

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



**FROM:** Office on Aging

**SUBMITTAL DATE:  
January 8, 2014**

**SUBJECT:** Office on Aging - Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force Annual Report for FY2012-2013. All Districts. Cost [\$0].

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force Annual Report for FY 2012-2013.
2. Instruct the Office on Aging to continue providing staff support to assist the Task Force in addressing the direction outlined in the report.
3. Support the ongoing participation of multiple County departments to serve grandparents raising their grandchildren.

**BACKGROUND:** The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force was created by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors (Agenda Item 3.45 on June 30, 1998) and was convened by the Office on Aging in October 1998. The Board of Supervisors directed GRG to establish a central point of access for grandparents as they engage with the County's supportive services system to address and resolve problems and issues experienced by grandparents as they raise their grandchildren.

(Continued on page 2)

*Michele Haddock*  
Michele Haddock  
Director

Departmental Concurrence

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost:	POLICY/CONSENT (per Exec. Office)
COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	Consent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/>
NET COUNTY COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b> Not applicable				<b>Budget Adjustment:</b> No	
				<b>For Fiscal Year:</b> 2012/13	

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:**

APPROVE

BY: *Lani Sioson*  
Lani Sioson

County Executive Office Signature

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

- A-30
- Positions Added
- 4/5 Vote
- Change Order

Prev. Agn. Ref.:

District: ALL

Agenda Number:

**2 - 11**

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
**FORM 11: Office on Aging - Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force Annual Report for**  
FY2012-2013. All Districts. Cost [\$0].

**DATE:** January 8, 2014

**PAGE:** 2 of 2

**Impact on Citizens and Businesses**

As is evidenced in this annual report, over 2,000 County residents have been outreached to and supported by GRG during the program year. The report highlights four new collaborative programs through which Task Force members are partnering with multiple County agencies and community-based organizations to combine resources and maximize staffing efforts in order to best serve County residents.

**ATTACHMENTS (if needed, in this order):**

- A. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force Annual Report for FY2012-2013



Riverside County  
Office on Aging

# Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program



Annual Report  
2012-2013



# What's Inside

## A Message from the Director- Michele Wilham



Thank you for reading this 2012-2013 Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force Annual Report!

I want to acknowledge the members of the Task Force, our County and community partners and our GRG Program staff for their dedication and commitment to serving grandparent families across the County of Riverside.

This critical work is underwritten with generous support from First 5 Riverside (Riverside County Children & Families Commission), Department of Public Social Services, Riverside County, the Older Americans Act, and the Family Caregiver Support Program through the California Department of Aging. Together we are making a difference in the lives of grandparents!

According to the 2012 American Community Survey there are some 24,418 grandparent-headed households in Riverside County. Many of these households are multi-generational (also known as "grandfamilies") but for 6,449 of them the grandparent(s) are the sole caregivers to their grandchildren. And, in Riverside County one-half of all children in these households are under the age of 6.

It is through the collaborative partnerships forged and maintained by the Task Force that the Office on Aging continues to address the needs of grandparents raising grandchildren. As you will read the Office on Aging and GRG Task Force are recognized nationally for our work in addressing the challenges of grandparents and we take this leadership role very seriously.

As always, we remain your trusted partner focused on building new opportunities in finding solutions to the increasingly complex issues that face grandparents and older adults in Riverside County.

**Message from the Director**  
Page 2

**Challenges for Caregiving Grandparents 2012-2013**  
Page 3

**Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force Highlights**  
Page 6

**GRG Program Outcomes for 2012-2013**  
Page 17

- **Support Services**  
Page 17

- **Child Care Support**  
Page 22

- **Community Education & Outreach**  
Page 24

**Sharing the Holiday Spirit**  
Page 27

**Testimonials**  
Page 28

**Task Force Membership**  
Page 29

**Funding & Contributions**  
Page 31

# Challenges for Caregiving Grandparents

## 2012-2013

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Program has seen that many of the issues facing caregiving grandparents remain consistent —

- Frustration with the complex legal issues around custody, and confusion over the difference in available benefits between gaining custody through juvenile court or probate court.
- Seeking advice on grandparent rights in order to have visitation with their grandchildren and for the right to rescue children they see as at-risk but whose circumstances have not risen to the attention of Child Protective Services.

Two new trends observed through this year are a higher incident of parent deaths as the cause for grandparent custody, and more “sandwich generation caregivers” with grandparents caring for their elderly parent, as well as, their grandchildren.

By far **the single greatest challenge grandparents are facing is their financial situation.** While they may have been financially secure when they first took custody of their grandchildren, the economy has eroded their savings, investments and home values.

### THE HIGH COST OF CARING FOR GRANDCHILDREN

*Grandparents over the age of 65 who are raising grandchildren are a small but extremely vulnerable population in California. These older adults usually become the primary caregivers of their grandchildren after an unexpected event. They are further faced with the financial challenge of having an additional dependent without additional income. The actual income needed to support a basic standard of living for older adults with grandchildren in California is about twice the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), depending on the county. Using 200% of the FPL as an approximate measure, about two-fifths of older grandparents who are responsible for their grandchildren in the state do not have enough income to make ends meet. The Elder Economic Security Standard™ Index (Elder Index) for California calculates that the costs of housing, food, and older adults' health care account for more than two-thirds of total household expenses for grandparents and the grandchildren they are raising. Despite the high cost of basic needs, public assistance for low-income older adults and children continues to be squeezed. If they are to efficiently serve members of this fragile population, the existing programs that serve them need to maximize and streamline their impact through better coordination and collaboration.*

UCLA Center for Health Policy Research released its Health Policy Brief in June 2013 on its study, “The High Cost of Caring: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren” by D. Imelda Padilla-Frausto and Steven P. Wallace.

The conclusion from that UCLA study —“to maximize and streamline their impact through better coordination and collaboration”— has been the guiding principle for the Office on Aging Grandparents Raising Grandparents (GRG) Task Force. Through its network of County agencies and community-based organizations, GRG is positioned to identify resources, provide solutions and make linkages with appropriate services and benefits.

## GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN TASK FORCE

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors established the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force in October 1998 to assist caregiving grandparents with access to the services and resources necessary to offer their grandchildren a safe and nurturing home. It is a collaboration of multiple County agencies, elected officials, and community-based organizations. More importantly, grandparent representation has been a key to the success of the Task Force.

The GRG Task Force meets on a quarterly schedule and two subcommittees provide direction for its activities throughout the year:



- The **Legislative/Systems Change Committee** identifies legislative, regulatory, and policy barriers, along with program gaps that impact services for grandparents raising their grandchildren, and proposes changes to improve the system of service delivery.
- The **Program and Public Relations Committee** develops work plans to assess the needs of grandparents, and provides information, education, and leveraging of resources to meet their on-going family needs.

The Task Force established the GRG Program within the Office on Aging to provide direct services with funding from the **County**, the **Older Americans Act Title III** (federal) and other public funds such as **First 5 Riverside**. The Program is intended to serve as a central point of access for information and linkage to available services within county agencies and the community at large. GRG trained staff is committed to listening, assessing, referring and helping grandparents navigate the complex systems of services, benefits and regulations involved to provide a secure and nurturing environment for their grandchildren. GRG also works to identify needs, collect data, and advocate on behalf of this population for the development of additional community resources.

### Task Force Meeting Dates FY 2012-2013

**September 5, 2012**

**December 5, 2012**

**March 6, 2013**

**June 5, 2013**

# Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Profile 2012

	National	State	Riverside County
Grandparent Headed Household	2,933,840	309,135	24,418
Grandparent Household w/out biological parent present	958,829	75,046	6,449
Hispanic	23.8%	50.7%	50.7%
White non-Hispanic	40.6%	28.0%	32.1%
African American	26.5%	8.8%	7.5%
Other/Mixed Race	9.1%	12.5%	9.7%
Living Under Poverty Level	28.2%	18.8%	19.4%
Working Grandparent	59.9%	58.9%	56.8%
Age of Grandchild			
Under 6	44.3%	45.6%	49.0%
6-11	30.5%	30.5%	31.0%
12-17	25.2%	23.9%	20.0%
<b>Percent of Grandparent Household w/no parent present</b>	<b><u>2012</u></b>	<b><u>2011</u></b>	
Grandparent age 30-59	21%	19%	
Grandparent age 60 and over	36%	32%	

2012 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

## GRAND FACTS:

- ◆ The percentage of grandparent led households without a parent present increased from 2011 to 2012 while the overall number of grandparent led households with multiple generations has decreased.
- ◆ Grandparents over age 60 are more likely to have sole custody (without parent in the home) than younger grandparents age 32-59.
- ◆ Almost 50% of grandchildren in the care of a grandparent are under the age of 6.



### Grandparent Led Households Served in Riverside County by Supervisorial District

District 1	18%
District 2	12%
District 3	30%
District 4	12%
District 5	28%

# GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN TASK FORCE HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2012-2013

## Focus Group Provides Direction for the Future

The September Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force meeting was used to conduct a public focus group to review its accomplishments and set goals for the future. Invitations were widely circulated throughout the County to encourage a broad range of public input. **Seventy three participants** from County agencies, community-based organizations and members of the public attended to show their interest and support of grandparents who are raising their grandchildren.

The Task Force co-chairs and committee chairs reported highlights of accomplishments in program development, legislation, and changes in County systems across agencies over the past 14 years. Viviana Criado, Executive Director for California Elder Mental Health Coalition, led the group in considering four basic questions:

1. What is the impact of the GRG Task Force on grandparent caregiving policy and on system of care change?
2. What are GRG related issues/priorities that the Task Force should focus on in the next 2- 4 years?
3. What can be done (strategies) to address these issues?
4. What are the top three priorities?

Lively discussion resulted in **74** bulleted points summarized in the following categories:

### Access & Eligibility Issues

- Service eligibility criteria across agencies and support for caregiving grandparents are often inconsistent resulting in inefficient and ineffective access to benefits.
- Grandparents limited computer skills inhibit their access to GRG resources and information available on the internet.





- Grandparents and service providers lack knowledge about how to navigate the system of care for grandparents raising grandchildren (GRG).
- There is a need for additional community outreach with grandparents.



## Legal Issues & Grandparent Rights

- Many caregiving grandparents do not have legal guardianship because of the complexity and high court costs involved showing there is a need for improved access to affordable and accessible legal services to effectively secure custody, services and safety for their grandchildren.
- Grandparent rights for custody, and visitation issues after grandchildren are reunified with their parents.
- Grandparents often face difficulties when trying to enroll grandchildren in school and securing services for their special needs grandchildren without formal guardianship.



## Services and Supports Issues

Lack of adequate and affordable services such as:

- afterschool care for children older than age five
- transportation to school and service related appointments
- grief/loss counseling
- care and management of chronic health conditions
- respite care services
- peer support group
- financial support to pay for guardianship related court expenses, particularly for caregiving grandparents under age 55



## Focus Group -Top Three Priorities for 2012-2016:

1. **Access to information**—Increasing awareness for grandparents and service providers about Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) issues and the GRG Program.
2. **Advocacy**—Continuing to advocate for the needs of grandparents such as legal aide, counseling, and peer support.
3. **Policies**—Addressing County agencies and community services to assure that grandparents are able to access services, that all services are equitable, that grandparent rights are respected and that service delivery is coordinated among multiple providers.

## Legislation Proposed to Protect Grandparents Living in 55+ Communities

Grandparents living in 55+ communities having to give up their home as a result of grandchildren moving in has had an impact on grandparents locally and nationally. The Legislative/Systems Change Committee of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force drafted a legislative proposal for consideration by the California Senior Legislature (CSL) as an issue to carry forward to the State Legislature.



This legislation would establish consistent regulation to assure a grace period for grandparents and other relative caregivers residing in a 55+ senior community that will allow grandchildren, in emergency situations, to stay in the grandparent's home for up to a year. This will allow time for a determination of a permanent placement for the children or finding another housing arrangement. For instance, in a Child Protective Services case, the parents are given 6 – 12 months to complete services to qualify for reunification with their children who would then leave the grandparent's home.

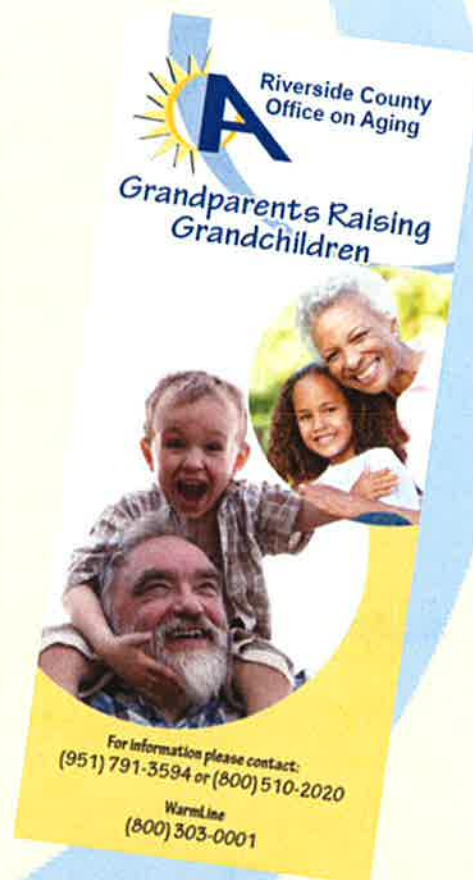
Sonja Martin will present the bill to the Senior Legislature for action at its session in Sacramento. Ms. Martin is a CSL Assembly member, as well as, Office on Aging Advisory Council member and a member of the GRG Task Force. The CSL will review proposals submitted from throughout the State and will vote on the top ten priority issues they will work to get introduced into the State legislative process.

This has been an intensive effort accomplished under a tight deadline and the committee is to be commended for its good work. The participation of legislative aides for Senator Emmerson, Assemblyman Nestande, Supervisor Stone and Supervisor Jeffries was particularly appreciated. Their practical advice on language and procedures was very helpful.

## Rebranding Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

At the focus group in September 2012, there were several comments about needing to increase visibility and appeal for the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program (GRG) among grandparents and professionals who serve them. The Program/Public Relations Committee took on the task of developing new terminology to describe GRG services and new images that reflect the younger and more diverse population of caregiving grandparents in Riverside County. The challenge for the outreach campaign is to attract grandparent participation, raise awareness about caregiving grandparents, and inform professional service providers about GRG.

Developing more friendly language to attract grandparents has meant replacing clinical terms with more approachable language to describe program services like relabeling “Case Management” as “Personal Support,” and “Support Groups” as “GrandsClubs – Peer Support.” Many grandparents do not see their role as a problem and do not sense a need for help, yet they may still benefit from peer support and education. Also, some grandparents involved with Child Supportive Services (CPS) are leery of further involvement with a social worker, so it is important





to reinforce the role of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren as the **grandparent's advocate**.

The first step in launching this outreach campaign was creating new promotional materials that reflect these changes. Brochures, flyers and posters were created and distributed county-wide among network partners and public service agencies. Several school districts had the new materials on display at registration sites for new students, which resulted in new inquiries and referrals.

## CSUSB Helps Grandmothers C.O.P.E.

California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB) is one of four universities selected to participate in **Caring for Others as a Positive Experience (COPE)**, a study involving grandmothers who are raising their grandchildren. The goal of the study is to improve the lives of custodial grandmothers and their grandchildren by providing tools to cope with the responsibilities and relieve their stress. Groups of grandmothers were given one of three training models to test effectiveness in reducing stress levels. The models included Positive Parenting Intervention (PPI), a cognitive therapy and parenting skills plan to increase communication and reduce conflicts between grandmother and grandchild; a personal stress management program; and a standard support group model of sharing information and resources as a

base line measure. Each group consisted of 10 weekly sessions and a series of interviews.

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Program collaborated with Julian Montoro-Rodriguez, Ph.D., director of the study, to recruit grandmothers who met the qualification criteria to participate and professional facilitators to conduct the study, and locate sites to host the study in Riverside County. Task Force member, Sonja Martin, was trained and facilitated groups for the study in Palm Desert and San Bernardino.

Ten groups have been conducted in the study with sessions offered in Palm Desert, Riverside and San Bernardino. Of the 150 grandmothers that enrolled, 80 completed the full 10 week session.

## Findings from C.O.P.E.

Dr. Montoro-Rodriguez's preliminary observations from the study indicate:

- ♦ *grandparents need assistance to rebuild their informal support systems since many reflected their feeling of isolation and lack of family/friend support; and*
- ♦ *respite care may not provide the desired relief because the caregiver does not use the time off effectively and grandparents would benefit from time management skills.*

GRG will continue to collaborate as Dr. Montoro-Rodriguez develops intervention plans and GRG anticipates offering his models to grandparents in Riverside County.



## Riverside County Pilots the iFoster Kinship Navigator

In September 2012, United Way of California was awarded a grant by the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children and Families, Children's Bureau for a three year study of the effectiveness of providing Kinship Navigator services through an internet web portal. The goal is to develop the most comprehensive, self-service resource website customized for grandparents, kinship caregivers, and foster parents that is localized to Riverside County.

The iFoster Kinship Navigator will be an interactive online service offering self-serve access to resources from private, public and governmental providers tailored to the needs of kinship/foster families. In addition, iFoster will negotiate with regional retailers for discounts and special offers for kinship caregivers. Resources will be searchable by key words and accessible through direct links and telephone contact.

Resources will be focused in 10 categories that were identified by focus groups of kinship caregivers:



- ◆ Education Support
- ◆ Computers & Communication
- ◆ Health & Wellness
- ◆ Recreational Activities
- ◆ Post Secondary/Youth Employment
- ◆ Food
- ◆ Household Expenses
- ◆ Support Groups
- ◆ Clothing & Personal Goods
- ◆ Child Care & Parenting Help

A County Collaborative, utilizing the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force, will focus on improving service delivery and coordination of the services available in the County. Demographic data, survey results and portal usage will be collected by the website and provided to the County Collaborative for evaluation to help determine service needs in Riverside County. This data will provide the GRG Task Force with information about informal caregivers who have not been involved with the juvenile or social services systems. The Collaborative will also be able to monitor satisfaction with the resources referred by the portal through online feedback.

The study component will evaluate the effectiveness of the model in improving outcomes for kinship children and their caregivers. Users of iFoster will be asked to participate in a series of assessments measuring the participants' well-being over the study period.



## Key Project Components for iFoster Kinship Navigator

**One-stop resource portal** for all governmental benefits; community-based, non-profit and faith-based services; and retail discounts for grandparents and kinship caregivers and their children available online, via mobile devices, and through iFoster Navigator phone support.

**User data sharing** with the County Collaborative on their portal usage, service referrals and any service delivery issues they encounter with government, community-based and retail providers referred through the portal.

**Study data** evaluating the impact of increased access to resources for grandparents and kinship families on their needs, child permanency, and child and caregiver well-being.

## Youth as Caregiver Network

*"In the first national study focusing on children and adolescents who care for relatives in their homes, 1.3 to 1.4 million young people, ages 8 to 18, have been identified in this country as "youth caregivers." These children and adolescents provide significant assistance to relatives or household members who need help because of physical or mental illness, disability, frailty associated with aging, substance misuse, or other conditions. Their responsibilities include personal care, medical care, household management, language translation in medical settings, and emotional support. Indirect responsibilities include parenting siblings and caring for the care recipients' personal affairs. [Professionals] must be aware that his or her dual role as student and caregiver affects these children profoundly. By identifying youth caregivers, measures of intervention and support can be implemented."*

Barber, M., MD and Siskowski, C., (2008). Youth Caregivers: Unrecognized Providers of Care. *American Academy of Pediatrics*.

## WHO ARE YOUTH CAREGIVERS?



**They are the brave young people who step up to take care of their families when no one else can, and they need our help.**

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force and Office on Aging's Family Caregiver Support Program have been facilitating a County-wide collaborative to address the issues facing youth caregivers and to establish a network of support services for these youth. Many of the grandchildren being raised by a grandparent find, as they and their grandparent age, the roles become reversed and the child is now caring for the grandparent.

Forty-two professionals attended the first meeting for Youth as Caregiver from a wide variety of agencies and services. The intent was to raise awareness about caregiving youth among service providers because they have

not received attention locally or nationally. Testimonials from caregiving youth helped participants understand the dynamics in the lives of these youth and long term impact on their development.

The **long range goals** for the network are:

1. to develop tools to help people who interact with youth identify those youth who may be caregivers; and
2. Develop a strong network of local providers to offer a support system for the youth.

The **immediate goal** is to identify a school district willing to be a pilot project for the collaborative to implement its strategies and develop the network of localized service providers.



## Grandchildren Are Becoming Youth Caregivers

*Mrs. M an 80 year old grandmother who has raised three granddaughters for the past 12 years. Although two of the girls are over age 18, they all continue to live with the grandmother. She took custody of the children when their mother was murdered. Her husband died within that same year, so she has raised the girls on her own.*

*She now has many medical needs and some cognitive impairment. She moves around with difficulty and uses a walker or a wheel chair for distances. She relies on the grandchildren to assist with most of her personal needs calling out to them continuously and banging on the walls to get their attention when they are in another part of the house. She is currently receiving In Home Support Services with the 18 year old granddaughter as her caregiver.*

*For the past 4 years, she has relied on the girls to assist in managing paperwork, making phone calls and maintaining the household. She tries to be as independent as possible and continues to provide support and encouragement to her granddaughters as she continues to raise them on her own.*

*A couple years ago the oldest granddaughter attempted suicide because of a number of stressful circumstances in her life, including her living situation. At the time, the grandmother expressed regret for expecting too much of her as the oldest girl. The grandmother is hesitant to ask too much of the girls as she realizes they are moving into a caregiving role for her.*

# Fatherhood Network Launched in Riverside County



*"It has long been recognized that one of the foundational problems in our society is the absence – some say exclusion – of fathers from their children's lives. This separation has negative consequences for the man involved as well as the children, and, ultimately society as a whole.*

*Beginning in January 2011, California counties were urged to step up their efforts to provide father inclusion and engagement services. When social workers and family service professionals open their hearts to fathers as redeemable persons, it's a win-win. When absent fathers are reunited or re-engaged with their children, it's a win-win-win."*

Adam Gettinger-Bruizela MA, Paternal Opportunities

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) is active in the launch of the Riverside County Fatherhood Network as part of a state-wide initiative to build support networks to strengthen father and grandfather involvement in raising children. The goals of the Network are to provide support, encouragement and education to fathers/grandfathers to have positive involvement in parenting and to provide role models for their sons. Grandfathers have many of the same issues as biological fathers with the added dynamic of having to adjust their role in the child's life from being grandpa to being the parent.

The Network meets monthly to identify and coordinate services in the County and share resources for encouraging father involvement in a wide variety of family needs like education, mental health, recreation, probation and parenting support.

In a recent survey, responders identified the following priorities for the Network:

- ◆ Education and skill development in relating to children
- ◆ Father-Child activities in the school districts
- ◆ Father support groups & free/inexpensive father-child activities to improve relationships
- ◆ More resources for professionals to enhance father-child relationships
- ◆ Help for mothers to accept/appreciate that father parenting is different from mothering
- ◆ Help for mothers in learning to partner with fathers in child raising
- ◆ Promote father programs offered throughout the County

# GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR 2012—2013

---

### Support Services

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program (GRG) was established to provide emotional and practical support to grandparents as they face the challenges of being primary caregivers for their grandchildren. This support is offered in a number of formats by a team of caring professionals and includes **information and assistance, care management, education, subsidized child care and peer support groups**. The scope of many of these services for grandparents as family caregivers is defined by the Older Americans Act, which provides funding for the program.

- ◆ Nearly twice as many children ages 5 to 17 living in a grand-family has a disability compared to children in a parent-headed household.
- ◆ 33% of the children living in a grand-family are living below the poverty level — double the number in parent-headed families.
- ◆ Nearly 50% of grand-family households face a crisis in housing cost burdens.

*Grand Facts, AARP*

### Information & Assistance — 1,111 contacts

The majority of the grandparents served are aided with **Information and Assistance (I&A)** through a telephone or a personal visit. Together with the WarmLine, GRG staff provide information on services available in the community, including programs of other County agencies, and often connect grandparents directly with specific service workers, supervisors and other partners that support the GRG Task Force. **During fiscal year 2012-2013, GRG staff provided I&A support through over 1,111 telephone calls.**

The majority of telephone calls were about financial assistance and public benefits. The next most frequent issue was grandparent rights related to either getting custody or visitation with their grandchildren. The program social worker reports that there has been an increase of contacts from grandparents who are caregivers for both grandchildren and an elderly parent.



## WarmLine — 837 contacts

The **WarmLine** is an “800” telephone contact for emotional support, education, information and referral services to relative caregivers, particularly grandparents. It is funded and staffed by the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Youth & Community Resources & Support Services Region. The WarmLine was established to assist relatives in breaking through barriers when accessing services. And, to help County agencies deliver services to this population. The DPSS social worker on the WarmLine has experience with Children’s Services, which enables the worker to assist in answering grandparent concerns and working with staff from multiple County programs involved with that grandparent to collect information and devise solutions to grandparent issues.



## Personal Support (Case Management) — 822 contact hours

For those families facing complex issues the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) social worker provides one-on-one personal support to the grandparent through case management. **During this year, 822 contact hours of personal support was provided.** After an in-depth assessment of the needs of the grandparent and their grandchildren, a care plan is developed to resolve the concerns, provide support, advocacy and linkages to resources that may be needed to be successful in parenting their grandchild.

A major issue for many grandparents is **financial hardship** expressed through requests for assistance with food, utilities and rent. Grandparents also sought support for **legal issues and accessing educational services**. The GRG social worker informed grandparents about the services available and coached them on how to access those services empowering grandparents to help themselves and their grandchildren.

Another prevalent issue for both case management and WarmLine calls is **parenting a teen**. Grandparents are challenged by teen behaviors and activities. While this is a common experience for many households, it is particularly difficult for grandparents because of the generation gap between them and the world their teens live in today. The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Program provides resources on teen issues through distribution of education materials, the GRG Newsletter, and referrals to teen-related community services and special events.

## **Case Management Takes on a Variety of Challenges**

Mrs. R is a fifty-nine year old Spanish-speaking woman living with her husband and two children ages 13 and 15. In addition, she is caring for three grandchildren ages 6, 12 and 16. Mr. and Mrs. R are unemployed and receiving public assistance, however, they were not receiving any aid for their grandchildren and struggled to meet all of the needs of their household. Mr. and Mrs. R assumed the care of their grandchildren after the mother moved to Mexico and the father decided he was unable to meet the demands of parenting.

Mr. R is disabled due to various medical conditions and Mrs. R felt unable to seek employment because of her responsibilities as caregiver for all of the household members. The sixteen year old grandchild is autistic and suffers from seizures but because Mr. and Mrs. R did not have guardianship of the children, they were limited in their capacity to make educational and medical decisions on behalf of the children.

The GRG social worker assisted Mr. and Mrs. R in accessing a wide range of services. The family completed the application for additional cash assistance for the grandchildren and food stamps. The social worker referred them to Kin Care for help with the guardianship application and Mrs. R was granted permanent guardianship of the grandchildren allowing her to address their grandson's medical needs. The autistic child was connected with Inland Regional Center and was signed up for Supplemental Social Security payments. Additionally, the social worker completed a referral for In-Home Supportive Services allowing Mrs. R to be compensated for being his caregiver. The other children received assistance with tutoring, vision screenings and glasses from resources and referrals that GRG provided.

# Collaboration at Work in Family Support—6 team meetings

The key to the success of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) is collaboration with other county agencies and community-based organizations to meet the needs of grandparents facing multiple issues. To meet the needs of a specific GRG family, the GRG social worker has access to the service partners to meet as the **Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)**. The MDT brings together the experiences and resources of various agencies and organizations to develop a strategy for the client to streamline access to the appropriate services and resources to resolve their issues. The members of this team represent a spectrum of county agencies, and may include:



- ◆ Riverside County Child Protective Services (CPS),
- ◆ Riverside County Adult Protective Services (APS),
- ◆ Riverside County Mental Health,
- ◆ Riverside County Public Health,
- ◆ Riverside County Probation Department,
- ◆ Riverside County Office of Education,
- ◆ California Family Life Center's Kin Care, and
- ◆ Other community-based organizations as appropriate for the case.

Similarly, GRG staff have been active partners in Children & Family Services' **Team Decision Making (TDM)** meetings. TDMs bring together community providers to meet with the family and interested parties as part of the Family-to-Family program and is dedicated to improving outcomes for children in foster and kinship care based on the principles that:

- ⇒ children need families;
- ⇒ families need the help of strong, nurturing communities;
- ⇒ and child welfare agencies and communities are better able to help children and families when they commit to working together.

## GrandsClub – 72 support groups for grandparents

**Support Groups** are an opportunity to join a supportive social network and an important resource to discuss and resolve family dilemmas with peers who are going through similar situations. Grandparents can learn more about community resources and strategies that have worked in other families, get reassurance that they are doing something important, and have an opportunity to share their circumstances with people who understand and will not be judgmental.

Through partnership with California Family Life Center's Kin Care Program, **72 support group meetings were held** in Temecula, Riverside, Cathedral City, Beaumont, Perris and Hemet. These groups are facilitated by staff from the two programs and often included experts from community partners to share information with the grandparents.



### GrandsClub Empowers Grandmother

Mrs. G is a 70 year old widow who adopted a daughter's three children ages 7, 8 and 13. She was renting rooms in another daughter's home with her husband and children. Mrs. G reported that the living situation was stressful and she was expected to take care of the household including cooking, cleaning, laundry and transportation. She felt restricted in the situation and isolated from her social network.

She attended the GRG support group periodically and finally contacted the GRG social worker. The social worker assisted Mrs. G in finding an affordable apartment so she could leave her daughter's home. While relieved to have made the move, the grandmother admitted she was experiencing some depression. The social worker helped her enroll in a depression intervention through the Department of Mental Health and encouraged her to return to the GRG support group.

After returning to the group, Mrs. G reported to the social worker that she felt much better expressing her feelings and enjoyed going to the support group to talk with others and listen to what other grandparents were going through. At one of the group meetings, she thanked the group for their support in helping her to realize that she could say "no" to her family and make decisions that improved her life and the lives of her grandchildren.

## Child Care Support— nearly 100 children served



The Child Care Program provides funding to cover a portion of the cost for childcare for grandchildren from birth through 5 years old. Program eligibility is based on the grandparent's age and household income. Respite, or part-time care, provides opportunities for the grandparent to take care of family errands, medical appointments and get needed rest. Assistance

full-time childcare is provided to working grandparents to allow them to continue in the work force to support their newly extended family.

The Child Care Program is made possible by funding through First 5 Riverside, using Proposition 10 "Tobacco Tax" money from the State. With funding available during fiscal year 2012-2013 Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) was able to maintain an **average enrollment of 45 children per month and serve nearly 100 children in childcare.**

## Childcare Funding Saved

As the First 5 Commission considered award recommendations for grants to support homeless families under its designation "Families in Crisis," GRG Task Force members—co-chairs **Dianne Lewis** and **Opal Hellweg**, Legislative/Systems Change Chair **Mary Price**, grandparents and staff—addressed the Commission to emphasize the importance of childcare support for grandparents.

The Commissioners expressed unanimous concern about losing services for grand-parents who are raising their grandchildren and a motion was made to approve the recommended awards for the homeless and to direct the staff to explore alternate funding from auxiliary First 5 funds to continue the Grandparents Raising Grand-children (GRG) Program. As a result funding was extended for the GRG Child Care Program for 13 months through December 2013 and a new Request For Proposals was issued specific to grandparents raising their grandchildren.



# Thank You First 5 Riverside for Continued Support of Childcare for Grandparents



Riverside County Children & Families Commission

A division of the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services



## Childcare Makes a Difference

*A grandmother contacted the Child Care program in response to receiving a GRG flyer at a health fair. She was raising an infant granddaughter who had been in her care since birth. The GRG Child Care Coordinator visited the grandmother in her home to complete the application and learned that the grandmother was eighty years old and had disabilities that made caring for an infant a challenge. She wanted childcare assistance to give her time for doctor appointments, shopping, and other chores without having to take the baby along.*

*The application was approved but the grandmother did not drive and would not be able to transport her grandchild to a day care. The Child Care Coordinator researched and provided information on care facilities in the area that would provide transportation. The grandmother was also referred to the GRG Social Worker and to the Office on Aging for further support services for herself.*

*After more than a year attending childcare, the toddler is thriving, and interacting with other children in the day care and displaying improved child development and social skills. The grandmother also received assistance with parenting skills. Now that her granddaughter is walking and talking the grandmother finds it easier to provide care and enjoys raising her granddaughter.*

# Community Education & Outreach

## Quarterly Newsletter—4 editions reach 1500 readers

Quarterly newsletters are produced and distributed to 1500 grandparents and community providers to further the goal of providing information, parenting tips, and identifying services and resources addressing the needs of grandparents and their grandchildren. The newsletters offered useful tips on health, safety, nutrition, parenting and activities for children. Topics this year included:

- ◆ Internet Safety
- ◆ Cyber Bullying
- ◆ Avoiding phone scams targeting seniors
- ◆ Dealing with stress
- ◆ Going shopping with your little one
- ◆ Taking the stress out of meal time
- ◆ Teens and career choices
- ◆ Making eating vegetables fun
- ◆ Water safety
- ◆ Staying cool



## Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Featured at National Conference

Michele Wilham, Director and Stephen Geist, Program Manager, had the opportunity to present a workshop titled, **“Grandparents to the Rescue: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren,”** at the American Society on Aging’s national conference in Chicago. The conference attracts 3500 to 4000 professionals in aging services, government and



research. The workshop highlighted the County’s commitment to services for grandparents raising grandchildren and the collaborative model that makes the program effective in helping grandparents navigate through the maze of services from multiple County providers. Workshop attendees packed the room and included a group of social work students and their instructor eager to learn about GRG issues and a model for response by a public agency.

## Community Presentations Reach the Public and Partners

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) offers community presentations for the public and professional audiences to share information about GRG issues and services provided by GRG and other community agencies.

### In 2012-2013 Community presentations included:

- ◆ Metro Partners—sponsored by Child Protective Services (CPS), Riverside Office
- ◆ In-service for CPS Emergency Workers, Banning Office
- ◆ Norco Senior Center
- ◆ Mead Valley Community Center
- ◆ Riverside Unified School District Head Start/Early Kindergarten
- ◆ Banning Pass Collaborative sponsored by the Banning School District and CPS
- ◆ Women, Infants & Children Services workers



## Community Collaborations

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren staff participate in 8 County collaborative meetings on a monthly or quarterly schedule, where staff and grandparents share resource updates and program information, including:

- ◆ Metro Community Partners sponsored by the Riverside office of CPS
- ◆ Temecula-Murrieta Valley Interagency Council sponsored by the Temecula and Murrieta School Districts
- ◆ Moreno Valley Multi-Agency Collaborative sponsored by Moreno Valley School District
- ◆ Banning Pass Collaborative sponsored by the Banning School District and CPS
- ◆ Inland Empire Disabilities Collaborative
- ◆ Riverside Child Care Consortium
- ◆ iFoster Kinship Navigator

## Resource Fairs—22 Community Events



- ◆ Compassion Community Church
- ◆ Temecula Valley High School
- ◆ Recovery Happens Resource Fair sponsored by Department of Mental Health
- ◆ Perris Valley Family Resource Center
- ◆ San Jacinto Head Start
- ◆ Dale Senior Center
- ◆ Senior Fair sponsored by Senator Bill Emerson
- ◆ Loma Linda University Drayson Center
- ◆ Mecca Family Resource Center
- ◆ Moreno Valley Holiday Health Fair sponsored by Moreno Valley Family Health Clinic
- ◆ Celebrate Families Resource Fair sponsored by Riverside County Mental Health
- ◆ Coachella Health Fair sponsored by Remote Area Medical
- ◆ Day of the Young Child sponsored by Riverside County Child Care Consortium
- ◆ Day of the Young Child sponsored by Corona-Norco Day of the Child
- ◆ Day of the Young Child sponsored by Desert Hot Springs Boys & Girls Club
- ◆ Riverside County Regional Medical Center
- ◆ Nuview Unified School District
- ◆ Perris Day of the Child sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse
- ◆ San Geronio Health Fair sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse
- ◆ Hemet Valley Health Fair sponsored by Hemet Valley Medical Center
- ◆ Family Night sponsored by Desert Sands Unified School District
- ◆ Pride Festival of Palm Springs

## Sharing the Holiday Spirit—95 families benefit

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) families are always very grateful for the members of the community who step forward to help make the holidays brighter. The Riverside County Supervisor District Youth Advisory Councils (YAC) were very generous again this year with providing Thanksgiving bounty for our families.

- ◆ **District 2 YAC donated 4 food baskets**
- ◆ **District 4 YAC collected food in the Desert area and adopted 2 families in Blythe**
- ◆ **District 5 YAC donated 2 food baskets**
- ◆ **Olive Branch Church adopted 4 families in the Corona/Norco area**
- ◆ **GRG staff donated 6 turkeys**



In addition, the following generous donors helped us provide an extra bit of joy to over **350 individuals in 83 families** the holiday season.

- ◆ **Supervisor Bob Buster - \$1,000**
- ◆ **Foundation on Aging - \$1,200 in gift cards**
- ◆ **Nita Rush & Norco Lioness Club – 50 gift boxes filled with an assortment of toys and personal items**
- ◆ **Norco Lioness Club also adopted 4 families providing food baskets and gifts**
- ◆ **Over the Hill Classic Car Club in Murrieta - \$300 in gift cards**
- ◆ **The Campbells (a GRG family) donated \$125 in gift cards**
- ◆ **Sparks of Love donated toys for infants and toddlers**



# TESTIMONIALS

"I just want to say thank you to the staff for being so helpful.

My great grandson was 1 year old when I got him. I had to stop working to care for him as day-care is expensive and I'm not allowed to leave him with anyone not licensed. My great grandson has benefited greatly from daycare because he's able to interact with kids his own age and they have a great program for toddlers.

My other grandson enrolled in community college with the encouragement and help of your staff. Your social worker never gave up on us, she mailed info on housing, grants for my grandson, info on WIC, day-care etc. Without her help I probably wouldn't have followed up on paperwork because I was so overwhelmed.

And lastly, I am now able to work outside the home and care for my mom knowing my great grandson is well taken care of in a licensed daycare near our home. I will be forever thankful."

*"Thank you for all you have done for me and my grandson. I really do not know what I would have done without the support of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG). I could not have had such a wonderful childcare for my grandson. In this terrible economy I have been struggling to keep my home and find employment. The support and guidance you provide to grandparents is a value words cannot describe. It is difficult enough to begin to be a "new parent" again and then not have the resources or support to get through it can be overwhelming to say the least. Having your help and personal support meant everything. Sometimes we never realize how we touch someone's life for the better and you have done that for my family."*



**"I thank God every day for the program and all the support that has been given. Without this program I really sometimes feel that maybe I would have failed but the program was my life-line. It allowed me to raise my grandchildren."**

# GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

## Committee Chairs

Task Force Co-chair  
Task Force Co-chair  
Legislative/Systems Change Committee  
Program & Public Relations Committee

Dianne Lewis  
Opal Hellweg  
Mary Price  
Mary Hrinko

## Board of Supervisors Grandparent Representatives

District I:  
District II:  
District III:  
District IV:  
District V:

James Sinkiewicz  
Donna Johnston  
Marci Volz  
Dianne Lewis  
Vacant

## Grandparents Representatives at Large

Mary Ann Stewart  
Robert Stewart  
Debb Walker

## Elected Officials Representatives

Senator Bill Emmerson:  
Assemblyman Brian Nestande:  
Supervisor Kevin Jeffries:  
Supervisor John Tavaglione:  
Supervisor Jeff Stone:  
  
Supervisor John Benoit:  
Supervisor Marion Ashley:

David Morgan  
Sarah Dukett  
Robin Reid  
Karen Christensen  
Opal Hellweg  
Gina Gonzalez  
Noel Loughrin  
Barry Busch

# GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

## Riverside County Departments

### Department of Public Social Service

Adult Protective Services:

Mark Sellers

Adult Protective Services:

Janet Hale

Child Protective Services:

Michelle Wohl

Child Protective Services:

Veronica Hilton

Foster Care:

Teresa Hendricks

Department of Mental Health:

Laura England

Department of Mental Health:

Kathy Webb

Department of Public Health:

Craig Demers

Department of Public Health:

Lorena Novak Bull

Office of Education:

Stephan McPeace

Office of the District Attorney:

Evelyn Essenwanger

Office on Aging:

Jamiko Bell

Office on Aging:

Mary Hrinko

## Community Agencies and Organizations Representatives

First 5 Riverside:

Jean Alexander-Booth

Kin Care:

Rachel Moreno

Kin Care:

Kathy Williams

The Stephan Center:

Victoria Stephan

## Education Representatives

UC Cooperative Extension:

Chutima Ganthavorn, Ph.D.

Temecula Valley Unified School District:

Marilyn Skrbini

Banning Unified School District:

Phillip Takacs

## Advisory Council on Aging

Barbara Brown

Dianne Lewis

Sonja Martin

Barbara Mitchell



Office on Aging Staff

Ed Walsh

Michele Wilham

Hilary Clarke,

Vikki Neugebauer

Director (July 1-December 31)

Director (January 1- present),

Deputy Director of Senior Programs

Deputy Director of Administration

Coordinated Care Programs Manager

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program

Stephen Geist

Veronica Castro

Donna Pierce

Carmen Cornejo

Tamara Williams

Program Manager

Social Worker

Child Care Coordinator

Office Assistant

WarmLine Social Worker

**GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN  
IS MADE POSSIBLE BY FUNDING FROM:**

**FIRST 5 RIVERSIDE**

**OLDER AMERICANS ACT TITLE III**

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF AGING**

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY GENERAL FUND**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES**

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DESIGNATION FUNDS**

**AND GENEROUS IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:**

**First 5 Riverside**

**Foundation on Aging**

**Inland Empire Health Plan**

**Molina Healthcare**

**Norco Lioness Club**

**The Cathedral Center**

**Sparks of Love**

**Mr. & Mrs. Scott Campbell**

**Olive Branch Church**

**Over the Hill Classic Car Club**

**Mary Phillips Senior Center**

**Janet Goeske Senior Center**



**Riverside County Office on Aging,  
Aging & Disability Resource Connection**

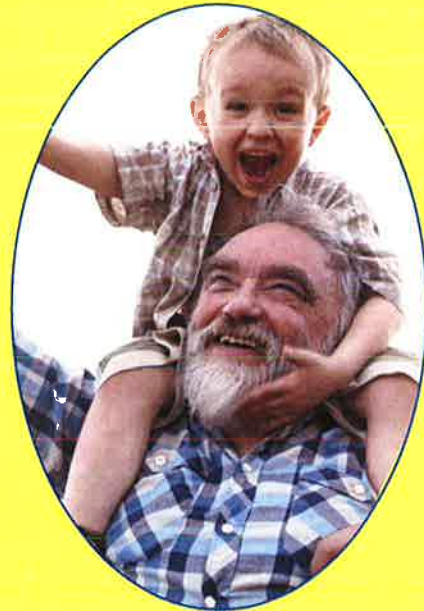
6296 River Crest Drive, Suite K

Riverside, CA 92507

(951) 867-3800

1(800) 510-2020

TTD (951) 697-4699



**Hemet Service Center & Program Site for  
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

749 N. State Street

Hemet, CA 92543

(951) 791-3573



Funding for this report was provided by the Office on Aging, ADRC through the Older Americans Act/Family Caregiver Program