

## COVID-19/Emergency Preparedness Resource Guide For Kinship Families and Grandfamilies

“Kinship Families and Grandfamilies” are families in which children are raised by their grandparents, other extended family members, or adults with whom they have a close family-like relationship. Currently, there are an estimated 2.7 million children in grandfamily/kinship households without parents in the home. Under normal circumstances, these families face significant challenges—health, well-being, financial, and legal—to name a few. During emergency circumstances, including natural disasters or pandemics, these challenges are amplified for Kinship Families and Grandfamilies.

Many Kinship Families and Grandfamilies have limited financial resources, making purchases such as food, personal protective equipment, sanitizers, and disinfectants difficult. Moreover, intergenerational families are more likely to live in closely confined spaces making social distancing difficult to achieve during a pandemic. Due to their living circumstances, there is an increased likelihood of infection across entire families. For Kinship Families and Grandfamilies with school-aged children, remote learning and loss of access to tutors and school-based special education services is another challenge. Moreover, many of these families have limited or no Internet access further constraining their ability to home school.

These challenges increase for ethnic and minority groups. For example, many Kinship Families and Grandfamilies living within Indian Country experience all of these challenges in addition to others such as lack of access to nearby health care facilities, lack of adequate transportation due to the remote locations of many Tribal communities. Lack of transportation alone can hinder their ability to pick up critical medications and necessities. Communication barriers due to language differences can also present a challenge for Kinship Families and Grandfamilies in this community.

Recognizing these concerns, the [Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren \(SGRG\) Advisory Council](#) produced the following list of resources specifically for Kinship Families and Grandfamilies during emergencies such as the current COVID-19 pandemic.

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## **COVID-19 Resources for Kinship Family and Grandfamily Caregivers** **Audience: Caregivers of children and teens**

### **ARCH National Respite Network**

Visit the [National Respite Locator](#) for [a list of respite resources](#) for parents and family caregivers your state or community.

### **Center for Parent Information and Resources**

The [Coping with COVID-19 for Adults and for Children webpage](#) includes regularly updated resources to support children with disabilities and their families during the pandemic covering such topics as distance learning, attending virtual IEP meetings, and providing behavioral support at home.

### **Child Welfare Information Gateway**

The [COVID-19 State Child Welfare and Related Health Resources webpage](#) contains a list of websites, organized by state, that provide local guidelines and responses to the COVID-19 emergency.

### **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)**

The CFPB's [coronavirus landing page](#) has links to information on mortgage and housing assistance, economic impact payments, managing finances, and scams.

With resources from across the federal government, the [Preparing, recovering, and rebuilding after disasters and emergencies webpage](#) can help you safeguard your finances.

The CFPB explains [new retirement withdrawal and repayment rules](#) under the CARES Act in considering an early retirement withdrawal, CARES Act rules and what you should know.

### **The Conversation Project (advance care planning)**

The [Being Prepared in the Time of COVID resource](#) offer instructions for advance planning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resource includes a worksheet on page 2 with specific questions to assist individuals in creating their own advance care plan.

### **COVID-19 Child Welfare and Related Health Resources by State**

The Child Welfare Information Gateway provides a [list of websites that focus on State-specific guidelines and responses](#) to the COVID-19 emergency.

## **Eldercare Locator**

This is a public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) that connects older adults and their families to services and resources. Visit the [Eldercare Locator](#) webpage and type in the name of the city or ZIP code. Examples of some of the information available include, but not limited to the following:

- Support Services
- Housing
- Elder Rights
- Insurance and Benefits
- Health
- Transportation
- Caregiver corner with helpful information and support

## **Feeding America**

The [Feeding America Food Bank locator](#) contains a database of 200 food banks across the nation. The locator is searchable by ZIP code and/or state.

## **Generations United**

The [COVID-19 Resource webpage](#) on the Grandfamilies website provides an up-to-date list of information, webinars and tools to assist Kinship Families and Grandfamilies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Local Health Departments**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials offers [a tool to help individuals search for their local health departments by area.](#)

## **National Council on Aging**

The [COVID-19 Resources for Older Adults and Caregivers webpage](#) offers information on many issues impacting older adults and caregivers such as paying bills, Medicare assistance, transportation issues, and finding affordable food. You may also check benefits eligibility at [BenefitsCheckup.org.](#)

## **National Indian Health Board**

[The COVID-19 Tribal Resource Center's Community Health Tools webpage](#) provides a number of COVID-19 resources, including fact sheets on such topics as:

- Talking about COVID-19
- How to Talk to Youth About COVID-19
- COVID-19 Testing in Indian Country
- Differences Between Social Distancing, Isolation, and Quarantine

- Securing Food and Nutrition
- COVID-19 and Housing
- Vulnerable Populations

### **Sesame Workshop**

The [Caring for Each Other initiative](#) offers games, activities, videos, information to help children and parents understand the latest additional issues surrounding Coronavirus, including resources to help families face current challenges like missing friends, while also giving children ways to celebrate the helpers in their neighborhoods, from pharmacists to mail carriers to grocery store employees.

### **State and Local FEMA offices**

Contact information for FEMA offices in each state and territory are available on the [FEMA webpage](#). Each state specific page is organized differently however; all contain information on how to sign up for advance warnings such as weather alerts and disaster warnings.

### **State Health Departments**

[This resource](#) links to health departments in all 50 states, 8 US territories and freely associated states, and the District of Columbia.

### **State Kinship Care Resources**

The [State Kinship Care Contacts and Programs webpage](#) includes State Kinship Care contacts or website links to kinship care programs and services offered by State Child Welfare Departments as well as subcontracted private nonprofit agencies in applicable States and the District of Columbia.

### **U.S. Department of Education (ED)**

The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) site contains the most up-to-date information on the Federal education law for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and how families can be involved in educating and supporting their children with disabilities.”

### **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

The FDA provides various [Consumer Articles](#) and guidance on [Shopping for Food During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). The [COVID-19 Resource page](#) also contains additional resources such as fact sheets, videos, podcasts, toolkits and articles.

## **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

The [Caregiver Support Program Information for Caregivers during COVID-19 fact sheet](#) offers caregiver tips including topics applicable to all caregivers such as advance planning, how to protect yourself, and tips for stress management during an emergency.

## **General COVID-19 Information from the Federal Government**

**Audience: Everyone**

### **Benefits.Gov**

On [Benefits.gov](#), you can find government benefits related to [unemployment assistance](#), [healthcare](#), and [food and nutrition](#). You can also take the [Benefit Finder](#) to find additional benefits you may be eligible for.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

The [What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others fact sheet](#) offers information about staying safe during the outbreak.

In addition, the [What You Need to Know about Handwashing video](#) provides instructions on how to wash your hand effectively. The [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19 webpage](#) offers up-to-date information and guidance on the use of face coverings, as well as tips for making and washing cloth facemasks.

The [Older Adults](#) webpage provides important information that could be very useful to this population.

[The Talking to Children about Coronavirus Disease 2019 webpage](#) offers concrete messaging for talking with children about the Coronavirus.

### **CDC, FEMA, & the White House**

[Coronavirus.gov](#) offers extensive information on symptoms, testing, and COVID-19 prevention. Resources are organized by audience; Kinship Families and Grandfamilies may need to select a number of audiences to find resources that specifically apply to their needs.

## **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)**

The FCC is working to ensure that [Americans stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). [Learn more about the pledge and the companies and associations that have signed on.](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a number of scam text-message campaigns and “robocalls” offering free home testing kits, promoting bogus cures, selling health insurance, and preying on virus-related fears. The [COVID Scams webpage](#) offers information about avoiding and reporting scams.

## **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

The [Coronavirus Rumor Control webpage](#) helps the public distinguish between rumors and facts regarding the response to COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, the page offers links and information on how to report scams to the Federal Trade Commission.

## **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

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## **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

The [What you need to know about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) guide](#) offers information about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Tips for staying safe and information on whom to contact if you do become sick.

## **Tips for “Staying Connected” in an Emergency**

### **Audience: Everyone**

#### **National Weather Service**

The [National Weather Service Station Listing webpage](#) included a search feature so that individuals can find the local radio stations they should tune into in the event of an emergency. There is also information about vibrators, strobe lights, and other alerting systems for people who are hearing impaired.

#### **Older Adults Technology Services (OATS)**

The [Senior Planet Coronavirus Resource Guide](#) offers a range of videos and guides on basic IT topics such as choosing a mobile device, safe online chatting, banking online, and shopping online.

## **Wi-Fi resources for caregivers who do not have Internet access at home**

If you do not have Internet access at home, this [article](#) explains how to find free Wi-Fi options. This [article](#) offers additional tips for finding free Wi-Fi in an emergency including a list of national businesses that offer free Wi-Fi.

## **Helplines and Hotlines**

### **Audience: Everyone**

#### **211.Org**

[Dialing 2-1-1](#) provides individuals and families in need with a shortcut through what can be a bewildering maze of health and human service agency phone numbers. By simply dialing 211, those in need of assistance can be referred, and sometimes connected, to appropriate local agencies and community organizations. 211.org can assist with resources in the following areas:

- COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic
- Crisis and Emergency
- Disaster Assistance

#### **American Bar Association**

The [ABA site](#) provides various legal support with finding free legal services; a Lawyer referral tool, as well as links to free information on common issues/problems.

#### **Stanford Legal Design and Lab**

Information on eviction and rent protections during the COVID-19 emergency can be found on the [Legal Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.

#### **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**

**NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness** is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI provides support in [Managing Anxiety](#), as well as additional [information for assistance](#) during these challenging times.

Call the NAMI Helpline at (800) 950-NAMI or in a crisis, text "NAMI" to 741741

#### **National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline**

Dial 1-866-720-5721 to report fraud related to an emergency, including COVID-19. To submit a compliant online, complete the [disaster complaint form](#)

## **National Domestic Violence Hotline**

For anyone affected by abuse and needing support, call 1-800-799-7233, or if unable to speak safely, log onto [thehotline.org](https://thehotline.org) or text LOVEIS to 22522. This toll-free, multilingual and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories.

## **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a suicide prevention network of over 160 crisis centers that provides 24/7 service to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress via toll-free hotline 1-800-273-8255 or [chat with a specialist](#).

## **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Disaster Distress Help Line**

The Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990 can provide immediate counseling to anyone who is seeking help in coping with the mental or emotional effects caused by developments related to the coronavirus pandemic. A text option is also available by texting 'TalkWithUs' to 66746.

## **Resources for Health Care and Social Service Providers Audience: Providers, social services workers, and advocates**

### **ARCH National Respite Network**

Providing and Receiving Respite Care Safely During the COVID-19 Pandemic - [Voluntary National Guidelines](#) for Respite Care Agencies, Providers, Family Caregivers, and Respite Care Recipients.

### **The Annie E. Casey Foundation**

The Foundation provides information on [Helping Agencies Prioritize Kinship Care during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). The [Support Kinship Caregivers information Sheet](#) identifies funding sources and strategic partnerships that can shore up resources for families and caregivers.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

CDC has published a [Guidance to Support Direct Service Providers \(DSPs\)](#), personal care attendants, direct support professionals, paraprofessionals, therapists, and others as they support people with disabilities for COVID-19.

## **Center for Parent Information and Resources**

[The Strategies to Support the Administration of Service Provision during the COVID-19 Pandemic webpage](#) contains logistics tips and information on delivering services remotely during the pandemic.

## **Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW)**

CASCW develops and hosts a variety of resources for child welfare practitioners, students, researchers, policymakers and other professionals. The [resource library](#) includes online training modules, publications, videos, documents, and research and outreach projects. CASCW also features a [Podcast](#) – *It takes a Village: Child Welfare in a Pandemic*.

## **Children’s Bureau – An Office of the U.S. Administration for Children and Families (ACF)**

The Children’s Bureau provides [resources](#) from state and national child welfare organizations on addressing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

## **Generations United**

Generations United is responding to the situation presented by COVID-19 and its impact on intergenerational connections around the world. Responses and resources are shared on the [Generations United COVID-19 page](#) including a [Grandfamilies: Strengths and Challenges Fact Sheet](#).

## **National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems**

Administration for Community Living and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services have developed a [tool for creating a Health Care Person-Centered Profile](#) to assist people with disabilities, older adults, and others to communicate their needs and preferences, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **National Conference of State Legislatures**

NCSL provides COVID-19 Child Welfare [resources](#) to help state legislators address the negative impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on children, families and caseworkers involved with the child welfare system. The resource guides address the following topics: COVID-19 and Child Welfare Caseworkers, COVID-19 and Congregate Care Facilities, COVID-19 and Foster and Kinship Caregivers, COVID-19 and Older Youth in the Child Welfare System.

## **National Council on Aging**

The [COVID-19 Resources for Professionals webpage](#) offers tips and tools to assist professionals in serving their clients during the pandemic.