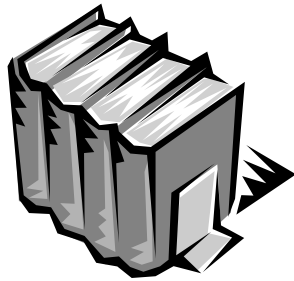


SUPPORT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



- **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**
- **Checklist of Key Activities**
- **Child's Information Sheet**
- **Papers**
- **Getting The Help You Need**
- **Health and Safety**
- **Immunization Schedule**
- **Financial Issues**
- **Schooling**
- **Education Issues/Dropout Prevention**
- **Taking Care of Yourself**
- **School Calendar**

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

SURROGATE PARENTING

A growing number of families across the country, regardless of income, background or race are assuming the challenging responsibility of raising their grandchildren. They did not expect to be parents again and often need help with legal, financial, medical, educational and emotional issues that come with this new role. It is not unusual for grandparents to feel overwhelmed, lonely, tired, and at a loss in dealing with their role as a full-time caregiver to their grandchildren. It is not unusual for the grandchildren to feel frightened, abandoned, ashamed or angry. Together they can help each other.

As a “full time” grandparent think through what you want to do, what you can do and what you must do. Remember to take care of yourself. Your health and well being are critical to the health and well being of your grandchild/ren. Help is available. To get help, you must work with the schools, the child welfare system and the legal system. Be aware that most agencies are not set up to recognize grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. When seeking help, you should insist that people in authority listen to you about your needs and those of your grandchildren. Get help from family members, friends and support groups.

The following pages are only a starting point for gathering information and getting help in Collier County, Florida. Inclusion of agencies does not constitute endorsement nor does omission imply disapproval.

Once you have informal authority from the parent or legal authority, you should be able to enroll the child in school and make any requests or decisions about the child’s education. Sometimes, the adjustment to a new setting and the emotional adjustment required shows up in problems at school. Be aware of this and don’t hesitate to seek help through the school or on your own with a private counselor or mental health center. Visit the child’s teacher and explain the situation. Keep in touch with the school regularly to see how the child is doing.

Reference Resources for Surrogate Parents:

- NAFC Resource Directory
- The Phone Book
- The Self-Help Section of Tuesday’s Naples Daily News
- The Public Library
- The Internet

PHONE & WEBSITES FOR KINSHIP CARE SUPPORT

- See Hot Lines Page 3
- Naples Alliance for Children 239-649-5260 www.napleschild.org
- Kinship Care Warm-line 1-800-640-6444 www.flkin.usf.edu University of South Florida School of Social Work Support Center
- AARP Grandparent Information Center www.aarp.org/grandparents

CHECKLIST OF KEY ACTIVITIES

The responsibility of being a fulltime caregiver can be stressful. Sometimes the best way to cope with stress is to make a list of things that need to be done and a reference list of sources. A checklist of key activities kept in one central location will be help. Keep important papers, names, and phone numbers, with this list. The following will serve as a guide for you until you make one your own.

To Do List	Yes	No	Date	Details
Legal custody has been established for child(ren)				
All important papers are in your custody and are in a Safe place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth Certificate • Social Security Card • School Records 				
Child(ren) have a doctor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been seen • Shots are up to date • Special Medical Condition • Require special supervision /medication 				
Child(ren) are being seen by a counselor				
All economic resources have been identified and are in place to help support the care of the child(ren): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Stamps • Social Security • Parental Child Support • Child care/after school program • Medicaid • Transportation 				
Family members/neighbors/friends who can assist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names, Addresses, Phone Numbers 				
Plans for the child(ren) if something happens to you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things that need to be done 				

Suggestion: Make copies of all forms, paperwork and especially **identification** documents. Keep originals in safe place. If you are required to give documentation to receive service, let them make a copy. **Be sure to get the original back.**

School records and **court records** can be used for identification. If you do not have the correct paperwork, always explain the circumstances and ask for help.

Note: The following information can be used in case of an emergency or when you need to fill out any forms or paperwork. Duplicate for each child and use the back of this page for any additional information

CHILD'S INFORMATION SHEET

CHILD'S FULL NAME: _____

SEX: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____ S.S.#: _____

HEIGHT: _____ WEIGHT: _____ HAIR COLOR: _____ EYE COLOR: _____

PLACE OF BIRTH: _____

(Hospital, County, State)

MOTHER'S NAME: _____ (include maiden name)

MEDICAL INFORMATION:

- DOCTOR: _____ PHONE: _____
- DENTIST: _____ PHONE: _____
- OTHER: _____ PHONE: _____
- BLOOD TYPE: _____
- ALLERGIES: _____
- DATE OF LAST TETANUS IMMUNIZATION: _____
- SPECIAL MEDICATIONS: _____
- OTHER HEALTH PROBLEMS: _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION:

- SCHOOL: _____ PHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____
- CONTACT PERSON AT SCHOOL: _____

SOCIAL WORKER'S NAME: _____

- AGENCY: _____ PHONE: _____

SOCIAL WORKER'S NAME: _____

- AGENCY: _____ PHONE: _____

PLAYMATE: _____ PHONE: _____

- ADDRESS: _____

PLAYMATE: _____ PHONE: _____

- ADDRESS: _____

DOCUMENTS OF IDENTIFICATION

PAPERS

It is necessary to provide a copy of the child's birth certificate, a certificate of a physical examination or an appointment notice. If the child needs a physical examination it must be done within thirty days of enrollment.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARD

A social security number is appreciated but not necessary for enrollment in school. If you are a grandparent, or other caregiver, you can apply for a social security card for a child. When you apply you must show the child's original or certified birth certificate and one other document showing the child's identity.

To request an application, you can call toll free Department of Health and Human Services, Social Security at 1-800-772-1213. Or, you can write or visit the local Social Security Administration office at:

Naples	Immokalee (Guadalupe Center)
6214 Trail Blvd. North	211 S. 9 th Street
Naples, Florida 34108	Immokalee, FL 34142
Monday – Friday	Every other Tuesday
8:30a – 3:30p	9:00a – 12:00p

BIRTH CERTIFICATES

The following agencies are able to help with obtaining birth certificates. There are certain facts about the child that you must know to obtain a birth certificate. If you do not know all the information, ask for help. Try your child's social worker, school counselor or doctor's office. They may be able to call the Office of vital Statistics on your behalf to do a "Search."

Collier County Health Department	
(239)252-8205	www.doh.state.fl.us/chdcollier
3301 Tamiami Trail E., bldg. H	419 N. 1 st Street
Naples, FL 33932	Immokalee, FL 34142
Monday – Friday	M & Th Tu, Wed, & Fri
8:30s – 5:00p	8:30a-noon 8:00a-noon
	1:00p-6:00p 1:00p-6:00p

There is a \$10 fee.

BAPTISM CERTIFICATES

A copy of the Baptism Certificate can usually be obtained, free of charge, from the church where the baptism took place. A written request, including as much information as you have, is required. To make the search simple for the church include the following information:

- Parents Names
- Child's Name
- Child's Date of Birth
- Anything Else You Deem Important

If the church charges a fee and you cannot afford it, explain you situation and ask for help.

GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED

There are many different services you may be using in taking care of your child(ren). The questions you ask at the beginning can save you from frustration later on. There are differing requirements for getting services from these agencies and organizations. Some may have an application process and require an interview. Some may have income requirements and require documentation. It is very important that you be prepared. The following suggestions are helpful hints for dealing with the “system.”

FIRST, IDENTIFY YOURSELF AS A CAREGIVER:

“Hello, I am taking care of my (grandchildren, niece, nephew, etc.) and need help with _____ . Could you direct me to the person who can answer my questions about your service?”

1. Have a pen and paper ready.

Keep a notebook just for information you need for your child(ren). Or, write in this book; it is yours to use in any way that is helpful. List the name of each person you talk with next to his or her phone number and the name of the agency. Keep notes on what they told you.

2. Get the information you need from each agency.

Ask about hours of operation, fees, if there is a waiting list, and the application process. Find out if there is someone in the agency that can help you with the process. Write down the name. If you have transportation or medical problems, some agencies may be able to do a home visit. Ask if you need to make an appointment or can you walk in.

4. If you have to go in for an interview, make sure you have what you need.

- Make a list of papers you need to take to the interview. If some of these papers are unavailable to you, ask if there is something else you can use. If the answer is no, ask if someone can help you get the papers you need.
- Write down the name of the person your interview is with, the time and location of the interview.
- Find out how long the interview will take. Let them know if you need to bring your child(ren) with you or if you have a baby-sitter for only a short time.
- Take notes during the interview.
- After the interview, ask what will happen next. How soon can you start getting the service or financial assistance? Ask if there is anything you can do while you are waiting for an answer. Ask if there will be any fees or other money needed when you start the program.

Make sure you have picked up all of the documents you took with you. Allow the agency to make copies --- **Do not leave your originals.**