



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Dear Friends,

This month I want to highlight the important programs and services available to grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. The groundbreaking Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren was created in 2008, as part of the Child Advocate bill. The Commission's primary purpose is to serve as a resource to the Commonwealth on issues affecting grandparents. The 4th Annual Conference was held in June with this year's focus on issues facing grandparents who serve as a child's primary caregiver.

The House champion on this issue, Representative Paul Donato (D-Medford), states "It is important that grandparents who have stepped into the position of raising their grandchildren be provided with the necessary resources, as well as the access to the proper agencies, that will assist them in raising and nurturing these children."

There are programs and services geared to assist grandparents and I want to highlight several of them:

- **Financial Assistance-** If you are the primary caregiver for your grandchild, you may be entitled to get cash assistance, and food stamp benefits. Contact the local Department of Transitional Assistance: 473 Main Street Fitchburg, MA 01420 (978)-655-8700
- **Healthcare and Insurance Options** -There are many health insurance options for you to choose for your grandchild. These options include private insurance, COBRA, MassHealth, Commonwealth Care, Commonwealth Choice, Children's Medical Security Plan, the Health Safety Net and the Special Kids/ Special Care Pilot Program. For more information you can access the Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector at mahealthconnector.org or Healthcare For All at hcfama.org or call (800) 272 4232.
- **Counseling, Mental Health and Disabilities**
In many situations, children and grandparents may benefit from professional help in coping with a variety of emotional and psychological issues. There are a number of different agencies which provide counseling and other supportive services. You should contact your insurance plan to determine your coverage. If you are concerned about your grandchild's behavior or moods, contact the child's school guidance counselor or doctor's office for assistance and referral.
- **Support Groups for Grandparents-** Participation in a grandparents support group is a great resource. These groups exist to advocate and organize grandparents in a supportive environment to share common concerns, solutions, resources, and to develop friendships in a caring and confidential manner. **I am looking to start a support group for grandparents in my district and the region. If you are interested in starting a support group, please contact my office. I will be hosting an informational event on support groups throughout the district later this year.** Contact my office if you have any questions on grandparents raising grandchildren or services you may be eligible for.

Office Hours will be by appointment for August. If you have an issue or concern, please call the State House at (617) 722-2130 or e-mail Kate.Hogan@mahouse.gov, to schedule an appointment with me. I look forward to hearing from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Hogan" followed by a horizontal line.

Proudly represents Bolton, Hudson, Maynard, and Stow
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