

# FOURTH NATIONAL **GRANDRALLY** FOR GRANDPARENTS AND OTHER RELATIVES RAISING CHILDREN

## GrandRally Policy Priorities

The Fourth National GrandRally for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children is a celebration of these “grandfamilies.” Recently released 2010 Census data shows nearly 7.8 million children live with a grandparent or other relative who is the head of the household. More than 2.5 million grandparents report they are responsible for their grandchildren who live with them; one third of these grandchildren live in households where neither parent is living with them according to the American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau (2005-2009).

Grandfamilies, also referred to as kinship care or relative care families, often step in for parents due to death, substance abuse or mental health problems, domestic violence, incarceration or military service. Many have made great sacrifices to care for and protect these children and by doing so, prevent them from entering formal foster care. However, they often struggle to provide financial security for the children in their care and to access health, mental health, educational and other basic supports. In these times of extraordinary economic challenges, these “grandfamilies” deserve our support.

### **Please take steps now to help children and caregivers:**

- Protect and strengthen the critically important role Social Security plays through its retirement, disability and survivors benefits for children and relative caregivers and extend support to more children being raised in grandfamilies.
- Protect federal programs that support vulnerable children and families, including grandfamilies, from budget cuts.
- Strengthen the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF), and National School Lunch Program, and the National Family Caregiver Support Program and others to reach more children raised by relative caregivers who are keeping them out of costly foster care.
- Support research and data surveys on the hundreds of thousands of grandparents and other relatives who are raising children outside of formal foster care to identify the additional supports they need, how children came into their care, and what caregivers know about available resources.



*The Fourth National GrandRally is cosponsored by AARP, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund, Generations United, Grandfamilies of America and the National Committee of Grandparents for Children's Rights.*

*More information is available at [www.grandrally.org](http://www.grandrally.org).*