

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

510A



FROM: Office on Aging

SUBMITTAL DATE:
January 22, 2013

SUBJECT: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Annual Report for FY 2011/2012.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Receive and File the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Annual Report for FY 11/12;
- 2) Instruct the Office on Aging to continue staff support to assist the Task Force in addressing the direction outlined in the attached report;
- 3) Support the ongoing participation of staff from county departments that serve grandparents raising grandchildren.

BACKGROUND: The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force created by the Board of Supervisors was first convened by the Office on Aging and the Advisory Council on Aging in October 1998 (Prev. Agn. Ref.: 3.45 06/30/1998). The goal of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force is to address the multiple and complex issues faced by grandparents raising grandchildren. The Task Force addressed issues such as affordable mixed generation housing, child care and legal assistance through education, program development, and by navigating the existing systems through advocacy, and improving overall access to services. The Task Force has been active since 1998 and continues to report back to the Board of Supervisors on an annual basis.

See page 2

Michele Wilham

Michele Wilham, Director

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----|-------------------------|-------|
| FINANCIAL DATA | Current F.Y. Total Cost: | -0- | In Current Year Budget: | No |
| | Current F.Y. Net County Cost: | -0- | Budget Adjustment: | No |
| | Annual Net County Cost: | -0- | For Fiscal Year: | 11/12 |

SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Requires 4/5 Vote | <input type="checkbox"/> |

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

County Executive Office Signature

BY: *Lani Sioson*
Lani Sioson

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Stone, seconded by Supervisor Ashley and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Tavaglione, Stone, Benoit and Ashley
 Nays: None
 Absent: None
 Date: February 26, 2013
 xc: Office on Aging

Kecia Harper-Ihem
 Clerk of the Board
 By: *Lani Sioson*
 Deputy

Prev. Agn. Ref.: 3.45 06/30/1998 | District: All | Agenda Number:

ATTACHMENTS FILED
 WITH THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

2-14

Dept't Recomm.: Policy Consent
 Per Exec. Ofc.: Policy Consent
 Departmental Concurrence

The following attachment is included:

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Annual Report for 2011-2012

Annual Report



Grandparents
Raising
Grandchildren

2011-2012



RIVERSIDE COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING

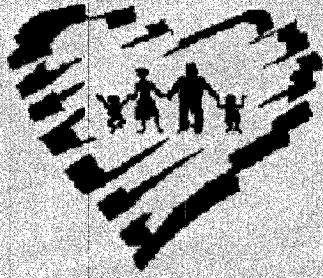
Aging & Disability
**Resource
Connection**
ADRC of RIVERSIDE COUNTY



Riverside County Office on Aging, ADRC

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR, Ed Walsh, MSW



Points of Interest:

- Introduction Pg. 2
- Background on the GRG Program Pg. 4
- Milestones of the GRG Task Force Pg. 5
- 2011-2012 Highlights Pg. 7
- Support Services Pg. 9
- Child Care Pg. 13
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- Community Outreach Pg. 19
- 2011 Holiday Highlights Pg. 21
- Future Goals of GRG Pg. 23



The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force Annual Report highlights the accomplishments of the past year. 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 grand-parent families across the County of Riverside. It is with great pride that the Task Force presents this Annual Report to provide an opportunity for the community to read about these heroic caregivers, who often receive their grandchildren very un-expectedly, but do so with a full and open heart ready to reassume the challenges of parenting. These grandparents raising grandchildren deserve our utmost respect and admiration for their ongoing commitment to keeping their families intact.

Based on current data there

are nearly 18,000 grandchildren under the age of 18 being raised in, what are now being called, "grandfamilies" in Riverside County. The Office on Aging expected to see an increase in the number of grandparent families due to the impact of the slow economic recovery and the demand for community services and supports will continue to escalate. It is through the collaborative partnerships forged and maintained by the Task Force that will allow the Office on Aging can continue to address the needs of grandparents raising grandchildren.

The Office on Aging has been recognized as a statewide leader in addressing the challenges of grandparents raising their grandchildren and we take this leadership role very seriously, as we continue to leverage the support of our partners to build a pathway to the future for our grandparent families in Riverside County.

THE RISE OF THE “GRANDFAMILY”

Across the United States, more than 5.8 million children live in their grandparent's homes. These families are often called “grandfamilies.”

More than 2.5 million grandparents are taking on the responsibility for these children, who have been displaced from their parents due to familial dysfunction related to drugs or incarceration, or due to the consequences of the economic downturn, which have impacted some communities and families harder than others. On some occasions, the parent is present in the grandparents' home, however nearly 1 million children are living in homes where the grandparent is the primary caregiver and neither parent is present in the home.



According to the 2010 US Census, the incidences of grandparents raising their grandchildren have increased significantly since 2000. Much of this increase is due to the downturn in the economy, the foreclosure crisis and the persistent jobless rate. Current statistics indicate that:

- ◆ 4.9 million (7%) of children under the age of 18 years old live with their grandparents
- ◆ Of those children 20% (almost 1 million) have neither parent in the home and rely on their grandparents for stability and support
- ◆ 67% of those grandparents raising grandchildren are under 60 years of age , and
- ◆ 20% of grandparents raising grandchildren live in poverty

These grandparents and the children they are raising are often isolated. They lack information about the range of support services, resources, programs, benefits, laws and policies available to help them successfully fulfill their caregiving role. In addition, to better serve children, families and older adults, educators and program practitioners need access to information about these key resources.

As increasing numbers of grandchildren rely on grandparents for the security of a home, their grandparents are taking on more of the responsibility for raising them in a tough economy. For these grandparents, raising another family wasn't part of the plan, but they step up to the plate when their loved ones need them. However, many of these grandparents face financial, health, housing, education and work challenges that often foil their retirement plans. These new figures magnify the need for more supports, resources and services for these "grandfamilies" so they can more effectively perform this important role in their families.

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN PROGRAM



Background of the Program

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors created the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Task Force in October 1998, to assist caregiving grandparents with accessing the services and resources necessary to secure their grandchildren and provide for their needs.

The Task Force established the GRG Program within the Office on Aging, which 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. The trained staff is committed to listen, assess, refer and help grandparents navigate the complex systems of services, benefits and regulations involved in safe and nurturing environment for their grandchildren. The GRG Program also works to identify needs, collect data, and advocate on behalf of this population for the development of additional community resources.

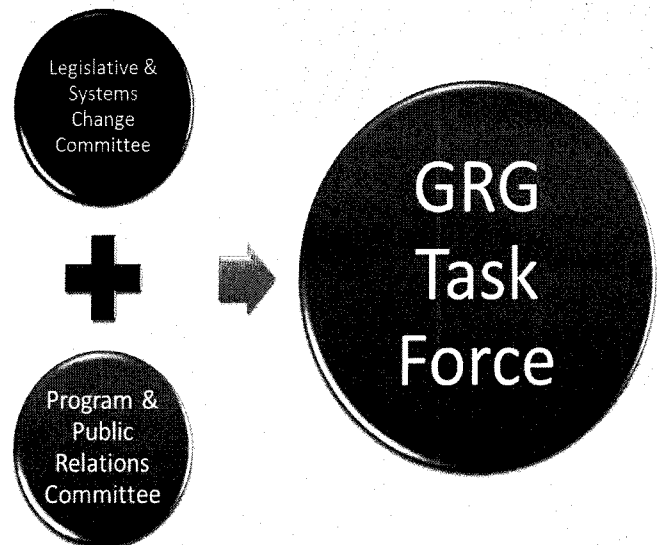
Beginning as a collaborative between the Office on Aging and the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), the Task Force grew to involve the Departments of Mental Health, Public Health, Probation, the Office of Education, Riverside Sheriff Department, other law enforcement, representatives from the County Board of Supervisors, other elected officials, and members from community agencies. A key to the success of the Task Force is the inclusion of grandparents in key leadership positions.

The Office on Aging continues to staff the GRG Program and convenes the GRG Task Force on a quarterly schedule.

Two subcommittees carry on the work of the GRG Task Force:

The Legislative/Systems Change Committee identifies legislative, regulatory, and policy barriers, along with program gaps that impact direct services for grandparents raising their grandchildren, and to propose changes to reduce the various barriers and close the gaps.

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.



MILESTONES OF THE GRG TASK FORCE

1998

The Task Force convened its first meeting in October

2000

- ◆ A program specialist was hired within the Office on Aging to staff the GRG Task Force and the WarmLine became operational within DPSS.
- ◆ The Task Force convened its first forum to identify needs and provide information on available resources.

2001

The Task Force completed a county-wide needs assessment by convening a series of grandparent focus groups to identify priority concerns and issues. The grandparents identified the top priority needs to direct the Task Force:

- ◆ Accessibility
- ◆ Fairness and impartiality
- ◆ Respect & Dignity
- ◆ System Intervention
- ◆ Legal assistance
- ◆ Child Care/Respite
- ◆ Consistency in services
- ◆ Counseling
- ◆ Support

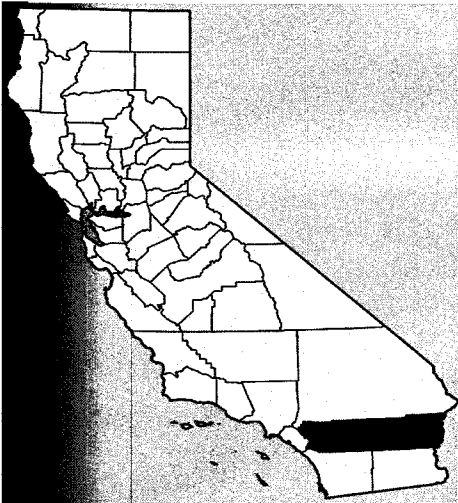
2002

The Task Force formed a special Ad Hoc Grievance Committee, at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, to address grandparent grievances with the service system. A workgroup evolved into the Red Tape Committee, which then became the Systems Change Committee and later expanded into the Legislative/Systems Change Committee. Early work of the Committee produced a grievance protocol within DPSS.

2006-2011

The Legislative/Systems Change Committee was successful in addressing a number of issues:

- ◆ Law enforcement has become more diligent in their cross reporting to CPS
- ◆ Guardianship fee waivers for children fourteen years and older are being accepted in the Hemet courts
- ◆ Advocacy for homeowner rights for grandparents with children in 55 plus communities funded by Section 8
- ◆ The second county-wide Needs Assessment Survey was completed in 2010
- ◆ October 24, 2011, the GRG Program moved into a service center in Hemet



In Riverside County 18,430

grandparents provide primary support for grandchildren 18 years and younger. Of those grandparents:

72.8% are married

27.2% are single

64.5% are working

22.6% have a disability

16.9% live on income below the poverty level

recent report by the Annie E.

Casey Foundation found that

extended-family caregivers are

more likely to be poor, elderly,

less educated and unemployed

compared with average

parents.

Challenges for Grandparents in 2011 through 2012

During 2011-2012, the Riverside County GRG Program observed that many of the most pressing issues facing caregiver grandparents have remained consistent. Legal issues regarding custody remained complex and often confused because of the dichotomy between juvenile and probate courts. More grandparents sought assistance from the program out of frustration over the ***lack of grandparent rights***—including visitation after grandchildren are re-unified with their parents and for the right to intervene to rescue children who they feel are at-risk, but whose situations have not yet come to the attention of Child Protective Services (CPS).

In 2011-2012, more grandparents faced very ***challenging financial situations***. While they may have felt economically secure when they took custody of their grandchildren, the economy has eroded their savings, investments and home values. The GRG staff found it more difficult to assist these grandparents due to the decrease in funding amongst the many public and community based organizations who provide extended or supplemental supportive services. In particular, the economy has ***impacted public schools*** and their capacity to provide services. The GRG program was called upon to provide ***more advocacy and support*** for grandparent rights in the schools in order to allow them to access Independent Education Plan (IEP) services and follow through.

Many grandparents expressed feeling overwhelmed as they tried to parent in today's culture and are challenged to catch up with the ***electronic age and its cultural impact***. They are feeling the generation gap as they observe new influences in their grand-children's lives and changes in their values. The GRG Program addressed the issues of raising teens today through support groups, case management and newsletters, which culminated in a county-wide conference on teens.

In 2011-2012, the GRG Task Force also focused on the ***growing issue of youth caregivers***; a phenomena which occurs when either grandchildren become "parents" to their younger siblings, or when young people become the primary caregiver for their aging grandparents. The GRG program held a summit this year to begin to address this issue with service providers and educators in order to develop better support for these young people.

Safe Families for Children

In September 2011, the Task Force was introduced to Olive Crest's Safe Families for Children program. This is a new resource for families in crisis who might be experiencing or witnessing child abuse or neglect. Each year, thousands of families do not qualify for service through county agencies. Grandparents who may be dealing with challenging circumstances can voluntarily request a safe home for their grandchildren. The parent or guardian retains legal custody and stays in contact with the children and host family. Olive Crest is working through faith-based communities to recruit and qualify volunteer hosts. During 2011-2012, GRG found this program to be a valuable resource on several occasions and assisted grandparents with alternative placements for their grandchildren during difficult times.



Safe Families for Children

Project C.O.P.E.

In December 2011, the Task Force meeting featured Dr. Julian Montoro-Rodriguez's presentation on Project COPE. California State University San Bernardino is one of four universities that will participate in this national study involving grandmothers who are raising their grandchildren. The goal of the study is to improve the lives of custodial grandmothers and the grandchildren they care for. Grandmothers will receive training in cognitive therapy and parenting skills to increase communication and reduce conflicts between grandmother and grandchild; thereby reducing stress levels for the grandmother. Professionals involved in the study have been selected and trained. The GRG Program has assisted in recruiting grandmothers and helped to identify session locations in Palm Desert and the City of Riverside.



TASK FORCE HIGHLIGHTS 2011-2012

California Senior Legislature

Sonja Martin, a new member of the Task Force, is also a member of the California Senior Legislature (CSL). The CSL consists of 80 Senior Assembly members and 40 Senior Senate members. Each October, the CSL meets in Sacramento to listen to proposals that affect seniors in California. They then vote to select 10 State initiatives and four Federal initiatives that are considered to be the top legislative priorities for the year. Once identified, the CSL lobbies State lawmakers to turn these proposals into bills and eventually lobbies the California legislature and the Governor to pass them into law. Ms. Martin encouraged the Task Force to utilize the Senior Legislature as a process for bringing GRG issues to Sacramento and has been an active member of the Task Force's Legislative/Systems Change Committee.



WarmLine

The WarmLine was shifted this year in a reorganization of region responsibilities within the Department of Public Social Services and is now included in the Youth & Community Resources & Support Services Region. In October, the role of the WarmLine was expanded to respond to inquiries from participants in the foster care "Independent Living Program (ILP)" and has been rebranded as the "Kinship and Youth WarmLine." The GRG Program has taken this opportunity to build on the partnership with the new region and the potential for collaboration with the Family Resource Centers throughout the County. Using the experiences of the ILP to develop similar programs, GRG now offers independent living skills for grandchildren outside of the foster system. Committee members shared their excitement about the revived energy behind the WarmLine and committed to help with promotion and utilization of this valuable resource.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Alliance on Mental Illness

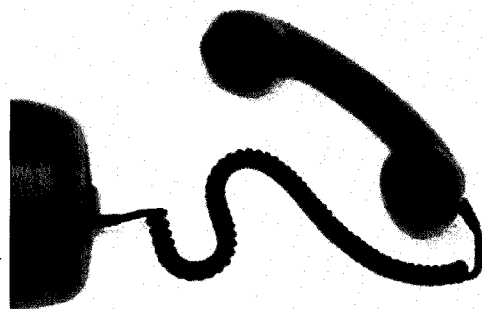
At the June 2012 meeting, Elin Zerai and Roxane Kamenski introduced the Task Force to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Founded in 1979, NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization. The focus of the organization is to help better the lives of those who are affected by mental illness. NAMI offers resources, education, and support to help these individuals through a wide range of programs. Several participants shared their experiences in dealing with the mental health issues of a loved one or a grandchild in their care. GRG hopes to partner with NAMI in the future to provide more services to our grandparents.



One of the primary missions of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program is to provide emotional and practical support to grandparents as they face the challenges of being parents to their grandchildren. This support comes in a variety of forms and from a team of caring professionals. Services include information and assistance, care management, education and support groups.

Information and Assistance:

1591 Clients Assisted

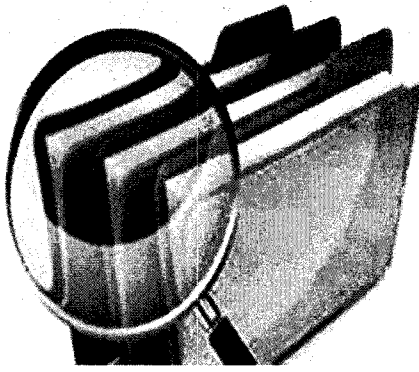


The majority of the grandparents served are aided by telephone or a personal visit. Grandparents are provided information about services available in the community including the programs of other County agencies. Through this information and assistance service, grandparents can be connected with specific professionals and partners that support the GRG Task Force.

The **WarmLine**, an "800" telephone number staffed by an experienced social worker, provides 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) and assists those relatives in breaking through barriers to accessing services and to improve service delivery to that population. The DPSS social worker on the WarmLine has experience with Children's Services, which enables her to assist in answering grandparent concerns and working with staff from multiple DPSS programs to collect information and devise solutions to grandparent issues.

Together with the WarmLine, the GRG staff provided support through 1591 telephone calls during the fiscal year 2011-2012. The majority of the telephone calls were requests for financial assistance and information about benefits. The next most frequent issue is information about grandparent rights related to placement or visitation. A growing number of calls are legal in nature and related to grandparents trying to understand why they do not have the right to intervene when they believe that their grandchildren are in dangerous situations, but do not meet the criteria for CPS involvement.





Case Management: 892 Contact Hours Logged

For those families facing complex issues, Veronica Castro, the GRG social worker, provides one-on-one personal support to the grandparent through case management. 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.

During this year, the GRG program logged 892 contact hours of care management. Contacts included face to face visits, phone contacts, and consultations with other service providers such as mental health, physicians, education providers and other social service agencies on behalf of the grandparents.

The GRG social worker coaches the grandparent on what services are available and how to access them. She will often attend Individualized Education Plan or Student Study Team meetings to provide support for the grandparent.

The issues most frequently addressed through case management include, but are not limited to:

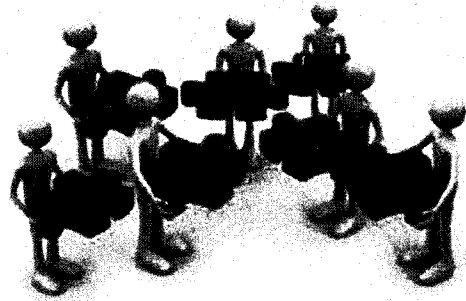
- Financial assistance and accessing benefits;
- Housing or rental assistance
- Food
- Children's clothing
- Utility assistance
- Accessing educational services
- Advocating for the rights of the guardian grandparent to represent their grandchild's needs.
- Parenting a teen

The GRG program saw an increase in walk-in cases, as well as cases involving more complex issues. Many grandparents with informal placement of their grandchildren are reluctant to seek legal guardianship of their grandchildren because they are optimistic that the parents will sort out their situations and take their children back. Unfortunately, some grandparents do not take legal action because they believe they have innate rights as a blood relative. In a recent incident involving one of Ms. Castro's clients that did not have legal guardianship in place, the biological mother came back to pick up her child after having lived out of state for over a year. There was nothing the grandmother could do to stop the mother from taking custody because she did not have any legal standing.



Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT): 6 Teams Assembled

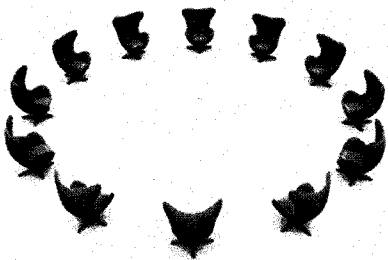
The social worker reviews more complicated cases with the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT). This MDT works to streamline the process for the grandparent in order to recommend and obtain the most appropriate services through their combined experiences and resources. The members of this team represent a spectrum of county agencies including:



- **Riverside County Child Protective Services (CPS),**
- **Riverside County Adult Protective Services (APS),**
- **Riverside County Mental Health,**
- **Riverside County Public Health,**
- **Riverside County Probation Department, and**
- **California Family Life Center's Kin Care Program.**

Collaboration and assistance from community partners continues to be critical to the success of the GRG care management program. Similarly, the GRG program staff are active partners in other multidisciplinary teams including the Children & Family Services' Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings. Team decision making is a key strategy used to implement the DPSS and Child Protective Services' Family-to-Family program. The TDM is dedicated to improving outcomes for children and grandchildren in foster care and is 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.

Support Groups

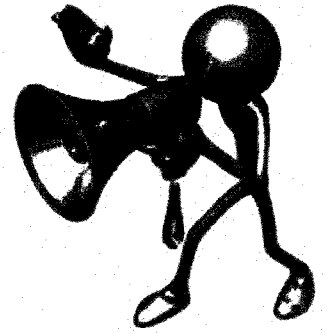


Support Groups are an important resource that grandparents use to discuss and resolve family dilemmas with peers who share the same experiences. Grandparents learn more about other community resources, create a network connection, and have the opportunity to share their stories with people who understand and will not be judgmental.

Through a partnership with California Family Life Center's Kin Care Program, six support groups met monthly in Temecula, Riverside, Cathedral City, Beaumont, Perris and Hemet. These groups were facilitated by staff and often brought in experts from community partners to share information and resources with the grandparents. In the three groups facilitated by GRG, 53 grandparents have participated in a support group this year. After reforming the Riverside support group last year, the group meeting at the Janet Goeske Senior Center has grown to be the largest group with the most consistent participation; an average monthly attendance of 10 grandparents.

GRG SUPPORTIVE SERVICE

TESTIMONIALS



A 57 year old grandmother raising 4 grandchildren with the help of her husband was having difficulty addressing her medical needs due to lack of health insurance and a reluctance to seek services because of her inability to pay. After some hurdles the grandmother was able to receive Medi-Cal and is now attending to her medical needs. The GRG social worker was able to see signs and of depression in both the client and her husband, prompting her to speak to them about the Late Life Depression Program. At first it appeared both were open to receiving help, but the grandfather decided he did not need help. The grandmother, however, is still participating in the program and claims it has been extremely beneficial to her and her family.

A 76 year grandmother was referred to the WarmLine for guidance regarding some issues she was having with her 9 year old grandson's school. The school moved him out of some of his special education courses and when the grandmother requested that he be reinstated, the school stated that, as his grandmother, she was not the holder of his educational rights and therefore could not act on his behalf.

The grandmother, who had legal guardianship through CPS, was confused and had never encountered any problems prior to this incident. The WarmLine social worker was able to reach out to Riverside County Office on Education for direction and was told grandmother need only present her guardianship paperwork with the court seal to the school to rectify the situation. The GRG social worker was able to contact a court officer and get them to waive the \$20.00 fee and courier the paperwork to the foster care supervisor.

A 65 year old grandmother who, along with her husband, was raising her 2 year old grandson. The grandmother had some disabilities, but with the help of her husband they managed to care for their grandson, who also had some health problems and developmental delays. When this grandmother began receiving case management services she was very reluctant to work with the health care professionals who could address her grandson's health issues.

Through case management services she was able to open up and obtained the skills to work with these professionals. Her grandson has since been treated and is doing much better. Furthermore, she has been able to reach out to family members for assistance with her grandson while she undergoes a necessary medical procedure.



CHILD CARE

GRG Places 100 Grandchildren Under Age 5

A grant from First 5 Riverside, funded through Proposition 10, allowed the GRG Program to provide child care and respite assistance for grand-parents raising grandchildren ages 0-5. Respite care provides opportunities for the grandparents to take care of family errands, medical appointments and provide needed rest. The GRG Program was awarded \$447,560 for fiscal year 2011-2012, to support a roster of 50 low to moderate income children ages 5 and under. Assistance for full-time child care was provided to working grandparents to sustain grandparents in the work force and to support the family.

In the final monitoring review by the First 5 staff, the GRG Program met or exceeded all target goals. During the funding period, the GRG Program provided services to an aggregate of 100 children and 113 grandparents. Of those served, 6 were children with special needs who were diagnosed with disorders like autism, attention deficit hyper-activity disorder, post-traumatic syndrome, learning deficits or physical challenges. Twenty eight families in the Child Care Program were referred to other health and education services through the assessment and care planning services of the GRG Program.

This year ended a four-year contract cycle for First 5 and new Request For Proposals (RFP) were issued for future funding . Funding categories were restructured under their new Strategic Plan and GRG was included in "Families in Crisis" with a much smaller allocation of funds to be distributed. In October, the First Five Commission voted to extend the GRG program for 18 additional months, until December 2013, for \$303,333.



Riverside County Children & Families Commission
A division of the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services

Child Care Testimonial: *A grandmother, who had recently taken custody of her very active 3 year old granddaughter, was feeling overwhelmed. The grandmother had several chronic health conditions that required monthly medical appointments. When her granddaughter came to live with her, attending these appointments became difficult and stressful. Often times, she would have to leave the doctor's office without being seen because of her granddaughter's behavior. Unfortunately, the child could not be left with any other family member. The grandmother was referred to the GRG Child Care Coordinator and GRG was able to enroll the grandchild respite child care so that her grandmother could take proper care of her health. The grandmother also reported that attending child care has improved her granddaughter's behavior and increased her social skills.*

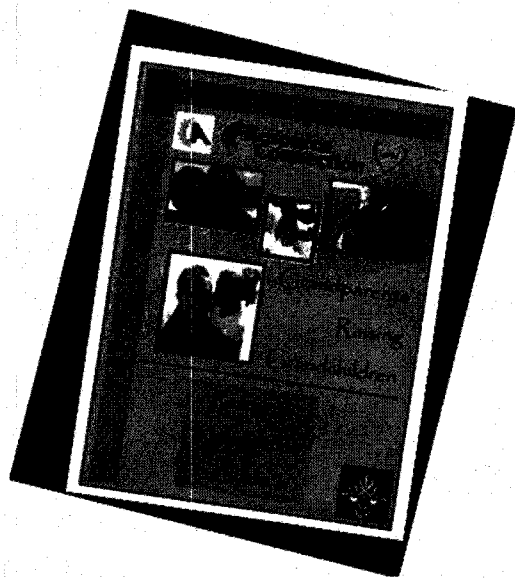
COMMUNITY EDUCATION

2011 Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Resource & Information Guide

Last year, the committee began updating the Resource & Information Guide that has been distributed to grandparents since 2007. Much of the information was updated because of legislative changes and fiscal changes to State and County programs. Some of the resource referral information was outdated because providers relocated or discontinued services. The committee also realized that the original Guide was written from the perspective of the juvenile system and the new Guide should include information about guardianships through the probate system.

This edition also includes more information about the education system, probation, health, and mental health. To help raise grandparents' awareness of current issues, the Guide also includes warning signs related to important topics like trauma, depression, suicide, bullying, cyber bullying, gang activity, tagging, and substance abuse. The resulting updated Guide is a valuable resource not only for grandparents, but also for professional service providers.

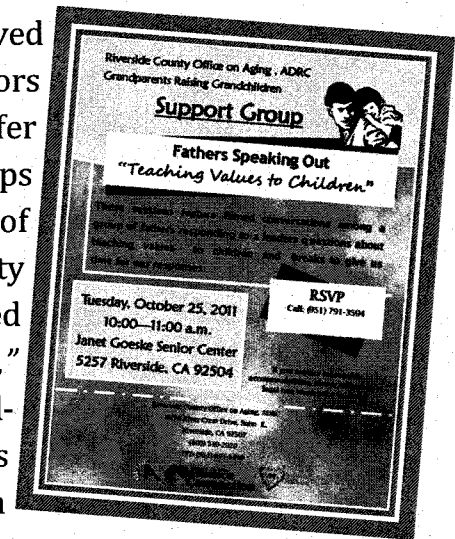
The focus in 2011 has been on distributing the Guides to grandparents and service providers. Grandparents have been very grateful for the information and many treat it as their text book on grandparenting. The Guide was presented to several professional collaboratives and a special effort was made to distribute copies to each school district in the County. As a result of this outreach, the GRG Program was asked to give presentations on the GRG Program to the Moreno Valley Multi-Agency Collaborative, the Pass Collaborative sponsored by Banning Unified School District (USD), Faith in Action group of Banning/Beaumont, and the grandparents of Beaumont USD. The Temecula USD sent an electronic version of the Guide to each school in their District.





“Fathers Speaking Out”

The Stephan Center received funding from Supervisors Tavaglione and Benoit to offer its program, **“Fathers Speaking Out”** to grandparent groups in their districts. The presentation involves viewing a video of men discussing the topic and giving attendees an opportunity to respond during pauses in the tape. The topics included *“Teaching Values to Children,”* *“Playing with Your Children,”* and *“Discipline vs. Punishment.”* The discussions made grandfathers mindful of the differences in attitudes and values between the time they were growing up and the generation they are raising today.



CalFresh Project

Task Force member, Chutima Ganthavorn, from University of California Cooperative Extension teamed up with Jill Kowalski, CalFresh Outreach Liaison from Department of Public Social Services to offer a new curriculum titled *“Plan, Shop, Save, and Cook”*. Participants attended two educational sessions and afterwards an eligibility technician was available to help them complete the CalFresh application. The goal was to reach older adults who may not be aware that they qualify for this benefit and to educate them on meal planning, buying groceries on a budget, and creating a menu for the week. The programs were offered in Perris and Hemet for grandparents and kinship caregivers.

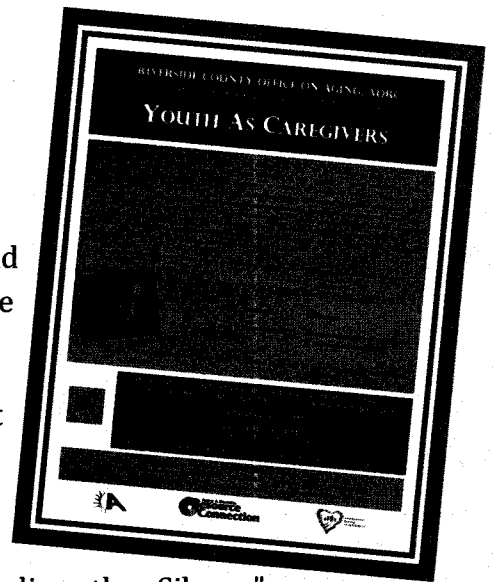


COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Youth as Caregiver

This situation occurs often within GRG families where grand parents take in very young grandchildren and, as both age, the grandchild becomes caregiver to the elder grandparent.

The "Youth as Caregiver" summit was held on May 17, 2012, at the Banning DPSS office. Forty-two professionals attended, representing a wide variety of agencies and services from school districts to probation, CPS, hospice and faith based communities. The program featured the documentary "Ending the Silence" produced by a model youth caregiving support program in Canada. A brief power point was used to review statistics from U.S. studies, identifying youth caregivers, and issues for caregiving youth. The program highlight was a very frank discussion with two former caregiving youth about their personal experiences and reactions to caregiving followed by Q&A with the audience. Following a networking lunch, participants had the opportunity to share information about resources their agencies can offer these youth and began a discussion about how the community can come together and provide better support systems to help these youth succeed personally and as caregivers. More meetings will be scheduled next year to continue the conversation.

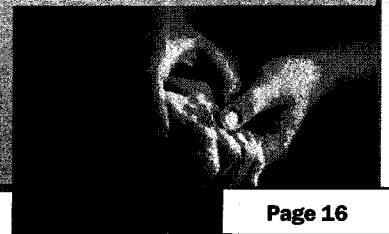


TESTIMONIAL

A couple took in two grandchildren when they were under 5 years old. After ten years of care giving, both grandparents suffered strokes limiting their mobility and capacity to care for the home. The now 15 year old grandson was taking more responsibility for the home, his grandparents and younger sibling. Initially, the grandmother did not acknowledge the effect of her limitations on her ability to be a caregiver, nor did she recognize the additional responsibility her grandson was incurring. The grandson had become resentful resulting in behavior issues and deteriorating performance in school, and the family labeled him as the "problem." However, after a through assessment and discussion the team realized that the family needed support services to meet the grandparents' physical needs and the grandson needed recognition and support for his new role as primary caregiver.

NATIONAL CAREGIVER STATISTICS

- 23% of those who care for loved ones for more than 5 years or more report that their health is fair to poor
- Stress of family caregiving for persons with dementia has been shown to impact a person's immune system for up to 3 years
- 40% to 70% of family caregivers have clinically significant symptoms of depression compared to 8% of their non-caregiving peers
- Family caregivers experiencing extreme stress have been shown to age prematurely and can take as much as 10 years off of a caregivers life.



Grandparent-Teen Conference Held June 20, 2012

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program partnered with Riverside City College's Foster & Kinship Care Program to offer a conference on teen issues for grandparents, other kin caregivers and their teen/preteen youth. The title, *Youth Organizing to Live on their Own*, played on a popular texting acronym "YOLO" (meaning You Only Live Once). The day focused on internet safety, parenting tips, life skills for teens preparing for independence, and empowering youth to make smart choices. Over 100 people benefitted from excellent speakers, interactive learning and resources shared by the exhibitors.

Claire Balanay, a Victims Specialist with the Los Angeles division of the FBI, opened with a presentation on Internet Safety in social networking, texting and gaming. This helped grandparents be more aware of the cyber world their children live in. Her points were illustrated with sobering video clips of teens who had become victims.

Workshops for the grandparents provided insights on parenting teens. Penny Davis, former director for the Foster & Kinship Care Program, explained development of the adolescent brain and thinking. Cara Filler, an international speaker and teen advocate, gave powerful tips on communicating with teens.

At the same time as these workshops, the youth participants were circulating through a series of four stations designed to trigger thinking about skills to help them move toward independence. They addressed employment, education, choices & consequence, and life skills like money management with fun activities.

One of the day's highlights was a panel of five youths who provided their perspectives on social networking, texting while driving, drinking and setting personal boundaries. Three of the panel represented the Youth Advisory Council of District 4. Two young men volunteered from the audience and their candid comments related their experiences as youth and making the smart choices.

Riverside City College Foster & Kinship Care Education Program

Youth Organizing to Live On their own

- What you need to know about raising a teen....
- What is it like being a teen today?
- What do teens need to know to live on their own?

Featured Speaker
Cara Filler
America's Next Top Role Model™
www.carafiller.com

A Source Connection RCC RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Presentations

California Senior Congress

California Coalition of Black School Board Members &
California Latino School Board Association

Moreno Valley Multi-Agency Collaborative

Riverside Morning Rotary

Faith in Action

Banning Pass Collaborative

Inland Area Caregiver Coalition

Lioness Club of Corona

Collaborations

Metro Community Partners

Temecula-Murrieta Valley Interagency Council

Moreno Valley Multi-Agency Collaborative

Banning Pass Collaborative

Lake Elsinore Community Partners

C.A.R.E.

Inland Empire Disabilities Collaborative

Riverside County Child Care Consortium



COUNTY SUPERVISORS HELP MAKE THE SEASON BRIGHT

The staff and families of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program are very grateful to the community for the many donations received to brighten the holidays. Most of the grandparents in our program thought they would be enjoying retirement and their “golden” years, but instead find themselves raising a second family—providing food, clothing, education, emotional support and discipline. This responsibility can often challenge the grandparent financially, emotionally, and physically. In our needs assessment survey a number of grandparents commented on feeling sad and disappointed that they could not provide their grandchildren with any of the little extras that children enjoy and deserve. The holidays are particularly challenging for those grandparents and they are deeply grateful for the community’s response to lend a hand.

The *Youth Advisory Council of Supervisor John Benoit’s district* kicked the holidays off by collecting food on Halloween to share with a few families in the Coachella Valley for Thanksgiving. Members of that Advisory Council from the Blythe area adopted two families in Blythe and provided them with a full Thanksgiving feast.

Supervisor John Tavaglione’s Youth Advisory Council prepared beautiful Thanksgiving baskets with all the ‘fixings’ for dinner for eight families in District Two. GRG staff provided the turkeys to complete the meal.

The *Youth Advisory Council from Supervisor Jeff Stone’s district* adopted two families providing them with holiday treats of gifts, food, and stuffed Christmas stockings.

Supervisor Bob Buster and Supervisor Jeff Stone each gave a generous grant to the program to support the families in Districts One and Three. Riverside County Information Technology (RCIT) also made a generous donation again this year. These funds were used to purchase items from the grandparent’s and children’s wish lists. In addition, *Supervisor Bob Buster’s office*, shared information about the program with the Montessori School in Corona and *collected \$250 in gift cards and cash for GRG needy families.*



MAKE THE SEASON BRIGHT (cont.)

The GRG families also received support from a variety of local organizations and individuals that stepped forward. The **Over the Hill Gang**, a classic car club in Temecula Valley, responded to a presentation about the GRG Program with over \$200 worth of gift cards. **Community Olive Branch Church** in Corona donated food baskets to three GRG families in their area. A large number of gently used clothes were also donated and clients were able to come by the office and select as many items as they needed. One particular client who is actively job searching was grateful to go home with business attire for job interviews. **Norco Lioness Club** adopted a GRG family and **Ms. Nita Rush** donated shoe boxes filled with goodies for six children. **GRG Task Force Sub-committee Chair, Mary Hrinko**, and her family shared the Christmas spirit of giving by adopting two families with very young children. The **Inland Association for the Continuity of Care (IACC)** adopted seven families with multiple grandchildren and donated boxes overflowing with gifts. Additionally three grandparents received gifts from the **Inter Valley Health Plan's Senior Santa** program.



The holiday spirit was continued by generous help from the **Riverside Fire Department Sparks of Love Toy Drive**. While Riverside County residents have faced some difficult economic times, the GRG Program was overwhelmed by the spirit of giving that helped make a special holiday for some grandparents and grandchildren in Riverside County. In many homes, these were the only gifts the grandchildren and grandparents received.

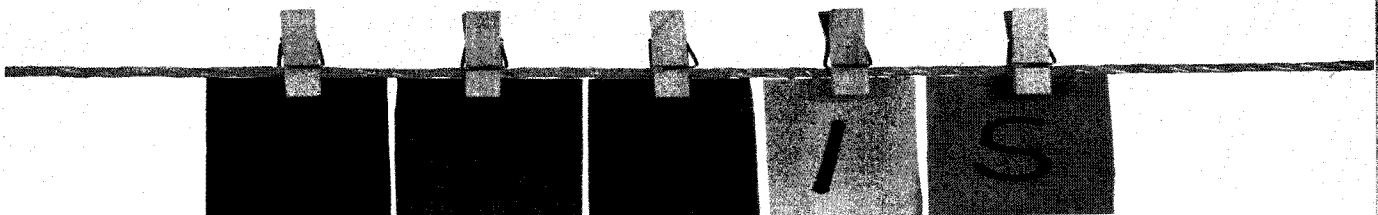


FUTURE GOALS FOR GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRAND-CHILDREN

The Riverside County Office on Aging/ADRC has completed its strategic plan for the next four years titled, "Focusing on a Healthy Tomorrow." The Office on Aging continues its commitment through the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program to address the issues facing grandparents and to provide the resources and support to assist caregiving grandparents in Riverside County.

Key activities for fiscal year 2012-2013 include, but are not limited to:

- Advocate with federal, state, and local officials and key community stakeholders to expand information and assistance and care management services for grandparents raising grandchildren and other relative caregivers and individuals with disabilities.
- Continue coordination efforts with Board of Supervisor representatives, local officials, County departments, Riverside County Youth Commission, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, and other key community networks, such as California Family Life Center—Kin Care, to address changing/emerging needs and make appropriate influences on the service delivery.
- Expand support groups for the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program county-wide.
- Expand outreach to underserved grandparents raising grandchildren in Riverside County, such as: the limited English speaking; residents of rural areas; and disabled who are currently underserved.
- Organize and coordinate a county-wide series of regionalized training seminars and/or collaborative expert resource fairs related to issues facing grandparents raising grandchildren.
- Partner with key stakeholders including the Department of Public Social Services to provide tools for youth outside of the foster care system to better assist grandparents relative caregivers with preparing their grandchildren for independence and success.



GRG TESTIMONIALS

"I wanted to personally thank you for all you have done for me and my grandson. I really do not know what I would have done without your support and the support of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Not having the resources myself to have my grandson attend such a wonderful childcare such as First Step Preschool would have been a great difficulty for us both. In this terrible economy I have been struggling to keep my home and find employment when available. The service and 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 after all these years and then to not have the resources or support to get through it can be overwhelming to say the least. Having your help and personal support Donna meant everything. Sometimes we never realize how we touch someone's life for the better and you have done that for my family."

"As a provider who serves many families in need, the Grandparent Program has been the most efficient program I have ever worked with. It has been a pleasure to work with Donna Pierce in helping to serve a family in need."

Child Care Provider

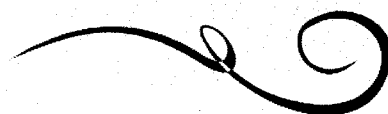
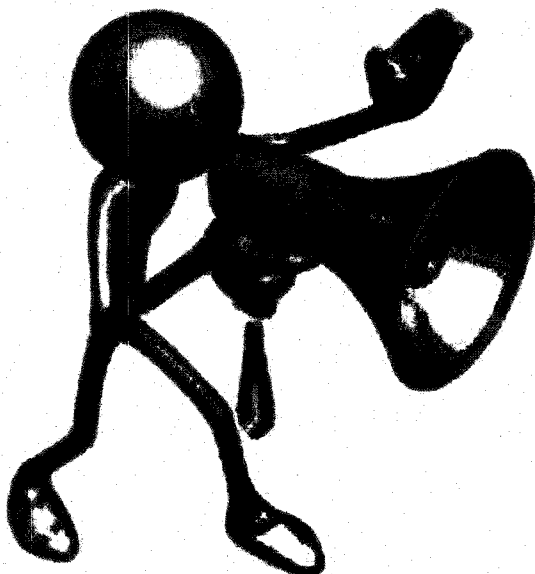
"Dear Donna Pierce,

My husband and I thank you very much for all the help, concern, courtesy, efficiency and good cheer that you and others in your organization have shown us over the years. It has been greatly appreciated.

Best Wishes,

**Mr. & Mrs. Smith"*

**names have been changed*



GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN TASK FORCE

Committee Chairs

Dianne Lewis & Opal Hellweg, Task Force

Mary Price, Legislative/ Systems Change Committee

Mary Hrinko, Program & Public Relations Committee

Board of Supervisors Grand Parent Representatives

District I: Vacant

District II: Donna Johnston

District III: Vacant

District IV: Dianne Lewis

District V: Vacant

Elected Officials Representatives

Senator Emmerson: Joseph Gonzales

Assemblyman Jeffries: Kristen Huyck

Supervisor Buster, District I: Sandy Isom

Supervisor Tavaglione, District II: Karen Christensen

Supervisor Stone, District III: Opal Hellweg

Supervisor Benoit, District IV: Noel Loughrin

Supervisor Ashley, District V: Robin Hastings

Riverside County Departments

Adult Protective Services: Janet Hale

Probation Department: Karen Bergkvist

DPSS/CPS: Guillermo Henry

DPSS/CPS: Michelle Wohl

DPSS/CPS: Veronica Hilton

DPSS/WarmLine: Tamara Williams

DPSS/Foster Care: Teresa Hendricks

Mental Health: Laura England

RCOE: Stephan McPeace

RCOE: William Cooper

Public Health: Craig Demers

Office on Aging/FCSP: Mary Hrinko

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN TASK FORCE

Community Agencies and Organization Representatives

First 5 Riverside: Jean Alexander-Booth

Kin Care: Rachel Moreno

Family Service Association: Lisa Prieto

California Senior Legislature: Sonja Martin

The Stephan Center: Victoria Stephan

Education Representatives

Riverside City College: Penny Davis

University of California Cooperative Extension: Chutima Ganthavorn, Ph.D.

Temecula Valley Unified School District: Marilyn Skrbin

Advisory Council on Aging

Barbara Brown

Dianne Lewis

Luella Thornton

Riverside County Departments

Ed Walsh, Director

Michele Wilham, Deputy Director, Senior Programs

Vikki Neugebauer, Coordinated Care Programs Manager

Stephen Geist, GRG Program Manager

Veronica Castro, GRG Social Worker

Donna Pierce, GRG Child Care Coordinator

Carmen Cornejo, GRG Office Assistant

Support Groups:

Cathedral City: Cathedral City Senior Center

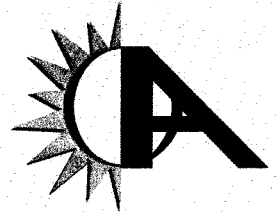
Riverside: Janet Goeske Senior Center

Temecula: Mary Phillips Senior Center

Hemet/San Jacinto: Hemet Senior Service Center

Beaumont: Chatigny Community Center

Perris: Perris Valley Family Resource Center



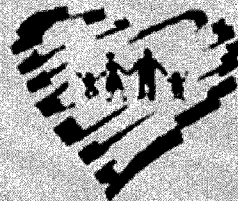
**RIVERSIDE COUNTY
OFFICE ON AGING/
ADRC**

6296 River Crest Drive,
Suite K

(951) 867-3800
1 (800) 510-2020
TTD (951) 697-4699

Hemet Service Center
749 North State Street
Hemet, CA 92543
(951) 791-3573

Kinship WarmLine
1(800) 303-0001



*Grandparents
Raising
Grandchildren*

www.rcaging.org
www.riverside.networkofcare.org