

## Grandfamilies of Utah County

### ❖ What are Grandfamilies?

- Grandfamilies, or kinship families, are families in which grandparents or other relatives are raising a child because the biological parents are unable to do so.

### ❖ What is the Grandfamilies Program?

- The Grandfamilies program is designed to provide information and support to kinship families so the children's needs of safety and permanency can be met. Grandfamilies is a program of Wasatch Mental Health in conjunction with United Way of Utah County. See below for program description.

### ❖ Kinship numbers in Utah

- The 2000 census indicated that there were 42,000 children in Utah being raised by relatives. The 2010 census saw that number increase to more than 80,000!
- Utah County currently has more than 9,000 children being raised by relatives

### ❖ Kinship care is good for kids

- Benefits of kinship care include: trauma of being placed with strangers is reduced, fewer placement disruptions, fewer behavioral and educational problems, and children retain ties to their culture.

### ❖ Challenges of kinship care

- Changes in roles, relationships, and family dynamics,
- A tenuous legal standing,
- Emotions of guilt, shame, anger, and betrayal

### ❖ Grandfamilies can help! **Our services include:**

- A **10 week long education and support groups** for caregivers. A children's group for children ages 4-12 years old runs at the same time. A light dinner is provided to all who attend.
- **Ongoing** education, respite and recreational activities held once a month (Friend 2 Friend activities)
- **Guardianship assistance** and links to community resources
- Need-based **clinical services** and crisis intervention
- All these services are provided at **no cost** to the families

### ❖ Testimonial:

- "I hope I've told you thank you often enough. Like an oasis in the Sahara – your Grandfamilies appeared when I'd pretty much given up hope." – Grandmother of a special needs twelve year old boy

### ❖ Contact Grandfamilies:

- Utah County: Sarah Williamson, LAMFT
  - 801-373-4765
  - [sarahw@wasatch.org](mailto:sarahw@wasatch.org) or [GrandfamiliesUC@wasatch.org](mailto:GrandfamiliesUC@wasatch.org)
- Salt Lake or Tooele Counties:
  - 801-326-4409
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