

# PARENTING...**all over again**

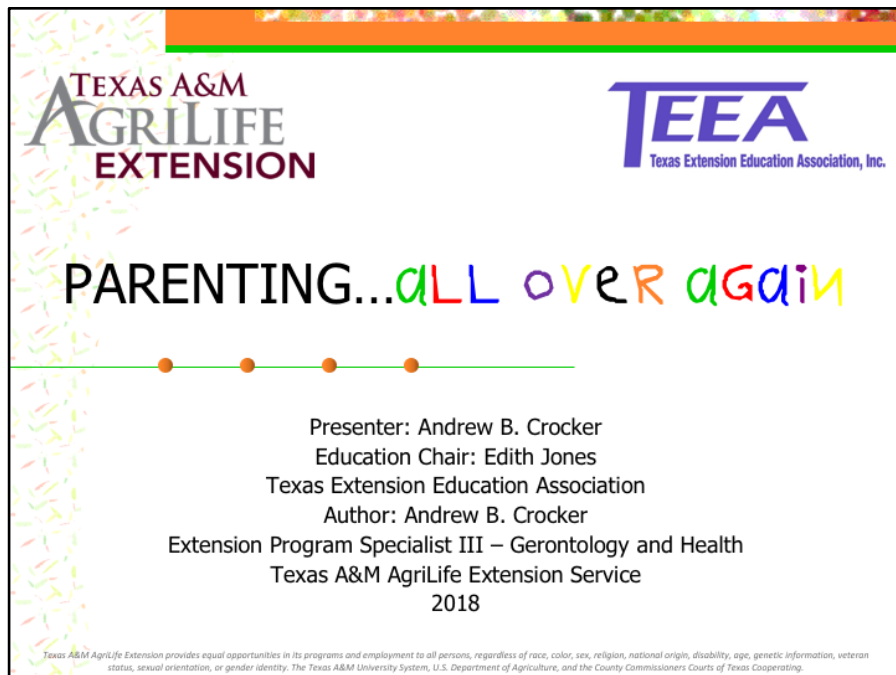
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## Goals and Objectives

- Goal
  - Provide information and resources related to relative caregiving.
- Objectives
  - Discuss relative caregiving
  - Discuss legal options
  - Discuss financial resources
  - Discuss caring for yourself

## Materials (available from <http://teea.tamu.edu>)

- “Parenting...All Over Again” PowerPoint
- “Parenting...All Over Again” Slide Handout (Optional)
- “Parenting...All Over Again” Evaluation
- (Optional) Department of Family & Protective Services – Kinship Manual
  - English:  
[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption\\_and\\_Foster\\_Care/Kinship\\_Care/documents/KinshipManual.pdf](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/Kinship_Care/documents/KinshipManual.pdf)
  - Spanish:  
[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption\\_and\\_Foster\\_Care/Kinship\\_Care/documents/KinshipManualSpanish.pdf](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/Kinship_Care/documents/KinshipManualSpanish.pdf)



Across the United States and throughout Texas, relatives and non-relatives alike are providing support for children whose parents are unwilling or unable to care for them. These caregiving relationships save the state and country millions of dollars annually and provide support and stability to the children; but, they may also present unique challenges for the caregivers.

## Today We'll Talk About...

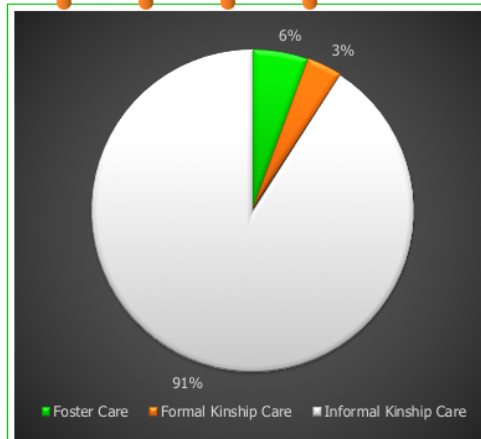
### ■ Today We'll Talk About

- Relative Caregiving
- Legal Options
- Financial Resources
- Caring for Yourself



We're going to spend our time during this lesson focusing on what basic information caregivers need to know and resources that can help support them on their caregiving journey. We're also going to talk about how self-care, through this type or any other type of caregiving journey, is paramount. For the health of the caregiver and care recipient/s.

## Relative Caregiving or Kincare



■ Among children living not living with their parents

- 71% grandparent(s)
- 21% other relative(s)
- 5% sibling(s)
- 2% non-relative without relative(s)
- 1% non-relative with relative(s)

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Data from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services shows that among children living apart from their parents in Texas, an overwhelming majority of them are living in “informal kinship care.” This means a grandparent or an aunt or a sibling or some other relative has taken on the role of the primary parent.

When we look at the picture nationally, US Census Bureau data shows the same overwhelming majority of children in kincare – 98%! – provided by a family member. But breaks down further so that we can see most of that kincare is being provided by a grandparent or grandparents.

## Grandparents as Parents

- In Texas, more than 300,000 grandparent householders are responsible for their grandchildren
  - 31% with no parents present
  - 67% are under age 60
  - 63% work
  - 23% live in poverty
  - 24% have a disability



When we look at grandparents who are the head of household and responsible for their grandchildren, you can see that about one-third of those households have no parent present. About two-thirds are under age 60 and/or still working. Think about that for a minute – we often assume a grandparent is an older person. But a grandparent may be in his or her twenties or thirties! And about one quarter live in poverty and/or have a disability.

## Parenting...**aLL oVeR aGaIn**

- Many different arrangements
  - Caregiver Household Children
    - Children live with a caregiver on regular basis with no parent present
  - Caregiver-Parent Children
    - Children live with caregiver and at least one parent
  - Shuttle-Household Children
    - Children who “shuttle” from one house to another
- Parenting today may be different from when a caregiver reared her/his children



What do we mean when we say “parenting all over again?” There might be a variety of arrangements that grandparents or other relatives serve in to care for or parent a child. As we’ve already seen, grandparent- or other relative-headed households with no parent present are common. This would be a “Caregiver Household” – where the caregiver/s have the primary parenting responsibility.

“Caregiver-Parent” household is one where the child and parent may live under the same roof. But someone else may be the householder or someone else may have the primary parenting responsibility. This could also be a type of multi-generational household where care needs dictate that members of the family all live together for support.

And there could also be situations in which the children “shuttle” between households. So that the primary parenting responsibility is shared. Maybe depending on the day or hour (due to a work schedule) or week or month due to divorce or some other change in the parental household status. These are just some examples of the variety of situations that children and relative (or non-relative) caregivers may find themselves in when it comes to “parenting.” And “parenting” today might be different from parenting back in the day...

## Practice Positive Parenting

- Set goals
- Guide
- Monitor friends and activities
- Help the child succeed in school
- Discipline and teach
- Nurture
- Listen and speak in positive ways
- Provide for basic needs

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There may be a lot involved in parenting a second time around, especially for grandparents. It may be hard for the non-parent caregiver to take on the role of mentor, teacher, protector, disciplinarian, provider, etc. If stemming from tragic circumstances, the reason that the children are living away from their parents can sometimes be hard to cope with, not to mention difficult to explain to children of any age.

For grandparents specifically, if they have already had the opportunity to indulge and even spoil their grandchildren, it can be hard to establish authority when the need arises. Grandparents who have undertaken the parenting of a grandchild may be disappointed and angry about being deprived of their grandparent status, yet relieved that they are finally in control of what seemed to be a chaotic situation.



## Keep Your Family Strong

- If you are alone, ask others for help
- If you have a partner, protect the couple relationship
- Partners need to support each other
  - Agree on house rules
  - Take turns caring for children
  - Don't let children put a wedge between you
- Give yourself credit for a good job!






The physical and emotional aspects of having children in the home can exhaust some caregivers and it may be essential to seek out support. Try to find a trusted friend, family member, doctor, pastor, etc., with whom to express these feelings. Caregivers need to remember it is in the child's best interest for them to be physically and emotionally healthy, and the only way to maintain physical and emotional health is to spend some time focusing only on themselves. It feels selfish sometimes, though it is really an investment in the situation, as a healthy caregiver will be more effective in the parent role.

The caregiver's marital and family relationship may well be disrupted and become a source of frustration. The presence of caregiver(s) and one or both parents under one roof potentially introduces a whole new set of unresolved psychological issues that can interfere with healthy parenting. When this is the case, well-defined parental authority must be established between parents and caregivers, and communicated clearly to the children.

# Legal Options

- Why?
  - Medical Care, School Enrollment, Personal Records, Social Security Payments, Insurance, Public Benefits, Child Support and Protection
- Options
  - Conservatorship
  - Guardianship
  - Adoption



An important consideration in the caregiver-child relationship is the issue of a legal relationship. Often a family member assumes they have some type of legal relationship with a child because of their familial relationship. But this is not the case...even for a grandparent. And a legal relationship is important for things like non-emergency medical care, school enrollment and a host of other issues. With the legal options listed here, think about them as weakest to strongest: conservatorship is the basic level, adoption is the top level.

Just like you can probably do your own dental work if you choose, you can probably do some of your own legal work. However, it's probably best to consult a trained professional. The following does not represent legal advice...just a brief introduction to levels of legal relationships in Texas.

# Conservatorship

- Petition in Family Court
  - Custody (Managing Conservatorship)
  - Visitation Rights (Possesory Conservatorship)
- Either or both parents may contest
  - Does not remove parental rights completely
  - Can be reopened as long as child is under 18



One of the legal relationships in Texas is Conservatorship. This is accomplished in Family Court. This may result in the relative caregiver being give custody or visitation rights. The best interest of the child will always be the primary consideration of the court in determining possession of or access to the child. And there is usually a presumption that the parent should be appointed or retained as the conservator of the child. That presumption may be overlooked if the relative caregiver 1.) can show that the parent voluntarily gave up actual car, control and possession of the child for a year or more, including the 90-days immediately before the court filing and 2.) that the child being with the relative caregiver is in the best interest of the child.

## Guardianship

- Petition in Probate Court
- May become Guardian of the person or property or both
  - Reporting requirements by Guardian to Court
- Consent forms signed by parents makes it easier

Guardianship is the next level of a legal relationship. Technically, Guardianship in Texas is a legal process designed to protect vulnerable people from abuse, neglect and/or exploitation. Parents are able to sign a Consent to Guardianship form which may help simplify the appointment of a Guardian.

In Texas, a Guardian may be a guardian of the person or of the person's property. Or both. And the Guardian may be required to provide periodic updates to the Court regarding the status of the person or the property.

# Adoption

- Petition in Family Court
- Termination of Parental Rights
  - Affidavit of consent signed by parents
  - Court order
- Criminal history and home study
- Name of child may be changed
  - New birth certificate may be issued

Adoption is the most formal of the three legal relationships that are presented here. Adoption terminates the rights of the parents by court order. This may be agreed to by the parents, which helps ease/speed the process, or may be contested by the parents. Before the adoption is approved, the relative caregiver may have to go through background screening and a home study to determine the suitability of the environment for the child. Once the adoption is approved, the child's name may be changed and a new birth certificate may be issued to reflect the new parents and/or new name.

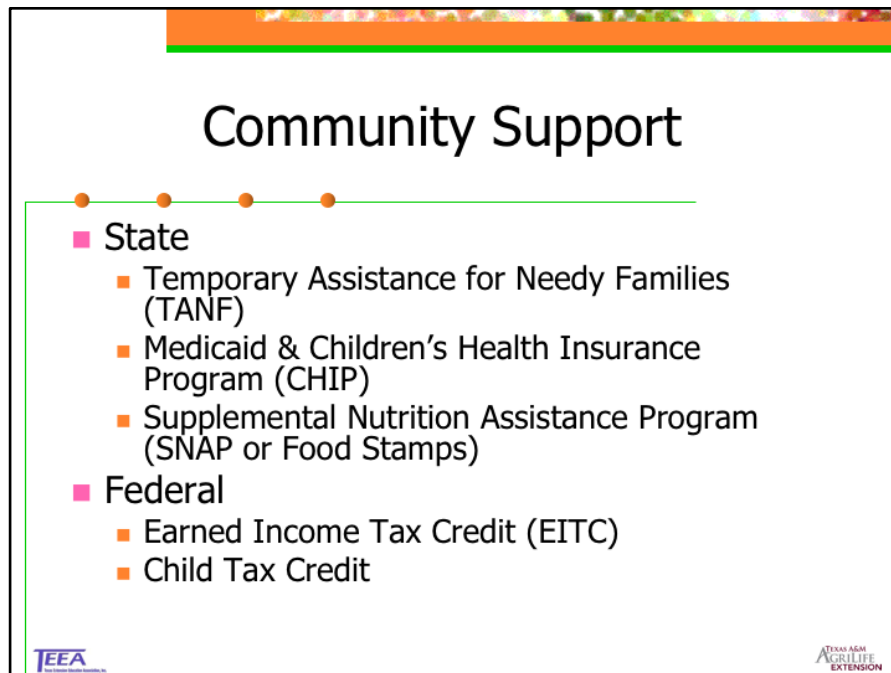
## Questions About Legal Options

- Texas Legal Services Center
  - 1.866.979.4343
  - <http://www.tlsc.org>
- Texas Law Help
  - <http://www.texaslawhelp.org>
- American Bar Association
  - [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/child\\_law.html](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/child_law.html)



Texas makes provisions for consent to medical treatment by a non-parent in limited circumstances. As well as enrollment in school. Also, in 2009, Texas authorized an Authorization Agreement for a Nonparent Relative by which a parent can authorize a grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling to make certain decisions for a child.

The Texas Legal Services Center's Kincare Program can help with questions regarding these forms/processes or any of the legal relationships we've discussed in this session.



## Community Support

- State
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  - Medicaid & Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or Food Stamps)
- Federal
  - Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
  - Child Tax Credit

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There are some state and federal programs which may be able to provide support to relative caregivers and/or the children in the care of a relative. Much like the discussion of legal programs, there's a certain amount of research and consultation you'll need to do to determine eligibility and benefit level. Many of these programs are income-based and levels/requirements change annually.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families may provide cash assistance to help meet the needs of the child and/or the relative caregiver. The child may qualify on her/his own, based on income and resources. Payment is made monthly. Relative caregivers may also be able to qualify for one-time TANF assistance if they meet income and resource requirements.

Medicaid provides the child with health services and eligibility can be determined based on the income/resources of the child alone. CHIP provides health care for children in certain households that have income/resources too high for Medicaid.

SNAP benefits provide resources to purchase food and are paid monthly. Eligibility is determined by household income/resources.

And the tax code provides benefits that relative caregivers who qualify may be entitled to,

among others the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit.



## Questions About Community Support

- Texas Health and Human Services
  - <http://www.yourtexasbenefits.com>
  - Local HHSC office
- 2-1-1 Texas
  - Dial 2-1-1 from your home telephone
  - <http://www.211texas.org>
- Internal Revenue Service
  - <http://www.irs.gov>



For more information about any of the programs discussed, these resources can help. Particularly for state benefits, the Your Texas Benefits can help relative caregivers and/or the children for whom they care self-screen for eligibility and begin the application process online.

For more information about benefits for relative caregivers under the tax code, visit the IRS website or consult with a tax professional in your area.

## Take Care of Yourself

- Manage stress
- Physical activity
- Cultivate healthy interests
- Make time alone or with friends
- Offer and seek support from others



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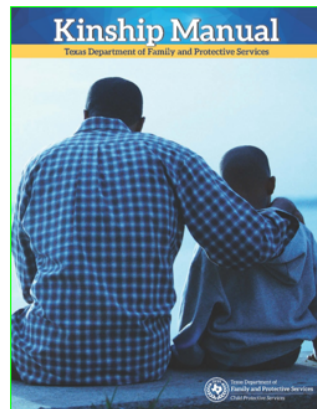
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As with any type of caregiving, it is important for the caregiver to take care of her or himself first...to make self-care a priority. Because if the caregiver isn't in good shape, the care recipient won't be in good shape either. Find healthy ways to manage stress, keeping in mind you may not be able to completely eliminate stress or sources of stress. But finding ways to cope with stress is important.

Physical activity can help with stress management and with overall well-being. Adults need 30-minutes per day, most days of the week. And for most children the recommendation is 60-minutes per day. You might be able to use time together doing physical activity for health and stress management as well as bonding time with the child in your care.

Make time to spend by yourself or with friends to enjoy things that bring you pleasure. And ask for help when you need it. But also be prepared to receive help when you ask for it. Sometimes accepting help can be harder than actually asking for it.

## Additional Resources



[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption\\_and\\_Foster\\_Care/Kinship\\_Care/](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/Kinship_Care/)



The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services – Child Protective Services Division has a great resources related to relative caregiving in Texas. You can access it via the link here in English and Spanish.

## For More Information. . .

- **State**

- [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption\\_and\\_Foster\\_Care/Kinship\\_Care](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/Kinship_Care)

- **Federal**

- <https://www.usa.gov/child-care>

- **Private/Non-Profit**

- <http://grandfamilies.org/>
- <http://www.aarp.org/relationships/friends-family/>
- <http://www.gu.org>

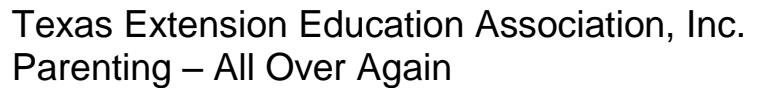


And some additional resources: state, federal and private/non-profit.

## What Questions Would You Like To Ask?

### References

- Grandfamilies.org. (2017). Grandfacts State Factsheets for Grandfamilies – Texas. [Online]. Available from <http://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/State%20Fact%20Sheets/Grandfamilies-Fact-Sheet-Texas.pdf> Last Accessed: 13 July 2018.
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. (n.d.). "Kinship Care." [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption\\_and\\_Foster\\_Care/Kinship\\_Care/](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/Kinship_Care/) Last Accessed: 13 July 2018.
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- US Census Bureau. (n.d.). Grandchildren Characteristics – Texas 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_15\\_5YR\\_S1001&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_5YR_S1001&prodType=table) Last Accessed: 13 July 2018.



**1. Regarding the overall program/teaching** (rate your response by circling a number):

**2. Regarding what you know and actions you plan to take (circle your response):**

	YES	NO
I know how to find resources and supports for kincare families		

\_\_\_\_\_ TEEA Member. \_\_\_\_\_ Extension Agent/Specialist \_\_\_\_\_ Other Speaker.

My age is \_\_\_\_\_ years-old.

**Thank You For Completing This Form!**