, consenting to health care for a child can be a challenge for relative caregivers who do not have legal custody. Some states have laws that allow these caregivers to “consent” to such treatment.

California has such a law, and your “caregiver’s affidavit” form can be found here:
http://kids-alliance.org/programs/guardianship/

Key Public Benefits: Tax Credits
The following information is about tax credits from the federal government available throughout the United States. Similar tax credits may exist in your state for state taxes. For example, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), 26 states and the District of Columbia offer a state tax credit based on the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and four states offer a Child Tax Credit. See CBPP’s “Get it Back Campaign” for more information on state tax credits.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is an income tax credit for workers who do not have high incomes. It is a refundable tax credit, which means you could get a refund check from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) even if you don’t earn enough to pay taxes.

Child Tax Credit is a tax credit for up to $1,000 per dependent child. But, it is not refundable.

Additional Child Tax Credit may help if you don’t owe enough taxes to benefit from the child tax credit. Unlike the child tax credit, this tax credit is refundable.
Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit may help you if you’ve hired someone to help care for the child so you could work or look for work. If so, you may be able to claim up to $3,000 in expenses per child.

Adoption Tax Credit can help if you have adopted your grandchild or other relative. It can give you a credit for the money you spent to adopt. If you adopted a child from the foster care system with special needs, you may be eligible for the maximum amount of credit for the year you adopted regardless of whether you had any qualifying expenses. If you did not adopt from the foster care system, you must have qualifying expenses like legal fees. This tax credit allows adoptive parents to claim up to $13,460 per child.

Please note that tax credits themselves are not counted as income. They will not be counted when you apply for financial help.

Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) – To find out about tax credits in your state.
www.cbpp.org

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) – To find out more information about each of these tax credits
www.irs.gov

Education
The U.S. Department of Education offers a parent site that has a wide range of helpful information for parents and caregivers regarding children’s education from early childhood through college, special needs, disabilities, language challenges and gifted students.

1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (toll-free)
www.ed.gov/parents

California Department of Education
916-319-0800
www.cde.ca.gov/

Educational Enrollment
Relative caregivers can contact their local school district’s administrative office or their local school to find out how to register the child and what paperwork is needed. Caregivers may need birth records, health records or previous school records. Some states have laws that allow relative caregivers without legal custody or guardianship to enroll the children they are raising in school. These laws are often called education “consent” laws, but they may be called something else in your state.

Grandfamilies.org Online Database - To find out if your state has an education consent law.
www.grandfamilies.org/Search-Laws

Early Intervention, Special Education and Related Services
The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - From birth to age 21, children who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities or other special needs may be able to get early intervention,
preschool and special education services in school through the federal IDEA. Services may include speech, physical and occupational therapies.

The IDEA requires that states identify, locate and evaluate all children ages 3 to 21 with disabilities who may need special education and related services. Once the evaluation team, which includes a child’s caregivers, has decided if a child is eligible for early intervention, preschool or special education services, an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP; birth to three years of age) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP; three to 21 years of age) is developed and services should begin shortly.

**California Department of Education, Special Education**
916-319-0800
www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/

**Early Start**
California Department of Developmental Services
916-654-1690
www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart/

**Parent Centers** across the country provide information to help parents and caregivers with children who have special education needs and disabilities.
**Online State Directory** - To find Parent Centers in your state.
www.parentcenterhub.org/find-your-center/

**Generations United’s Grand Resources:**
A Grandparent’s and Other Relative’s Guide to Raising Children with Disabilities
www.gu.org/RESOURCES.aspx

**Early Childhood Education**

**Head Start** and **Early Head Start** are early education programs for eligible children.
**Online Directory** - To find Head Start or Early Head Start centers in your state.
1-866-763-6481 (toll-free)
www.eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices

**Child Care Aware** provides information, resources and connection to local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R) that help you find local child care.
**Online Directory** - To find your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency.
1- 800-424-2246 (toll-free)
www.childcareaware.org/families/
Legal

The following legal relationships may be options for both those children exiting the foster care system and those outside the system. For those families who do not want to establish a legal relationship, consent and power of attorney laws are available in several states.

All of the following options are presented in general terms. This area of the law is created at the state level, so how these options are defined and which ones are available can vary significantly by state.

Adoption

With adoption, the relative caregiver 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.

Adoption assistance payments may be available to relative caregivers who choose to adopt children in their care from the child welfare system.

- North American Council on Adoptable Children - To get information about your state’s subsidy, in addition to other adoption information.
  www.nacac.org

- Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption - To find adoption resources that may be helpful to you.
  www.davethomasfoundation.org

Guardianship

The biggest difference between adoption and guardianship is that guardianship does not take away all the birth parents’ rights and responsibilities. Parents typically keep certain rights and the obligation to financially support the child. Unlike adoption, the parents can go back to court and ask for the guardianship to be ended. For caregivers, a guardianship allows them to access services on behalf of the child that otherwise might prove impossible while not changing family relationships, like making grandma legally mom.

Guardian assistance payments may be available to relative caregivers who choose to get guardianship of the children in their care who are exiting the child welfare system.

- www.grandfamilies.org - To find out more about whether your state has guardianship assistance.

Legal Custody

Legal custody is similar to guardianship, but it is usually granted by a different court that has different procedures.
Other Options

In some states, relative caregivers who do not want or have a legal relationship to the children in their care have laws that make it possible to access health care treatment and educational services on behalf of the children without going to court.

For more information on all these options, and to see what exists in your state, see www.grandfamilies.org.

State Laws

Grandfamilies.org is a collaboration between Generations United, the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law and Casey Family Programs. It contains an easy-to-use, searchable database of state laws and legislation directly impacting kinship families. You will also find explanations of legal topic areas, practical implementation ideas, personal stories and many other resources.

Topics Covered:

- Adoption
- Care and Custody
- Education
- Federal Laws
- Foster Care Licensing
- Financial Assistance
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Kinship Navigator Programs
- National Family Caregiver Support Program
- Notification of Relatives
- Subsidized Guardianship

The online database of laws and legislation is at www.grandfamilies.org/Search-Laws.

Updates

If you have an update or a resource to be included in this or any of the other GrandFacts State Fact Sheets, please email grandfamilies@gu.org.
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