

# Behavioral Health is Essential To Health



Prevention Works



Treatment is Effective



People Recover



# Learning Community: Supporting Grandparents

November 30

3:00pm – 4:30pm ET



**THE TA NETWORK**  
the national technical assistance network for children's behavioral health





*This webinar is hosted by FREDLA Learning Community, a partner in the National TA Network for Children’s Behavioral Health, operated by and coordinated through the University of Maryland.*

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*Disclaimer: The views, opinions, and content expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).*

# Speakers



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# How Many Grandparents do you Think are the Primary Caregivers for Their Grandchildren Under Age 18?



BECAUSE WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER

**generations  
united**



# Supporting Grandfamilies Raising Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Jaia Lent  
Deputy Executive Director  
Generations United

# Generations United

## National Center on Grandfamilies

- Founded in 1986 by National Council on Aging, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund and AARP
- Since 1999, The National Center on Grandfamilies has provided:
  - Wide variety of resources
  - Technical assistance and training to service providers and professionals
  - Education to policymakers on adopting supportive public policies and programs
- [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)
- [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org)

# GrAND

- A select group of kinship caregivers from 35 states, soon all 50
- GrAND aims to have kinship caregiver voices front and center
- Guides the work of the National Center on Grandfamilies

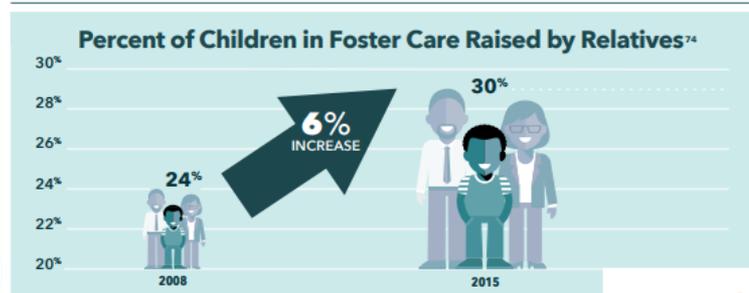
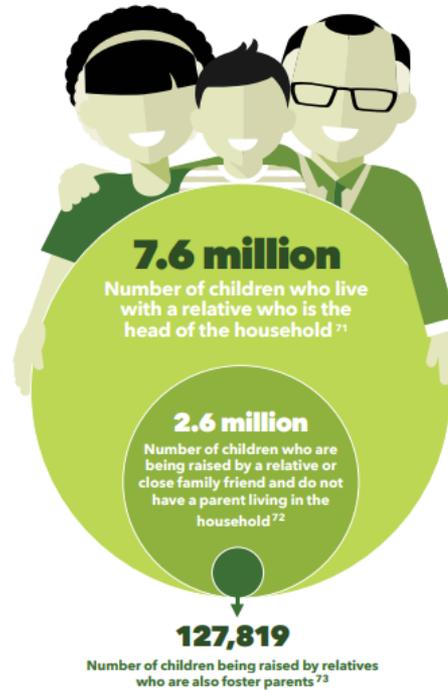
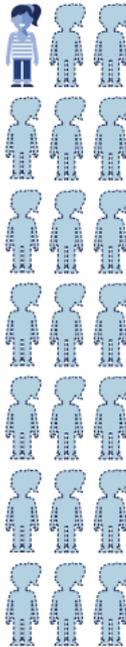


# Grand-Families



# Data Tells the Story

For every **1** child in foster care with relatives there are **20** children being raised by grand-parents or other relatives outside of the foster care system.<sup>70</sup>



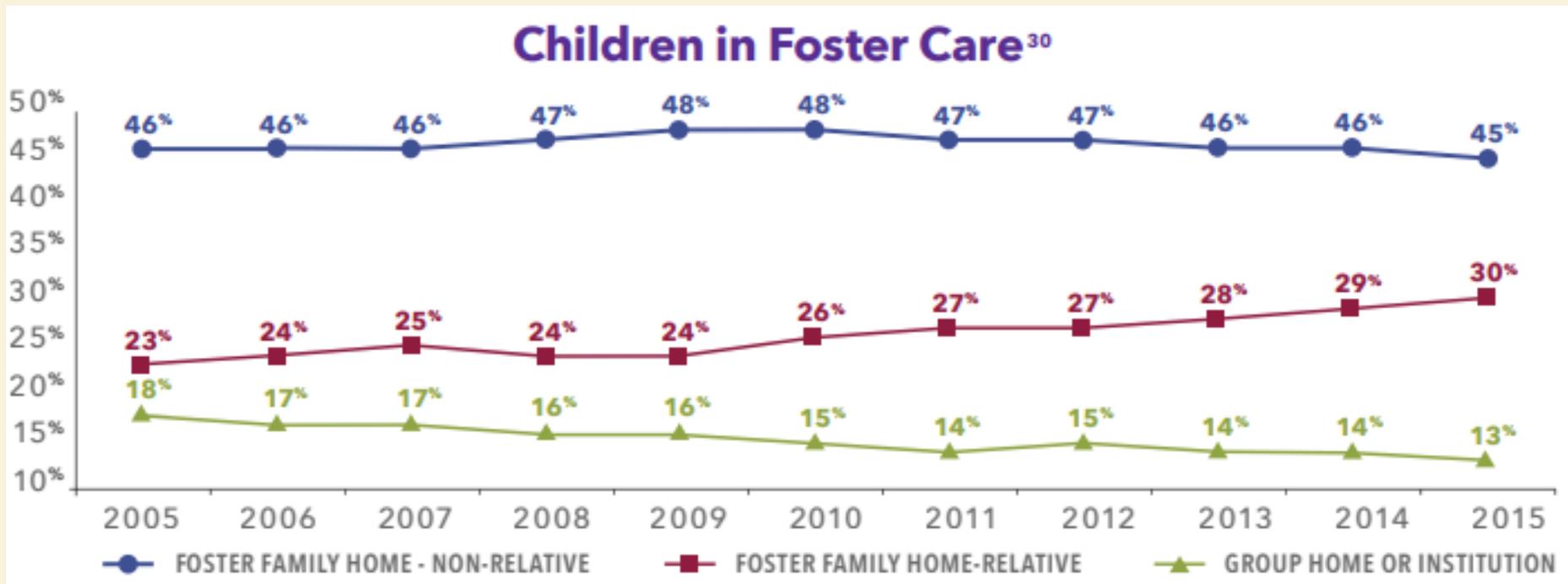
[www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)

**generations united**  
Because we're stronger together

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
**SAMHSA**

(Generations United, 2017)

# Data Tells the Story



(Generations United, 2017)

# Causal Factors

- Substance abuse
- Death of a parent
- Child abuse and/or neglect
- Teenage pregnancy
- HIV/AIDS
- Military deployment
- Unemployment
- Incarceration
- Divorce
- Mental health problems
- Family violence
- Poverty



# Opioid Epidemic

STATE OF GRANDFAMILIES 2016

## RAISING THE CHILDREN OF THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC:

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SOLUTIONS AND SUPPORT FOR GRANDFAMILIES



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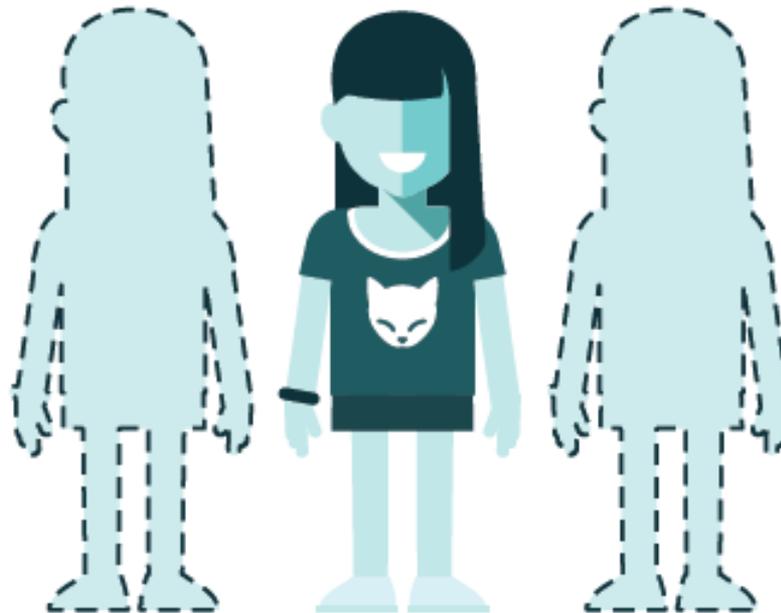
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
**SAMHSA**  
www.samhsa.gov • 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727)

# Key Findings

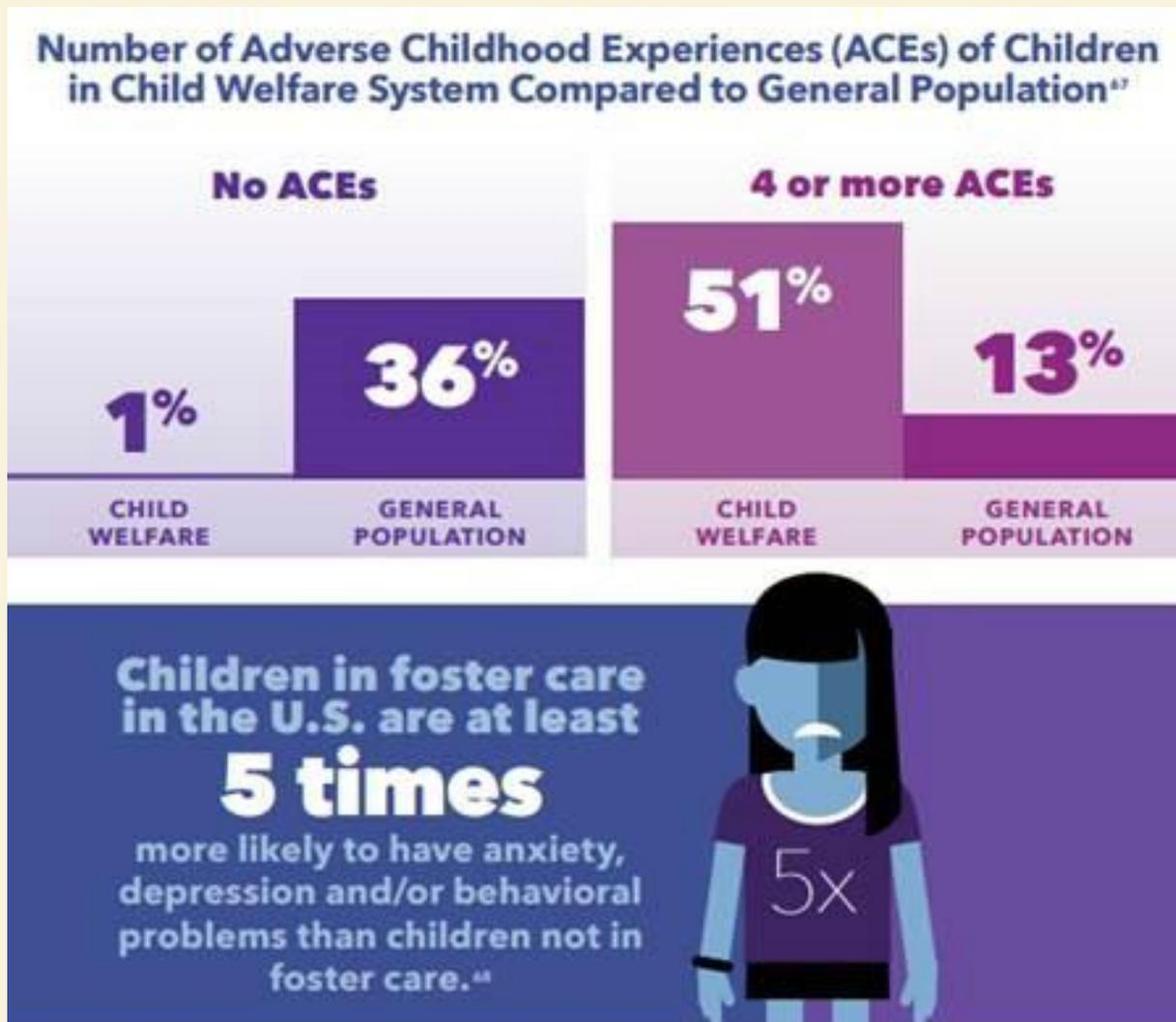
- Opioids and other substance abuse is the primary reason grandfamilies come together.
- Because of the opioid epidemic, the numbers of children in foster care is increasing after years of decline.
- The system is relying on relatives more than ever to raise these children whose parents have substance use disorders.

# Foster Care with Relatives

More than **1/3** of all children placed in foster care because of parental substance abuse are placed with relatives.



# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



# Children Under Age 3



**38%**  
of children  
under 3 in  
the child  
welfare  
system  
have 4 or  
more ACEs<sup>40</sup>

(Generations United, 2017)

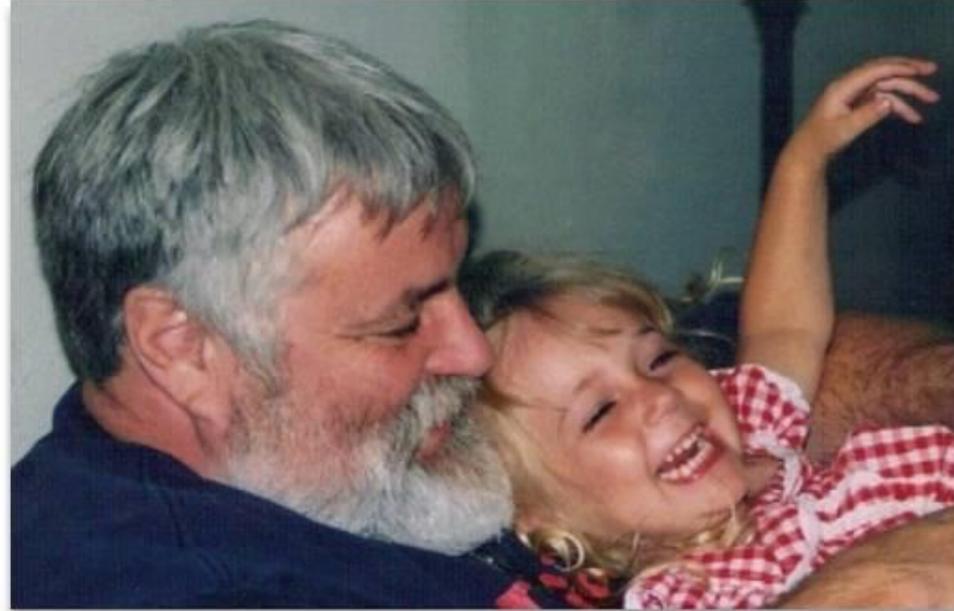
# Impact on Children

*“I thought because my grandkids were babies (6 month, 1 ½, 2 ½) they were not going to have any problems. By was I wrong! They had problems with separation anxiety; it was so painful to see them go through this. I had to tell them a hundred times a day how much I loved them and was never going to leave them”*

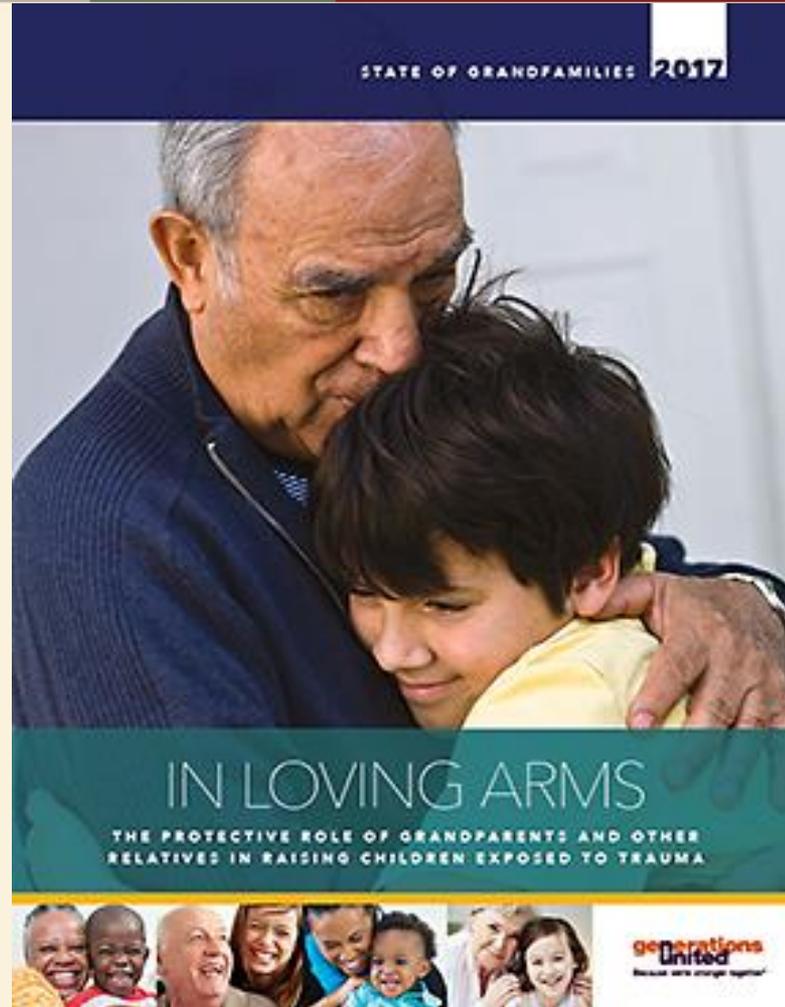
*– Delia, grandmother raising her grandchildren*

# Children's Mental Health/Social Issues

- Trauma
- Attachment
- Abandonment
- Stigma/Feeling Different
- Loss/Separation from Friends
- Cognitive Issues
- Fear about Caregiver's Health
- Weight/Responsibility/Fear/Guilt about other Family Members
- Multiple Loyalties



# Protective Role of Grandparents



(Generations United, 2017)

# Benefits of Grandfamilies

## Family-Based Protective Factors <sup>43</sup>

Positive Child-Caregiver Relationships and Adults who Model Healthy Relationships

Relationships with Extended Family

Stable Living Environment

## Benefits of Grandfamilies <sup>44</sup>

Safety, Belonging & Feeling Loved

Brothers / Sisters & Cultural Identity

Stability & Permanency



# Children Do Better in Grandfamilies



(Generations United, 2017)

# Grandparents

## Grandparents Responsible for Grandchildren (2015)

In the U.S. **2,572,146** grandparents are responsible for grandchildren<sup>61</sup>



**1,458,407**  
57% of them are in the workforce<sup>62</sup>



**1,022,872**  
40% of them are over 60<sup>63</sup>



**509,285**  
20% of them live below the poverty line<sup>64</sup>



**642,739**  
25% of them have a disability<sup>65</sup>



**1,070,885**  
42% of them have provided care for 5 years or more<sup>66</sup>



(Generations United, 2017)

# Cost Savings



**Amount grandparents and other relatives save taxpayers each year by raising children and keeping them out of foster care**

(Generations United, 2017)

# The Brown Family



(Photo courtesy of the Brown Family)

# Trauma

*“One thing I know to be true: you can’t love away the effects of trauma from neglect and abuse. Our children need the same amount of intensive therapy and services as a traditional foster placement and we, as their caregivers, desperately need the same to help them heal.”*

*- Jan, grandmother raising her grandson*

# Caregiver Mental Health & Social Issues

- **Grieving the Loss of:**
  - Adult Child
  - Expected Life of/Relationship with Adult Child
  - Expectation of “Healthy” Grandchild
  - Traditional Grandparent Role
  - Peer Friendships
  - Expected Retirement Experience
  - Retirement Savings/Financial Security
- Feeling Embarrassed or Ashamed
- Dual Loyalties
- Rock of the Family

# Other Challenges

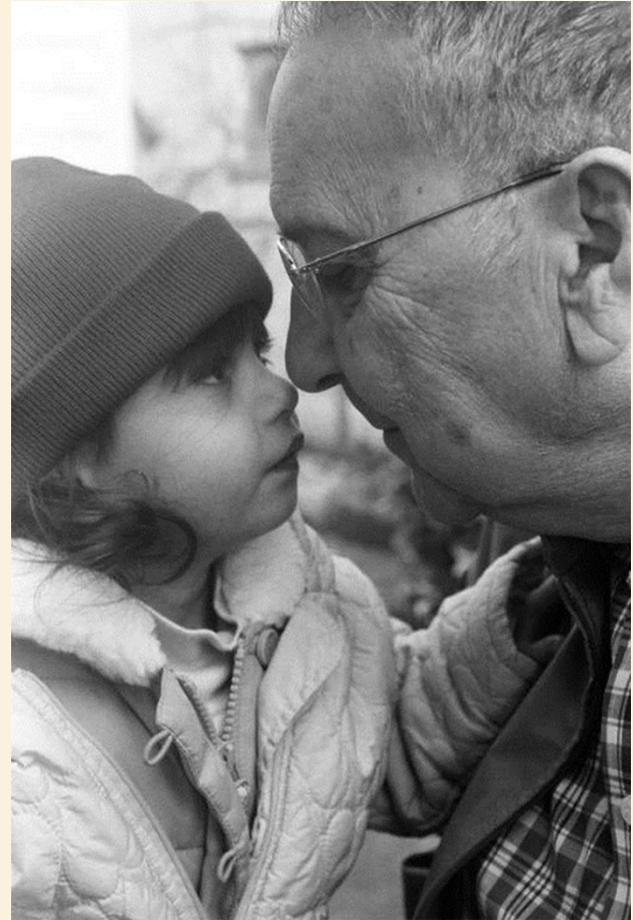
- Children's physical health
- Caregiver's physical health
- Inadequate supportive services/respice
- Financial
- Housing
- Legal Issues Educational and medical consent
- Information/navigation services

# Strengths of Grandfamilies



# Chad Dingle

*“...most people go to grandma’s house and get spoiled but for me it was the only safe place I had...getting to live with grandma was like ‘going to grandma’s house’ all the time. I had more love there than anywhere else in my life.”*



# Children Thrive in Grandfamilies

- Higher Levels of Permanency
- Greater Safety
- Better Behavioral and Mental Health Outcomes
- More Positive Feelings About Where They Live
- Increased Likelihood of Living With or STAYING Connected to Siblings
- Greater Preservation of Cultural Identity and Community Connections\*



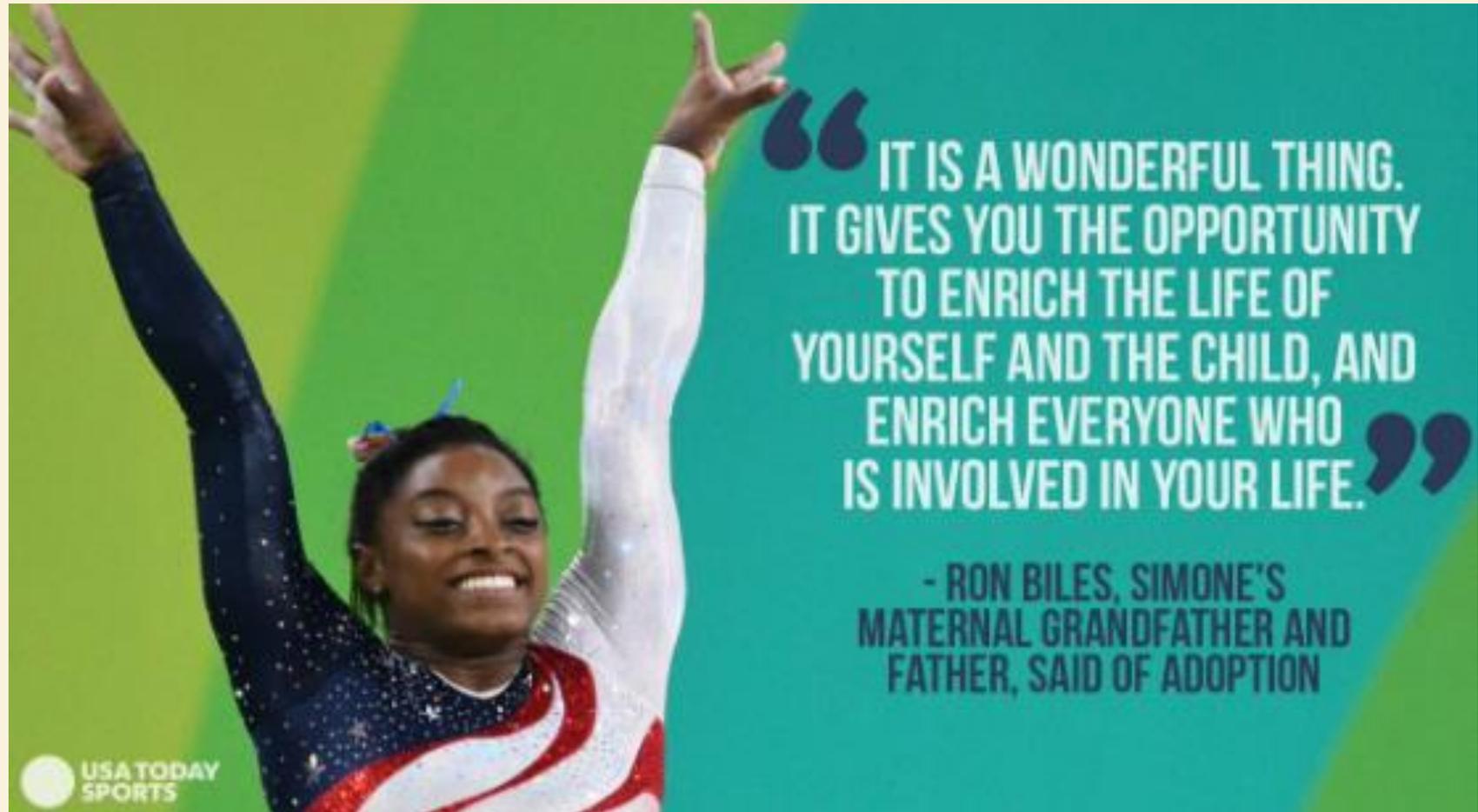
\* **Children Thrive in Grandfamilies fact sheet**, available at [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org) and [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)

# Blessings

*“I feel blessed to have this boy in my life. He is a treasure, and most likely, I would not be here without him. He gave me something positive to focus on, rather than the heartaches and sadness and grief. I have a renewed sense of hope, that I’m doing something worthwhile.”*

(Seelye, 2016)

# Simone Biles



“ IT IS A WONDERFUL THING. IT GIVES YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENRICH THE LIFE OF YOURSELF AND THE CHILD, AND ENRICH EVERYONE WHO IS INVOLVED IN YOUR LIFE. ”

- RON BILES, SIMONE'S MATERNAL GRANDFATHER AND FATHER, SAID OF ADOPTION

USA TODAY SPORTS

# Resources

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[DONATE NOW](#) to help improve the lives of children, youth and older adults through intergenerational collaboration, public policies, and programs.



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## Become A Member

Help improve the lives of children, youth and older adults today. Learn more about [membership](#), then [join us!](#)



## Resources

Resources from the Intergenerational Center are [now available at gu.org](#).



## Opioid crisis forces grandparents to care for grandchildren

Generations United worked with producers from NBC Universal on this Today Show story about how the opioid crisis is impacting grandfamilies. The story features our friend, [Larry Cooper](#), chief of Prevention and Intervention Services at Children's Home Network. [Watch the TODAY Show segment](#). There are also a companion article and Q&A, both of which includes quotes from [Donna Butts](#). [Read the companion article](#), then [check out the Q&A](#) that highlights three things grandparents should know before they take on the role of raising grandchildren.

## News



Generations United announced six intergenerational programs have been selected to receive the prestigious 2017 Programs of Distinction. [Learn more](#)



[Read this Q&A on D.O. v. Glisson](#) from Generations United about the impact of the decision on children inside and outside of Kentucky.

[Sign up for alerts!](#)

## Most Popular

The State of Grandfamilies in America: 2017 - [In Loving Arms: The Protective Role of Grandparents and Other Relatives in Raising Children Exposed to Trauma](#)

[I Need You, You Need Me: The Young, The Old, and What We Can Achieve Together](#)

The State of Grandfamilies in America: 2016 - [Raising the Children of the Opioid Epidemic: Solutions and Support for Grandfamilies](#)

The Valuing Vaccinations Across Generations Intergenerational Discussion Guide ([Download the guide | Learn about our campaign](#))

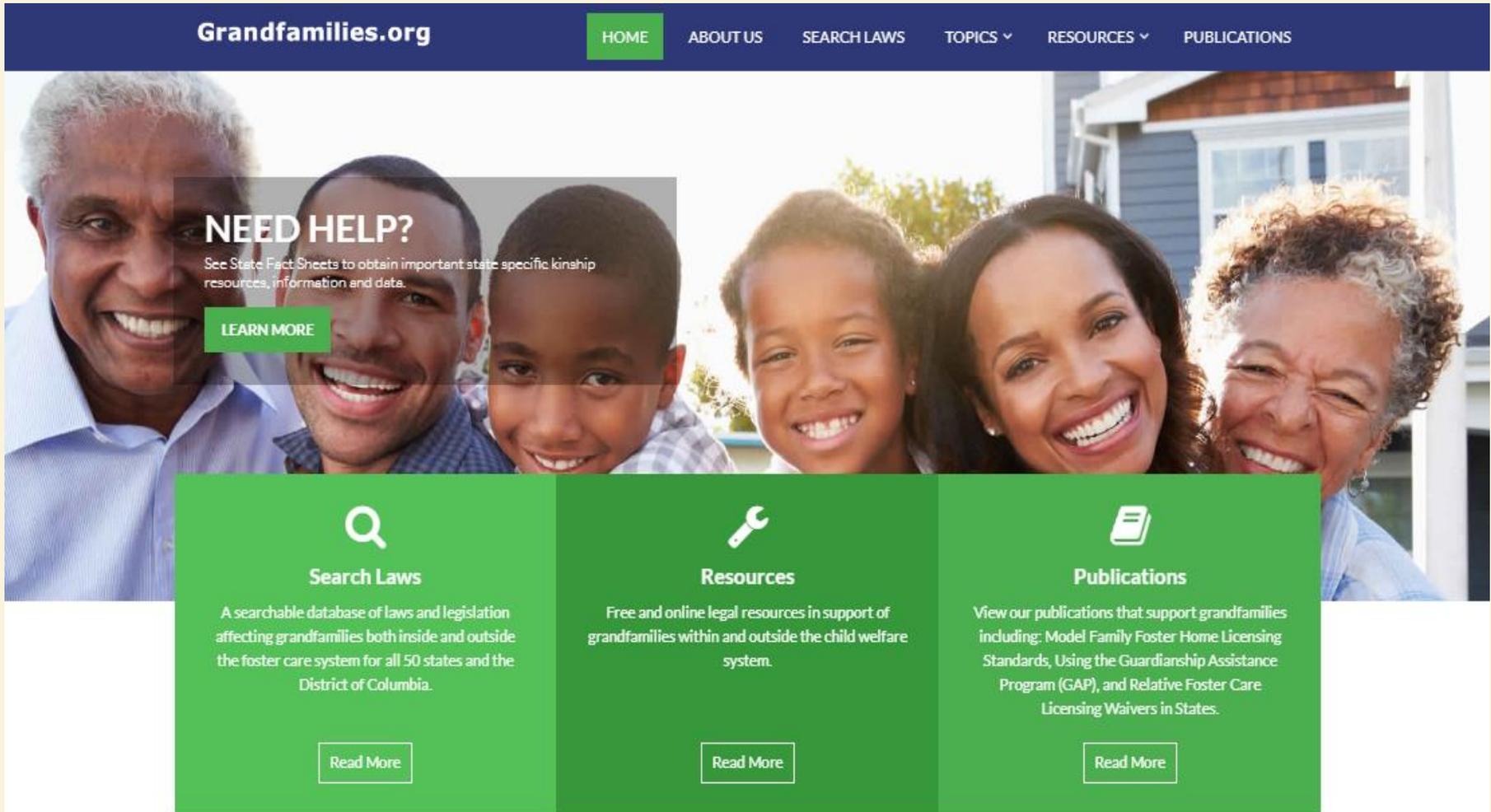
[Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards](#)

[Creating An Age-Advantaged Community](#)

[Out of Many, One: Uniting the Changing Faces of](#)

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

# Resources (cont.)



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Grandfamilies.org website. The navigation bar is dark blue with white text for the site name and menu items. Below the navigation bar is a large photograph of a diverse group of smiling people, including an older man, a man, a young boy, a young girl, a woman, and an older woman. Overlaid on the left side of the photograph is a semi-transparent grey box with the text 'NEED HELP?' and a description of state fact sheets. Below this is a green 'LEARN MORE' button. At the bottom of the photograph area are three green boxes, each with an icon and a title: a magnifying glass for 'Search Laws', a wrench for 'Resources', and a document for 'Publications'. Each box contains a short description and a white 'Read More' button.

**Grandfamilies.org**   HOME   ABOUT US   SEARCH LAWS   TOPICS ▾   RESOURCES ▾   PUBLICATIONS

**NEED HELP?**  
See State Fact Sheets to obtain important state specific kinship resources, information and data.

**LEARN MORE**

**Search Laws**  
A searchable database of laws and legislation affecting grandfamilies both inside and outside the foster care system for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

**Resources**  
Free and online legal resources in support of grandfamilies within and outside the child welfare system.

**Publications**  
View our publications that support grandfamilies including: Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards, Using the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP), and Relative Foster Care Licensing Waivers in States.

**Read More**   **Read More**   **Read More**

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

# Resources (cont.)

- Sign up for e-alerts at [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)
  - Generations This Week (GTW) – Weekly Intergenerational News
  - The Grand Voice – Quarterly Grandfamilies News
- Helpful Publications/Fact Sheets
  - Annual State of Grandfamilies Reports- Trauma, Opioid etc.
  - Grandparents’ and Other Relatives’ Guide to Raising Children with Disabilities
  - Fact Sheet to Help Grandfamilies Access TANF
  - Grand Successes: Stories of Lives Well-Raised
  - Children Thrive in Grandfamilies Fact Sheet
  - Grandfamilies Research Annotated Bibliography

# THANK YOU!



Jaia Lent, [jlent@gu.org](mailto:jlent@gu.org)

(Generations United, Copyright 2017)

# Opportunities Facing Family Run Organizations

- What special programming might be needed
  - How to provide support for grandparents
- How to address specific needs of grandparents
  - Navigating educational issues
  - Navigating systems for their grandchildren
  - Managing their own health along with their grandchild's health
  - Maintaining family relationships
  - Legal issues

# Programming for Grandparents

- Support group for grandparents raising grandchildren
  - Allow a space for them to share with other grandparents
- Include them in trainings on navigating child-serving systems, especially education, CPS, and juvenile court
- Parent peer support services

# Programming for Grandparents (cont.)

- Training on state-specific legal issues
  - Custody, guardianship, adoption, consent issues
  - AARP Grandfamilies Guide
  - Grandfamilies.org – great resource around legal issues – [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org)
    - State Grandfamilies Fact Sheets - <http://www.grandfamilies.org/State-Fact-Sheets>
    - Be sure your organization is listed as a resource on your state's fact sheet by emailing organization's information to [grandfamilies@gu.org](mailto:grandfamilies@gu.org).

# Q & A



# Additional Resources

- Generations United, National Center on Grandfamilies  
[www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)
- Children's Defense Fund [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)
- Grandfamilies State Law and Policy Resource Center  
[www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org)
- Fact sheets for each state with data and resources  
[www.grandfactsheets.org](http://www.grandfactsheets.org)
- Extension  
[www.extension.org/category/family\\_caregiving\\_grandparents\\_raising\\_grandchildren](http://www.extension.org/category/family_caregiving_grandparents_raising_grandchildren)

# Additional Resources (cont.)

- National Kinship Alliance for Children  
<http://kinshipalliance.org/>
- Annie E. Casey Foundation [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)
- Casey Family Programs, [www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)
- ChildTrends [www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org)
- Brookdale Foundation Group  
[www.brookdalefoundation.org/](http://www.brookdalefoundation.org/)

# Additional Resources (cont.)

- AARP – [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)
  - Grandfamilies Guide -  
<https://www.aarp.org/relationships/friends-family/info-08-2011/grandfamilies-guide-getting-started.html>
- SAMHSA Wellness Strategies -  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/wellness/strategies>

# Thank You for Participating!

## Special Edition of Great Ideas! on Supporting Grandparents

available on the FREDLA website

<http://www.fredla.org/fredla-newsletter-great-ideas/>

Join the Learning Community Closed Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/familylearningcommunity/>

# Coming Up

- Next Learning Community:

## ***Participant Protections – What Family-Run Organizations Need to Know***

January 25, 2018

Contact **FREDLA** if you are in need of technical assistance or have thoughts on how we can improve the Learning Community for Family Leaders!

[sratliff@fredla.org](mailto:sratliff@fredla.org)