

Grandparents raising  
Grandchildren.  
The Indian Child  
Welfare Act

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**What is the Indian Child Welfare Act**

- The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was enacted in 1978 in response to a crisis affecting American Indian and Alaska Native children, families, and tribes. Studies revealed that large numbers of Native children were being separated from their parents, extended families, and communities by state child welfare and private adoption agencies. The intent of Congress under ICWA was to “protect the best interests of Indian children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families”.

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**Childhood Trauma**

AI/AN children are at a 2.5 times greater risk of experiencing childhood trauma than the general population. Many are born into communities that experience poverty, substance/drug abuse, and domestic violence. Often these children are taken from their parents and are put in foster care or grandparents are given guardianship.

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**The challenges of grandparents raising grandchildren**

- Stress: Coping with their own and their grandchild's grief. There are so many decisions to make when they are raising their grandchildren such as registering them for school, social worker visits, medical appointments.
- Financial Stress: Most often the grandparents are not working. Added financial burdens can bring on more stress.
- Grandparents health can deteriorate. Physically and emotionally. Grandparents feel exhausted after caring for an active toddler.
- Emotionally, the experience can be very straining. Seeking out mental health support would be beneficial.

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**Household Challenges**

- Some grandparents are dealing with children who have come to them with severe mental health issues.
- Not knowing how to deal with the effects of childhood trauma
- Overwhelmed by amount of people in the home
- Not understanding possible developmental delays

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**School Challenges**

- Getting children enrolled (not having all necessary documents)
- Getting children to/from school
- Anger issues
- Regression

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**Parental Involvement**

What happens when the non-custodial parent is living in the same home?

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**Support makes all the difference**

- Support groups
- Reach out in your community for child care help- CCDF
- Food Stamps
- Local Child Welfare Agency
- Develop MOA's with other programs. (CHR) appointment transport (Clinic) Medical needs, Mental health support
- (TANF) Temporary Assistance to Needy Families  
    medicaid)
- Waivers for disabilities

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Interview 1

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Interview 2

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Interview 3

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