Relative Caregiver Assistance Programs

If you are a grandparent or other relative raising a child that is not biologically yours, you are not alone! Grandfamilies.org reported nearly 62,000 children in the state of Tennessee live with a relative and have no parent present in their lives, 168,215 children under the age of 18 live in a home with a relative, and 76,406 grandparents in Tennessee have their grandchildren living in their homes ("Grandfacts State Fact Sheet for Grandfamilies", 2017). It is normal to experience emotions such as stress, anger, guilt, and/or grief. If and when you become to feel overwhelmed, make sure you make it a priority to take care of yourself. Staying healthy, leaning on your grandchildren for help, and reaching out for help in your community are a few ways that you can care for yourself. Your grandchildren may also experience some mixed feelings as they are separated from their parents. Remember – children often act out when they are in a safe place. The best way for you to help your grandchildren adjust to living with you is to create a secure, stable environment. Set clear rules, establish a routine, and offer your time to them. Make your grandchildren feel comfortable in being able to communicate with you. Set time aside away from other distractions and encourage them to talk about the emotions they are experiencing. It is okay to encourage contact with the parents of your grandchild, if it is appropriate to the situation ("Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - HelpGuide.org", 2020). Please explore the links below to find information that may be helpful to you and explore programs you may be eligible for!

Benefits.gov can help you determine what type of benefits that you are eligible for - <https://www.benefits.gov/>

Relative Caregiver Program - <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/foster-care-and-adoption/relative-caregiver.html> , <https://www.theomnifamily.com/relative-caregiver-program/>

Grandparents as Parents Program – 865-524-2786 <https://www.knoxseniors.org/grandparents/>

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families – cash assistance program to assist low-income families with children <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/temporary-assistance-needy-families-tanf>

Grandfamilies resources - <https://www.grandfamilies.org/>

Resources for early childhood, reading resources, and helping your child learn - <https://www2.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml?src=ln>

Grandfacts State Fact Sheet for Grandfamilies. (2017). Retrieved 24 February 2021, from <https://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/State%20Fact%20Sheets/Grandfamilies-Fact-Sheet-Tennessee.pdf>

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - HelpGuide.org. (2020). Retrieved 24 February 2021, from <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/parenting-family/grandparents-raising-grandchildren.htm>