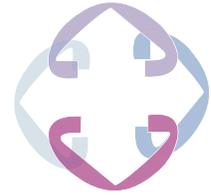




WELFARE PEER TA NETWORK

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Workshop
Dallas, TX



On October 17, 2003, several Administration for Children and Families (ACF) regional staff from the TANF/Child Care team attended a *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Workshop*, which was sponsored by a local collaboration between the Texas Cooperative Extension Parenting in the Metroplex Committee and the Area Agency on Aging. This workshop was designed to provide guidance and offer resources to local grandparents who were raising their grandchildren. In addition to approximately fifty grandparents and the regional ACF staff, the event was also attended by representatives from local government agencies and local community-based organizations.

The agenda for the event included a number of informative presentations that were tailored to the grandparents in the audience. Taken as a whole, these presentations were intended to provide grandparents with a wealth of comprehensive information about raising young children. Grandparents were afforded the opportunity to learn about various Federal and State programs such as the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, and child care subsidy programs. In addition, the workshop also briefed grandparents on interacting with the local school systems and public housing programs. Grandparents learned about section 8 housing, child care licensing, and the various requirements of the school systems. A representative from the school district described the functions of the Office for Student Services and discussed the relevance of two Federal laws: the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. As they apply to schools, these Federal statutes establish who has the right to review a student's file and outline eligibility criteria for various school-related support services such as transportation, free school breakfasts and lunches, and Title I after school programming. A local Department of Human Services representative fielded questions about the one-time grandparent payment that is part of Texas' TANF program. The luncheon speaker was an attorney who discussed the legal rights of grandparents. Overall, the presentations built on each other and covered the many facets of raising children. Ample time was allotted for interactive discussion and for grandparents to ask questions.

The event also offered grandparents the opportunity to network with each other and create informal support systems. Moreover, a number of local organizations supplied resource materials on parenting, child safety, quality child care, health, and nutrition.

At the State level, the collaborating agencies launched a Web site for grandparents, information about which was also disseminated at the workshop. This Web site was created through a collaboration between the Texas Cooperative Extension, the Area Agencies on Aging of Texas, the Texas Legal Services Center, and the Brookdale Foundation. It is available at <http://grandparentsraisinggrandkids.tamu.edu>.

For more information about the workshop, please contact Charlotte Bristow, Program Specialist, ACF Region VI at (214) 767-0164 or email at cbristow@acf.hhs.gov.