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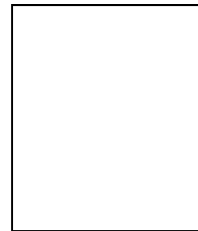
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# Parenting your Grandchild

## A practical guide to resources in San Luis Obispo County

While it is not part of their plans, many grandparents are taking on the role of primary caregiver for their grandchildren. The reasons that they take on this new role vary from family to family: death of one or both parents, unstable family situation (due to divorce, drugs, or finances), incarceration, military deployment or abandonment. Whatever the circumstances, many grandparents need assistance adjusting to their new role. The following guide and resources are provided to make this transition as successful as possible.



### Defining The Relationship

The following terms describe some of the typical caregiving relationships grandparents have with their grandchildren. These terms are used by service providers to distinguish between the different types of caregiving relationships.

**Informal Day Care Provider**– Provides unpaid caregiving for minors. Grandparents providing this level of care for their grandchildren may do so occasionally or regularly (weekly or daily).

**Primary Caregiver**- The person who is responsible for providing or coordinating the care for a minor. If the biological parent is actively involved, they are generally considered the primary caregiver. In situations where the parent is absent, the following describes other options for fulfilling this role. Most of the

information in this guide is directed towards primary caregivers.

**Kinship Caregiver** is a primary caregiver who provides full-time care, nurturing, and protection of children and is either a blood relative, member of their tribe or clan, or other adult who have a family relationship to a child.

**Grandparent Caregiver** is a primary caregiver who is over the age of 55 and

- lives with the child; AND
- is the primary caregiver of the child because the biological or adoptive parents are unable or unwilling to serve as the primary caregiver of the child; AND
- has a legal relationship to the child, such as legal custody or guardianship, or is raising the child informally.

**Foster Care** is the placement of a child, by a legal authority, in the temporary, primary care of a family other than its own as the result of problems or challenges that are taking place within the birth family, or while critical elements of an adoption are being completed.

**Guardianship**- Is the legal relationship created when a person is named in a will or assigned by the court as the primary caregiver of minor children. This means that a guardian has the "care, custody and control of" the child and responsibility for the minor's education. This includes providing meals, clothing, education and living facilities for the child.

A legal guardian has an ongoing responsibility to update the court on the child's wellbeing and residence until the child is 18.

**Adoption**-Is the termination of parental rights of the parents and the creation of a new parent-child relationship between the child and another

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individual(s). After an adoption the adoptive parents and the adopted child sustain towards each other the legal relationship of parent and child and have all the rights and are subject to all the duties of that relationship.

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## Financial Supports

Becoming the caregiver for a grandchild may mean unexpected and/or unmet expenses. Especially for retired persons who are on a fixed



income, increased expenses for food, clothing, and school supplies can be overwhelming. There are public benefits that can provide assistance for households who find themselves in financial

need.

### Cash Assistance

**CalWORKS-** Kinship caregivers can apply for CalWORKS benefits in one of two ways: for a “child-only grant” or by adding the child as part of grant covering the entire household. Most kinship caregivers apply for CalWORKS “child-only grants.” With a child-only grant, only the child’s income is counted for the purposes of determining his or her eligibility for cash benefits. Since the benefit is intended only for the child, a relative kinship caregiver does not have to share her income information or comply with welfare program work requirements. More importantly, there is no time limit on the receipt of a child-only grant. Eligible children can continue to receive monthly assistance until they reach the age of 18—or 19, if they are full-time students.

For more information on CalWORKS or to apply contact:

#### SLO County Department of Social Services

Atascadero      Paso Robles  
461-6000      237-3110

San Luis Obispo  
781-1600

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### Survivor Benefits or Social Security

**Disability (Social Security)-** Benefit paid through social security to surviving children under the age of 18. Eligibility and payment is based on the parents Social Security Contributions.

For more information on Social Security Benefits or to apply you can contact:

# Notes

# Notes

## **Social Security Administration Office**

544-5251

800-772-1213

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### **Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program (Kin-GAP)**

The Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (Kin-GAP) program may be available to those children exiting the juvenile court dependency system or to probation youth exiting the delinquency system to live with a related guardian.

The intent of the program is to provide an option for dependent and delinquent children to leave the juvenile court system to live with a relative legal guardian. Kin-GAP provides a subsidy to the family that is equal to 100% of the basic foster care rate, based upon age

To find out if you may qualify for this you need to speak with the social worker assigned to the child by the courts.

#### **For information on eligibility contact:**

Funding Eligibility Unit

Foster Care Audits and Rates Branch

744 P Street, MS 20-38

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 324-4873

<http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cfsweb/pg1354.htm>

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### **Food Assistance**

It may seem at times that a grandchild's stomach is a bottomless pit. It may be difficult to meet the nutritional needs for a child without some financial assistance. The following programs may help to extend a family's food budget.

**Cal Fresh (Formerly SNAP)**- Also known as Food stamps. Food stamps are used like cash or electronic "debit" cards at most grocery stores.

Generally, they can be used to buy food items that are prepared and eaten at home as well as seeds and plants to grow food. Kinship caregivers do not need legal custody or guardianship to apply for food stamps on behalf of the children they are raising.

**Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**- This program can help eligible kinship caregivers meet the special nutritional needs of their young grandchildren. WIC provides free food and formula to eligible low income children up to age five. The grandchildren must have certain types of health conditions, like anemia or growth problems, or another condition that requires the child to eat more nutritious food. Children must get a health screening when they apply to see if their condition qualifies.

For more information on SNAP or WIC or to apply you can contact:

#### **SLO County Department of Social Services**

Atascadero

Arroyo Grande

461-6000

474-2000

Paso Robles

San Luis Obispo

237-3110

781-1600

**Brown Bag Supplemental Food**- This program is free and distributes groceries to low income seniors 60 and over twice monthly at sites in the community

For more information on the Brown Bag food program or to apply you can contact:

#### **Food Bank of SLO**

Paso Robles

238-4664

Oceano

481-4652

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### **Health Insurance**

**Medi-Cal-** Medi-Cal is a state and federally funded health coverage program that includes coverage for infants less than one year of age with family incomes up to 200% of the federal income guidelines, children between the ages of one and six with family incomes up to 133%, and children between 6 and 19 with family incomes below 100%. For example, a child between the ages of 1 and 6, in a family of four, with net family income at or below 133% of the federal poverty level (\$27,467) would be eligible for no cost Medi-Cal). In some situations it is possible to apply for Medi-Cal based on the child's income independent of the primary caregiver.

For more information on the Medi-Cal program or to apply you can contact:

**SLO County Department of Social Services**

Atascadero	Arroyo Grande
461-6000	474-2000

Paso Robles	San Luis Obispo
237-3110	781-1600

**Healthy Families-** Healthy Families is low cost insurance for children and teens. It provides health, dental and vision coverage to children who do not have insurance and do not qualify for free Medi-Cal. Children in Healthy Families must live in California and:

- Be age 18 or younger
- Not be eligible for no-cost Medi-Cal
- Children in families with incomes within the Healthy Families Guidelines
- Live in families without health insurance from an employer for the past three months
- Meet citizenship or immigration requirements

Members pay a small monthly premium each month and a co-payment when they go to the doctor or get other services. Some services are free. Enrollment can be done through any local Healthy Families Enrollment Entity.

To find a Healthy Families Enrollment Entity call 1-888-747-1222.

**Child Care Assistance**



Raising a child is a 24 hour a day job. There are times when grandparents cannot be available to provide that care. Finding affordable and appropriate child care can be difficult. The following resources are available to help.

**Pepper Tree Counseling Services**

San Luis Obispo  
545-9449

**Legal Resources**

**Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)-**

CASA volunteers are appointed by judges to watch over and advocate for abused and neglected children. They stay with child case until the case is closed and the child is placed in a safe, permanent home.

Volunteers get to know the child and meet with the people who are important in that child's life: family members, teachers, medical professionals and others. Their research informs the decisions of the judge and ultimately helps the child to find a safe, permanent home.

**CASA of San Luis Obispo County**

75 Higuera, Suite 180  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
(805) 541-6542



**Self Help Legal Resources**

**Family Law Self Help-** offers individual appointments in Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo for family law issues to discuss individual cases. All scheduled appointments will take place at the Courthouse in Paso Robles located at 901 Park Street, Room 111 or the Court Support Services Building at 1120 Mill Street in San Luis Obispo.

For Appointments call:

**Family Self Help Appointments**  
(805) 788-2491

**Family Law Walk In Center** assists with all family law issues including custody, visitation, child support, domestic violence and Department of Child Support Services cases. They also assist in civil harassment, name change and guardianship cases.

**San Luis Obispo Courthouse Hours and Location:**

Wednesday and Thursdays, 8:30 am - 11:30 am at the San Luis Obispo Courthouse on the 2nd Floor in Department 11. For child support issues only staff are available Wednesdays, 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm at the SLO Courthouse Annex located at 1035 Palm St., Department 11, San Luis Obispo

**Paso Robles Courthouse Hours and Location:**

Tuesdays, 8:30 am - 11:30 am and 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm at 901 Park Street, Paso Robles, CA 93446. Please sign-in and complete registration forms located in Room 117 then wait for the next available staff person.

## Emotional Supports

### Support Groups and Caregiver Education

Raising children later in life can be a major shift in plans for many people and can result in challenging emotions. Many caregivers report high levels of stress, depression and frustration. The following services are available to help them adjust and get on going emotional support.

### Kinship Care Programs

These programs provide a forum for families providing kinship care to secure training and practical support. They are also a place for families acting as foster parents to receive training in order to meet the requirements of the foster placement as well.

The following are Kinship Care programs available in the San Luis Obispo County area.

#### Cuesta College

Foster & Kinship Care Program  
Mimi Feliciano-Hix  
546-3156

#### Kinship Center

Templeton  
434-2126

### Support Groups

Support groups consist of people with similar needs or goals who have come together to share information, coping skills and offer each other emotional support. They can be a valuable emotional support network. Support groups help people to feel less isolated and alone. In addition it can be a resource for developing coping skills and communication skills.

The following are support group resources in the San Luis Obispo County area:

#### Kinship Center

Templeton  
Marta Nielsen  
434-2126 ext 30

Paso Robles  
Lida Lucas  
805-466-2041

#### S.A.F.E Arroyo Grande

Arroyo Grande  
805-474-2000

### Counseling

Many people experiencing difficulty adjusting to their new role or need a more private setting to share difficult feelings choose to get counseling. Counseling can provide a safe place to discuss difficult issues, find direction or get more comprehensive therapy.

The following is a list of resources available for counseling.

#### Wilshire Community Services

##### Senior Peer Counseling

Free counseling services provided by a trained, non professional counselor.  
547-7025 ext. 15

#### Cal Poly Community Counseling Service

756-1532

Services provided by Graduate Students.

#### Calm, Clear and Connected

San Luis Obispo and Atascadero  
544-2273 or 466-4681

#### Community Counseling Center

A non profit community organization providing short term counseling and counseling information.

San Luis Obispo  
543-7969

#### Kinship Center

Provides mental health services to minors and their family caregivers.

Templeton  
434-2126

### Child Care Referrals

These organizations maintain an up-to-date listing of licensed child care providers. Referrals are free and available to all parents. Referral Counselors can help people decide what type of care is best for their child and give information about what to look for and what questions to ask when visiting a potential child care provider.

**Referrals are not to be confused with recommendations.**

For resources on licensed child care providers, contact the following referral providers:

#### Community Action Partnership Child Care Resource Center

Atascadero 461-6032	Paso Robles & Cambria 226-3234
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San Luis Obispo 781-1719	South County 474-2092
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Coastal communities  
(805) 474-2092

#### TrustLine:

The TrustLine Registry is a database of nannies and babysitters that have cleared criminal background checks. TrustLine can be used to find a registered caregiver, see if a caregiver is already registered with TrustLine or have a caregiver screened.

**1.800.822.8490**

[www.trustline.org](http://www.trustline.org)

#### Subsidized Child Care

##### Alternative Payment Program

The Alternative Payment Program is a subsidized child care program that serves:

- low-income families who are employed, seeking employment, or participating in a job training or education program.
- children who are "subjected to" or "at risk of" abuse, neglect, or exploitation and have a referral from a legally qualified professional from a medical or social services agency, or an emergency shelter may also be eligible.
- parents who are incapacitated and families that are homeless. Child Protective Services and "At Risk" families shall be served first.

The Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) Program is designed to be a central application point for all publicly subsidized child care programs.

#### Community Action Partnership Child Care Resource Center

Deborah Smith, CEL Supervisor  
782-4722  
Toll free: (888) 727-2272

### Child Development/ Education



Child development and education resources are critical to giving children the opportunity to succeed. Once children enter primary school, many of the services are directed through their school, and information about programs can be found by contacting the school counselor. The following information is focused on early child development resources available in your community:

**Low Income Pre School Programs**

**Head Start-** Created in 1965, Head Start is the most successful, longest-running, national school readiness program in the United States. It provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families.

The following is a contact list for Head Start sites in San Luis Obispo County:

**Community Action Partnership Head Start**

- Atascadero  
(805) 466-0417
- Cambria  
(805) 927-0830
- Five Cities  
(805) 473-1657
- Los Osos and Morro Bay  
(805) 528-3717

- Nipomo  
(805) 929-3366
- Paso Robles  
(805) 238-5323
- San Luis Obispo  
(805) 594-1752 or (805) 542-0320

**State Pre-Schools**– Are open to preschool children three to five years of age. They provide a three-hour per day, parent/child education program (expanded day programs offered in some locations). They are free to families whose gross monthly income does not exceed the income ceilings established by the California Department of Education. Proof of income and birth certificate are required to determine eligibility

The following is a contact list for sites in San Luis Obispo County:

- Atascadero**  
San Gabriel West  
466-8181 Ext. 120
- Grover Beach**  
Grover Beach Elementary  
489-4799
- Los Osos**  
Sunnyside Elementary  
528-4808
- Morro Bay**  
Del Mar Elementary  
772-2932
- Nipomo**  
Nipomo High School  
929-1114
- Oceano**  
Oceano Elementary  
481-5842

- Paso Robles**  
Marie Bauer Elementary  
237-3481
- Winifred Pifer Elementary  
237-3435
- Georgia Brown  
237-3480
- San Luis Obispo**  
Chris Jespersen Elementary  
466-8181 Ext. 206
- San Miguel**  
Lillian Larsen Elementary  
467-3626
- Shandon**  
Shandon Elementary  
238-6814



**Disability Resources**

Raising a child with a developmental disability or delay can be challenging. There are resources to help caregivers with training and additional programs for child development and care. The following resources may be helpful for families with a child with a disability.

**Case Management** –Is assistance in coordinating state and federal services for persons with developmental disabilities. Children who have been diagnosed with a developmental disability or need assessment to determine if they have a developmental disability can receive case management services from Tri Counties Regional Center.

**Tri- Counties Regional Center**

San Luis Obispo  
(805) 543-2833 or (800) 456-4153

Atascadero  
(805) 461-7402

**In Home Care** - Children with profound care needs may require paid care services. In Home Supportive Services may be available to assist with the in home care of a child with a disability. The child must qualify for Medi-Cal. The In Home Supportive Services Program is operated by the county's Department of social services

For more information or to apply for IHSS contact:

**In Home Supportive Services**  
781-1790