

# Guide for Providers: No-Cost Training Resources on Kinship/Grandfamily Mental Health Needs



---

## Background

Kinship families and grandfamilies form when grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends provide primary care for children whose parents are unable to do so. Kinship/grandfamilies come together for a variety of reasons, including substance use, child welfare involvement, incarceration, mental and physical challenges, divorce, parental death, and military deployment. While research shows that kin caregivers<sup>i</sup> and children<sup>ii</sup> benefit tremendously from these family arrangements, studies also indicate that kinship/grandfamilies face unique difficulties. They “are disproportionately impacted by the opioid epidemic, child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, parental incarceration, financial instability, and serious mental illness.”<sup>iii</sup> They also face legal challenges, emotional traumas, loss of relationships, chronic stress, and disability, all while being forced to navigate unfamiliar systems of care.

A [2022 USAging survey](#), conducted with the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network, found that more than one-third of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American Aging Programs (Title VI programs) that offer services specifically for kinship/grandfamilies want training to address the mental health needs of these family members. In response to this need, this guide outlines no-cost mental health training resources for professionals and providers who interact with kinship/grandfamilies.

## Using This Guide

The resources included in this guide were developed by different organizations for various audiences, including frontline workers, organizational managers, and kin caregivers. However, all resources contain information useful to staff from a range of professional backgrounds. Most can be read, viewed, or completed in 60 minutes or less (some in less than 15 minutes). Spanish-language resources are included when available.

Resources are grouped in sections covering broad categories of mental health needs.

- ▶ [Section 1: General Challenges and Stressors Experienced by Kinship/Grandfamilies](#)
- ▶ [Section 2: Grief](#)
- ▶ [Section 3: Managing Challenging Behaviors in Young Children](#)
- ▶ [Section 4: Managing Challenging Behaviors in Older Children and Adults](#)
- ▶ [Section 5: Parental Substance Use](#)
- ▶ [Section 6: Trauma](#)
- ▶ [Section 7: Secondary Trauma](#)
- ▶ [Section 8: Trauma-Informed Principles for Organizations](#)
- ▶ [Section 9: Specific Populations](#)
- ▶ [Section 10: Trauma, Loss, and Grief Books for Children](#)
- ▶ [Section 11: Additional Resources](#)

Sections 1 through 9 list resources, including articles, podcasts, recorded webinars, and videos, in alphabetical order by title. Each resource is presented with a brief description, a link to its web location, and a link to the organization that created or is hosting the resource. Section 10 lists books in alphabetical order by author and Section 11 lists and links to relevant organizations, agencies, and projects.

*Note: Resources labeled with an asterisk (\*) include contents that could be triggering to those with similar histories.*

The resources offer an introduction to the mental health needs of kinship/grandfamilies and the stressors commonly faced by this population, as well as tips on supporting kinship/grandfamilies. However, these resources do not include instruction on mental health treatment, which should only be conducted by trained and licensed mental health professionals. Those seeking further study can find additional resources in Section 11.

## Resources

### **Section 1: General Challenges and Stressors Experienced by Kinship/Grandfamilies**

These resources review the unique challenges and stressors that can trigger or exacerbate mental health needs.

### **Black Kinship Families and the High Cost of Loving (2023) \***

- ▶ Online video (43 minutes), also available in audio-only and as a written transcript
  - Three kin caregivers share the joys, losses, and challenges faced by kinship/grandfamilies from a Black/African American perspective
- ▶ Source: [Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network](#)

### **Building Resilience: Supporting Grandfamilies' Mental Health and Wellness – 2 resources (2023) \***

- ▶ [Recorded webinar](#) (95 minutes)
  - Provides an overview of the challenges faced by kinship/grandfamilies, including trauma, multigenerational trauma, and chronic stress, as well as their resilience
  - Launched the release of Generations United's 2023 State of Grandfamilies report
- ▶ [Report](#) (72 pages)
  - Introduces the array of emotions and challenges experienced by kin/grandfamily caregivers and children, including trauma, secondary trauma, multigenerational trauma, chronic stress, grief, guilt, shame, and loneliness
  - Explains how chronic stress affects physical and mental health, behaviors, and coping capacity, and describes the strengths of these families
  - See especially pages 16-25 and 31-35
  - Also includes a mental health resources list
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### **Common Challenges in Kinship Care and How to Overcome Them (2021)**

- ▶ Blog post (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Describes common stressors experienced by kin/grandfamily caregivers and coping strategies
- ▶ Source: [Creating a Family](#)

### **Family Dynamics in Kinship Families: Implications for Services and Programs (2022) \***

- ▶ Recorded webinar (90 minutes)

- Explains how roles, responsibilities, and relationships among family members (both adults and children) change upon the formation of kinship/grandfamilies; how this impacts family members' mental health; and how the experiences of kinship/grandfamilies differ from non-relative foster care families

▶ Source: [Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network](#)

### **Panel of Kinship Caregivers: What's It Really Like (2021) \***

- ▶ Podcast (55 minutes)
  - Features kin caregivers sharing the joys, losses, and challenges faced by kinship/grandfamilies
- ▶ Source: [Creating a Family](#)

## **Section 2: Grief**

Kinship/grandfamilies frequently form following grief-provoking events like the death of a parent, parental incarceration, parents' inability to parent or abandonment, or parental military deployment. These resources provide an overview of grief; discuss how a person's age, culture, and trauma history affect their experience; and offer tips on supporting grieving children and adults.

### **Answering Difficult Questions [from a child about death]**

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Contestar preguntas difíciles](#)
- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Offers sample language adults can use when answering questions from young children about a parent's death
  - Particularly useful for frontline professionals
- ▶ Source: [Sesame Workshop](#)

### **Childhood Traumatic Grief: Information for Mental Health Providers (2019)**

- ▶ Fact sheet (4 pages)
  - Explains how children grieve, defines childhood traumatic grief, describes its causes and signs, and offers tips for how mental health providers can support children who are experiencing traumatic grief
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Childhood Traumatic Grief: Information for Pediatric Providers (2019)**

- ▶ Fact sheet (4 pages)
  - Defines childhood traumatic grief and describes its causes and signs as well as its potential impacts on physical health, shares tips for assessing children with childhood traumatic grief, and offers guidance for helping children who are experiencing traumatic grief
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Childhood Traumatic Grief: Information for Parents and Caregivers (2019)**

- ▶ Fact sheet (3 pages)
  - Describes causes and signs of traumatic grief in children and how it differs from regular grief, and provides tips for supporting children experiencing traumatic grief
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Childhood Traumatic Grief: Information for School Personnel (2019)**

- ▶ Fact sheet (5 pages)
  - Explains how children grieve, describes childhood traumatic grief and the signs of it that school personnel may observe in students, and offers tips for helping students who are experiencing childhood traumatic grief
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Depression vs. Grief (2019)**

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Describes the difference between grief and depression and offers guidance on when and how to seek treatment for depression
- ▶ Source: [Hospice Foundation of America](#)

### **Grief and Loss (2023)**

- ▶ Tip sheet (2 pages)
  - Lists key findings related to grief and loss in kinship/grandfamilies and offers tips for families and providers
- ▶ Source: [Grandfamilies Outcome Workgroup \(GrOW\)](#)

### **Grief Fact Sheet #2: Responses to Grief Across the Lifespan (2020)**

- ▶ Fact sheet (6 pages)
  - Describes common emotional, cognitive, and behavioral grief reactions in infants, young children, school-age children, adolescents, and adults
- ▶ Source: [Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network](#)

### **Grief Fact Sheet #4: Cultural Responsiveness (2020)**

- ▶ Fact sheet (6 pages)
  - Provides an overview of the varied ways different cultures view death, grief, and mental health treatment, as well as differences among subcultures and individuals
  - Advises professionals to approach each grieving individuals with “cultural humility,” assuming nothing about how an individual or their culture responds to death
- ▶ Source: [Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network](#)

### **Grief: Helping Older Adults with Grief**

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Describes how multiple losses faced by older adults compound their experiences of grief when compared to middle-aged and younger adults
- ▶ Source: [Kaiser Permanente](#)

### **Grief Over the Holidays: Educators Can Help Students Cope**

- ▶ Tip sheet (2 pages)
  - Describes common behavioral responses by children to feelings of grief during the holidays and common triggers and tips for helping children cope in a non-family environment
- ▶ Source: [National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement](#)

### **Grief Reactions, Duration, and Tasks of Mourning (2019)**

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)
  - Provides an overview of common emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioral responses to grief, including how long it may last and its stages
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs](#)

### Grieving the Death of an Adult Child (2016)

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Describes how and why kin caregivers (and others) grieving the death of an adult child often experience disenfranchised grief and isolation
- ▶ Source: [Psychology Today](#)

### Handout #3: Ambiguous Loss Haunts Foster and Adoption Children

- ▶ Fact sheet (4 pages)
  - Explains ambiguous loss, lists common symptoms, describes several unique challenges associated with ambiguous loss, and offers suggestions for helping children deal with loss
- ▶ Source: [National Training and Development Curriculum for Foster and Adoptive Parents](#), retrieved via the [Missouri Department of Social Services](#)

### Helping School-Age Children with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers (2014)

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Ayuda para los niños en edad escolar con duelo traumático: consejos para los cuidadores](#)
- ▶ Tip sheet (1 page)
  - Describes elementary school age children's cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physical responses to traumatic grief and offers tips for helping them cope
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### Helping Teens with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers (2014)

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Ayuda para los adolescentes con duelo traumático: consejos para los cuidadores](#)
- ▶ Tip sheet (2 pages)
  - Describes teenagers' cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physical responses to traumatic grief and offers tips for helping them cope
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### Helping Young Children with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers (2014)

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Ayuda para los niños pequeños con duelo traumático: consejos para los cuidadores](#)

- ▶ Tip sheet (1 page)
  - Describes young children’s cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physical responses to traumatic grief and offers tips for helping them cope
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Kinship Family Forum: How and Why We Grieve (2023) \***

- ▶ Recorded webinar (52 minutes)
  - Describes emotional, behavioral, and cognitive responses to grief in children and in kin caregivers as well as physical symptoms of grief
  - Covers how grief impacts the whole family and offers tips for kin caregivers to help themselves and their children grieve
- ▶ Source: [Penn State Extension](#)

## **Section 3: Managing Challenging Behaviors in Young Children**

These resources provide guidance for caregivers and providers on ways to help young children and infants with behavioral issues and difficult emotions related to the absence of their parents.

### **Behavior Has Meaning (2023)**

- ▶ Online video (5 minutes) with supplemental written materials
  - Provides an overview of how infants and toddlers rely on behavior to communicate their feelings, wants, and needs and offers tips on interpreting and responding to these behaviors
  - Includes links to supplemental written materials on the topic and guidance for those using the video as in-service training
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center](#)

### **Communication is Key (2023)**

- ▶ Tip sheet (1 page)
  - Offers sample language for responding to certain challenging behaviors
- ▶ Source: [National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#)



### Four Tips to Teach Self-Soothing Skills

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)
  - Describes various techniques for family caregivers to teach children how to self-soothe and calm themselves
- ▶ Source: [Creating a Family](#)

### HALT: Hungry, Angry, Lonely and Tired: A Simple Tool for Better Days

- ▶ Tip sheet (2 pages)
  - Provides guidance for avoiding and responding to child meltdowns
- ▶ Source: [The Chickasaw Nation](#)

### Kinship Family Forum: Coping with Challenging Behaviors (2021)

- ▶ Recorded webinar (52 minutes)
  - Explains how a child's age and temperament, the environment, and trauma influence a child's challenging behaviors, along with tips for managing these behaviors
- ▶ Source: [Penn State Extension](#)

### Parenting After Trauma: Understanding Your Child's Needs (2020)

- ▶ Disponible en español: [La crianza después de un trauma: cómo atender a las necesidades de su niño](#)
- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)
  - Describes common emotional and behavioral responses to trauma in children and how those behaviors can be misinterpreted as tantrums or defiance
  - Includes tips for managing trauma-related behaviors
- ▶ Source: [The American Academy of Pediatrics' Parenting Website](#)

### Problem Solving In The Moment

- ▶ Online video (5 minutes)
  - Offers practical advice for teaching young children to solve social conflicts that may occur in the classroom
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Administration for Children and Families](#)

### Redirecting Behavior (2023)

- ▶ Online video (5 minutes)
  - Shows several ways to redirect a child's behavior to prevent a child from exhibiting or escalating a challenging behavior
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center](#)

### Supporting Children with Challenging Behavior (2013)

- ▶ Recorded webinar (51 minutes)
  - Provides tips for managing challenging behavior in young children and resources for learning more
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center](#)

## **Section 4: Managing Challenging Behaviors in Older Children and Adults**

These resources provide guidance for caregivers and providers on ways to help older children and adults with behavioral issues and difficult emotions related to the absence of their parents.

### How to Set Limits

- ▶ Note: the guide is available at no cost, but accessing it requires submitting a name and email address
- ▶ Guide/manual (10 pages)
  - Provides practical steps for setting limits, explains how effectively setting limits avoids power struggles, and offers sample language for specific situations
- ▶ Source: [Crisis Prevention Institute](#)

### Positive Discipline for Teenagers: Building a Positive Relationship

- ▶ Note: no-cost preregistration is required to access the course
- ▶ Online, self-paced course (approximately 30 minutes to complete)
  - Provides guidance on giving positive and constructive feedback to teens, reinforcing desirable behaviors, and setting boundaries
- ▶ Source: [University of Kentucky, College of Social Work](#)

### Top 10 De-escalation Tips

- ▶ Note: the guide is available at no cost, but accessing it requires submitting a name and email address
- ▶ Guide/manual (7 pages)
  - Provides practical advice for calming adults or older children and de-escalating tense situations
- ▶ Source: [Crisis Prevention Institute](#)

### What to Do When They Don't Want Help

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)
- ▶ Offers tips on how to help adults who don't want help
  - Developed for family members of adults with serious mental illnesses, the information may be applicable to frontline professionals working with adults or older children who resist help
- ▶ Source: [Mental Health America](#)

## **Section 5: Parental Substance Use**

Kinship/grandfamilies sometimes form after children are removed from their birth parents due to parental substance use. These resources provide an overview of addictive substances, the impact of parental substance misuse on the children and the kinship families, and the effects of prenatal substance exposure, as well as tips for supporting affected kinship/grandfamilies.

### **GRAND RESOURCE: Help for Grandparents and Kinship Caregivers Impacted by Opioids or Other Substance Use Disorders, Part Two: Understanding the Impact of a Parent's Substance Use Disorder on the Child (2023) \***

- ▶ Guide/manual (10 pages)
  - Describes the often-chaotic home life experienced by children of parents who use substances and the long-term emotional and behavioral impacts of a parent's substance use on a child and offers tips and sample language adults can use in talking with children about a parent's substance use
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### **Infant of a Substance-Using Mother (2021)**

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)

- Describes the short and long-term behavioral and physical impact of prenatal exposure to addictive substances on children and how prenatal exposure is diagnosed and treated

▶ Source: [Medline Plus](#)

### **Parental Addiction: Healing Families Together**

- ▶ Note: no-cost preregistration is required to access this webinar
- ▶ Recorded webinar (60 minutes)
  - Gives an overview of how children experience parental substance use, feelings they may have, and how they respond to these feelings, as well as experiences of parents who use substances and guidance on providing help

▶ Source: [Sesame Workshop](#)

### **Questions & Answers [from children about parental substance misuse]**

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Preguntas y respuestas](#)
- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Offers sample language adults can use when answering questions from young children about a parent's substance use

▶ Source: [Sesame Workshop](#)

### **Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders: Supporting Kinship Families (2022) \***

- ▶ Recorded webinar (90 minutes)
  - Describes the short- and long-term impacts of parental substance use on children's physical and mental health, with special emphasis on children with prenatal exposure to opioids and/or alcohol
  - Provides data on the prevalence of children removed from their homes because of parental substance use
  - Features a kin caregiver describing the systemic barriers she faced in helping her grandson

▶ Source: [National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare](#)

### **Understanding Drug Use and Addiction DrugFacts**

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Entendiendo el uso de drogas y la adicción – DrugFacts](#)
- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)

- Provides an overview of how addictive drugs affect the brain, what addiction is, what makes recovery so difficult, risk factors associated with addictive drugs, and available treatments

▶ Source: [U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)

### **Understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders**

▶ Disponible en español: [Información sobre los trastornos del espectro alcohólico fetal](#)

▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)

- Provides an overview of the prevalence, causes, symptoms (physical, cognitive, and behavioral), and treatment of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders that frequently occur in babies exposed to alcohol before birth

▶ Source: [U.S. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism](#)

### **Why are Drugs so Hard to Quit?**

▶ Online video (4 minutes)

- Provides an overview of how addictive drugs affect the brain, what addiction is, what makes recovery so difficult, withdrawal symptoms, risk factors associated with addictive drugs, and available treatments

▶ Source: [U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)

## **Section 6: Trauma**

These resources provide an overview of the types of trauma kinship/grandfamilies may experience, including post-traumatic stress disorder; how trauma impacts families; and how a person's age and culture affect their experience of trauma.

### **12 Core Concepts for Understanding Traumatic Stress Responses in Children and Families**

▶ Note: no-cost pre-registration is required to access this course

▶ Online, self-paced course (approximately 50 minutes to complete)

- Covers the complex emotions, thoughts, and physical reactions children likely experience during and after a traumatic event; how a child's temperament, age, and culture impact their experience of trauma; and how trauma impacts a child's development, daily functioning, and future experiences of traumatic events

▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### ACEs Infographic

- ▶ Online infographic (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Provides an overview of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) like abuse and neglect, long-term effects of ACEs, risk factors, and protective factors
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Veto Violence Webpage](#)

### Common Reactions After Trauma

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Reacciones Comunes Después del Trauma](#)
- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Describes common emotional, behavioral, and physical responses to trauma by adults and children and conditions that may occur after trauma, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anger, and substance use
  - Provides a list of other resources for finding help
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' National Center for PTSD](#)

### GRAND RESOURCE: Help for Grandfamilies Impacted by Opioids and Other Substance Use: Addressing Childhood Trauma (2023) \*

- ▶ Guide/manual (8 pages)
  - Explains trauma, its prevalence among children and children who live in grandfamilies, its impacts, and traumatic grief
  - Provides guidance to help a child who has endured trauma and to help a child experiencing traumatic grief
  - Offers numbers for crisis hotlines and links for further resources
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### Grandfamily Caregiver Tip Sheet: Youth Mental Health (2022)

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Hoja de consejos para cuidadores de familias intergeneracionales: Salud mental juvenil](#)
- ▶ Tip sheet (4 pages)
  - Provides an overview of childhood trauma, warning signs, tips on how adults can offer support, and a list of links to other resources for learning more
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### How Early Childhood Trauma is Unique

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Describes how development impacts a young child's (age 0 to 6) experience of trauma and gives an overview of young children's behavioral responses to trauma
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### Impact on the Brain

- ▶ Online video (10 minutes) (Note: it is the second video from the top of the webpage)
  - Describes how trauma affects the development of a child's brain and how brain changes impact behaviors
  - Offers tips for individuals and organizations in supporting child survivors of trauma
- ▶ Source: [Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development](#)

### Importance of Culture

- ▶ Online video (8 minutes) (Note: it is the fourth video from the top of the webpage)
  - Describes how an individual's culture affects their perception of trauma and the way they talk about trauma
  - Explains why helping organizations need to adapt practices to accommodate cultural differences
- ▶ Source: [Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development](#)

### Mental Health Myth Busters: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- ▶ Online video (6 minutes)
  - Describes the symptoms, causes, and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and myths about the diagnosis
- ▶ Source: [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#)

### Never Give Up: A Complex Trauma Film by Youth for Youth \*

- ▶ Online video (15 minutes)
  - The teenage and young adult cast describe and demonstrate what it's like to experience complex trauma, how it affects their lives, and how they got help

- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Trastorno por estrés postraumático](#)
- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)
  - Defines post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and describes causes, prevalence, symptoms, risk factors, protective factors, and how PTSD may present differently in children
- ▶ Source: [U.S. National Institute of Mental Health](#)

## **Section 7: Secondary Trauma**

Professionals who work with individuals with trauma histories or mental health needs can experience secondary/vicarious trauma, including persistent feelings of anxiety, exhaustion, helplessness, and/or sadness. Some kin caregivers may also experience secondary trauma. These resources describe causes, symptoms, and treatment for secondary/vicarious trauma and offer strategies to prevent it.

### **GRAND RESOURCE: Help for Grandfamilies Impacted by Opioids and Other Substance Use: Practicing Self-Care (2023)**

- ▶ Guide/manual (6 pages)
  - Defines self-care; explains why it is necessary; and offers examples of self-care, guidance on asking for help, and information on support groups
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### **GRAND RESOURCE: Help for Grandparents and Kinship Caregivers Impacted by Opioids or Other Substance Use Disorders, Part Two: Understanding the Impact of the Parent's Substance Use on the Grandfamily or Kinship Caregiver and Maintaining Your Mental Health as a Caregiver (2023)**

- ▶ Guide/manual (10 pages)
  - Explores common emotions and experiences that caregivers may face and offers tips to help caregivers help themselves, prepare for legal proceedings or social service interventions regarding custody, respond to comments others may make, and use their experience to make things better
  - Offers links to further resources
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)



### Grandfamily Caregiver Tip Sheet: Self-Care (2022)

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Hoja de consejos para cuidadores de familias intergeneracionales: Cuidado personal](#)
- ▶ Tip sheet (4 pages)
  - Explains self-care and offers tips for grandparent caregivers (also applicable to other caregivers and professionals)
  - Offers links to resources related to self-care, mental health, and COVID-19
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### Kinship Caregiver Wellness (2023)

- ▶ Tip sheet (2 pages)
  - Provides key findings from the Grandfamilies Outcome Workgroup's National Grandfamilies and COVID 19 Survey as well as practice recommendations for caregivers
- ▶ Source: [Grandfamilies Outcome Workgroup \(GrOW\)](#)

### Managing Stress with Mindful Moments

- ▶ Online videos (2 minutes to 12 minutes)
  - Demonstrations of various relaxation techniques
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center](#)

### Secondary Trauma

- ▶ Online video (22 minutes) (Note: it is the fifth video from the top of the webpage)
  - Provides strategies for how organizations can help staff address secondary trauma they may experience
- ▶ Source: [Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development](#)

### Secondary Traumatic Stress

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)
  - Describes the causes and symptoms of secondary traumatic stress and offers strategies individuals and organizations can use to prevent and treat it
- ▶ Source: [U.S. Administration for Children and Families](#)

## Section 8: Trauma-Informed Principles for Organizations

Given the prevalence of trauma in this population, most organizations supporting kinship/grandfamilies will encounter individuals with trauma histories. These resources review the principles of trauma-informed care and include tips on supporting this population and avoiding re-traumatization.

### Assessment of Complex Trauma Information for Non-Mental Health Professionals (2018)

- ▶ Screening tool
  - Includes assessment questions designed to help non-mental health professionals determine when to refer a child for a more comprehensive assessment
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### Creating Supportive Environments When Scary Things Happen (2022)

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Creando Ambientes de Apoyo Cuando Suceden Hechos Alarmantes](#)
- ▶ Tip sheet (1 page)
  - Describes how routines and rituals can create a sense of safety and stability for children and families with trauma histories
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### Importance of Culture

- ▶ Online video (8 minutes) (Note: it is the fourth video from the top of the webpage)
  - Describes how an individual's culture affects their perception of trauma and the way in which they talk about trauma
  - Explores why helping organizations need to adapt their practices to accommodate cultural differences
- ▶ Source: [Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development](#)

### Practical Guide for Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach (2023)

- ▶ Guide/manual (51 pages)
  - Provides tools, advice, and case studies that organizations can use to develop trauma-informed care at all levels of an organization

- Offers an overview of trauma, including trauma types and impact on individuals and communities

▶ Source: [U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)

### **Talking to Children When Scary Things Happen (2022)**

▶ Disponible en español: [Hablando con los Niños Cuando Sucede La Violencia](#)

▶ Tip sheet (2 pages)

- Offers strategies adults can use when talking with children about scary events

▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Trauma-Informed Care Resources Guide**

▶ Note: The guide is available at no cost, but accessing it requires submitting a name and email address

▶ Guide/manual (14 pages)

- Explains how trauma changes the way people see, experience, and interact with the world; introduces principles of trauma-informed care; and provides tips on how organizations can try to avoid retraumatizing people with trauma histories
- Highlights the risk of secondary trauma among staff and provides links to resources for learning more

▶ Source: [Crisis Prevention Institute](#)

### **Trauma Informed Care**

▶ Online video (9 minutes) (Note: it is the second video appearing on the webpage)

- Professionals from a variety of child-serving social service backgrounds explain what trauma-informed care looks like at an organizational level

▶ Source: [Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development](#)

### **What is Historical Trauma?**

▶ Online article (approximate reading time: 10 to 20 minutes)

- Describes which populations in the U.S. have suffered from historical trauma, how historical trauma affects trust relationships with helping systems/ organizations, and offers tips on building trust with these populations

▶ Source: [U.S. Administration for Children and Families](#)

## Section 9: Specific Populations

Many kinship/grandfamilies share similar experiences and stressors, but some face additional challenges due to racism, their legal status, their involvement with the military, or other situations. These resources explore these unique needs.

### **African American Grandfamilies: Helping Children Thrive Through Connection to Family and Culture – 2 resources (2020 and 2022)**

- ▶ Toolkit (64 pages) and tip sheet (8 pages)
  - Chapters 3 and 4 of the toolkit are particularly relevant
  - Both the toolkit and tip sheet provide an overview designed to help professionals better understand and serve African American kinship families
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### **American Indian & Alaska Native Grandfamilies: Helping Children Thrive Through Connection to Family and Cultural Identity – 2 resources (2020 and 2022)**

- ▶ Toolkit (68 pages) and tip sheet (8 pages)
  - Chapters 3 and 4 of the toolkit are particularly relevant
  - Prepared in partnership with the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), both the toolkit and tip sheet provide an overview designed to help professionals better understand and serve American Indian & Alaska Native kinship/grandfamilies
- ▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### **Caring Through Struggle: Caregivers of Children with Incarcerated Parents** \*

- ▶ Online video (11 minutes)
  - Focuses on the emotional stressors faced by kin caregivers of children whose birth parents have been incarcerated
  - Created by children of incarcerated parents
- ▶ Source: [Echoes of Incarceration](#)

### **Children with Traumatic Separation: Information for Professionals (2016)** \*

- ▶ Fact sheet (5 pages)

- Provides an overview of the trauma sometimes experienced by children separated from their birth parents due to parental incarceration, deportation, military deployment, or termination of parental rights

▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Children, Teens and Suicide Loss** \*

- ▶ Online booklet (48 pages)
  - Provides information and guidance, including sections on returning to school and resources for schools, to help caregivers and professionals in their efforts to support children and teens who are survivors of suicide loss
- ▶ Source: [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

### **Coping With Incarceration** \*

- ▶ Online video (9 minutes)
  - Describes the impact of parental incarceration on children
  - Offers tips for helping children express and normalize feelings, cope with strong emotions, and stay connected with incarcerated parents
- ▶ Source: [Sesame Workshop](#)

### **Essential Understanding of Historical Trauma for American Indian Families and Communities** \*

- ▶ Recorded webinar (46 minutes) (Note: this link goes to a list of videos; this video is led by the heading, “Historical Trauma”)
  - Describes how a legacy of broken treaties and racist federal policies, such as removal to reservations and mass separation of children from families into boarding schools and foster families, has led to intergenerational historical trauma that affects how Native Americans today access and respond to non-Native supportive services
  - Offers guidance on how to develop a trauma-informed lens when working with this population
- ▶ Source: [National Native Children’s Trauma Center](#)

### **Grief Support for Military Children, A Guide for School Personnel (2016)** \*

- ▶ Recorded webinar (74 minutes)
- ▶ Note: the presentation begins 15 minutes after the start of the recording

- Describes the various types of losses experienced by military children (including losses associated with deployment, relocation, and parental death or injury); how military culture impacts a family's experience of death; common emotional, behavioral, and physical grief responses of children by age group; and tips for supporting a grieving military child

▶ Source: [TAPS](#)

### **Historical and Intergenerational Trauma**

- ▶ Online video (13 minutes) (Note: it is the third video from the top of this webpage)
  - Describes how historical traumas including slavery, forced migration, and mass separation of children from families have impacted certain groups, especially Native Americans and African Americans
  - Explains how historical trauma can be passed from one generation to another and offers hope in interrupting this process

▶ Source: [Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development](#)

### **Homicide Survivors Dealing with Grief** \*

- ▶ Guide/manual (48 pages)
  - Explains how homicide grief differs from other grief types; describes intense emotional, cognitive, physical, interpersonal, and spiritual reactions by both adult and child survivors; and offers tips on how to support survivors
  - Offers additional resources (some specific to Montana)

▶ Source: [Montana Department of Corrections, Victim Services](#)

### **How [Military] Deployment Stress Affects Families**

- ▶ Disponible en español: [¿De qué Manera el Estrés de una Movilización Puede Afectar a las Familias?](#)
- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Describes stressors experienced by adults and children in military families when a service member is deployed and following their return

▶ Source: [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' National Center for PTSD](#)

### **Love Without Borders: Grandfamilies and Immigration (2018)** \*

- ▶ Report (28 pages)

- Provides an overview of common emotions and stressors experienced by kinship/grandfamilies in which children have been separated from their birth parents due to deportation or other immigration policies and the impact of stress and trauma on mental and physical health

▶ Source: [Generations United](#)

### **Suicide Loss: Grief Support Packet** \*

- ▶ Online collection of resources (8 pages)
  - Contains one-page fact sheets and tip sheets on suicide and supporting suicide loss survivors, as well as a list of resources for suicide loss survivors
- ▶ Source: [SAVE](#)

### **Talking About It [foster care]**

- ▶ Disponible en español: [Hablemos](#)
- ▶ Online Article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)
  - Offers sample language for answering questions from young children who are in foster care – over 120,000 children are in foster care with kin providing the care
- ▶ Source: [Sesame Workshop](#)

### **The Power of Parenting: Helping Your Child After a Family Homicide Loss (2023)** \*

- ▶ Tip sheet (5 pages)
  - Describes common emotional and behavioral responses by both adults and children to the homicide of a loved one, coping strategies, and effective ways to talk with children
  - Covers the disenfranchised grief experienced by many people of color when the death of their loved one is ignored or their loved one is blamed for their own death
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

### **Tip Sheet for Providers: Supporting Children Who Have an Incarcerated Parent (2016)**

- ▶ Online article (approximate reading time: less than 10 minutes)

- Describes the experiences, emotions and stigma youth with incarcerated parents have faced and explains how their circumstances differ from children whose parents are absent for different reasons
- Written by youth with incarcerated parents

▶ Source: [Youth.gov](https://www.youth.gov)

### **Working with Parents Involved in the Child Welfare System** \*

- ▶ Note: no-cost preregistration is required to access this course
- ▶ Online, self-paced course (approximately 50 minutes to complete)
  - Describes how birth parents experience the child welfare system and the impact of trauma among birth parents involved with child welfare
  - Offers tips for communicating with birth parents through a trauma-informed lens
- ▶ Source: [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](https://www.nctsn.org/)

## **Section 10: Trauma, Loss, and Grief Books for Children**

Professionals and kin/grandfamily caregivers often need to discuss challenging topics with children. Dr. Deborah Langosch, PhD, LCSW, prepared the bibliography below to provide professionals with ideas for books that they can use with children and/or recommend to kin/grandfamily caregivers. Dr. Langosch is a consultant, psychotherapist, trainer, and founding member of the Grandfamilies Outcome Workgroup (GrOW). She developed and directed the Kinship Care Program at the largest social service agency in New York City and previously served as the Director of the Loss and Bereavement Program for Children and Teens.

- ▶ Bagley, Jessixa. (2015). *Boats for Papa*. NY: Roaring Brook Press.
- ▶ Brown, Margaret Wise. (1938). *The Dead Bird*. New York: Harper Collins.
- ▶ Hemery, Kathleen Maresh. (1998). *The Brightest Star!*. Nebraska: Centering Corporation.
- ▶ Higgenbotham, Anastasia. (2016). *Death Is Stupid*. NY: Feminist Press, CUNY.
- ▶ Holmes, Margaret. (2000). *A Terrible Thing Happened: A Story for Children Who Have Witnessed Violence or Trauma*. Washington, DC: Magination Press.
- ▶ Karst, Patrice (2018). *The Invisible String*. NY: Little, Brown and Company.



- ▶ Levis, Caron. (2012). *Stuck with the Blooz*. NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co.
- ▶ Levis, Caron and Santoso, Charles. (2016). *Ida, Always*. NY: Simon and Schuster.
- ▶ Romain, Trevor. (1999). *What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?* Minnesota: Free Spirit Publishing.
- ▶ Rowland, Joanna. (2017). *The Memory Box: A Book About Grief*. Minnesota: Sparkhouse Family.
- ▶ Salloum, Alison. (1998). *Reactions: A Workbook to Help Young People Who are Experiencing Trauma and Grief*. Nebraska: Centering Corporation.
- ▶ Schwiebert, Pat. (2005). *Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing after Loss*. Washington: Grief Watch.
- ▶ Sheppard, Caroline. (1998). *Brave Bart: A Story for Traumatized and Grieving Children*. Michigan: Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children.
- ▶ Silverman, Janis. (1999). *Help Me Say Goodbye: Activities for Helping Kids Cope when a Special Person Dies*. Minnesota: Fairview Press
- ▶ Sunderland, Margot. (2003). *The Day the Sea Went Out and Never Came Back: A Story for Children Who Have Lost Someone They Love*. NY: Taylor and Francis Limited.
- ▶ Sunderland, Margot. (2001). *The Frog Who Longed for the Moon to Smile: A Story for Children Who Yearn for Someone They Love*. NY: Routledge Press.
- ▶ Thomas, Pat. (2001). *I Miss You: A First Look at Death*. Illinois: Sourcebooks.

## Section 11: Additional Resources

Grandfamily and kin caregiving comes with a unique set of circumstances that is different for each family. Other resources can help professionals learn how to support families with a more holistic approach.

- ▶ [Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network](#) – Publications and training on topics related to substance use
- ▶ [African American Behavioral Health Center of Excellence](#) – Publications, training, and technical assistance on African American mental health, trauma (including historical trauma), substance use, and cultural competency topics

- ▶ **Annie E. Casey Foundation** – Publications and training on topics related to kinship/grandfamilies
- ▶ **E4Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Disparities in Aging** – Publications, training, and technical assistance on older adult mental health topics
- ▶ **Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network** – Publications, training, and technical assistance on topics related to kinship/grandfamilies
- ▶ **National Family Support Technical Assistance Center** – Publications, training, and technical assistance on family mental health and substance use topics
- ▶ **National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Child, Youth, & Family Mental Health** – Publications, training, and technical assistance on family mental health topics
- ▶ **U.S. Child Care Technical Assistance Network** – Publications and training on child development, child mental health, childhood trauma, and trauma-informed organizations/systems topics; look under the menu headings *Resources, For Grantees and Providers, and Professional Development*
- ▶ **U.S. Child Welfare Information Gateway** – Publications and training on child welfare, childhood trauma, child mental health, and foster care topics
- ▶ **U.S. Indian Health Services** – Training on mental health, substance use, trauma (including historical trauma), and cultural competency topics

---

The Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center (Network) helps government agencies and nonprofits in states, tribes, and territories work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries to improve supports and services for families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children whose parents are unable to do so. For more information, please visit [www.GKSNetwork.org](http://www.GKSNetwork.org).

*The Network is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$9,950,000 with 95 percentage funded by ACL/HHS and \$523,684 and 5 percentage funded by non-government sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.*

The Network is a project of  
Generations United.

**generations  
United**

Because we're stronger together®

©Generations United and USAging, 2024

- 
- <sup>i</sup> Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (SGRG) Act: Initial Report to Congress, November 16, 2021, [https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE\\_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress\\_2021-11-16.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress_2021-11-16.pdf).
- <sup>ii</sup> Generations United, State of Grandfamilies Report 2021: Reinforcing a Strong Foundation: Equitable Supports for Basic Needs of Grandfamilies, 2021, [https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2022/02/2021-Grandfamilies-Report\\_V14.pdf](https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2022/02/2021-Grandfamilies-Report_V14.pdf).
- <sup>iii</sup> Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and the Administration for Community Living, Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (SGRG) Act: Initial Report to Congress, November 16, 2021, [https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE\\_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress\\_2021-11-16.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress_2021-11-16.pdf).