

RESOURCES FOR GUARDIANS

DUPAGE
COUNTY



Are you a Grandparent or
Relative raising children?

If so, you are not alone and
may be eligible for
community resources and
additional support.

GRANDFAMILIES

Grandfamilies or kinship families are families in which children reside with and are being raised by grandparents, other extended family members, and adults with whom they have a close family-like relationship such as godparents, fictive kin, and close family friends. About 7.8 million children across the country live in households headed by grandparents or other relatives. About 2.5 million grandparents report that they are responsible for the daily needs of their grandchildren. In about a third of these homes, neither of the children's parents are in the home. More information can be found at Generations United <http://www.gu.org/> and Grandfamilies.org <http://www.grandfamilies.org/>.



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The above information and additional information regarding minor guardianships is available from the Illinois State Bar Association or via their website at <https://www.isba.org/> and Illinois Legal Aid Online at <https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/legal-information/guardianship-child>. The information contained herein is intended for informational purposes only and is not intended to be nor should anything herein be construed as legal advice or opinion.

1. What is Kinship Care?

Kinship care refers to the care of children by relatives or, in some jurisdictions, close family friends (often referred to as fictive kin). Kinship care is often considered a type of family preservation service.

Kinship care may be formal and involve a training and licensure process for the caregivers, monthly payments to help defray the costs of caring for the child, and support services. Kinship care also may be informal and involve only an assessment process to ensure the safety and suitability of the home along with optional supportive services for the child and caregivers. Approximately one-fourth of the children in out-of-home care are living with relatives.

What are the steps in the Guardianship Process?

In Illinois, the only way someone can be a guardian for a person who is eighteen years old or younger is to be appointed by the circuit court. Guardianship over a minor child stops automatically when the child turns eighteen.

The procedures for designating a court-appointed guardian are set forth in Section 11 of the Illinois Probate Act, 755 ILCS 5/1-1 et seq. Each county circuit court may also have its own practices or rules. In DuPage County, you can find out more about guardianships in the probate court by contacting the Circuit Clerk at 630-407-8700.

Legal guardianship lets someone that is not a parent take care of a child. This person is the child's court-appointed guardian. Once someone becomes a child's guardian, they cannot give up the responsibility unless a judge rules that:

- A parent is able to care for the child again;
- Someone else is willing to become the guardian; or
- The child is deemed to be a dependent minor
- The child turns 18.

To become a guardian, a person must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a US resident
- Be of sound mind
- Not be adjudicated a disabled adult
- Not have a felony conviction that involved harm or threat to a child

There are three types of guardianship of a child:

- Permanent or Plenary legal guardian – appointed by a judge in the probate court
- Standby guardian - a person who will take over as guardian if needed
- Short-term guardian – informal agreement for up to one year; no need to go to court

Permanent or Plenary guardian

A permanent legal guardian makes sure the child has medical care, food, clothes, shelter, and education. The guardian can make important decisions for the child, such as:

- Enrolling the child in school
- Seeking special education and other related services
- Taking the child to the doctor and consenting to medical treatment
- Obtaining any applicable public benefits on behalf of the child
- Following any court orders regarding the child

A plenary guardian must be appointed by a court. The court can appoint a guardian when:

- The parent is not able or willing to make and carry out daily decisions for the child even though the parent still has parental rights;
- The parent was notified of the hearing but does not show up and object at the hearing;
- The parent agrees to the guardianship.

Standby guardian

A standby guardian is a person who will take over as guardian when a parent or legal guardian can no longer care for a child. This usually happens when a parent or guardian gets sick or dies, or otherwise cannot care for the child(ren). A parent or guardian must designate the standby guardian in writing. The designation must be witnessed by at least 2 people who are at least 18 years old. A witness cannot also be the person trying to be the standby guardian. A petition for a standby guardian must then be filed in the probate court.

Short-term guardianship

A short-term guardian is responsible for the child for one year or less. The parent or guardian picks the short-term guardian. The parent or guardian does not need to go to court, but the agreement must be in writing. The agreement must be witnessed by at least 2 people who are at least 18 years old. A witness cannot also be the person trying to be the short-term guardian.

The short-term guardianship cannot last for more than one year. The written agreement should state the exact date the guardianship ends, or the agreement can state the guardianship ends if an event happens within the one year time limit. For example, if the parent returns from active military duty or is released from jail. However, a parent or guardian can end the short-term guardianship at any time. Only one short-term guardian can exist at any one time.

The short-term guardian does not have to be related to the child. A short-term guardian will not have control over any money or property (i.e. an "estate"). A permanent guardianship must be obtained in order to have control over a child's estate.

Types of Minor Guardianships:

- **Guardian of the Person:** A minor needs a guardian of his or her person when the minor has no living parents, when the parents cannot be found, or when the parents are unable or unwilling to care for the minor.
- **Guardian of the Estate:** A minor needs a guardian of his or her estate when he or she has, or is about to receive, any money or property with a value of at least \$5,000 (such as from insurance, from an inheritance, or from the settlement of a personal injury case). A guardianship of the estate is not needed if the only asset of the minor is the right to collect social security benefits.



DUPAGE

COUNTY

COMMUNITY SERVICES

WHAT WE DO...

DuPage County Community Services provides a wide array of confidential services and programs, client advocacy, and referrals to over 1,100 social service resources nationwide, to individuals and families in need of assistance.

Community Services does not discriminate in admission to programs or activities in compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the U.S. Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Age Discrimination Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the U.S. and Illinois Constitutions. If you feel you have been discriminated against, you have a right to file a complaint.

For more information, contact:

DUPAGE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

Attention: Director
421 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187

PHONE: 630-407-6500
TOLL-FREE: 1-800-942-9412
TDD: 630-407-6502

Daniel J. Cronin
County Board Chairman

Mary A. Keating
Community Services Director



DUPAGE

COUNTY

COMMUNITY SERVICES

If you are in need of...

- Food
- Clothing
- Housing Assistance
- Utility Bill Assistance
- Senior Citizen Resources
- Assistance with Adult Protective Services (APS)
- Information on Home Health Care or Long Term Care



**WE CAN
HELP!**

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DUPAGE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

421 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187

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Daniel J. Cronin
County Board Chairman

Mary A. Keating
Community Services Director

Illinois Department of Human Services can often help you and your family meet your basic needs. The following information is a general overview of resources available through Illinois DHS. For more complete information, please visit the DHS website at <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=27894>

DHS Offices and Service Providers for DuPage County

1. DHS Family Community Resource Center in DuPage County

Family Community Resource Center - Receives applications for Cash, SNAP, and Medical Assistance by fax, mail or in person.

1717 Park St, Suite 105

Naperville, IL 60563

Phone: (630) 328-1000

Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday (except state holidays)

2. YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

Child Care Resource & Referral

2055 E Army Trail Rd, Suite #140

Addison, IL 60101 Phone: (630) 790-6600

3. DayOne PACT, Inc. / (Child and Family Connections)

Developmental Disability Services

750 Warrenville Rd, Suite 300

Lisle, IL 60532 Phone: (630) 960-9700

Toll Free: (800) 637-7181

Website: www.dayonepact.org

Crisis after hours number: (630) 960-9700

4. Family Shelter Service

Domestic Violence Victim Services

605 E Roosevelt Rd

Wheaton, IL 60187 Phone: (630) 221-8290

Website: www.familyshelterservice.org

5. DuPage County Health Department / DuPage County Behavioral Health Services Family Case Management

111 North County Farm Road

Wheaton, IL 60187

Phone: (630) 932-1447

Website: www.dupagehealth.org

The following information is a general overview of resources available through Illinois DHS. For more complete information, please visit the DHS website at <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=27894>

Apply For Cash, SNAP (Food Stamps) & Medical Assistance

There are several ways to apply for Cash, SNAP (formerly Food Stamps), and Medical Assistance.

- **Apply Online** <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=33698>

Use the [Application for Benefits Eligibility \(ABE\)](#) to apply for SNAP, cash or medical assistance.

- **Apply Using a Paper Application**
 1. **Download the application**
 2. **Follow the directions on the form.** Type in as much information as you can. If you can't answer all the questions, that's ok. You must include your name and address. You may print out the application and write on it if you prefer. **You must sign the form.**
 3. Once you've completed the application, **carry, mail or fax it to your local Family Community Resource Center.** Use the [DHS Office Locator](#) to locate your local office.
- **Apply At Your local Family Community Resource Center**

What happens next?

The application process begins the day **your DHS office receives your signed application.** You will be asked to come to the office for an interview or participate by phone if you are unable to come to the office. The DHS caseworker will tell you what you need to bring.

You will be asked for various types of documents such as:

- proof of your identity
- proof of your residence
- proof of Social Security numbers for all people on your application
- other types of documents depending on your circumstances.

Need Help with an Application?

Please call our toll-free line at 1-800-843-6154 (Voice), Nextalk 1-800-324-5553, 711 TTY Relay, if you have questions or need help with the application.

For Other DHS Questions, Contact:

Megan Napierkowski

Community Planner

mnapierkowski@ageguide.org

County Liaison

DuPage County

Service Specialties:

Aging & Disability Resource Network - I&A Outreach, Options Counseling, ESP Liaison, Disaster Preparedness (North)

The following information is a general overview of the All Kids Insurance program. For more complete information, please visit the website at <https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalPrograms/AllKids/Pages/application.aspx>

All Kids Insurance

What is All Kids?

All Kids is Illinois' program for children who need comprehensive, affordable, health insurance, regardless of immigration status or health condition. Every child deserves the chance to grow up healthy. With All Kids, your children will be able to get the care they need, when they need it. It means you can take your child to the doctor for a regular check-up, to the dentist to fill a cavity, or to the eye doctor to get a prescription for glasses.

To date, there are over 1.6 million Illinois children enrolled in All Kids. If your family, like many hardworking families, cannot afford private health insurance, All Kids may be the answer for you.

What does All Kids Cover?

All Kids is complete health insurance for your child. All Kids covers doctor visits, hospital stays, prescription drugs, vision care, dental care, and eyeglasses. All Kids covers regular check-ups and immunizations (shots). All Kids also covers special services like medical equipment, speech therapy, and physical therapy for children who need them.

Who can get All Kids?

Children can get All Kids health insurance if:

1. They live in Illinois.
2. They are age 18 or younger.
3. They meet the [insurance requirements for All Kids](#).
4. Their family's income meets the All Kids Income Limit.

Apply Online at <https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalPrograms/AllKids/Pages/application.aspx>

Request an Application

All Kids Applications may be requested by E-mail at <https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalPrograms/AllKids/Pages/AppRequest.aspx>

For instructions/assistance, call the All Kids Hotline: 1-866-ALL-KIDS (1-866-255-5437)





Tips for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren in Illinois

who are

These simple suggestions have been developed by the Task Force on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren in Illinois to assist older adult caregivers in their efforts to provide quality care for their family's children. The Task Force can be reached through the Illinois Department on Aging's toll-free Senior HelpLine, 1-800-252-8866 (Voice and TTY).

CHILD ONLY GRANT

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)

TANF provides financial assistance in the form of cash assistance to help families care for children who need help. This program also provides help to children who have been deprived of parental support or care.

The child will automatically receive **medical assistance** with a Child Only Grant.

If you are a working grandparent, and receive a Child Only Grant you can also get **daycare paid** for the children (with no co-payment).

If the grandparent chooses not to apply for or receive the cash assistance, the grandparent has the option of applying only for medical assistance for the child.

You do not have to be a guardian of the child to receive TANF.

Grandchildren with no income of their own, under their grandparent's care, are eligible to receive Child Only grants under the TANF program.

The grandparent's income and assets are not counted in the child's eligibility.

Continued on the other side

The following factors must be established to be eligible for a TANF Child Only grant:

1. Prove you are related to the child through birth certificates and/or other legal documents.
2. Prove that the child is living with you. Letters from a neighbor, school, doctor, child care provider, or clergy are acceptable.
3. Provide proof of the grandchild's citizenship; that the child was born in the United States. If the child is not a U.S. citizen, provide proof of immigration status.
4. Provide a Social Security number for each child applying for assistance. If the child does not have one, you will need to apply for one at the Social Security Office and bring proof of that application.
5. Provide proof of health insurance, if the child has health insurance.
6. Provide proof of any income and/or assets belonging to the grandchild.
7. You will be asked to provide information about the birth parents, and cooperate in attempting to obtain child support from them. You do not have to do this if it may harm you or the child. You will still be able to obtain a Child Only Grant.

If you receive a TANF Child Only grant, and if either or both non-custodial parents pay child support for the child(ren), the child support payment must go to the State.

The Department of Human Services will give you the full TANF Child Only grant, plus \$50.00 of the child support payment each month.

If the child support payment is more than the Child Only grant, you will get all of the child support payment plus medical assistance, but not the TANF Child Only grant payment.

For additional information, call

1-800-843-6154
(TTY 1-800-447-6404)

Extended Family Support Program



What is it and why is the program needed?

The Extended Family Support Program is a statewide program that supports caregivers who are caring for related children outside the formal child welfare system. This intensive short-term program allows children to live with family members without becoming involved with the child welfare system and offers caregivers support and services when they unexpectedly assume responsibility for related children.

It is estimated that over 100,000 relatives in Illinois are providing care for related children without support from the formal child welfare system. Many of these caregivers are able to rely on family and community supports to provide care. Caregivers who contact the Extended Family Support Program are provided a variety of support and information in order to continue caring for the related children.

What services are provided?

A family receives assistance from a caseworker for three months. The caseworker will assist the family in identifying the needs that must be met in order for the children to have a stable living environment. The caseworker helps meet these needs by providing:



1. Assistance in obtaining guardianship through probate court and in applying for a public aid grant.
2. School advocacy
3. Limited financial assistance per family for bedding, food, uniforms, and/or other appropriate services to stabilize the home.
4. Accessing community resources and services as needed per family.

Who is Eligible?

Any relative caring for a related child who is not their own biological child or step-child and meets the following criteria is eligible for the Extended Family Support Program:

1. The child or children have been living with the relative caregiver 15 or more days and the caregiver is willing to continue to care for the child(ren).
2. The relative caregiver meets the Department of Children and Family Services definition of a "relative."
3. The family requires assistance processing public aid and guardianship applications.
4. The child does not have protective issues, and does not have an open or pending case with DCFS.
5. The relative caregiver is providing the majority of the care giving responsibilities.

Who to contact to get referred into the Extended Family Support Program:

1. The State Central Registry (SCR)/Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873).
2. For Cook County residents with general questions about the program contact Extended Family Support Program at 773-777-6377 ext. 7365 for the Program Director, Debra Melin or Aracely Galvan Assistant Coordinator at 773-777-6377 ext 7363.



EXTENDED FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Extended Family Support program provides short-term services to stabilize the home of a relative caregiver who has been caring for children when their biological parents are no longer able to. The services help avoid involvement in the child welfare system and any disruption of the family placement. The **Extended Family Support Program** provides short-term services to relative caregiver families that are **not** involved in the formal child welfare system. LCFS helps resolve the short-term crisis and prepares relative caregivers to provide caring and nurturing homes for the children now in their care.

Services provided include:

- Help obtaining guardianship and addressing legal authority
- Help obtaining a child only grant, subsidized day care and other entitlements
- Assistance with financial and housing issues
- Help enrolling children in the school district where the relative caregiver lives
- Cash and in-kind assistance for items needed to stabilize the household
- Identifies other needed services available in the community

The EFSP caseworkers will meet with the relative caregiver monthly until guardianship has been obtained or until other services have been provided. During this time, the EFSP worker will provide other services to stabilize the relative family, including:

- ✓ Provide crisis intervention and short term interventions to address issues in the family.
- ✓ Assist eligible families to obtain TANF benefits, subsidized daycare and other benefits that are available to the caregiver.
- ✓ Advocate with local schools to enroll the caregiver's child in their school district.
- ✓ Coordinate family meetings and mediation.
- ✓ Refer to and advocate for needed services such as: financial employment and/or housing counseling, legal services, medical and mental health services, parenting counseling and training, special education and vocational training.
- ✓ Referral for cash assistance and in-kind assistance to help meet the basic needs of the family.

Keep in mind that EFSP Does Not:

- Assist caregivers when either the caregiver or the child has an open DCFS case.
- Assist caregivers living outside of Illinois.
- Assist with guardianship when a biological parent objects (the program provides other services if the biological parent objects to guardianship).
- Assist caregivers when a biological parent lives with the relative caregiver and is able to care for the child themselves.

DuPage County contractor for EFS:

Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois

7620 Madison Street, River Forest, IL 60305

Central Intake and Information &

Referrals: 800-363-5237

Phone : 708-771-7180

Fax : 708-771-7184

Email : lcfs_info@lcfs.org

LEGAL SERVICES

Administer Justice

Located at: Wheaton Bible Church
27W500 North Avenue, West Chicago, IL 60195
1-877-778-6006 (toll-free)
www.administerjustice.org

Administer Justice is a Free Law Clinic that offers low income residents legal assistance, financial counseling, educational outreach, and conflict resolution services provided by volunteer attorneys and other professionals. Some services require a small fee. Call for an appointment.

DuPage Bar Legal Aid Service

126 S. County Farm Road, Wheaton, IL 60187
(630) 653-6212
www.dcba.org

Provides free legal assistance for qualified persons to help in the areas of family law, domestic violence, bankruptcy, adoption, guardianship, tort and collection defense, and other areas. Those who qualify must have a case in or be a resident of DuPage County and be financially qualified as an indigent person. Applicants are screened from 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M., Monday through Friday, by telephone only.

DuPage County Bar Association

Lawyer Referral Service

126 S. County Farm Road, Wheaton, IL 60187
(630) 653-9109
www.dcba.org (under "find a lawyer")

Offers assistance to individuals in locating an attorney in their community. The attorneys participating in this service provide a free consultation for up to 30 minutes. For additional services, the fee will be negotiated between the client and the attorney. Referrals to Elder Law Attorneys are available through this service.

DuPage County Community Services

Senior Services

421 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton, IL 60187
(630) 407-6500
1-800-942-9412
www.dupageco.org/seniorsvcs

Financial assistance is available on a limited basis for caregivers and grandparents raising grandchildren who are dealing with legal issues associated with their caregiving roles. The funding is provided through the Older American's Act, Caregiver Assistance

Program. It is designed to help caregivers with legal issues including assisting in resolving civil legal matters, protecting a caregiver's legal rights and/or the rights of a relative raising a child, or providing legal advice or education to caregivers.

DuPage County State's Attorney

503 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton Illinois 60187

(630) 407-8000

(630) 407-8003 (TDD)



DuPage County State's Attorney prosecutes crimes committed in DuPage County. The Senior Division of DuPage County Community Services, the Township Supervisors, Mayors and Managers are united in their efforts to work with State's Attorney's Office on behalf of seniors and persons with disabilities.

The Investigator and Assistant State's Attorney assigned to these cases have received special training in the laws which protect seniors and persons with disabilities. They work in tandem with the County Senior Services representatives and members of partner agencies who are prepared to address special needs throughout the legal process.

Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.

400 W. Roosevelt Road, Wheaton, IL 60187

1-888-965-7757 Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

(630) 690-2130 (TDD)

www.pslegal.org

Free civil legal services for low-income persons (follows federal poverty level guidelines) and senior citizens, age 60 and older, regardless of income. Specialty areas include government benefits (including Medicare and Medicaid), landlord tenant disputes, homeless issues, consumer issues, advance directives, and nursing facility law. Staff attorneys do not handle criminal or fee producing cases.



Screening, Assessment, and Support Services (SASS) for Children and Adolescents

What is SASS?

Screening, Assessment and Support Services (SASS), is a crisis mental health service program for children and adolescents, who are experiencing a psychiatric emergency. SASS agencies provide intensive mental health services for eligible children and youth who may need hospitalization, or community based mental health care. SASS services are available by calling the CARES line.

What Is CARES and When Should CARES Be Called?

CARES stands for Crisis and Referral Entry Services. CARES is a telephone response service that handles mental health crisis calls for children and youth in Illinois. A parent/guardian may check to see if their child can receive SASS services, by calling the **CARES Crisis Line: 1-800-345-9049 (Voice), 1-773-523-4504 (TTY)**.

You should call CARES when a child is at risk to himself or others and any time you or others think a child is having a mental health crisis. If a child has mental health problems, but is not a risk to self or others and is not experiencing a crisis, contact your local community mental health services provider on the IDHS website at: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12&officetype=&county=> or call our Child and Adolescent Client Assistance Line at: 312-793-1361, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (excluding Holidays).

What Is the Purpose of CARES?

The purpose of CARES is to ask questions of the child's parents, caregivers, or other callers about the child's behavior. CARES will then either send the local area SASS agency to see the child and guardian, or refer the child and guardian to community mental health or other services.

Who Can Receive SASS Services?

Any child or youth in a mental health crisis who may need public funding through the Illinois All Kids Program or Medicaid may receive SASS services. **If the child is eligible for SASS services:**

- SASS will work with the guardian and child for at least 90 days.
- If the child is hospitalized, SASS will join the hospital team to care for the child.
- SASS will help the hospital team plan for the child's return home and will provide services when the child is home.
- If the child is not hospitalized, SASS will provide mental health services and supports to help the child stay at home.

DuPage County Family Center

We strongly believe that all children have a need to share a relationship with both of their parents. It is our goal to reach out to families in DuPage County to help them achieve cooperative parenting that focuses on the needs of the children. Through an array of services: parent education, neutral exchange, mediation, supervised parenting time and conflict management, the DuPage County Family Center strives to establish, maintain, and enhance familial relationships.

PARENT EDUCATION CCC and PAK

- Mandatory one-time seminar
- Encourages parents to develop a way to relate to each other that keeps their children out of conflict
- Emphasizes the need for parents to set aside personal differences in order to provide the healthiest environment possible for their children
- Offered in classroom setting and online

**Register by telephone
or online**

DuPage County Family Center
422 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187

Neutral Exchange Hours
Wed, Thurs & Fri 4:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Sat 8:00 am - 12:30 pm
Sun 3:00 pm - 8:00 pm

General Office Hours
Mon - Fri 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Mediation/Supervised Parenting Time
By Appointment

www.dupagaco.org/familycenter
Phone: 630.407.2450
Fax: 630.407.2451



DuPage County
Community Services

Family Center



**Give your children
permission to love
you both.**

Programs for building and
enhancing relationships between
parents and children