

Vermont Resource Guide for Relatives Caring for Children



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To request additional copies of this guide, call DCF's Family Services Division at (802) 241-2131. Press 6.

It is also available at *<http://dcf.vermont.gov/publications>*.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Relatives and friends have always played an important role in the lives of our children. We make informal arrangements to care for each other's children during special events such as the birth of a child and through times of crisis such as the death of a family member. What's different today is the ever-increasing number of people who are providing long-term care of their friends' or relatives' children.

Over the past two decades, the number of children living with a grandparent or other relative has increased dramatically in the United States. **FACT:** Over 5% of children nationwide are now living in such arrangements (referred to as *kinship care*¹).

Several factors have contributed to this increase in kinship care: rising rates of divorce, substance abuse, and unemployment; as well as changing child welfare practices that favor placing children with relatives whenever possible.

Kinship Care

A kinship care situation can happen when the parents are:

- Deceased;
- Separated from their children for long periods of time—either by choice or by circumstance (e.g., substance abuse, incarceration, mental or physical illness, and military deployment); and
- Unwilling or unable to provide their children with safe, appropriate care.

¹ Kinship care is when an adult relative cares for a child under the age of 18, either on a temporary or permanent basis. The relative is most often a grandparent, but can also be an aunt, uncle, sibling, or cousin. It can also be a non-relative adult who has a relationship or family-like bond with the child and/or family. Kinship care refers to both informal and formal arrangements (e.g., legal guardianship, kinship foster care, and adoption).

How This Guide Can Help

Regardless of the circumstances that make kinship care necessary, all caregivers share a common bond: the need for information, resources, and support. This guide can help!

It includes information about:

- The legal issues you may face and resources that can help;
- Programs and services that can help with the cost of caring for the child; and
- Other resources that can help — from blogs to support groups.

It also includes a pocket on the inside back cover that you can use to store related brochures and booklets — in one handy location.

This guide was produced by the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) in partnership with Vermont Kin as Parents (VKAP).

Is this guide for you?

This guide was specifically written for relatives and friends who are providing kinship care for children *not in DCF custody*.

If you are caring for (or considering caring for) a relative or friend's child who is in DCF custody, ask the worker for a copy of *A Guide for Foster & Kinship Foster Families in Vermont*. It includes information that you'll need to know to care for a child in foster care.

Chapter 2: Legal Issues

This chapter explains some of the legal issues you'll face and how the decisions you make may affect your family and the children in your care — over both the short and long term. For example:

- ➔ *Should we go to court to get legal guardianship of the children we are caring for?*
- ➔ *How might the legal arrangement we choose affect the financial assistance that might be available to help us?*

While only you can ultimately decide what's right for you and your family, you may want to seek the advice of an attorney with experience in this area. A lawyer can help you sort through the available legal options so you can make an informed decision about what's best for you and the children in your care.

You may also want to contact Vermont Kin as Parents (VKAP). They can help you think through some of the legal and other issues you'll face as a kinship caregiver. Contact VKAP at (802) 871-5104 or kinlmg@comcast.net. See page 22 for more information about how VKAP can help.

Kinship Care Arrangements

There are generally six types of kinship care arrangements in Vermont:

1. Informal Arrangement;
2. Legal Guardianship through Probate Court;
3. Legal Custody through Family Court;
4. State Foster Care;
5. Permanent Guardianship through Family Court; and
6. Adoption through Probate Court.

1. INFORMAL ARRANGEMENT

Informal arrangements happen when parents and caregivers agree that the children will be cared for by the caregivers. An informal arrangement does not have the force of a court order and does not legally transfer any parental rights or responsibilities from the parents to the caregivers.

Problems can arise because the law does not recognize informal arrangements. For example, the caregivers would not have the right to enroll children in school, consent to necessary medical treatment, or transport the children out of the country. And the parents may ask that the children be returned home at any time.

While informal arrangements may be appropriate in short-term situations, they are generally not appropriate for longer-term ones.

2. LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP THROUGH PROBATE COURT

Anyone can petition Probate Court for *legal guardianship of a minor child*. Along with custody, the court typically grants legal guardians the right to make important decisions on the child's behalf (e.g., enroll the child in school and consent to medical treatment).

This type of arrangement may be appropriate when a parent is unable to care for a child during a specific, extended period of time (e.g., during a parent's incarceration, deployment overseas, or substance abuse treatment). It may also be appropriate when parents are unable or unwilling to provide safe and appropriate care of their children.

If a judge appoints you as a child's legal guardian, you will be responsible for the child's day-to-day care; however, the parents retain some parental rights, including the right to have contact with the child (unless the judge decides otherwise) and the right to ask the court to return custody to them at any time.

3. LEGAL CUSTODY THROUGH FAMILY COURT

This type of arrangement arises from a family court proceeding in which the state alleges the child or youth was maltreated, is without or beyond the parents' control, or committed a delinquent act. If the judge decides the child can't safely remain at home with the parent (at that time), he or she will consider granting legal custody to someone else in the following order:

- a. A non-custodial parent;
- b. A close relative;
- c. Another relative or person known to the child; or
- d. The DCF Commissioner (*foster care*).

See page 10 for information about what it would mean to be granted legal custody through Family Court.

4. STATE FOSTER CARE

If the judge grants legal custody of a child to the DCF Commissioner, this means the child will be in foster care. You can apply for a license to provide foster care for the child; however, being issued a license does not automatically ensure placement of that child with you.

See page 11 for more information about what it would mean to become the child's licensed kinship foster parent.

As the court case moves forward, the court may return custody to the parents. If the court does not do so, the parents may voluntarily relinquish their parental rights or the courts may terminate these rights, clearing the way for the child to be adopted. Other options include permanent guardianship or, in a few cases, foster care until the child turns 18.

If Family Court grants you legal custody of a child, you:

- Will control most decisions made about the child (except for those ordered by the court).
- Will be responsible for carrying out any plan for the child, including any plan for reunification with the parents. A DCF social worker may be involved.
- Will be responsible for carrying out the plan for contact between the child and his or her parents. This includes transporting the child to visits and getting needed supports such as child care.
- Will be responsible for providing the court with any requested information about the child and for attending any court hearings about the child.
- May be eligible for child-only public assistance (called a *Child-Only Reach Up Grant* in Vermont). See pages 15 - 21 for more information about benefits the child and your family might be eligible for.
- May receive child support from the parents. If the child receives public assistance, however, most or all of the child support you get will go to the State.
- Will be responsible for enrolling the child in, and transporting the child to, school. The child will likely have to change schools if you live in another town.
- Must ask the court to change the custody order if you can no longer care for the child.

If DCF places a child in state custody with you:

- You will need a foster care license.
- DCF will control many of the decisions made about the child.
- DCF may remove the child from your care if there are concerns about the child's safety and well-being.
- A DCF social worker will be assigned to help you and the child's parents carry out the child's caseplan.
- DCF will help you carry out the plan for family contact (e.g., reimbursing your mileage costs, helping you get needed supports, and paying for services such as child care).
- You will receive a foster care payment for each child placed with you, and each child will be eligible for Medicaid. Any public benefits you receive for yourself (e.g., Reach Up, 3SquaresVT, Fuel Assistance) may be affected.
- Any child support you get for the child will go to DCF to offset the cost of the child's care.
- The child can stay in his/her current school if it is in the child's best interest. DCF is responsible for transportation costs if the child attends school in a town other than where you live.

If you become licensed to provide kinship foster care for a child in DCF custody, ask the social worker for a copy of *A Guide for Foster & Kinship Foster Families in Vermont*.

5. PERMANENT GUARDIANSHIP THROUGH FAMILY COURT

Family Court may establish a permanent guardianship during any hearing in which a legal disposition about permanence for the child can be made. However, before a permanent guardianship can be established, the judge must find by clear and convincing evidence that:

1. The child is not likely to return home to the parents or be adopted within a reasonable period of time;
2. The child is at least 12 years old — unless the proposed guardian is a relative or a permanent guardian for one of the child’s siblings;
3. The child has lived with the proposed guardian for at least a year (six months if the proposed guardian is a relative);
4. The proposed guardian is suitable and is able and willing to provide a safe, nurturing home for the child until he or she turns 18; and
5. Permanent guardianship is in the child’s best interests.

In a permanent guardianship, the parents no longer have the right to end the guardianship order, but they do retain certain parental rights and responsibilities (e.g., the right to have contact with the child and responsibility to pay child support). *Permanent guardianship provides children with a sense of permanency and home, while allowing them to stay connected — to family, culture, and community.*

Permanent Guardianship Assistance

If you are granted permanent guardianship of a child in DCF custody and you meet other requirements, you might be eligible for *Permanent Guardianship Assistance*. This could include a monthly payment, Medicaid for the child, and reimbursement of non-recurring expenses. For more information call DCF’s Adoption Unit at (802) 769-6282.

6. ADOPTION THROUGH PROBATE COURT

Adoptions take place in Probate Court. During an adoption the court transfers all parental rights and responsibilities for the child to the adopting parent. Once an adoption is finalized, the birth parents no longer have any legal rights or responsibilities with respect to the child. If you adopt your relative's child, you become his or her legal parent with all the rights and responsibilities that entails.

Post-adoption contact between the child and birth family members may be beneficial, especially if the adopting relatives have a good relationship with the parents and everyone is focused on the child's best interests. This could include letters, phone calls, and visits.

Adoption Assistance

The child might qualify for adoption assistance if:

- The first written court order that ordered the child's removal from the home included a judicial determination that "to remain in the home was contrary to the child's welfare";
- The child has special needs that make adoption unlikely without assistance; and
- The child meets other requirements.

Assistance could include one or more of the following:

- Adoption finalization services;
- Medical benefits for the child;
- Monthly payments to help you meet the child's special needs; and
- Payment of special services.

You must apply for, negotiate, and sign an adoption assistance agreement before the adoption is completed. To learn more, call DCF's Adoption Unit at (802) 769-6282.

Legal Resources

Before deciding on the type of arrangement you want to pursue, you may want to consult an attorney. A lawyer can help you understand the options available and how each one may affect your family. Search for a lawyer with relevant experience and knowledge about family law, juvenile and child welfare statutes, formal kinship arrangements, and programs that may be available to help.

If you are involved with Family Court and cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for one at public expense. Ask the Family Court clerk for an *Application for Public Defender Services*, and the court will determine whether you qualify.

South Royalton Legal Clinic At Vermont Law School

<http://www.vermontlaw.edu/>

Helps residents from several Vermont counties who are unable to afford counsel and need help with issues such as children's rights, family law, housing, welfare and more. Call (802) 831-1500 for more information.

Vermont Bar Association's Online Lawyer Referral Service

<https://www.vtbar.org/LRS>

Attorneys provide an initial 30-minute office consultation for no more than \$25. Simply provide information about you and your legal needs and you'll be matched with a qualified attorney. If you are not sure what type of attorney you need, call 1-800-639-7036 during regular business hours.

Vermont Law Help

<http://www.vtlawhelp.org>

Easy-to-read legal information on topics such as public benefits, education, and free legal services.

Vermont Legal Aid

<http://www.vtlegalaid.org>

Free civil legal services for people who are elderly, have a disability, or have low income. Call 1-800-889-2047.

Chapter 3: Help with Basic Needs

Many grandparents and other relative caregivers live on fixed incomes and need extra help to make ends meet. The added expense of raising an additional child can make it even more difficult. In addition, children who have been abused or neglected, or are living away from their parents for other reasons, may need special services and supports.

The good news is that children and their kinship caregivers are often eligible for public benefits and services. This chapter looks at the programs and services that may be available to help you provide for the children in your care.

DCF's Child Development Division (CDD)

Child Care Services

CDD administers two programs that can help you find and pay for child care.

A. *The Child Care Financial Assistance Program* can help cover part of the cost of child care if you:

- Have an accepted reason for child care; and
- Meet current income guidelines¹.

B. *The Child Care Referral Service* can help you find a registered child care provider or licensed program.

Both programs are delivered through Community Child Care Support Agencies located throughout the state. Your local agency can give you information about the child care options in your area and help you apply for financial assistance.

For the name and phone number of your local agency, call 1-800-649-2642 or go to <http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/cccsa>.

¹ If the child gets a *Child-Only Reach Up Grant* (see page 17), your income will not be counted but you still need an accepted reason for child care.

Child Development Services

CDD also administers *Children's Integrated Services (CIS)* — a resource for:

- Pregnant Women who have questions or concerns about a condition or risk situation that may impact their baby's health or safety;
- Families who need help providing stable, healthy environments for children; and
- Parents of children age 6 or younger who have questions or concerns about suspected developmental delays or conditions.

To find out more about CIS services:

1. Dial 2-1-1 toll free from anywhere in Vermont.
2. Ask the operator for the name and phone number of your local CIS Coordinator.
3. The Coordinator will discuss your concerns, the help you are seeking, and possible next steps for you and your family.
4. If CIS services seem right for your family, your local team will help you develop an action plan; provide resources and services and/or referrals; and help you access other programs and community services.

CIS teams have expertise in social work, family support, maternal & child health, nursing, child development & early intervention, early childhood and family mental health, child care, and other specialties such as nutrition and speech therapy.

Dial 2-1-1 or go to <http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/cis>

DCF's Economic Services Division (ESD)

ESD administers several benefit programs that can help families to meet their basic needs. This includes 3SquaresVT, Emergency Assistance, Energy Assistance, Fuel Assistance, Phone Assistance, and Reach Up.

Eligibility for most of these programs is based on the family or household's income (and additional criteria in some cases).

There is one program that can help with the cost of raising the children in your care, regardless of your income. It's called the Child-Only Reach Up Grant.

The Child-Only Reach Up Grant

Child-Only Reach Up provides cash assistance to kin caring for minor children who have little or no income. The amount of assistance varies, depending on the child and family's specific circumstances and according to program rules.

Children getting *Child-Only Reach Up* grants are also eligible for:

- **Free School Meals** - if the child's school participates in a federal meals program, ESD will notify the school that the child qualifies for free school meals. You can also contact the school directly and provide a copy of the notice of eligibility.
- **Health Insurance** - a child getting Reach Up is automatically eligible for State health insurance (Medicaid or Dr. Dynasaur). Benefits include doctor visits, prescription medicines, dental care, and hospital visits.
- **Child Care Financial Assistance** (see page 15) - if you have an accepted reason for child care, the child is eligible for Child Care Financial Assistance regardless of your income.

To find out more and to apply, call 1-800-479-6151; visit an ESD District Office during regular business hours (see list on next page); or go to <http://mybenefits.vt.gov>.

DCF's Economic Services Division

Barre District

5 Perry Street, Suite 150, Barre, VT

Bennington District

200 Veteran's Memorial Drive, Suite 6, Bennington, VT

Brattleboro District

232 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Brattleboro, VT

Burlington District

119 Pearl Street, John Zampieri Building, Burlington, VT

Hartford District

224 Holiday Drive, Suite A, White River Junction, VT

Middlebury District

156 South Village Green, Suite 201, Middlebury, VT

Morrisville District

63 Professional Drive, Suite 4, Morrisville, VT

Newport District

100 Main Street, Suite 240, Newport, VT

Rutland District

320 Asa Bloomer Building, 88 Merchants Row, Rutland, VT

Springfield District

100 Mineral Street, Suite 201, Springfield, VT

St. Albans District

20 Houghton Street, Room 313, St. Albans, VT

St. Johnsbury District

67 Eastern Avenue, Suite 7, St. Johnsbury, VT

<http://mybenefits.vt.gov>

1-800-479-6151

DCF's Office of Child Support

DCF's Office of Child Support is the state agency responsible for establishing, collecting upon, enforcing, and modifying support orders for children who do not live with both parents. Services are available to custodial and non-custodial parents as well as guardians of children who are under 18 or still in high school.

OCS can help parents and guardians to:

- ➔ Establish parentage;
- ➔ Establish, modify or enforce an order for child and medical support;
- ➔ Make support payments to the custodial parent; and
- ➔ Locate a missing non-custodial parent.

For more information about available services, call the statewide Child Support Helpline (1-800-786-3214); contact your regional office; or go to <http://dcf.vermont.gov/ocs>.

CENTRAL REGION

Counties: Essex, Orange and Washington

162 North Main St., Barre, VT 05641 - (802) 479-4204

NORTHEAST REGION

Counties: Caledonia, Lamoille, and Orleans

1153 Main St, Ste 2, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819 - (802) 751-2650

NORTHWEST REGION

Counties: Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle

32 Cherry St., Ste 310, Burlington, VT 05401 - (802) 863-7444

SOUTHEAST REGION

Counties: Windham and Windsor

100 Mineral St., Ste 202, Springfield, VT 05156 - (802) 885-6212

SOUTHWEST REGION

Counties: Addison, Bennington and Rutland

420 Asa Bloomer Bldg, Rutland, VT 05701 - (802) 786-5060

Department of Health's Nutrition Assistance Program

The Department of Health administers the *Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children*. Known as WIC, the program helps ensure young children eat well and stay healthy.

Children up to age 5 may be eligible if they live in Vermont and meet income, health, and nutrition guidelines. Children who get Medicaid or Reach Up are eligible, and their kinship caregivers may apply on their behalf.

If the child is eligible, a driver will deliver food to your home twice a month (e.g., milk, juice, eggs, whole grain bread, and peanut butter). You'll also get a WIC card with a small monthly benefit that allows you to buy fruits and vegetables at authorized grocers.

For More Information & To Apply

Call 1-800-649-4357 or your local office:

- **Barre:** 1-888-253-8786, (802) 479-4200
- **Bennington:** 1-800-637-7347, (802) 447-3531
- **Brattleboro:** 1-888-253-8805, (802) 257-2880
- **Burlington:** 1-888-253-8803, (802) 863-7323
- **Middlebury:** 1-888-253-8804, (802) 388-4644
- **Morrisville:** 1-888-253-8798, (802) 888-7447
- **Newport:** 1-800-952-2945, (802) 334-6707
- **Rutland:** 1-888-253-8802, (802) 786-5811
- **St. Albans:** 1-888-253-8801, (802) 524-7970
- **St. Johnsbury:** 1-800-952-2936, (802) 748-5151
- **Springfield:** 1-888-296-8151, (802) 885-5778
- **White River Junction:** 1-888-253-8799, (802) 295-8820

<http://healthvermont.gov/wic>

Other Financial Assistance

Community Action Agencies

These agencies help people with their basic needs through programs such as crisis fuel assistance, emergency assistance, food shelves, help with housing, and more.

- **Central VT Community Action Council (CVCAC)** - 1-800-639-1053, <http://www.cvcac.org>
- **Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)** - <http://www.cvoeo.org>
 - Addison Community Action - 1-800-639-2318, (802) 388-2285
 - Chittenden Community Action - (802) 863-6248
 - Franklin/Grand Isle Community Action - 1-800-300-7392, (802) 527-7392
- **Community Action in SW Vermont (BROC)** - 1-800-717-2762, <http://www.broc.org>
- **NEKCA - Northeast Kingdom Community Action** - (802) 334-7316, <http://www.nekcavt.org>
- **Southeastern VT Community Action (SEVCA)** - 1-800-464-9951, <http://www.sevca.org>

Social Security

If the child you are caring for has a physical or mental disability or the child's parents are disabled or deceased, he or she may qualify for financial assistance. For more information, call 1-800-772-1213 or visit your local Social Security office.

Tax Credits

Ask your accountant about tax credits you may qualify for (e.g., Earned Income Credit, Child Tax Credit, and Low-Income Child and Dependent Care Tax Benefit). Or go to the Department of Taxes website: <http://www.state.vt.us/tax/index.shtml>.

Chapter 4: Other Resources

Assistance & Referral

Vermont 2-1-1

<http://vermont211.org>

2-1-1 is a free information and referral helpline — available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Simply dial 2-1-1 toll free from anywhere in Vermont. A call specialist will help you find government programs, community-based organizations, support groups, and other resources.

Vermont Kin as Parents (VKAP)

<http://vermontkinasparents.org>

Vermont Kin As Parents, known as VKAP, is a grassroots, nonprofit organization committed to supporting kin who are raising relatives' children. VKAP staff & volunteers understand kinship care and can help you:

- Understand the choices you may have and the long-term impact of each;
- Sort through the issues you may experience as a kinship caregiver; and
- Understand and access the financial assistance and day-to-day supports that may be available to help you.

Contact VKAP at (802) 871-5104 or kinlmg@comcast.net.

Vermont's Senior Help Line: 1-800-642-5119

<http://www.vermontseniors.org>

Information and referral service for Vermonters age 60 and over. An information & referral specialist can provide information about available programs and services and help you apply for public benefits.

Educational Resources

Head Start/Early Head Start

<http://vermontheadstart.org>

Head Start and Early Head Start provide a range of comprehensive early education, health, nutrition, parental involvement/engagement, and family support services to primarily at-risk children from birth to age 5 and their families. Visit the website listed above or dial 2-1-1 to find your local provider.

Vermont Family Network (VFN)

<http://www.vermontfamilynetwork.org>

VFN works with families of children who have special needs and learning difficulties. They can help you advocate for a child's special needs; learn about special education, parents' rights, and related laws; prepare for meetings about school issues; and identify community supports. For more information about VFN's programs and services, please call (802) 876-5315 or 1-800-800-4005.

Vermont Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

<http://www.vffcmh.org>

If you need help with a child's educational, emotional, or behavioral problems, call (802) 876-7021 or 1-800-639-6071.

Miscellaneous Resources

Friends Of Veterans

<http://www.friendsofveteransvtnh.org> • (802) 296-8368

Provides crisis funding, particularly to avoid homelessness, as well as advocacy and clearinghouse services in collaboration with other service providers. Both active and veteran members of all branches of military service and their families are eligible.

Internet Essentials:

Affordable Internet Service through Comcast

You may qualify for affordable Internet service and a low-cost computer if your household:

- Is in an area with Comcast Internet service;
- Includes at least one child getting free or reduced cost school lunches; and
- Meets other criteria.

To learn more, go to www.internetessentials.com or call 1-855-846-8376.

Vermont Health Connect

<http://www.healthconnect.vt.gov> • 1-855-899-9600

The place in Vermont for individuals, families and small businesses to compare health plans and select the ones that best fit their needs and budgets. It includes both public healthcare plans such as Dr. Dynasaur and Medicaid as well as private healthcare plans. Every plan offered through the exchange offers basic services such as checkups, emergency care, mental health services and prescriptions.

Parenting Support

AARP's Grandparent Support Center

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

Information for grandparents raising their grandchildren.

Generations United

<http://www.gu.org>

Resources for families headed by grandparents and other relatives. Click on "Grandfamilies" on the left.

Kids VT

<http://www.kidsvt.com>

A great resource for parents, with county-by-county information on local events, playgroups, classes, summer camps and activities for children and families.

Parent Child Centers

http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/contact_us/pcc

A network of centers throughout Vermont that help families make sure children get off to a healthy start. Services include early childhood services, home visits to families with young children, playgroups, parent education, parent support, and information & referral. Visit the website listed above or dial 2-1-1 to find your local parent child center.

Prevent Child Abuse Vermont (PCAV)

<http://pcavt.org> • (802) 229-5724, 1-800-244-5373

Offers statewide education programs for parents, children, and teens; hosts parent support groups; and publishes an annual resource directory for parents.

Vermont Adoption Consortium

<http://www.vtadoption.org> • (802) (802) 223-4744

A consortium of agencies and groups from around the state that offer support to kinship caregivers and adoptive parents.

Vermont's Find And Go Seek

<http://www.findandgoseek.net>

A fun and easy way to discover fun things to do with your children in your neck of the woods. It also offers tips from other parents and caregivers that can help you save time,

Voices at the Table Blog & Website

<http://voicesatthetable.wordpress.com>

A bi-weekly blog for Vermont kinship, foster, and adoptive families to share with one another. The website includes information about current resources, support, educational opportunities, and topics relevant to your experience.

Support Groups for Kin

There are kinship support groups located throughout Vermont. For information about meeting times, locations, and availability of childcare, please call or email the contact listed for the group. If you don't see a group near you, contact Vermont Kin as Parents at (802) 871-5104 or kinlmg@comcast.net to see whether a new group has started in your area.

- **ADDISON COUNTY - K.I.N.** - Contact Sandi Yandow at (802) 578-9518 or syandow@yahoo.com.
- **BELLOWS FALLS - Circle of Support for Kinship Caregivers** - Contact Deb Witkus at (802) 463-9927 ext. 212 or gfpc4parents@gmail.com
- **BRATTLEBORO: Brattleboro Kinship Support Group.** Call Ross Gibson at (802) 451-6445 or send an email to rossgibson97@yahoo.com.
- **BURLINGTON - Burlington Kin** - Contact Linda Deliduka at (802) 864-5114 or linda@deliduka.com
- **CENTRAL VT - Grandparents Raising Their Children's Children** - Contact Evelyn Sawyer at (802) 476-1480, ext. 364 or evelyns@wcmhs.org
- **MILTON - Grandparents as Parents** - Call John Smith at (802) 893-3838.
- **MORRISVILLE - Grandparent Support Group** - Call Jackie Stanton at (802) 888-5229, ext. 149 or send an email to jstanton@lamoillefamilycenter.org.
- **ORANGE COUNTY - Kinship Care Support Group** - Contact MaryEllen Otis at (802) 685-2264 or via email at maryellen@orangcountypcc.org
- **RUTLAND - Kin Conversations** - Contact Diane Robie at (802) 747-0490 or drobie@eckerd.org
- **ST. JOHNSBURY - Grandparents Together** - Call Chris Morey at (802) 892-6176 or Rose Aldrich at (802) 748-3181, ext. 1172.

DCF's Family Services Division

Barre: (802) 479-4260

Bennington: (802) 442-8138

Brattleboro: (802) 257-2888

Burlington: (802) 863-7370

Hartford: (802) 295-8840

Middlebury: (802) 388-466

Morrisville: (802) 888-4576

Newport: (802) 334-6723

Rutland: (802) 786-5817

Springfield: (802) 885-8900

St. Albans: (802) 527-7741

St. Johnsbury: (802) 748-8374

Vermont Kin as Parents (VKAP)

Free information & referral service specifically for kinship caregivers. We can help you:

- Find programs, services, educational opportunities, and other resources;
- Figure out the right questions to ask so you can make informed decisions; and
- Connect with kinship caregivers and support groups throughout Vermont.

(802) 871-5104 • <http://vermontkinasparents.org>

Vermont 2-1-1

- Free & confidential information and referral service for everyone in Vermont — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Call specialists can help you find government programs, community-based organizations, support groups, and other resources.

Dial 2-1-1 • <http://vermont211.org>

[myBenefits.vt.gov](http://mybenefits.vt.gov)

- Find out about public benefits such as 3SquaresVT, Energy Assistance, Fuel Assistance, & Reach Up;
- Apply online for many benefits; and
- Get details about your benefits — 24/7.

<http://mybenefits.vt.gov>