

# Kinship Care

## Definition

Number in kinship care is children who lived in subsidized care of non-parental relatives during the reported year due to abuse or neglect in their home of origin. Percent living with grandparents is the percent of all children in kinship care who lived with grandparents as primary caregivers.

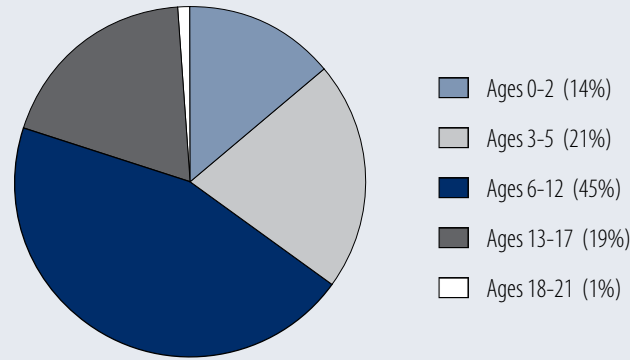
## Data in context

All children need nurturing homes with loving adults to thrive. Yet not all children have a safe home of origin. When suitable, child victims of abuse or neglect who cannot remain safely with their parents are placed with relatives to maintain family connections and cultural ties. There are many formal and informal arrangements involving relative caregivers. In kinship care, a guardian receives financial assistance to help with the cost of caring for a related child.

Kinship care offers many benefits to the child. Research indicates that children in kinship care are more likely to be kept together with their siblings, have greater stability in residential placements and schools, and report a better experience in non-parental care, compared to children in non-relative foster care.<sup>1</sup> Placement with relatives is often less traumatic for children who have already suffered through abuse or neglect.<sup>2</sup> In addition, it allows children to maintain cultural practices and stay connected with the valued network of extended family. One concern, however, is national research suggesting that while children in foster care are eligible for Medicaid and efforts are made to enroll them consistently, children in relative placements are less likely to be insured than children who are in traditional foster care.<sup>3</sup>

In 2005, nearly 24 percent of children in out-of-home care nationwide lived with relatives.<sup>4</sup> More than 2.4 million grandparents were responsible for their grandchildren in the United States in 2006, and 37 percent of these had been responsible for the

**Kentucky Children in the Kinship Care Program by Age, May 2008**



Source: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

grandchildren for 5 years or more.<sup>5</sup>

In May 2008, 8,842 Kentucky children were in the Kinship Care Program, a 9 percent increase from the year before. Of these children, 64 percent lived with grandparents. At least 75 percent of children in kinship care lived with grandparents in 25 Kentucky counties. Meanwhile, fewer than one-third of children in kinship care lived with grandparents in Adair, Clinton, and Elliott Counties.

Children ages 6 to 12 represented the largest group of Kentucky children in kinship care arrangements in May 2008 (45 percent).<sup>6</sup> LaRue County had the largest percentage of children under age one in kinship care (24 percent). Among youth ages 18 to 21, 70 counties had no youth in kinship care, while Jefferson County had the most (45 young adults).

Research indicates no differences among races in rates of abuse or neglect; however, Black children are more likely to be placed in foster care than White or Hispanic children.<sup>7</sup> When out-of-home care is warranted, kinship care offers a sustained family connection for children of all races while ensuring safety. In May 2008, 74 percent of children in kinship care in Kentucky were White; 24

percent were Black or African American, 1 percent were Hispanic, and less than 1 percent were of another race or ethnicity. While racial disparities exist in the child welfare system, offering financial support to willing relative caregivers can help achieve permanency for all children.<sup>8</sup>

**Data Source:** Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community Based Services.

**Data Note:** Number of children in kinship care and percent living with grandparents reflect data as of May 2007 and 2008. Some child victims are directly placed by the courts into the custody of relatives without entering the foster care system. The figures here underestimate placements with relatives and only refer to those non-parental relatives receiving monthly payments subsidizing care of such children. Data also do not reflect 50 additional children who are in state custody and moving toward permanent custody with relatives.

- 1 Conway, T., and Huston, R. (2007). *Is Kinship Care Good for Kids?* Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Law and Social Policy.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Houshyar, S. (2008). *Addressing the Health Care Needs of Foster Care Children.* Washington, DC: First Focus.
- 4 Child Welfare League of America (2008). *The Nation's Children 2008.* Available at <http://www.cwla.org>. Accessed August 2008.
- 5 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2006 American Community Survey. Available at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). Accessed August 2008.
- 6 Data obtained from Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, July 2008.
- 7 Hill, R. (2006). *Synthesis of Research on Disproportionality: An Update.* Washington, DC: Casey-CSSP Alliance for Racial Equity in the Child Welfare System.
- 8 Annie E. Casey Foundation (2006). "Unequal Opportunity within the Child Welfare System." *Race Matters Toolkit.* Available at <http://www.aecf.org>. Accessed August 2008.

## Children receiving Kinship Care (number & percent living with grandparents)

	May 2007		May 2008	
	Number receiving Kinship Care	Percent living with grandparents	Number receiving Kinship Care	Percent living with grandparents
<b>Kentucky</b>	<b>8,086</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>8,842</b>	<b>64</b>
Adair	17	41	19	32
Allen	29	52	28	57
Anderson	34	59	30	53
Ballard	14	79	12	75
Barren	47	57	39	59
Bath	30	73	43	77
Bell	112	69	100	71
Boone	99	53	98	54
Bourbon	52	58	59	59
Boyd	49	59	57	56
Boyle	32	69	58	60
Bracken	13	62	9	44
Breathitt	81	62	102	61
Breckinridge	34	65	30	60
Bullitt	76	70	86	72
Butler	21	71	16	69
Caldwell	20	75	16	50
Calloway	13	85	20	90
Campbell	113	71	113	65
Carlisle	7	57	7	57
Carroll	19	58	16	44
Carter	76	68	100	69
Casey	14	43	21	38
Christian	40	53	54	70
Clark	62	53	69	55
Clay	32	31	34	41
Clinton	8	38	7	29
Crittenden	8	88	16	88
Cumberland	6	67	7	71
Daviess	190	67	179	61
Edmonson	25	64	22	68
Elliott	18	33	22	32
Estill	24	83	33	70
Fayette	544	69	607	66
Fleming	35	71	46	76
Floyd	107	64	116	64
Franklin	66	61	50	56
Fulton	8	75	7	71
Gallatin	18	78	24	79
Garrard	27	56	36	75

	May 2007		May 2008	
	Number receiving Kinship Care	Percent living with grandparents	Number receiving Kinship Care	Percent living with grandparents
Grant	43	70	47	70
Graves	24	38	28	46
Grayson	78	68	63	81
Green	34	82	35	77
Greenup	28	68	36	72
Hancock	0	*	4	100
Hardin	101	50	95	52
Harlan	79	77	89	73
Harrison	19	79	20	85
Hart	28	46	34	68
Henderson	39	56	32	44
Henry	32	56	26	58
Hickman	1	0	1	0
Hopkins	43	60	54	61
Jackson	47	51	37	51
Jefferson	2,150	65	2,334	64
Jessamine	47	53	67	67
Johnson	51	69	52	69
Kenton	216	57	284	64
Knott	104	54	118	59
Knox	73	67	68	68
LaRue	15	47	17	47
Laurel	121	58	124	56
Lawrence	28	68	38	76
Lee	21	48	30	73
Leslie	44	48	45	58
Letcher	110	75	137	75
Lewis	12	75	13	69
Lincoln	45	64	39	72
Livingston	14	100	16	81
Logan	18	44	18	44
Lyon	4	75	4	75
McCracken	39	46	51	63
McCreary	90	39	87	41
McLean	21	67	18	61
Madison	135	60	172	62
Magoffin	60	55	81	44
Marion	26	81	25	80
Marshall	6	50	16	56
Martin	41	83	47	79
Mason	33	70	31	77

	May 2007		May 2008	
	Number receiving Kinship Care	Percent living with grandparents	Number receiving Kinship Care	Percent living with grandparents
Meade	51	33	51	39
Menifee	15	80	13	77
Mercer	45	67	47	70
Metcalfe	29	83	24	92
Monroe	7	71	10	80
Montgomery	39	67	35	66
Morgan	35	63	43	67
Muhlenberg	42	57	43	53
Nelson	47	68	50	62
Nicholas	18	67	20	65
Ohio	53	75	51	71
Oldham	21	71	22	73
Owen	26	81	27	67
Owsley	17	29	14	43
Pendleton	42	60	38	61
Perry	222	69	226	69
Pike	116	68	147	68
Powell	44	73	51	73
Pulaski	112	63	121	69
Robertson	0	*	0	*
Rockcastle	75	69	78	68
Rowan	30	50	49	65
Russell	15	80	14	64
Scott	63	54	88	56
Shelby	34	71	37	68
Simpson	11	73	15	60
Spencer	34	53	31	45
Taylor	43	63	52	62
Todd	14	50	15	87
Trigg	21	76	19	79
Trimble	18	44	15	47
Union	10	40	7	71
Warren	123	80	138	70
Washington	11	73	26	73
Wayne	45	62	68	60
Webster	10	70	15	80
Whitley	153	71	141	70
Wolfe	27	89	29	86
Woodford	28	79	31	74

\* County had no children receiving Kinship Care.