

Grandparents: *Becoming a Parent Again*



ADRC of Brown County is here to help you and your family. This booklet is a guide to getting started on your journey as a grandparent becoming a parent again. Reach out whenever you need help.

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ADRC is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization

Find us online:



Getting Started

Becoming a grandparent is one of the most exciting moments in your life. You waited a long time to have this special bond with your grandchildren.

However, if you are one of the millions of grandparents caring for a grandchild full-time, then you know becoming a grandparent can be overwhelming.

You may have fear and anxiety about providing the care your grandchild needs and deserves. You could be concerned with how that special bond will change as you take over the role of “parent.” Maybe you have a little bit of anger and frustration because your life is no longer your own, especially when you planned to relax and enjoy your retirement years.

ADRC of Brown County is here to help you and your family. Use this handbook as a guide to getting started on this journey. Reach out whenever your need help.

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***Our Mission:**
“Empower and enrich
the lives of older adults,
adults with disabilities
and their caregivers.”*

For more Information:

Visit our website:

www.adrcofbrowncounty.org

211 Community Services database:

www.get211.org

Five Tips for Caregivers

Start off on the right foot. Follow these simple tips to get organized so you can feel ready to take on the role of grandparenting.

Schedule a Family Meeting

A family meeting offers an opportunity for individuals, their families, and caregivers to communicate and work together to coordinate a plan. If any conflict exists, it may be helpful to bring in a neutral party to the meeting, such as a social worker, counselor, or mediator. For more information about family meetings, see ADRC's "Holding a Family Meeting" resource.

Learn about Health Conditions

Knowing about your grandchild's health condition helps you plan for the future. Many illness-specific organizations are available for information and support, such as the Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America, Childhood Leukemia Foundation, and the Epilepsy Foundation. A quick internet search will get you connected to these agencies and more.

Keep a Medical Log

Having a medical log makes it easy to access your grandchild's health information. Bring this to every medical appointment. Make sure to include a list of:

- Medications (prescribed, over-the-counter, and supplements)
- Questions and concerns for the doctor plus notes from appointments
- Changes you see in your grandchild

Exercise

Besides making you feel good (exercise releases natural endorphins), exercise can release stress. Be sure to check with your doctor before you begin an exercise program. You can bond with your grandchild by including them in your routine! Give these activities a try:

- Hiking - include scavenger hunts for double the fun
- Tai Chi - develop physical and mental harmony
- Golf - putt in the backyard or make a trip to a miniature golf park
- Yoga - relax your mind
- Exer-gaming - use a fitness system, like Wii Fit

Connect and Get Support

You are not alone. Reach out to other grandparents, just like you, to form a support system. Connecting with someone going through your similar situation can help to reduce stress and improve your overall well-being. ADRC offers Powerful Tools for Caregivers classes throughout the year. Call ADRC to learn about upcoming sessions (920) 448-4300.

Handling Family Concerns and Challenges

As a grandparent, you are probably stepping in to raise your grandchild during a crisis situation in your family. Learn how to cope with challenges while still providing care.

My grandchild gets upset by their parents coming in and out of their lives.

What should I do?

Consider your options and what you feel will work best for providing a stable environment for your grandchild. You may look to create a schedule of visits with their parents as a way to set boundaries and provide stability. If scheduling times is challenging, it may be beneficial to enlist the help of a trained mediator, faith professional, counselor, or family friend.

My grandchild's parents are addicted to alcohol or drugs.

Is there help for our family?

This can be stressful and lead to conflicts within the family, but there is help. You and your grandchild may find it helpful to join a support group. You may also consider counseling services and/or exploring resources such as the Children of Alcoholics Foundation to help cope with these challenges.

My grandchild's parents are in jail.

Should I help my grandchild stay in touch?

This is a significant loss, not only for your grandchild, but also for you. Talk about the option of visiting, calling, or writing the parents with your grandchild. If your grandchild expresses interest, contact visitor services through the jail to help you identify the best way to contact the parents and plan your visit.

My grandchild's parents have died.

How can I help my grandchild cope?

Take time to allow yourself and your grandchild to grieve in your own ways. While providing support, a sense of security, and love, you may also want to inform your grandchild's teachers or other important figures in their life of the circumstances. In addition, you may seek out counseling services and/or grief support groups for you and your grandchild.

Balancing Caregiving, Employment, and Finances

As a new grandparent caregiver, consider how you will support your grandchild financially.

Balancing Caregiving and Work:

You might need to change your work schedule, come in late/early, or alter your work-related travel to find time for caregiving responsibilities. Talk with your Human Resources department to see if your employer has an eldercare program, Employee Assistance Program (EAP), or a more flexible work schedule. Child care subsidies may also be an option to pay for child care while you work. Contact the Bay Lake Consortium for eligibility guidelines (see page 6).

Returning to Work:

If you need extra income to care for your grandchild, get assistance with your job search:

Job Center of Wisconsin

Provides job services, training, and employment assistance for individuals looking for work.
701 Cherry St. Green Bay

Curative Connections Senior Service Program

Provides participants, who are 55 years of age or older, a position in a government or nonprofit organization to gain experience and build career skills.
(920) 593-3557 | 1-800-636-1161, ext. 3557

Wisconsin Senior Employment (WISE) Program

Provides participants, who are 55 years of age or older, training for employment and part-time, paid work experience in community service organizations.
(920) 469-8858

Need to understand how working could affect your benefits, including retirement, FoodShare, and Medicaid? Speak with a Work Incentive Benefit Specialist at either of these locations:

Employment Resource, Inc.

(608) 246-3444 | www.eri-wi.org

Options for Independent Living

(920) 490-0500

Financial Assistance:

Based on your grandchild's income (e.g. trust fund or child support payments), you may be able to access benefit programs such as: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for children with disabilities, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and/or the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

To access some of these benefits, you do not need to have custody or guardianship of your grandchild. However, other benefits will require you to have a formal legal relationship with your grandchild. Contact ADRC for more information, (920) 448-4300. If you have custody of your grandchild, consider speaking with a family law lawyer about child support payments to help in raising your grandchild.

Financial Assistance, Benefits, and Legal Concerns

The following resources offer a variety of ways in which to learn about available benefits and assistance as someone raising a grandchild.

Bay Lake Consortium

111 N. Jefferson St. Green Bay

888-794-5747 | www.access.wi.gov

Child Care Assistance (WI SHARE Program) available to assist eligible working families in paying for child care.

Brown County Child Support Agency

111 N. Jefferson St. Green Bay

(920) 448-4090 | www.browncountywi.gov

Child support payments may be available for grandparents raising grandchildren.

Note: Grandparents may want to consult with a family law attorney first.

Brown County Health & Human Services

111 N. Jefferson St. Green Bay

(920) 448-6000 | www.browncountywi.gov

Provides information, referral, support, and assistance for individuals who may be experiencing economic hardship, neglect, abuse, juvenile crime, or incapacities.

Kinship Care

111 N. Jefferson St. Green Bay

(920) 448-4144 | www.browncountywi.gov

Offers assistance with transitioning into a relative caregiver role. Financial assistance through Kinship Care Grants may be available. Contact to discuss eligibility requirements and application process.

National Coalition of Grandparents

137 Larkin St. Madison, WI 53705

(608) 238-8751

National coalition of grandparent caregivers who are working for legislation and policy changes in support of relative caregivers, with the goal of protecting and ensuring inherent rights of grandparents, children, and their kin.

Education

The following educational resources offer learning opportunities for grandparents and grandchildren.

Family & Childcare Resources of N.E.W.

201 W. Walnut St. Suite 100, Green Bay

(920) 432-8899 | www.fcrnew.org

Equips adults with information, programming, and resources. Offers a drop-in play area and playgroups that support caregivers and promote child socialization.

Head Start

1420 Harvey St. Green Bay

(920) 448-2226 | www.headstart.gbaps.org

Free classes offered for children who will be three or four-years-old on September 1st.

Families must meet income requirements (call for guidelines) and/or be working with foster care or kinship care. Program includes: medical and dental screenings, meals, snacks, transportation, bi-lingual programming for English Language Learners (Spanish), services for children with disabilities, and trainings for parents, guardians, and families.

Howe Community Resource Center

526 S. Monroe Ave. Green Bay

(920) 448-7340 | www.howecommunityresourcecenter.org

A safe place for individuals and families to learn and grow, individually and together. Offers parenting classes, home visits, and reading tutoring to strengthen the individual and family unit. Provides information on community resources.

HSHS Grandparent Class

St. Vincent Hospital, 835 S. Van Buren St. Green Bay

(920) 433-0111 | www.stvincenthospital.org

Discussion of changes that occur for grandparents transitioning into their new role. This class is particularly helpful for first-time grandparents.

Need a Break? Find Childcare

Use these resources to find daycares near you, including those with sliding scale fee options. Also, check with your grandchild's school to see if after-school care is offered.

Family & Childcare Resources of N.E.W.

Staff can help in your search for childcare or after-school care. Access their database of regulated child care in Brown County, plus learn about questions to ask when looking for child care options.

201 W. Walnut St. Suite 100, Green Bay

(920) 432-8899 | www.fcrnew.org

YoungStar

This is Wisconsin's Child Care Quality Rate & Improvement System. Use the database to search for quality childcare across the state.

(Family & Childcare Resource Center of NEW is the local YoungStar office.)

www.dcf.wisconsin.gov

Health

The following health resources can help promote your grandchild's physical well-being and safety.

Brown County Health & Human Services - Public Health Division

610 S. Broadway St. Green Bay

(920) 448-6400 | www.browncountywi.gov

Offers immunization clinics, car seat education and installation, hearing and vision screenings for school-aged children, service coordination for children with special healthcare needs, information and referral to community resources, and home visits for assessment and education about parenting issues, growth, and development.

De Pere Health Department

335 S. Broadway St. De Pere

(920) 339-4054 | www.de-pere.org

Offers similar programs as the Brown County Health & Human Services - Public Health Division (listed above), but only for De Pere residents.

Clothing and Furniture Assistance

The following resources offer options and assistance for getting basic items such as clothing, furniture, and other household goods.

Goodwill Industries

2814 S. Oneida St. Green Bay

(920) 498-0990

1301 Brosig St. Green Bay

(920) 465-9601

www.goodwillncw.org

Retail stores offering affordable clothing and household items. Need-based vouchers are available for eligible individuals.

Love Life Ministry

Assists low-income families in meeting basic infant needs under age 3. Diapers and other baby items as available. Thursdays (except 5th Thur. of the month) from 1 - 4 p.m. Must bring a photo ID, proof of address, proof of birth for children, and WIC card if available. Each location is based on residency, attend the east side site if living in East Green Bay and the west side site if living in West Green Bay.

West Side Site:

The Hope Center

505 Clinton St. Green Bay

(920) 497-1087

East Side Site:

Central Church

831 Schoen St. Green Bay

(920) 468-5414 | (920) 336-5636

St. Vincent de Paul Society & Store

1529 Leo Frigo Way Green Bay

940 Hansen Rd. Green Bay

(920) 435-4040 | www.svdpgb.org

Retail store offering affordable clothing and household items. Need-based vouchers are available for eligible individuals.

Salvation Army Men's Closet

1125 W. Mason St. Green Bay

(920) 884-2950 | www.sagreenbay.org

Free, work-appropriate clothing for men in need.

YWCA Women's Closet

230 S. Madison St. Green Bay

(920) 432-5581 | www.ywcagreenbay.org

Free, work-appropriate clothing for women in need.

Need to Talk with Someone? Get Support

The following support resources can be used as a starting point to gain more information about services pertaining to grandparents raising grandchildren.

Brown County Human Services Department

111 N. Jefferson St. Green Bay

(920) 448-6000 | www.browncountywi.gov

Provides information, referral, support, and assistance for individuals who may be experiencing economic hardships, neglect, abuse, juvenile crime, or incapacities.

Family Services of Northeast WI, Inc.

300 Crooks St. Green Bay

(920) 436-6800 | www.familyservicesnew.org

Offers various programs to support children and families, including: early childhood development, counseling and treatment services, and at-risk youth services.

Crisis Center of Family Services

3150 Gershwin Dr. Green Bay

(920) 436-8888

Provides 24/7, free, confidential, short-term counseling for people of all ages in Brown County.

ADRC of Brown County

300 S. Adams St. Green Bay

(920) 448-4300 | www.adrcofbrowncounty.org

Information & Assistance and Benefit Specialists are available by phone or appointment to discuss a wide variety of community resource options. Check-out books and DVDs through the ADRC Resource Room. Materials available for grandparents raising grandchildren, adults, pre-teens, and children. Also, inquire about class availability for Powerful Tools for Caregivers.

Information is Power - Online Resources

Use the following state and national resources to get more information.

AARP: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren-www.grandfamilies.org

Provides a basic guide for individuals raising a grandchild (or another relative's child). Guide includes the following information: getting started, support, legal issues, finances, work, housing and safety, health, education and child care, and family challenges.

Brookdale Foundation Group: Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP)

www.brookdalefoundation.net

Promotes the creation or expansion of services for grandparents and other relatives who have taken on the responsibility of surrogate parenting due to the abuse of the parents. Provides access to RAPP publications, helpful state and national links, and local and state programs.

Family Caregiver Alliance- www.caregiver.org

Offers caregiver tips, information, policy issues, newsletters, online groups, and more resources.

Grandfamilies State Law & Policy Resource Center- www.grandfamilies.org

Provides national collaborative, legal resources supporting grandfamilies in and outside of the child welfare system. Find a searchable database of laws and legislations applicable to grandfamilies, summaries and comparisons of laws and legislation, publications that support grandfamilies, and more.

National Alliance for Caregiving- www.caregiving.org

Offers reports, caregiving tips, publications, and more.

UW-Extension: Grandparenting Today- fyi.extension.wisc.edu/grandparenting

"Through the Eyes of a Child" fact sheets give grandparents information about relationships and child development.

WI Family Caregiver Support Program-www.wisconsinicaregiver.org

Provides information for people 55 or older and are a relative (grandparent) caring for a child or a relative with a disability.

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