

May/June 2009



*Support provided by the AARP Foundation through a generous grant from the New York Life Foundation*

Welcome to *Kincare News*, a monthly e-newsletter produced by AARP New York on behalf of the New York State Kincare Coalition for professionals working in the kin caregiving field.

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## News

### Child Only Grant Public Awareness Campaign

The New York State Kincare Coalition recently launched a public awareness campaign aimed at helping kin caregivers access the non-parent caregiver grant, which is woefully under utilized in NY State. The grant provides \$400 for one child and \$125 for each additional child in a household headed by a grandparent or other relative. The state-wide campaign will educate kin caregivers about the benefit and direct them to where to find local assistance in applying for the grant.

The Coalition kicked-off the campaign with successful press conferences in Rochester and Buffalo in conjunction with AARP New York, the Catholic Family Center in Rochester, and Catholic Charities of Buffalo. As a result of local media coverage, each of the local agencies has received an increase in calls requesting information about the grant or help filling out the grant application.

According to public assistance data, only an estimated 8 percent of eligible kincare families in New York State are receiving the much-needed financial assistance the grant provides. With over 400,000 children being raised by grandparents or other relatives, only an estimated 32,000 children are receiving the grant.

With the downturn in the economy affecting jobs and retiree savings, kin caregivers, especially grandparents who may be on a fixed income, need financial assistance more than ever. Since the grant is based solely on the child's income, and not on the caregiver's, even kincare families who aren't considered low income, but make a moderate salary and yet still struggle with the added costs of caring for a grandchild, niece or nephew, could benefit. For more information, contact Chaunda Ball at 212-407-3732 or [cball@aarp.org](mailto:cball@aarp.org).

To add your organization's logo to the flyer prior to distribution, please contact Chaunda Ball at 212-407-3732 or [cball@aarp.org](mailto:cball@aarp.org).

## **NYC Kincare Task Force Key Stakeholder Meeting**

On Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup> the NYC Kincare Task Force held a stakeholders meeting at Fordham University School of Social Service in New York City to release the research report, "Removing Barriers to Successful Kin Caregiving". Key policy makers, including the NYS Commissioner of the Office of Family and Children's Services, Gladys Carrion, NYC DFTA Commissioner, Lilliam Barrios-Paoli and Erik Nicklas, Associate Commissioner of NYC Administration of Children Services, grandparent spokespeople, academicians and advocates attended. The report and the event were made possible with generous grant of the AARP Foundation and the New York Life Foundation. Common themes resounded in the research that surveyed grandparents and their experiences trying to secure information, benefits and services for their families. Key findings included the need for agency staff to have greater awareness of the needs of kinship caregivers, more training on benefits for these caregivers and the need for greater dissemination of written materials.

Upcoming NYC Kincare Task Force Meetings:

Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>: 9:30 – 11:30 AM

Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>: 9:30 – 11:30 AM

Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>: 9:30 – 11:30 AM

The report can be accessed on the NYS Navigator website at:  
<http://www.nysnavigator.org/updates.php>

To receive a hard copy of the "Removing Barriers to Successful Kin Caregiving" report, please contact Christine Collins at [ccollins@aarp.org](mailto:ccollins@aarp.org)

To join the NYC Kincare Task Force or for additional information, please contact the Task Force Co-Chairs: Deborah Langosch at [dlangosch@jbfcs.org](mailto:dlangosch@jbfcs.org) and Amy Roehl at [aroehl@mfy.org](mailto:aroehl@mfy.org)

## **Upcoming OCFS Proposal: The Special Delinquency Prevention Program**

Next month OCFS is expected to release another proposal that may be appropriate for select kinship caregiver programs. The Special Delinquency Prevention Program (SDPP) proposal will be made available for non-profit, community based organizations targeting a number of different disconnected youth populations. These populations, some of which intersect with kinship households, include victims of child abuse/neglect; members of a family that lack adequate family supports; and include a priority in serving youth from homes where one or both parents are incarcerated. Outcomes over the five-year grant period include increased connectedness with school, increased independent living, increased positive relationships, etc. It is proposed that maximum awards will be \$100,000 and \$150,000 for those located in NYC.

Please scan the OCFS internet site for further information next month if you are interested.

<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/>

## **LIFT Recognized As A Semifinalist for the 2009 New York Times Company Nonprofit Excellence Award**

Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) was recognized by the New York Times Company, the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York and the New York Regional Association of Grantmakers as a semifinalist for the 2009 New York Times Company Nonprofit Excellence Award. LIFT, who is an active member of the New York State Kinship Care Coalition, is competing against ten other organizations for a cash grant and a scholarship to be applied toward Social Enterprise Programs at Columbia Business School Executive Education.

The New York Times Company Nonprofit Excellence Awards are presented annually to nonprofits in the New York City area for excellence in organizational management. The Awards include an extensive three-step judging process, including two stages of written applications and site visits where each organization is judged on its management and laser-like focus on its mission. "LIFT is honored to be a semifinalist for such a prestigious award," said Melissa M. Beck, LIFT's Executive Director. "The families we serve deserve nothing less than excellence in organizational management; thanks to our stellar management team and exceptional Board of Directors, LIFT's programs are consistently high-quality, mission-driven, and responsive." In the initial round of applications, each organization was asked to explain how they accomplished their goals while addressing multiple challenges. The winners will be announced on June 18 at TheTimeCenter during a Best Practices Workshop and Awards Ceremony. "I am proud to be the President of LIFT's Board of Directors," remarked Steve McGrath. "Our Board and management team work side-by-side to ensure best practices propel the organization forward, and help to ensure our ability to navigate these tumultuous economic times."

## **Brookdale Foundation Seeks Proposals for Alzheimer's Disease Respite Program**

A program of the Brookdale Foundation Group, the Brookdale National Group Respite Program awards seed grants to organizations working to develop and implement social model group respite programs.

The goals of the program are to provide persons with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia with opportunities to engage in meaningful social and recreational activities in a secure and supportive setting in order to maximize their cognitive and social abilities, and to provide relief and support to family members and other primary caregivers.

Funding is available for up to forty organizations working to develop new dementia-specific programs. Applicants must be nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations or public agencies. All proposed programs must provide day services specifically for people affected by Alzheimer's disease or other related disorders. Grant funds may not be used to support or expand the hours, days, or service capacity of existing programs.

Selected organizations will each receive grant support of \$7,500 in the first year, renewable for \$3,000 in the second year. The sponsoring organization must provide a 1:1 match of cash or equivalent in-kind support.

For more information: <http://www.brookdalefoundation.org/Respite/respiteprogram2008.html>

## **Initiation of The Statewide Caregiving and Respite Coalition of New York**

The Statewide Caregiving and Respite Coalition of New York is a new statewide, cross-disability, cross-generational Coalition whose purpose is to bring together state, county, and community-based organizations that serve and advocate for caregivers and the loved ones they care for.

This Coalition, as recommended by the New York State Family Caregiver Council, will work to unite caregiving and respite groups, individuals and families for the purpose of raising awareness of the valuable role caregivers play in the health and long term care systems and shaping the direction of New York's lifespan respite and caregiver programs.

Learn more about the Coalition and how you can join at: [www.scrny.org](http://www.scrny.org) or contact The New York State Coalition for the Aging, Inc. (NYSCA) at 518-465-0641 or email Joanne Macklin at [Joanne@coalitionforaging.org](mailto:Joanne@coalitionforaging.org).

## **Programs in Western New York in May**

Jerry Wallace from the New York State Navigator and AARP NY kinship education program came to Western New York on May 28th to speak to about 20 Niagara County Department of Social Services Child Welfare supervisors, and on May 29th to an Erie County group including a broad range of providers and caregivers.

The topic in Niagara County was "N-Docket" cases, where children are placed in temporary custody with relatives. This custodial arrangement is often used instead of foster care placement, and is done to comply with NYS legal preference for relative placements. There are many challenges in ensuring this type of placement is successful, and the County is interested in improving and enhancing the way services are provided.

In Erie County approximately 75 people attended a presentation on local kinship caregiver programs and an update from Jerry Wallace on current topics in kinship care and legislation. There are five voluntary providers of case management and legal services for kinship caregivers in the area including Catholic Charities, Gateway-Longview, Neighborhood Legal Services, Legal Services for the Elderly and Disadvantaged and Mid-Erie Mental Health Services.

Jerry Wallace gave a presentation on the history of kinship care programming and legislation in New York State, and talked about the new federal legislation currently being implemented. He talked about the Statewide Kinship Care Coalition and their accomplishments over the past few years, including several key regulations and legislation. The recent presentations by the commissioners from OTDA and OCFS, and the upcoming presentation by the Director of the State Office for Aging demonstrate the cooperation and interest of the State offices with the work of the coalition. Jerry talked about the significant use of "N-Docket" status in Western New York, and his hope to look more carefully at that over the new few months.

## **Caregivers Count! Support for Women and Families with Special Needs Children**

The HRSA Office of Women's Health is pleased to share the third podcast in their 2009 series on timely health issues for women and families. Issues like respite time, caregiver social support, connections to other families, and putting challenges in perspective are some of the topics discussed.

Follow the link below to access the podcast:

<http://www.hrsa.gov/womenshealth/>

## **Gerard Wallace Receives 2009 Generations United Grandfamilies Award**

Gerard Wallace was selected as the recipient of the 2009 Generations United Grandfamilies Award. The specific award criterion requires that it honor a professional, a relative caregiver or an organization that has made an outstanding contribution to the field of grandparents and other relatives raising children. The award will be presented at the Generations United's Award Banquet on Thursday, July 30, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capital Hill. Congratulations to Gerard on this well deserved honor.

## **Lauren Polakoff Honored with NASW-NYC Student of the Year Award**

Congratulations to Lauren Polakoff who received the National Association of Social Workers-New York Chapter Student of the Year award at the Columbia University School of Social Work Commencement Ceremony on May 20, 2009. The award is given to students who have demonstrated professional commitment, identity, and values through student leadership, field of practice or academic projects. Lauren was the Kincare intern at AARP New York during her second year of the Masters in Social Work program at Columbia from the fall of 2008 to the spring of 2009. While at Columbia, Lauren specialized in Advanced Generalist Practice and Programming with a focus on aging. She is passionate about the field of aging and hopes to continue her career in social work with the aging population.

## **Legal Update**

*By Gerard Wallace*

### **NYS Kinship Budget**

The final NYS budget retained funding for the thirteen OCFS kinship programs and the Kinship Navigator. Many individuals and organizations worked to strengthen support and all deserve many thanks. Their success gilded the lily! Close to an additional million was added for OCFS kinship programs. OCFS will release a new RFP, seeking proposals from organizations across the state. The RFP should be out at the end of June and startup is targeted for fall '09.

### **NYS Kinship Legislation**

A bill reintroduced this session by Senator Golden, S.2033, would extend the two year extraordinary circumstances described in Domestic Relations Law to include children residing in relatives' homes (not just grandparents). As late as June 9<sup>th</sup>, we were still hoping that a "same as" bill might be introduced in the Assembly. However, the change in leadership in the Senate will probably make any legislative action on this bill impossible until next year. Complicating any predictions about the NYS Senate's legislative actions, new rules were enacted that may lead to more bi-partisanship and the opportunity for legislators who are interested in kinship care to work together across the aisle. Uncertainty is the only certainty at this time.

### **Commissioner Hansell Attends Kincare Coalition**

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Commissioner David Hansell and senior staff attended the February 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the NYC Kincare coalition. The Commissioner recounted recent regulatory changes to the deeming rules for "child-only" grants that were favorable to kinship families, and indicated that OTDA wanted to maximize access to these grants. He also introduced the OTDA/OCFS handbook, "Having a Voice & a Choice."

Follow the link below to access the "Having a Voice & a Choice" Handbook:  
<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/publications/Pub5080.pdf>

## Commissioner Carrión Attends Kincare Coalition

New York State Office of Children and Family Services Commissioner Gladys Carrión presented at the April 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the NYC Kincare Coalition. The Commissioner affirmed her commitment to working with the Coalition on identifying kinship needs. As part of the meeting, members voiced concerns with the use of “N Docket” (director custody or 1017 custody) orders. The Commissioner indicated her willingness to look into the use of this alternative to foster care.

*Gerard Wallace is an attorney specializing in kincare legal issues and is currently the director of the New York State Navigator, an information referral service for caregivers across the state. He is also a consultant to AARP New York and involved in AARP’s statewide effort to educate professionals regarding kinship care legal issues. The AARP New York project is a joint initiative with [Empire Justice](#) with generous support from the [AARP Foundation](#) and the [New York Life Foundation](#). For more information, contact Gerard Wallace at (845) 594-6398 or [gwallace@cfcrochester.org](mailto:gwallace@cfcrochester.org).*

## Events Calendar

### Generations United 15th International Conference

When: July 27 - 31, 2009

Where: Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill

To register: <http://www.gu.org/ConferenceFees.asp>

The Generations United conference offers opportunities for all attendees to enjoy learning about the state-of-the-art showcase of intergenerational programs, practices, policies, and research from around the world. The GU Conference fosters new and creative intergenerational programming, enhances and strengthens current local, national and international practice, and supports effective public policy initiative that all share the goal of improving the lives of people of all ages and connecting generations.

Over 400 practitioners, innovators, legends, leaders, experts, administrators, managers, academics, and advocates in a variety of youth and aging fields come together to explore intergenerational topics and issues.

### NYS Kincare Coalition Meeting

The NYS Kincare Coalition is excited to announce that Michael Burgess, Director of the NYS Office of the Aging, will be joining us for the next coalition meeting. The meeting will be held Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup> from noon – 3pm. We hope that Kincare members will make a special effort to attend.

Please be sure to RSVP to Christine Collins at [ccollins@aarp.org](mailto:ccollins@aarp.org) and to name which AARP office you plan to attend.

Time: Noon to 3 pm, Lunch will be served

Where: AARP NYC Office: 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 33<sup>rd</sup> Floor, New York NY 10017

AARP Rochester: 435 E. Henrietta Rd., Rochester, NY 14620

AARP Albany: One Commerce Plaza, Suite 706, Albany, NY 12260

## Empowerment Training Classes, September

Empowerment Training classes will be offered beginning in September at Fordham University, Lincoln Center. The only criteria for participation is that the grandparent is raising a grandchild and lives in one of the 5 boroughs. The program consists of 14 classes that cover parenting and community advocacy. Stipends, lunch, and transportation are provided. For further information, contact Dr. Carole Cox at 212-636-6649.

## Resources

### Help for Children Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives: Questions and Answers About the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

This report is intended to help ensure implementation of the improvements in the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act for children being raised by grandparents and other relatives. It was prepared by an informal coalition of 18 organizations, many of whom have been working individually and together for years to support children being raised by grandparents and other relatives. In this guide, the collaborating organizations have answered a number of questions posed to them by persons interested in implementing the new act. The Guide is intended to be useful to those charged with implementing the improvements for children being raised by grandparents and other relatives, as well as others who are advocating for the new improvements and assisting with implementation. Download at <http://www.clasp.org/publications/NewHelpForChildrenRaisedByGrandparentsAndOtherRelatives.pdf>

### Online Parenting Program

Evidence-based online parenting program for foster and/or kinship parents: <http://www.fosterparentcollege.com/>

## About Kincare News

*Kincare News* is produced by [AARP New York](#) on behalf of the New York State Kincare Coalition. The Coalition is dedicated to empowering the grandparents and other relatives who are raising nearly half a million children in New York State. The goals of the coalition are to remove barriers facing kin caregivers and engage policy makers in the areas of education, health, legal issues, temporary assistance and child welfare. The members of the coalition are a statewide network of organizations and agencies that serve kin caregivers by providing resources, legal and social services, support groups and advocacy.

To submit an item or for more information about *Kincare News*, contact Christine Collins at [ccollins@aarp.org](mailto:ccollins@aarp.org) or 212-407-3784.

To subscribe to *Kincare News*, send an e-mail with **subscribe** in the subject line to [ccollins@aarp.org](mailto:ccollins@aarp.org).

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### New York State Kincare Coalition Members

The Coalition is made up of 80 individuals representing 50 organizations throughout the state. Below is a listing of some of the organizations represented in the Coalition.

AARP New York State

The Brookdale Foundation  
Catholic Charities Caregivers Support Services  
Center on Addiction and the Family  
Child Care Coordinating Council  
Child Welfare League of America  
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Orange County-RAPP Program  
The Family and Children's Society  
The Family Center  
Family Service Society of Yonkers  
Fordham University  
Grandparents Empowerment Movement  
Liberty Resources, Inc.  
National Committee of Grandparents for Children's Rights  
New York Council On Adoptable Children  
New York State Office for the Aging  
NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council  
Presbyterian Senior Services  
Sadin Institute on Law, Brookdale Center on Aging of Hunter College/CUNY  
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy  
VCS Inc.

Please note that the Coalition Member organizations do not necessarily endorse the content in *Kincare News*. If you have any changes or additions to the Coalition Member list, please contact [ccollins@aarp.org](mailto:ccollins@aarp.org).