

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Tips and Resources for School Staff and Families

Many grandparents in New Mexico are raising grandchildren for a variety of reasons such as family relationships and challenges related to health and wellness, financial responsibilities, military time, incarceration, and other challenges in their lives.

It is important to consider the following when students are being raised by or living with grandparents:

- In many family arrangements, grandchildren live with their grandparents and there is a mutual agreement between the child or children, parents, and grandparents and support for student success is strong. In others, there are many challenges with agreements and consistent support for students.
- Grandparents can be in an uncomfortable position with the parents of the child and their relationship may be difficult emotionally, legally, and physically. For example, many grandparents are raising children without the benefits of security of legal custody and a parent can take the child away from the grandparents.
- Navigating the system and access to legal rights, social services, health care, etc. can be quite challenging for some grandparents. Grandparents and students benefit from services such as respite care, legal services, social services, non-profits counseling services, financial support, health and wellness guidance, and student success support.
- A number of agencies and organizations are devoted to helping grandparents raising grandchildren. There are resources for grandparents raising grandchildren that schools can share with families. Several are listed below.

New Mexico Aging & Long-Term Services Department

<http://www.nmaging.state.nm.us/grandparents-raising-grandchildren.aspx>

The department offers a wide range of services for families including those for grandparents raising grandchildren. 1-800-432-2080

Las Cumbres Community Services

<http://www.lascumbres-nm.org/>

Las Cumbres sponsors the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program founded in Espanola, NM. The program provides support, resources, discussion topics, and an end of year conference aimed to foster the growth and well-being of grandparents who are the primary caregivers to their grandchildren in Rio Arriba County and beyond. 505-753-4123

Parents Reaching Out (PRO)

<http://parentsreachingout.org/>

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) is a non-profit organization that works with parents, caregivers, educators, and other professionals to promote healthy, positive and caring experiences for families and children.



PullTogether.org

<https://pulltogether.org/>

This resource offers support for parents, families, and children in New Mexico and includes statewide and Tribal resources such as family service organizations, health and wellness programs, housing and child care options, and more.

National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA)

<http://nicoagrandparents.org/category/why-are-grandparents-raising-grandchildren/>

NICOA offers a helpful forum for grandparents. It includes answers to many questions as well as links to useful resources.

AARP

<http://www.aarp.org/relationships/friends-family/grandfacts-sheets/>

AARP has a helpful Grandfamilies Guide and links to useful resources. AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that helps people 50 and older improve the quality of their lives.

Pegasus Legal Services

<http://pegasuslaw.org/kinship-guardianship/>

Pegasus Legal Services operates the *The Guardianship Legal Helpline*. Call them at 1-505-244-1101. They are bilingual and can help with:

Information and advice, regardless of income

- Legal assistance for low-income people representing themselves, including drafting pleadings and on-going legal help throughout the case
- Referrals for direct legal representation

Law Access New Mexico

<http://www.lawaccess.org/>

Law Access New Mexico provides respectful, efficient, high quality legal advice, brief service and referrals to eligible low-income New Mexicans over the telephone and help remove barriers to the justice system. Call them toll-free at 1-800-980-1165.

New Mexico Crisis and Access Line

<http://www.nmcrisisline.com/>

This site The New Mexico Crisis and Access Line (NMCAL) is a statewide mental health crisis line for anyone who resides in the State of New Mexico. The phones are answered by professional counselors 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Counselors have access to emergency workers if needed, are trained in assessing a crisis and responding with the least restrictive alternative. Callers are referred to resources local to them at the end of the call or by a follow up call by the next business day.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

<http://articles.extension.org/pages/32573/grandparents-raising-grandchildren-doubly-stressed-triply-blessed#.VRwWJ2d0y1s>

The USDA Cooperative Extension System has information and materials designed to learn about and provide supportive services to family and relative caregivers. Click here (<http://aces.nmsu.edu/county/>) to locate your local county extension office.

