Raising Your Relative’s Kids: How To Find Help

2009, 2013

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To obtain a copy online, go to:
www.raisingyourrelativeskids.org

or
www.unce.unr.edu

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click on “Children, Youth & Families”
click on title Raising Your Relative’s Kids: How to Find Help.)

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Revised 2013
# RAISING YOUR RELATIVE’S KIDS:
## HOW TO FIND HELP

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It’s pretty likely that you are raising or have raised your own child, so you may know firsthand what a wonderful, enriching and challenging job it is. If anything, the job of raising your relative’s child is even more so. Maybe you are a sibling and this is your first experience with child-rearing. You are about to learn the rewards and challenges of parenthood, but don’t worry. Help is available and the rewards outweigh the challenges.

You have the opportunity to change a life! You will be able to provide stability, love and your constant presence, instilling the values of your family on your relative’s child. There are practical considerations to weigh such as housing, financial, medical, legal and educational needs along with many other realities that you will face. This guide outlines and identifies some of the resources that can help you.

The dramatic increase in the number of children who need to be rescued by relatives during the last several decades poses an important challenge for relatives today. For many, it involves making a life-changing decision to dedicate one’s life to raising a child at a time in your life when you may be looking forward to more leisure and less responsibility or when you are just starting your own life. The rise in these “Kinship Families” reflects both the parents’ need for help and, in the worst case, parental failure.

There are several national organizations that have developed websites that contain up-to-date information about relatives raising children and will provide direction in addressing legal, financial and other types of issues you might encounter.
CHAPTER 1—TAKING CARE OF YOU

Some helpful ones are the AARP’s web page, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, [www.aarp.org/families/grandparents/raising_grandchild](http://www.aarp.org/families/grandparents/raising_grandchild); the website of the Grandfamilies State Law and Policy Resource Center, [www.grandfamilies.org](http://www.grandfamilies.org); and the website of the National Committee of Grandparents for Children’s Rights, [www.grandparentsforchildren.org](http://www.grandparentsforchildren.org). Relatives raising children and advocacy groups that care about you are getting more national attention and helping make this journey easier by developing more resources for people in your situation.

This manual is designed to give you an overview of the new responsibility you have agreed to take on. It will provide helpful advice and suggest many local resources where you can find additional help. There is also room in the back to keep notes on resources you may discover on your own. More people than you may realize have traveled this road before you, and we have gathered some of that wisdom to pass on to you. In addition, more people are willing to help than you might think. You just have to know where to ask. We hope this handbook helps make your new parenting experience a bit easier.

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FOSTER KINSHIP

Foster Kinship is a non-profit organization that provides support and resources to individuals raising their relative's children. It is currently the only nonprofit agency in Southern Nevada providing comprehensive, family specific services for foster families involving relatives. Services include support groups, a weekly helpline, office hours, case management, family events and limited financial assistance.

The volunteers at Foster Kinship can give you practical advice on the types of custody your family might pursue and put you in touch with helpful resources.

Foster Kinship
(Groups for all kinship family arrangements)
5030 S. Paradise Road, Suite A118
Las Vegas, NV  89119
(702) KIN-9988
Info@FosterKinship.org
www.FosterKinship.org
TAKING CARE OF YOU

Important to you, your child and your whole family is that you take care of you too! You do want to be the best parent you can be, right? Healthy eating, exercise and adequate sleep are important. So is learning about resources to be an informed parent (start by reading this manual) and speaking to others in a situation like yours (see support groups below). You will also benefit by taking a break (respite). This can be as simple as time alone to read a book or time spent on an outing with friends. Ask your family for help and continue to participate in activities that you enjoy for your health and well-being. Research shows that when the relatives taking care of foster children have a sounding board and take care of their needs, the children do better as well.

Experts agree you should:

- Put your own physical and emotional health at the top of your list.
- Not be embarrassed to ask for help.
- Seek out services that are available in our community: financial, legal, educational and free- or low-cost counseling.
- Find local support through your friends, family, church or a support group.
- Laugh and enjoy the journey, knowing you may be saving a child’s life.

Online resources

AARP online support forum:
www.aarp.org/online-community/groups/index.action?slGroupKey=Group1882
SUPPORT GROUPS

Some people faced with raising a relative’s child see taking on a parental role as a blessing and are grateful for the opportunity to form a deep bond with the child and to influence his or her development. Other relatives, while enjoying the pleasures of parenting, resent the responsibility and inconveniences that come with it. Some say that raising the child, though stressful and tiring at times, has increased their vitality and zest for life or has helped them become more organized. You might experience all these emotions depending on what is occurring at the moment. Some relatives may ask:

- How do I cope with caring for a relative’s child?
- How do I deal with being a grandparent or a sibling while I am also acting as a parent?
- Do I have legal standing?
- What problems should I expect?
- How does the child I’m caring for feel?
- How do I effectively manage my own anger and disappointment in the parents’ failures?

Clearly there are no easy answers. But there are many relatives going through these same issues, and support and understanding is available. By contacting, and more importantly participating in, support groups you will find you are not alone in your challenge and will learn ways to manage problems.

1) **Foster Kinship**
   (Groups for all kinship family arrangements)
   5030 S. Paradise Road, Suite A118
   Las Vegas, NV 89119
   (702) KIN-9988

2) **Fostering Southern Nevada**
   (Groups for licensed relatives, foster parents working with Family Services)
   9811 W. Charleston Blvd., Suite 2-858
   Las Vegas, NV 89117
   (702) 990-1597
   fosteringsonv@gmail.com
   www.fsonv.com
3) **East Valley Family Services**  
(Groups for those 55 and older caring for a relative’s children)  
1800 E. Sahara Ave., Suite 117  
Las Vegas, NV 89104  
(702) 631-7098  

4) **Friends and Family of Incarcerated Persons**  
(Groups for families who have an incarcerated relative)  
P.O. Box 27708  
Las Vegas, NV 89126  
(702) 870-5577  
[www.ffipnv.org](http://www.ffipnv.org)

5) **Southern Nevada Al-Anon, Spanish Al-Anon and Alateen**  
(Groups for families with a member suffering from alcohol abuse)  
Hotline: (702) 615-9494  
Find a meeting: [http://www.nevadaal-anon.org/sonvmeetinglist.html](http://www.nevadaal-anon.org/sonvmeetinglist.html)

6) **Nar-Anon Family Groups**  
(Groups for families with a member suffering from substance abuse)  
Hotline: (310) 534-8188, (800) 477-6291  
Find a meeting: [http://www.nar-anon.org/naranon/taxonomy/term/234](http://www.nar-anon.org/naranon/taxonomy/term/234)

7) **National Alliance of Mental Illness**  
(Groups for families with a member suffering from mental illness)  
2251 Rampart Blvd., Suite 126  
Las Vegas, NV 89128  
(702) 310-5764  
[namisnv@yahoo.com](mailto:namisnv@yahoo.com)  
[www.namisouthernnevada.org](http://www.namisouthernnevada.org)  
Find a meeting: [http://namisouthernnevada.org/support.html](http://namisouthernnevada.org/support.html)
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

You may also contact the staff at Cooperative Extension (publishers of this manual) for more information, referrals and classes. They can also connect you to their parenting programs along with other UNCE programs in the areas of Children, Youth & Families, Health & Nutrition and Horticulture (Master Gardeners and Junior Master Gardeners).

Kinship Program
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
8050 Paradise Road, Suite 100
Las Vegas, NV 89123
(702) 222-3130

Yaebin Kim, Ph.D., Area Specialist, (702) 257-5521, kimy@unce.unr.edu

Heidi Petermeier, Program Officer, (702) 257-5588, petermeierh@unce.unr.edu

www.RaisingYourRelativesKids.org
Chances are the placement of your relative’s child with you started out as an informal arrangement. In the eyes of the law, the parent is still in charge. You have neither legal rights nor a legal parental relationship to the child.

Some relative caregivers find it difficult to raise their child without some legal rights or a formal legal relationship. For instance, you may have problems enrolling the child in school, obtaining medical care, or you may worry that an unfit parent may come and take the child away. Also financial help, including access to medical insurance, may be a problem.

You also may be confused about the various ways to make this relationship more established and the benefits and risks that might be involved with each approach. This chapter provides an overview of the various ways to make an informal relationship (physical custody only) more formal (guardianship, foster kinship care or adoption) and should help answer some of your questions.

Changing your legal relationship is a big decision, and some options are not easily reversed. You should consult with an attorney so you are well informed of the legal options available to you and what these changes will mean for you and your child. If money to pay for an attorney is an issue, you can start with the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada. They offer a free guardianship class that provides excellent information and once you have completed the class, you may have access to a lawyer. More information is provided under Legal Resources on Page 15.
Children thrive in stable, permanent and caring families, and research shows that the best families for children are those that are related. If it is your intention to provide a home for the child until he or she is an adult, you may want to consider adoption or legal guardianship.

**WHAT IS INVOLVED IN ADOPTION?**

Adoption is a legal process where the child becomes a full and permanent member of your family. When adopted by relatives, the child can continue important family relationships. Adoption also means the legal rights and responsibilities of the parent are transferred to the adopting relative including all the authority and responsibility of a parent. Therefore after adoption, the relative is now in fact the legal parent.

Biological parents can voluntarily agree to allow a child to be adopted through consent to adopt or by giving up their parental rights (by relinquishing those rights) to an adoption agency. A child can be adopted against the parent's wishes if it's best for the child. The court will terminate the legal rights of biological parents prior to an adoption.

The following will apply if you (a relative) decide to adopt:

- You will be assessed by the adoption agency to insure you can give the child a safe, healthy and permanent home. It may require training classes as well.
- If you are married, adoption requires commitment by both partners, and both you and your spouse must go through the process.
- If your child is a ward of the court due to abuse or neglect and has special needs, you may be eligible for a monthly payment (an *adoption subsidy*) and Medicaid. Special needs can be as simple as being age 5 or older, or as complicated as emotional and physical disabilities. For more information, go to [www.dcfs.state.nv.us/DCFS_Guide_SpecialNeeds.htm](http://www.dcfs.state.nv.us/DCFS_Guide_SpecialNeeds.htm).
- You will have all the authority and responsibility for the child.
- Social Security benefits, insurance coverage and rights to inherit property are secured through the adoptive parent(s).
- Once established, a court rarely overturns an adoption.
Adoption can provide stability for the child and offer numerous benefits, specifically in regards to legal authority for education and medical care. It also ends the worry of if and when biological parents may attempt to claim the child or challenge custody in court. However, it is important to note that adoption can be expensive, frustrating and may be a long process. Sometimes too, a grandparent or other relative cannot afford to lose state foster care payments they may be receiving for the care of the child.

LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP

A guardian is someone appointed by the court to care for a child (ward) until he or she is 18 years of age (or graduates high school, moves to another state, or if a parent petitions for guardianship termination or the court feels guardianship is no longer necessary). If you become a guardian, the court grants you the right to make most decisions regarding the child, though you are not a child's legal parent, along with the responsibility to properly care for, support and educate the child. Guardianship does not give all the legal rights and responsibilities of a parent to the guardian the way adoption does to an adoptive parent. However, with guardianship the parental rights are suspended and placed with the guardian. The court can grant a guardianship with the parent’s agreement or without it.

As a relative guardian the following would apply to you:

- You must apply through the Family Court for legal guardianship. To do this, you’ll need to contact an attorney competent in family law and/or seek assistance through the Family Court Self Help Center (see Legal Resources on Page 15).
- You may be eligible to receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) payments and Medicaid for the child (see Page 22).
- If you do not qualify for TANF, you may be eligible for a Non-Needy Relative Caretaker subsidy for each child. This is explained on Page 23 or you can find more information at www.fosterkinship.org/non-needy-relative-caretaker-nnrc-tanf-in-nevada.
- The guardianship may be challenged in court by the parents at any time.
- In addition, because guardianship does not transfer the legal rights and responsibilities for the child to the guardian, there are often limitations placed on the guardian's authority.
- In Nevada, the relative guardian has to submit a report to the Family Court every year. You may also be required to appear at a hearing. Documents for these reports are available through the Self-Help Center (Page 15).
Social Security benefits, retirement benefits, insurance coverage and inheritance rights are subject to different rules for a child under guardianship. Some of these issues will be covered in detail in later chapters, but the services of a family law attorney are recommended to understand how they apply to your family.

In circumstances of either adoption or legal guardianship, your medical insurance provider will often accept the child as an additional insured. You will need to verify this with your insurance provider.

The benefit of guardianship is that it provides legal and physical custody without terminating parental rights (though it does suspend them). This gives the guardian the ability to enroll the child in school, consent to medical treatment and make many other day-to-day decisions. However, it can be expensive to petition the court for guardianship, especially if you are using a lawyer and/or your petition is contested. Also, there are some emotional risks as you are building a case against the parent in an effort to prove that it is in the child’s best interest to be with you.

There are different options for financial assistance with adoption or legal guardianship, depending on the individual family, the child’s circumstances and needs, and the legal arrangements that have been made. These are discussed in detail in Chapter 3, starting on Page 22.

TEMPORARY GUARDIANSHIP

Many care giving relationships begin with temporary guardianship, especially since it does not require a court hearing. This works well if the situation will be short-term and/or if you have a good relationship with the parent. In this instance, the parent(s) signs and notarizes a form that identifies you as the temporary guardian. These forms are available at the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (see Page 15) and are also included at the end of this chapter. Any form you and the parent(s) use should be notarized and should state that you have the right to care for the child, obtain medical care and represent the parent in school matters including enrollment. Temporary guardianship does not normally allow you to place the child on your medical insurance policy. Again, you need to consult with your insurance company about this issue.

Under Nevada law a temporary guardianship, whether notarized or not, is valid for only six months at which time it needs to be renewed through the same process. If the parent is unavailable or unwilling to renew the temporary guardianship, legal
issues may become awkward in that the school or your child’s medical provider may not accept your signature to authorize what your child needs. It’s doubtful anyone (police or Child Protective Services) would remove your child from your home, though under a temporary guardianship, the parent has the right to do so.

Many children remain indefinitely with a temporary guardian. Based on the behavior of the parent and your commitment to the child, this may be a practical or unpractical arrangement. Mostly, however, this can be an unstable and unsettling way to raise a child and the time may come when you need to consult with an attorney about making the temporary guardianship more permanent.

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**FOSTER CARE**

Kinship foster care is when a relative agrees to care for a child after Child Protective Services, or CPS (a branch of the *Clark County Department of Family Services*), has removed a child from their parents. DFS can get involved for a variety of reasons such as a parent is jailed or deceased, or allegations are made of abuse or neglect.

Once the Department of Family Services gets involved, the parental rights belong to the state and a court oversees major decisions involving the children, such as where they will live, how often their parents can see them and when/if parents can resume care or if rights are terminated. In the meantime, a caseworker, who acts as the official guardian, is assigned to supervise the children’s authorized caretaker (foster parent) and provides referrals for resources that may be available for the children’s care. As a foster parent you will have regular involvement with the caseworker and court system.

To become a licensed and paid foster parent, you must meet Nevada State foster home licensing criteria through the Clark County Department of Family Services. Once you become approved, you would receive a monthly foster care subsidy payment. This payment varies with the age of the child. You may contact the Clark County Department of Family Services Relative Foster Care Licensing Unit at (702) 455-7409 for information on the process and application paperwork or go to the website [http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/foster_care/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/foster_care/Pages/default.aspx).

More information about the process involved when a family is reported for child abuse and neglect, see the *Child Abuse and Neglect* section on Page 17.
Foster Kinship, a nonprofit group that specializes in helping foster families, can discuss all of these options with you and help with the paperwork or help you find resources. Call the group at (702) KIN-9988 or www.fosterkinship.org

LEGAL RESOURCES

1) Clark County Family Law Self Help Center
   601 N. Pecos Road
   Las Vegas, NV 89101
   (702) 455-1500
   www.clarkcountycourts.us/shc

The Self Help Center assists residents in representing themselves in Family Court proceedings by providing legal information, use of legal materials, instruction on family court practice and procedure, and providing fill-in-the-blank court forms. Guardianship forms are available online at the above website. Foster Kinship (702-KIN-9988) will print forms for free for those who do not have a computer or printer.

The “Ask a Lawyer” program offers self-represented individuals a free, 15-minute consultation with a lawyer regarding family law matters. Services are provided on a “first-come, first-serve” basis. Call the Self Help Center for current hours and availability of this service.

2) Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
   725 E. Charleston Blvd.
   Las Vegas, NV 89104
   (702) 386-1070
   www.lacsn.org

The Legal Aid Center is a private, non-profit agency providing free community legal services to those in need. Eligibility is determined by family income and size. Services are not provided in criminal matters.

Classes are offered for relatives seeking legal guardianship of their relative’s child. Once you complete the class, you will not only have helpful information about the legal implications, forms and filing procedures, and how to represent yourself in Family Court. You also will then be eligible to request free legal services through the Legal Aid Center for an attorney to help you with the legal work. You can call the office to inquire about the classes or go to the website, www.lacsn.org for a calendar of classes.
3) **Senior Citizens Law Project**  
310 S. Ninth St. Second Floor  
Las Vegas, NV 89101  
(702) 229-6596

The **Senior Citizens Law Project** is a program of the City of Las Vegas Leisure Services Department, and it provides free legal counsel and assistance to Clark County residents age 60 and older. You must have an appointment to see someone. While donations are accepted for services, clients are responsible for applicable filing fees and other court costs.

The Senior Citizens Law Project does not currently provide assistance in guardianship. However, they can be helpful in matters such as:

- Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Long-term health care planning issues
- Consumer disputes and small claims instructions
- Landlord/tenant disputes
- Social Security problems and other public entitlements
- Intervention of elder abuse matters
- Legal advice, information and referrals

If the Senior Citizens Law Project declines actual representation in your matter, referrals will be made to:

4) **State Bar of Nevada’s Lawyer Referral Program**  
(702) 382-0504  
[http://www.nvbar.org/content/lawyer-referral-information-service](http://www.nvbar.org/content/lawyer-referral-information-service)

The **State Bar of Nevada** is our state’s organization of lawyers, and it can refer you to a lawyer who has experience in the matters you are facing. You will be paying regular fees for these services.

5) **Nevada Legal Services**  
(702) 386-0404  
[http://www.nlslaw.net/whatwedo.html](http://www.nlslaw.net/whatwedo.html)

Nevada Legal Services is a nonprofit organization that provides legal services to low-income people. They help people at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines.
OTHER ISSUES

Nevada Department of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS)

Families who are going through the foster family process and have applied for, or are now receiving, a subsidy through the DWSS Kinship Program (as described in Chapter 3) may request assistance through their case manager for legal fees related to obtaining legal guardianship of their child. Qualified kinship care recipients who are 62 or older can either:

- Be referred to an attorney under contract to DWSS who will provide legal counsel at no cost to you; or
- Be reimbursed for legal expenses up to $600 for legal counsel independently obtained.

Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Anyone who suspects a child may be the victim of abuse or neglect can make a report to the Clark County Department of Family Services (DFS). Reports are kept confidential or can be made anonymously. Information and a form are online at: http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/family_services/Services/Pages/ChildProtectiveServices.aspx. Anyone who works with children such as teachers or coaches is required by Nevada law to report if they suspect abuse or neglect.

The Clark County Hotline number is (702) 399-0081.

The form to report suspected abuse by email is at: http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/family_services/Documents/CPS%20Online%20Referral%20Form.pdf

Not all calls to DFS result in an investigation because what is reported may not, even if true, constitute child abuse or neglect. Child abuse and neglect is defined in Nevada law. In general, child neglect arises from a parent’s indifference to a child’s well-being, such as failing to feed the child, or leaving a child unsupervised. Child abuse is a non-accidental physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse inflicted by a parent or person responsible for the child.
Anyone can make a complaint to DFS, including the parents of the children in your home. If you are the subject of a child abuse or neglect investigation, do not panic! There are many thousands of investigations conducted each year and about 75 percent are unfounded. By law, DFS must conduct the investigation but they do not begin by presuming that you have done anything wrong.

If your child is of school age or enrolled in day care, it is likely that DFS will begin their investigation with the child at that location. This is an effort to get neutral, objective information about the child’s well-being. DFS will then contact you and discuss the concerns with you and inquire about your household. They may interview relatives or people who have knowledge of your child and your family. If they observe anything that causes them concern, they will discuss these issues with you and may recommend corrective action. Remember, state law and federal guidelines mandate that your family be kept together if the child can be safe at home. It is not the goal or desire of DFS to take your child from you.

Should the allegations (the complaint that is being reported) be severe, or if there are serious concerns for the child’s safety, DFS may place a child temporarily in a foster home or at Child Haven Campus (emergency care and housing). If that occurs, the matter will be heard in juvenile court. Your child cannot be made a ward of the court and placed into long-term foster care unless you plead guilty or are found guilty at a trial. DFS has a brochure that describes what you can expect. Ask the caseworker for a copy of this brochure preferably at your first meeting.

Another agency that might get involved in the case is the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). These volunteers are assigned to evaluate cases in the child welfare system and make recommendations to the Family Court based on what is best for the child. Other sources for information about DFS, child welfare services and CASA can be found on the following Web sites:

A Family’s Guide to the Child Welfare System:  
http://www.cwla.org/childwelfare/fg.pdf

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
www.casalasvegas.org

Nevada Child Abuse Prevention Brochure:  
http://www.dcf.s.state.nv.us/Documents/ChildAbusePrevention.pdf
Family and Medical Leave Act

If you or your child is ill, and you need extended time off from work, consider asking your employer’s Human Resources Department about the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). FMLA allows you to take up to 12 weeks off work in any 12-month period. The time off can be taken in small or large blocks of time. To be eligible, you must have worked for a year or more for an organization that has more than 50 employees. Accepted reasons for FMLA include:

- For the birth and care of the newborn child of the employee
- For placement of an adopted or foster child with you
- To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition
- To take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

FMLA does not pay you for the time off. You must use your own sick or vacation leave or go on unpaid status. FMLA does ensure that your job is still available to you because of a qualified absence.
Short-Term Guardianship

(NRS 159.205 for Minor Child)

I, ____________________________, ____________________________, Parent street address

In the city of ____________________________, State of ____________________________,

Having legal rights as the ____________________________, of ____________________________,
    Mother/Father full legal name of minor child

Whose date of birth is ________________, having the legal right and ability, do hereby

Appoint the following person(s) as the Short-Term Guardian(s) for my child, pursuant to

NRS 159.205:

______________________________, who resides in the County
Name of person(s) to be appointed Short-Term Guardian

of ____________________________, State of Nevada, at ____________________________,
    Street address, city and zip code

    This Short-Term Guardianship is valid from ________________ to
    ________________, unless canceled by a parent in writing. Written revocation of Short-
    Six-month end date

Term Guardianship shall immediately terminate this Short-Term guardianship.

    I specifically consent that the Short-Term Guardian may make all necessary decisions
concerning the day-to-day care of the above-named child, including decisions for medical and
    dental care and education and, in the event of a medical emergency, the named Short-Term
Guardian may authorize recommended medical treatment.

    This Short-Term Guardianship may be terminated at any time by an instrument in writing
signed by either parent if that parent has not been deprived of legal custody of the minor child or
is terminated by any order of a court of competent jurisdiction that appoints a guardian.
CHAPTER 2—LEGAL ISSUES: GUARDIANSHIP, ADOPTION, FOSTER CARE

Short-Term Guardianship

The undersigned parent swears and affirms that he/she is the lawful custodian of the minor child and is fully competent to make this appointment of a Short-Term Guardian and that all necessary consent forms have been duly executed.

Dated this ________ day of __________________, 20__.

________________________________________
Signature of Parent

State of Nevada
County of Clark

SIGNED AND SWORN TO
Before me this ______ day of ____________, 20__,
By ________________________________________.

________________________________________
Notary Public

CONSENT TO SERVE AS SHORT-TERM GUARDIAN

I, __________________________, hereby consent to serve as Short-Term Guardian for __________________________, a minor child. I understand that this Short-Term Guardianship expires in six (6) months or at any time upon written revocation signed by a parent and will return the child to the parent at that time. I understand that this Short-Term Guardianship does not permit me to move from this State. I acknowledge that the action of the parent in placing the minor child in a safe home and a safe environment may constitute good parenting choices and I will not disparage the parent to the child.

DATED this ___ day of ____________________20__.

________________________________________
SIGNED AND SWORN TO
Before me this ______ day of ____________, 20__,
By ________________________________________.

________________________________________
Notary Public
As much as you may want to care for your relative’s child, there may be serious financial implications for you. If your residence is small or you live in an age-restricted neighborhood you may have to move. Food, clothing, medical care and other routine expenses may strap an already tight budget. If any of this is true you may want to consider exploring financial assistance that may be available on a monthly basis to help you care for your relative’s child.

There are new requirements that citizenship be verified through original documents (original copies of birth certificates or passports) in order to be eligible for any financial programs. See Page 44 for information on obtaining birth certificates.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

Most children living with family members are eligible for cash assistance through TANF, even if the family member they are living with is not eligible. As a non-parent relative you may apply for assistance for the child only or for you and the child.

The State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services Division of Welfare & Supportive Services (DWSS) administers this program and will assist you in applying for TANF Related Medicaid (medical care) benefits.
if needed (more on this program on Page 48). Federal law allows a five-year lifetime limit for receipt of TANF benefits.

Once qualified, you may receive a monthly check that you can use to assist in the expenses required to support the child. All of these programs are based on your household income and other qualifying criteria. You may also be required to cooperate with the district attorney’s office so the state can collect child support from the parent.

You may qualify for:

- **Needy Caretaker**: A relative, other than a legal parent, requesting assistance for themselves and a child. A relative’s income and resources are used to determine eligibility when applying as a Needy Caretaker. To qualify for this, the household cannot make more than 130% of the federal poverty level. Some earned income can be excluded. Only your case manager can determine whether you qualify.

- **Non-Needy Caretaker**: A relative, other than a legal parent, requesting assistance only for a relative’s child, not himself or herself. Your income is used to determine eligibility when applying as a Non-Needy Caretaker. To qualify for this, the household cannot make more than 275% of the federal poverty level. Again, only a case manager can determine whether you qualify.

  *Note:* This is not a financial subsidy for you. This program targets people who volunteer to take on the expense of raising a relative’s child, acknowledging just how expensive that can be.

- **Kinship Care Program**: A financial assistance program for children living with a non-needy caretaker relative. This monthly payment allowance is a percentage of the State of Nevada Foster Care rate and is higher than that of the non-needy caretaker.

To be eligible for the **Kinship Care Program** you must:

- Be a non-parent, non-needy caretaker relative.
- Be 62 years of age or older.
- Be caring for a child who is related to you by blood, adoption or marriage for at least six months.
- File for and obtain court approval of legal guardianship.
You're Raising Your Relative’s Kids: How to Find Help

CHAPTER 3—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – MONTHLY STIPENDS

- Comply with court-imposed requirements.
- Be qualified based on the combined incomes of all household members, a maximum of 275% of the federal poverty level.

Note: As with the non-needy caretaker program, this is not a financial subsidy for you. This program helps relatives age 62 and older with the expenses in raising a relative’s child.

Application for TANF

TANF applications are accepted by the DWSS (Division of Welfare and Supportive Services). All three of the cash programs mentioned above, Needy Caretaker, Non-Needy Caretaker and Kinship Care Program, as well as TANF-Related Medicaid, require a TANF application. You may also apply for the Supplement Nutritional Assistance Program at the same time (which is a separate program through DWSS).

Applications are processed and approved in one of seven regional offices, based on your home’s ZIP code. The customer service number (702) 486-1646 will verify which office is authorized to process your application. Once you have a PIN, you can check on the status of your benefits at this number.

The TANF application is detailed and requires a lot of information so you may want to consider in-person assistance. One option is to personally go to the welfare office nearest your home. If you do not go to the right district office, staff will inform you of the correct office location (and if you ask may accept your application and forward it to the correct office). The seven offices are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flamingo District Office</th>
<th>Henderson District Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3330 E. Flamingo Road #55</td>
<td>520 S. Boulder Hwy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89121</td>
<td>Henderson, NV 89015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(702) 486-9400</td>
<td>(702) 486-1001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nellis District Office</th>
<th>Owens District Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>611 N. Nellis Blvd.</td>
<td>1040 W. Owens Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89110</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(702) 486-4828</td>
<td>(702) 486-1899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You must answer all of the questions on the application and be interviewed before eligibility can be determined. When submitting the application, you will be given an appointment to come back for a face-to-face interview. You need to bring identification with you. You will be asked to provide Social Security numbers, original birth certificates and information about the citizenship or immigration status of the children you are caring for. The eligibility worker may need to request more information and will give you a specific amount of time to provide the information. If you have trouble obtaining the information, ask your eligibility worker to assist you. Within 45 days of submission of the application you will be informed whether or not your application was approved.

As a second option, any Family Resource Center in Southern Nevada can also help in filling out the TANF application. A list can found on page 35.

Some helpful links:

- Division of Welfare and Supportive Services home page: [https://dwss.nv.gov](https://dwss.nv.gov)
- Forms: [http://dwss.nv.gov/dmdocuments/Forms_2905-EG.pdf](http://dwss.nv.gov/dmdocuments/Forms_2905-EG.pdf)

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

SNAP, formerly known as “Food Stamps,” is a federally funded program to help low-income families buy nutritious food from authorized retailers. SNAP benefits are available to qualifying families, elderly people, and single adults.
You may want to consider applying for this program. Prior to applying however, it is suggested you complete the Pre-Screen Eligibility Tool (though only a caseworker can determine your eligibility) and read the handout

*Information Needed to Process Your Application.* Both can be found online at [https://dwss.nv.gov/#DWSSFS-1](https://dwss.nv.gov/#DWSSFS-1) along with the online application. You may also fill out, pick-up or request an application be mailed, by contacting or visiting the welfare office nearest you (office addresses listed above) and also at the Family Resource Centers (page 35) and Three Square.

**Three Square’s SNAP Outreach Program**
4190 N. Pecos Road  
Las Vegas, NV 89115  
(702) 644-FOOD (3663)  
http://www.threesquare.org/programs/snap

Once your application has been received, you must appear for an interview and meet with a caseworker who will determine if you qualify for benefits, and the amount. Within 30 days after you turn in your application your SNAP benefits will be authorized or you will be notified you are ineligible for the program. SNAP benefits are provided on an electronic card that is used like an ATM card and accepted at most grocery stores.

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**SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY AND SURVIVOR BENEFITS**

**Child Disability**

SSI, or Supplemental Security Income, is a Social Security Administration (SSA) program that provides monthly cash payments to people in need. SSI is for people who are 65 or older, as well as for blind or disabled people of any age, including children.

If your child is disabled, you may be able to apply for SSI benefits if they meet the following requirements:

- The child must have a physical or mental condition(s) that very seriously limits his or her activities.
• The condition(s) must have lasted, or be expected to last, at least one year or result in death.
• The child must not be working and earning more than $1,040 a month in 2013.

The Disability Determination Services (state agency) will review the application and request your child’s medical and school records, and any other information needed to decide if your child is disabled. If the state agency cannot make a disability decision using only these sources, they may ask you to take your child for a medical examination or test, which will be paid for. They also consider the income and resources of family members living in the child’s household.


Survivor Benefits

If a deceased parent has worked and paid Social Security taxes, your child may qualify for survivor benefits. To qualify the child must be:

• Unmarried and under the age of 18, or up to age 19 if attending high school full time; or
• Disabled before age 22 and remain disabled.

Survivor benefits depend on the average lifetime earnings of the deceased worker. Typically children receive 75 percent of the worker’s benefit amount.

To apply for either of these benefits you can call 1-800-772-1213 and make an appointment at your local SSA office. For more information about both disability and survivor benefits, visit www.socialsecurity.gov (when on the website, click on “Disability” or “Survivors” tabs). This website also features an “Office Locator” tool and allows you to submit an application online.
INCOME TAXES – INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS)

Claiming Your Relative’s Child as a Dependent

You can claim your child on your income taxes as a dependent if ALL of the following circumstances are present:

- The child is under the age of 19 (if a full-time student under age 24)
- You provide more than 50 percent of his or her support
- The child has lived with you at least half of the year

Note: The IRS allows only one person to claim a child as a dependent. If your relative is claiming the child you may have to provide proof of your financial support.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

The EITC is a refundable tax credit designed for lower income working families and individuals. The amount of the credit varies depending on your level of income and how many dependents you support. To qualify, taxpayers must meet certain requirements and file a tax return. Information is available on the IRS Web site: [www.irs.gov/eitc](http://www.irs.gov/eitc).

The EITC has no effect on most welfare benefits. In most cases, EITC payment will not be used to determine eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), food stamps (now called “SNAP”), low-income housing or most Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) payments.

For more tax information you may call the IRS Toll-Free at 1-800-829-1040, get information online at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or visit the Taxpayer Assistance Center. You may also seek tax assistance from a Certified Public Account.

**IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers**
110 City Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89106
(702) 868-5005

IRS trained volunteers are available to assist you with tax preparation at multiple sites throughout Clark County. These volunteers can also provide
information about credit and debt relief, financial education and home ownership. These services are also provided in Spanish. For locations call the number above or visit http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/IRS-Free-Tax-Return-Preparation-Programs.

THE POSSIBILITY OF FRAUD

In some cases, parents may have applied for benefits or even credit in the child’s name. If the parents are collecting benefits or claiming the child on their taxes while you are caring for the child, they may be committing fraud.

To report welfare fraud, call the hotline at (702) 486-1875 or go to https://dwss.nv.gov to report fraud online. You can make this report confidentially. For information on reporting tax fraud to the IRS, go to http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/How-Do-You-Report-Suspected-Tax-Fraud-Activity%3F

If credit has been taken out in the child’s name or Social Security number, it can be a struggle to clear that record. The first step is to request a “Credit Security Freeze” for the child. This prevents any further credit from being taken out under that Social Security number without your express permission. You must send a request to each of the three credit reporting agencies. Forms for doing so are available at the end of this chapter. The cost is $10 per agency.
CREDIT REPORT “SECURITY FREEZE” REQUESTS

The Federal Trade Commission estimates as many as 9 million Americans are victims of identity theft each year. Identity theft occurs when a thief obtains personal and/or financial information about you and then uses it without your knowledge to commit fraud or theft, like opening a credit card account in your name. A security freeze helps provide you with protection from identity theft because your credit bureau file cannot be shared with new potential creditors. Most businesses check a consumer’s credit history before opening any new credit accounts. With your security freeze in place, even someone with your name and Social Security number would probably not be able to get credit in your name.

Any consumer may place a “security freeze,” also known as a “file freeze,” on his or her credit report by making a request to each credit reporting agency. The request must also provide the credit reporting agency with sufficient identification information to establish the identity of the consumer. In Nevada, a security freeze is free to people who are 65 years of age and older. For all others placing a freeze, the cost is $10.00 per agency. To place a security freeze, please read the tips below and use the sample letters to complete your request.

- There are three independent credit reporting agencies: Experian, Equifax and TransUnion.
- SUBMIT security freeze REQUESTS, to each CREDIT REPORTING AGENCIES.
- Security freezes are free to adults over the age of 65.
- For all others, each freeze request costs $10. That means the total cost for freezing is $10 x 3 credit bureaus = $30.
- Each freeze request is per person. For a married couple, both spouses must freeze their separate credit files, via separate letters requesting the freeze, in order to get the benefit. That means the cost (if under age 65) is $10 x 3 credit bureaus x 2 people = $60.
- You will receive a written confirmation from each credit reporting agency once your freeze is in place. SAVE this information!
- This written confirmation will also include information on how to temporarily or permanently remove the freeze on your credit report should you wish to open a new credit account. SAVE this information!
- You can still order a credit report with the freeze in place.

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only. For more information visit www.FinancialPrivacyNow.org.
10/2012
Experian Security Freeze
P.O. Box 9554
Allen, Texas 75013
(Experian recommends this request be sent via certified mail.)

This is a request to place a “security freeze,” also known as a “file freeze,” on my credit report. Below is the information requested and enclosed are the appropriate documents and fee.

First Name: _______________ MI: ____ Last Name: __________________________ (Jr/Sr/I/II/III)

Current Mailing Address: __________________________________________________________

City: _______________________ State: Nevada Zip Code: ____________________________

Social Security Number: _______________________ Date of Birth: ______________________

Previous addresses for the past two years (if you have moved):
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

☐ Please find enclosed one copy of a government issued identification card (i.e. driver’s license) AND one copy of a utility, bank or insurance statement. All are recent and legible. They include:

1. ______________________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________________

☐ Also enclosed is a check for the fee of $10.00.

☐ Fee waived for persons age 65 or older. Attach date of birth verification (i.e. copy of driver’s license or passport).

Signature: ________________________________ Date: _________________

Thank you.

Experian will send a written confirmation notice to consumers once the “security freeze” has been added that will include a Personal Identification Number (PIN). The PIN will be required to remove the freeze temporarily or permanently ($10 charge to “lift”). A freeze may also be placed or lifted online at www.experian.com/freeze. To contact Experian: 1-888-397-3742.

10/12
Equifax Security Freeze  
P.O. Box 105788  
Atlanta, Georgia 30348  

This is a request to place a “security freeze,” also known as a “file freeze,” on my credit report. Below is the information requested and enclosed is the appropriate fee.

First Name: ___________________________  MI: _____  Last Name: ___________________________

Current Mailing Address: ________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________  State: Nevada  Zip Code: ___________________________

Social Security Number: ___________________________  Date of Birth: ___________________________

☐ Please find enclosed an item to validate my address (i.e. copy of utility bill, bank or mortgage statement, valid driver’s license or state ID). It includes:

1. ____________________________________________________________________________

☐ Please find enclosed an item to validate my identification (i.e. copy of a valid driver’s license, passport, state or military ID). It includes:

1. ____________________________________________________________________________

☐ Also enclosed is a check for the fee of $10.00.

☐ Fee waived for persons age 65 or older.

Signature: ___________________________________________  Date: ___________________________

Thank you.
Equifax will send a written confirmation notice to consumers once the “security freeze” is in place. The written confirmation will include a 10 digit security freeze confirmation number for future use to remove the freeze either temporarily for a business or period of time, or permanently. A freeze may also be placed and lifted online at: www.freeze.equifax.com. To contact Equifax: 1-800-685-1111.

10/12
This is a request to place a “security freeze,” also known as a “file freeze,” on my credit report. Below is the information requested and enclosed is the appropriate fee.

First Name: _______________  MI: ____  Last Name: ____________________________

Current Mailing Address: _______________________________________________________

City: ______________________  State: Nevada  Zip Code: ___________________________

Social Security Number: _________________________________________________________

☐ Please find enclosed proof of mailing address (i.e. copy of utility bill, bank or insurance statement). It includes:

1. ___________________________________________________________________________

☐ Also enclosed is a check for the fee of $10.00.

☐ Fee waived for persons age 65 or older. Attach date of birth verification (i.e. copy of driver’s license or passport).

Signature: _____________________________  Date: ____________________________

Thank you.

Once the request is received by TransUnion the “security freeze” will be added within the time required by state (5 days in Nevada). After the security freeze is added, consumers will be provided with an information letter that includes a Personal Identification Number (PIN) and instructions on how to lift and permanently remove the security freeze. TransUnion will also process a freeze request and “lifts” online at www.TransUnion.com, or by phone. To contact TransUnion: 1-888-909-8872.

10/12
Despite the best laid plans, there are times when you might require some help to manage all the needs that you and your child have. This chapter provides additional community resources to assist during these times. Many programs, though not all, require proof of income. Always contact the organization to discuss eligibility because even though you don’t qualify for one program, it doesn’t mean you won’t qualify for another. Also, most organizations require certain documentation to receive assistance so find out what you need prior to applying and/or going to their office.

NEVADA 2-1-1

2-1-1 is a telephone number that connects callers to free information about basic health and human services available in their community. In Southern Nevada, HELP of Southern Nevada serves as the 2-1-1 information and referral center which is staffed by live referral specialists who are available statewide 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. You may also visit www.nevada211.org for online referral information.

2-1-1 provides information in the following topics:

- Basic human needs: food, shelter, clothing
- Physical and mental health resources
- Financial stability
- Programs for children, youth and families
- Support for older Americans and persons with disabilities
FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) provide information, referrals and case management to resident in their service area. Almost all FRCs provide assistance with food, clothing, energy and help filling out applications for welfare services such as TANF, SNAP, and medical assistance. Other services may be available based on other grant funds an individual FRC might receive.

You can call a Family Resource Center for information but it is usually best to visit the center and speak directly with a staff member and/or caseworker. Most FRCs have standard business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, go to http://dhhs.nv.gov/Grants/FRC/FRC_Directory.pdf.

Family Resource Centers

East Valley Family Services
1800 E. Sahara Ave., Suite 111
Las Vegas, NV 89104
(702) 631-7098
serves ZIP codes 89101, 89102, 89104, 89106, 89107, 89109, 89110, 89119, 89120, 89121, 89142, 89169

East Valley Family Services
Laughlin FRC
(by appointment)
(702) 920-6515
serves ZIP codes 89019, 89026, 89028, 89029, 89039, 89046
www.eastvalleyfamilyservices.org

Olive Crest
3825 W. Cheyenne Ave., #604.
North Las Vegas, NV 89032
(702) 685-3459
www.olivecrest.org
serves ZIP codes 89030-89033, 89036, 89081, 89084-89087, 89108, 89115, 89130, 89131, 89143, 89149, 89156, 89191

Boys and Girls Club
2850 S. Lindell Road
Las Vegas, NV 89146
(702) 932-1880
www.bgclv.org
serves ZIP codes 89004, 89018, 89103, 89113, 89117, 89118, 89124, 89128, 89129, 89134, 89135, 89138, 89139, 89141, 89144-89148, 89166, 89178, 89179

HopeLink
178 Westminster Way
Henderson, NV 89015
(702) 566-0576
www.link2hope.org
Serves ZIP codes 89002, 89005, 89011, 89012, 89014, 89015, 89044, 89052, 89074, 89122, 89123, 89183

Nevada Outreach Training
621 S. Blagg Road
Pahrump, NV 89048
(775) 751-1118
On Facebook: No to Abuse/ Nevada Outreach Training Organization
Serves ZIP codes 89003, 89020, 89023, 89041, 89048, 89060, 89061
FAITH-BASED SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES

There are several faith-based social service agencies that provide emergency assistance and offer varied support programs like counseling and adoption. The assistance available at these social service agencies can vary based on each program’s capacity. It is best to call the agency or visit its website to inquire about hours when services are available and their capacity to help you. You do not have to be affiliated with the agency’s religion to request and receive services.

Salvation Army in Mesquite
355 W. Mesquite Blvd.
Mesquite, NV 89027
(702) 345-5116
Serves ZIP codes 89007, 89024, 89027

Cappalappa FRC
189 N. Moapa Valley Blvd.
Overton, NV 89040
(702) 397-6400
http://www.mvcfrc.org/
Serves ZIP codes 89021, 89025, 89040

Catholic Charities of So. NV
1511 Las Vegas Blvd. North
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 385-2662
www.catholiccharities.com

Jewish Family Service Agency
4794 S. Eastern Ave., Suite C
Las Vegas, NV 89119
(702) 732-0304
www.jfsalv.org

Lutheran Social Services of NV
73 Spectrum Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 639-1730
www.lssnv.org

United Methodist Social Ministries
4412 S. Maryland Pkwy # B
Las Vegas, NV 89119
(702) 733-0053
www.umsmlasvegas.org
*Weekend food services

PLACES OF WORSHIP

Many caregivers have found emotional and financial help from their church, temple, mosque or other place of worship. If you are affiliated, and even if you are not, this is a good place to start. Many have food pantries and clothing closets, as well as resourceful, caring people to help you through a tough time. Check places of worship in your neighborhood and start with a phone call to determine what services may be available.
ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Energy Assistance Program assists low-income residents with the cost of home energy. Benefits are awarded on a “first-come, first-serve” basis and each family may receive only one award each year. Applications are available through the State of Nevada’s Division of Welfare and Supportive Services and also at one of the seven Family Resource Centers (page 35).

You must be income-eligible and provide proof of income for everyone in your household for energy assistance. To apply, you must provide Social Security numbers for everyone in your household, copies of your rental agreement or mortgage statement and copies of your last gas and electric bills. The approval decision normally takes 30 days. When the money budgeted for the year for the energy assistance program runs out (the year runs July 1 – June 30), funding is no longer available.

Las Vegas Energy Assistance Program
3330 E. Flamingo Rd. # 55
Las Vegas, NV 89121
(702) 486-1404
https://dwss.nv.gov and click on the Energy Assistance tab at the top of the page or enter “Nevada Energy Assistance Program” into your Web browser.

CLARK COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICE

Clark County Social Service provides medical and financial assistance to Clark County residents, who are not eligible for, and not receiving, any assistance from any local, state or federal source. If your TANF application is pending interview or certification, this agency may be able to help.

Financial assistance is provided for housing and housing-related expenses such as utilities. Medical services are provided through University Medical Center and its facilities, and include services such as outpatient clinic care, pharmacy services, X-ray, laboratory and durable medical equipment.

Eligibility for medical and financial assistance is determined based on financial, non-financial and resource information that will be verified at the time of application.
Applying is not often easy as lines can be long and the demand for services can exceed available resources. Applications must be made in person. To avoid unnecessary follow-up trips it is advised to check in advance exactly what information you need to bring with you. The offices open at 6:30 a.m. and applicants are processed on a “first-come, first-serve” basis.

For information about what you will need and a copy of the application, go to http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/social_service/Documents/CCSS%20Application%20English.pdf

Clark County Social Services Offices

Main Office
1600 Pinto Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89106
(702) 455-4270

Cambridge Center
3900 Cambridge St. Suite 208
Las Vegas, NV 89119
(702) 455-8687

Fertitta Building
1504 N. Main St.
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 455-2854

Cambridge Annex
3885 S. Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV
(702) 455-8639

Henderson Office
522 E. Lake Mead Pkwy., Suite 35
Henderson, NV 89015
(702) 455-7918

Martin Luther King Center
2432 N. Martin Luther King, Suite D
North Las Vegas, NV 89031
(702) 455-7208

Main Website: www.clarkcountynv.gov
(Click on the “Departments” tab and select “Social Service.”)

CLOTHING & SUPPLIES

Families of children in the custody of the Clark County Department of Family Services are eligible to receive clothing, shoes, toys, strollers, school supplies and other necessities through this resource, which is supported by donations. Access is provided by the case worker.

Peggy’s Attic - Child Haven Campus
701 N. Pecos Road
Las Vegas, NV
(702) 455-5424
SENIOR CENTERS

If you are a senior, municipal senior centers can provide a lot of information about services that will help you in the raising of your relative’s child. They also offer educational, social and leisure programs for you and several offer lunch programs. Below are the listings of senior centers in our area. More information about the senior centers and other community centers near you is available on the listed websites. Note: You do not have to live within the city limits to go to any senior center and you may be asked you to become a member for free or a small charge.

1) Clark County
(702) 455-8200
www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/parks/Services/Pages/community-centers.aspx

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cora Coleman Senior Center</th>
<th>West Flamingo Senior Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2100 Bonnie Lane</td>
<td>6255 W. Flamingo Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89156</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(702) 455-7617</td>
<td>(702) 455-7742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whitney Recreation &amp; Senior Center</th>
<th>Paradise Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5712 E. Missouri Ave.</td>
<td>(dedicated senior programs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89122</td>
<td>4775 S. McLeod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(702) 455-7560</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(702) 455-8769</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) City of Las Vegas
(702) 229-6457
http://www.lasvegasnevada.gov/Find/parks_facilities.htm
Look under “Active Adult/Senior Centers.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centennial Hills Active Adult Center</th>
<th>Derfelt Senior Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6601 N. Buffalo Drive</td>
<td>3343 W. Washington Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89131</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(702) 229-1702</td>
<td>(702) 229-6601</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doolittle Senior Center</th>
<th>Dula Gymnasium</th>
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<tr>
<td>1930 J St.</td>
<td>441 E. Bonanza Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89106</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89101</td>
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<tr>
<td>(702) 229-6125</td>
<td>(702) 229-6307</td>
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</tbody>
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CHAPTER 4—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE—OTHER NEEDS

East Las Vegas Community Center
250 N. Eastern Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 229-1515

Howard Lieburn Senior Center
6230 Garwood Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89107
(702) 229-1600

Las Vegas Senior Center
451 E. Bonanza Road
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 229-6454

3) City of Henderson
http://cityofhenderson.com/parks/index.php

Downtown Senior Center
27 E. Texas Ave.
Henderson, NV 89005
(702) 267-4150

Heritage Park Senior Facility
300 S. Racetrack Road
Henderson, NV 89015
(702) 267-2950

4) North Las Vegas
(702) 633-1171
www.cityofnorthlasvegas.com/Departments/ParksAndRecreation/
RecreationCenter.shtml
(Recreation centers listed below have dedicated senior programs.)

Neighborhood Recreation Center
1638 N. Bruce St.
North Las Vegas, NV 89030
(702) 633-1600

Silver Mesa Recreation Center
4025 Allen Lane
North Las Vegas, NV 89032
(702) 633-2550

5) Boulder City
813 Arizona St.
Boulder City, NV 89005
(702) 293-3320
www.seniorcenterbouldercity.org
Housing can be another issue that you need to address once you take on the role of a relative raising a child. The home that you thought was perfect may seem too crowded after children move in. Or, maybe you live in an age-restricted neighborhood that doesn’t allow children on a permanent basis.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development provides funding to the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority that offers two commonly known housing program options. First is the Conventional Public Housing program which provides qualified families with housing in apartments or some single-family homes. The housing is owned by the housing authority and the rents are subsidized (a monthly amount which partially pays your rent). Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher is the second program which is federally subsidized. You select the neighborhood and residence you want based upon availability of Section 8 rentals, family size, your income and the amount of subsidy you receive.

Technically, a family qualifies for public housing if its total family income does not exceed 50 percent of the area median income (AMI). However, due to limited supply, only those families with incomes below 30 percent AMI actually get housing. The AMI in Clark County in 2013 for a family of four was about $64,300 (30 percent of this is $19,290). Once accepted into the public housing program, your portion of the rent is equal to 30 percent of your family’s income.

Waiting lists for public housing can be closed or very long. There are very specific rules about who qualifies for assistance through the Housing Authorities. You must be income-eligible and a credit, rental and criminal history check is required.

Public Housing is not a quick fix, nor is it for everyone. Some housing units are older and come with few amenities. If you do not like the housing unit, you may have limited choices.

If you are interested in learning more about Section 8 and additional housing opportunities, you can learn more from the agency below. You may want to check out the website first to find out more about the application process.
Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority
5390 E. Flamingo Road
Las Vegas, NV 89122
(702) 922-6026
http://www.snvrha.org/how-to-apply.htm

Affordable Apartments

A few organizations specialize in affordable apartments that are not part of the local housing authorities. You must be income-eligible. Two such agencies are:

Nevada HAND
295 E. Warm Springs Road, #101
Las Vegas, NV 89119
(702) 410-2744
www.nevadahand.org

The David J. Hoggard Family Community
1100 W. Monroe Ave.
Las Vegas NV 89106
(702) 631-2281
www.gpmglv.com
CHAPTER 5

DOCUMENTS THAT YOU WILL NEED

In order to provide the care your child requires, at a minimum, you will need the following three documents. All three documents need to be originals or officially certified copies.

1) Authorization that you are the child’s guardian – See Page 12.

2) Birth Certificate

3) Social Security card

Desirable to have in your possession, though not legally required, are your child’s:

- Immunization records
- Medical records

To enroll your child in school, you will also need:

- Proof of address – using a mortgage statement, rental agreement or utility bill.
BIRTH CERTIFICATE

A birth certificate for your child will be required for many reasons such as school enrollment, medical insurance and proving your relationship to the child, among others. If you do not have an original or a certified copy of his or her birth certificate, you’ll need to apply for one.

To request a birth certificate you must contact the Vital Records Office in the county where your child was born. In Clark County it is the Southern Nevada Health District and it takes at least two weeks to receive the birth certificate. The Southern Nevada Health District can also assist you in applying for an out-of-state birth certificate, though it can take months to receive.

Information on ordering birth certificates and other vital records from each state is available at: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm. Fees and the time to get birth certificates vary among states and counties.

Birth Certificate Application

Birth certificates can be requested from the Southern Nevada Health District by one of the three methods listed below. In all instances, you must complete a Birth Certificate Application available online at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org or in person at one of the two offices listed below. You must provide your own picture identification and pay $20 per birth certificate. Cash, money order or Visa and MasterCard are accepted. If you need to verify that your child’s birth certificate is available at the Southern Nevada Health District, call (702) 759-1010.

1) In-person you can request a birth certificate for a child born in Clark County at the following locations. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

   Southern Nevada Health District Main Facility
   330 S. Valley View Blvd.
   Las Vegas, NV 89107

   Mesquite Public Health Center
   830 Hafen Lane
   Mesquite, NV 89027
2) **Mail** a money order (made payable to SNHD) along with a completed Birth Certificate Application and a copy of your photo identification to:

**Southern Nevada Health District**
Vital Records Office  
P.O. Box 3902  
Las Vegas, NV 89127  
(702) 759-1000  
www.Southernnevadahealthdistrict.org

3) **Fax** a completed Birth Certificate Application along with complete credit card (Visa or MasterCard only) information and a copy of your photo identification to (702) 759-1421.

For Nevada births outside Clark County, contact:

**Nevada State Vital Records Office**
Division of Health & Vital Statistics  
4150 Technology Way, Suite #104  
Carson City, NV 89706  
(775) 684 4242  
www.Vitalchek.com

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**SOCIAL SECURITY CARD**

To apply for a Social Security card, residents of the Las Vegas area need to go to the **Social Security Office**, in person, to the address listed below. If your child is age 12 or older, he or she must accompany you to the office. There is no fee for a Social Security card. You need to bring verification of your child’s citizenship, age and identity; a birth certificate is the best identification for this purpose. You must also bring proof of your own identity.

You may also complete the application for a Social Security card online at www.socialsecurity.gov.
Social Security Administration
1250 S. Buffalo Dr., Suite #100
Las Vegas, NV 89117
(800) 772-1213
www.socialsecurity.gov

The hours for this office are 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and it closes promptly.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

If you are going to apply for financial or emergency assistance, you will need to be prepared to verify your income, as well as the income(s) of anyone living in your home. Different agencies have different requirements so it is wise to call the agency first to inquire precisely what documents are required. The requirements could vary from your last two pay stubs to two years of tax records. Other programs, such as energy assistance, require that you also verify your rent or mortgage payments and your utility bills.

Federal law now requires that any application for TANF, Medicaid or other federally subsidized entitlements include verification of citizenship for all members of your household. Each member of your household will need to provide verification of citizenship with one of the following documents:

- U.S. Birth Certificate
- Passport
- Certificate of Naturalization
MEDICAL INSURANCE AND CARE

If your child is going to be with you for any length of time, access to medical care and medical insurance will be essential. There will come the day when your child gets ill, requires immunizations or needs routine medical care. It is important to plan ahead.

Not all medical providers accept all kinds of insurance, be it Medicaid or private insurance, so always inquire if your medical insurance is accepted when making an appointment. If your child has a serious medical emergency any hospital with an emergency room will see your child. However, they will bill you for services through insurance or private-pay billing.

This chapter discusses insurance, medical clinics and options you need to research in advance of a medical emergency. Ask each facility what kinds of services they currently offer, if they take your insurance and what co-pay is required. If you are uninsured, always ask what assistance may be available to you and your child. The Nevada 2-1-1 help line can also provide up-to-date information on low-cost medical and dental care for your child, as well as you and your family.

PRIVATE INSURANCE

You need to check with your medical insurance provider about what is needed to have your child placed on your policy. Generally it is necessary to have legal custody or guardianship, or have adopted the child, before your insurance will accept your child as an additional insured. Check with your insurance provider.
MEDICAID AND OTHER SUBSIDIZED PROGRAMS

Medical insurance is available to low-income individuals and families through Nevada’s **Division of Welfare and Supportive Services**. Some of the coverage is free, and some requires a co-pay. Services may include doctor visits, hospitalization, dental and eye care, prescriptions and therapy. Three programs you may want to explore are **Medicaid, Nevada CheckUp and Children’s Health Assurance Program** (CHAPS). Information about these programs is available at the link below or through the Welfare offices listed on Page 24. Applications for medical assistance are made using the same form as the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) application available on the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services website:

[https://dwss.nv.gov](https://dwss.nv.gov)  (Click on the “Medical Programs” tab at the top.)

It’s worthwhile to apply even if you do not think you will qualify. For some programs, only the child’s income is taken into account. Other circumstances might also make you eligible. In addition, if you qualify, medical expenses up to three months before your application may be covered.

NEVADA HEALTH CENTERS

**Nevada Health Centers** (NVHC) operates 14 health clinics throughout Nevada, all staffed with physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners. Their mission is to bring comprehensive medical care to rural and under-served areas of the state. Among the services provided at most clinics are:

- Primary Care
- Diagnostic Laboratory
- Acute Medical Care
- Management of Chronic Conditions
- Well Child Care and Vaccinations
- Preventative Dental Assessment
- Pharmacy

NVHC accepts most insurances including Medicaid. Uninsured residents can receive services on a sliding scale, which is income-based. When you call for an appointment, ask if your insurance is accepted. If you are uninsured, ask what information they require for you to become eligible for the reduced fee.
The NVHC website provides information about each clinic, including how to become a patient and contact information at www.nevadahealthcenters.org. After entering the website, click on “Locations.” The clinics in Las Vegas area are:

**Cambridge Family Health Center**  
3900 Cambridge Ave. #101  
Las Vegas, NV 89119  
(702) 307-5415  
Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

**North Las Vegas Family Health Center**  
2225 Civic Center Drive, Suite 224  
North Las Vegas, NV 89030  
(702) 214-5948  
Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Las Vegas Outreach Clinic**  
47 W. Owens Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89030  
(702) 307-4635  
Hours: 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

**Martin Luther King Family Center**  
1799 Mount Mariah Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89106  
(702) 383-1961  
Hours: 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Eastern Family Medical and Dental Center**  
2212 S. Eastern Ave.  
North Las Vegas, NV 89104  
(702) 735-9334  
Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Ronald McDonald Care Mobile – Dental Care**

Nevada Health Centers also operate a mobile dental clinic. They have two buses that bring primary dental care to underserved neighborhoods in the Las Vegas area. Just like the medical clinics, most medical insurances are accepted, and for the uninsured, a sliding scale is available. For appointments, call (702) 220-9908.

NVHC also provides health-screening services via a mobile mammography van. For information and appointments, call toll free (877) 581-6266.
HUNTRIDGE TEEN CLINIC

The Huntridge Teen Clinic provides medical and dental care to uninsured and at-risk adolescents, age 12 to 19 who are ineligible or unable to obtain services available through other Clark County agencies. The clinic does not bill Medicaid or any insurance. It relies exclusively on grants and donations. Services are normally provided by appointment. The office information is listed below.

Teens come to the medical clinic for a wide variety of tests and procedures. It’s wise to call first to make sure the clinic is prepared to handle your child’s health issue. Common issues the clinic handles include:

- Illness
- Birth control & pregnancy tests
- Pap tests and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases
- Sports physicals
- Health education & counseling

Fees are $5 to $20 for medical treatment and other services such as lab tests. Permission from a parent or guardian is not required to access most medical care. Parental permission is required for a sports physical, which is $20.

Dental care is also available. As of 2013, the dental visit fee is $20. If the teen is unable to pay, the fee may be waived or reduced. Permission from the parent or guardian is required for dental care.

To make an appointment or for more information, contact:

Huntridge Teen Clinic
2100 S. Maryland Parkway, Suite 1
Las Vegas, NV 89104
(702) 732-8776
www.huntridge.org
ZELZAH SHRINE CENTER

Zelzah Shrine Center (The Shriners) provides free medical care to children with serious medical conditions, such as cleft palates, burn scars, amputations and many other potentially debilitating and life-threatening conditions. Medical care requiring hospital services is performed at one of 22 Shriner hospitals, all of which are out of state. The Shriners provide necessary transportation at no charge.

Zelzah Shrine Center
2222 W. Mesquite Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89106
(702) 382-5554 or (800) 237-5055
www.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org

Screenings are held in Las Vegas regularly. To sign up for a screening to see if your child is eligible, call the Las Vegas office.

PRIVATE HOSPITALS

In general, private hospitals with both emergency rooms and pediatric departments will provide emergency services to children. You will be billed for these services. If you do not have insurance, they may help you apply for one of the public programs available.

UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER (UMC)

UMC is Clark County’s public hospital and provides emergency medical services at the hospital’s emergency room and medical care at its Quick Care Centers. There are 10 Quick Care Centers, and they are listed in the telephone book under University Medical Center, or you can find them on the UMC website at www.umcsn.com. If you think you may use one of these centers, identify the one closest to your home in advance, and telephone them to find out the hours they are open and what kind of services they do and do not provide.

The Quick Care Centers require a $70 deposit before services can be provided. Quick Care Centers offer discounted fees (up to 45 percent discount) for uninsured Clark County residents. Be sure to ask about this discount.
The hospital requires medical insurance (private or Medicaid). In the event of an emergency admission, the hospital’s eligibility department will assist you in applying for medical insurance, such as Medicaid, CHAPS and Nevada CheckUp, as referenced above. If you are ineligible due to immigration status or are income ineligible, you will be billed for services.

The UMC Family Resource Center at (702) 383-2229 can be helpful to uninsured and under-insured residents by helping you apply for Medicaid, Nevada CheckUp or CHAPS, or other means of assisting in obtaining medical care for your child. They also operate several educational programs for families, such as breastfeeding, sibling classes and senior classes.

University Medical Center UMC Family Resource Center
1800 W. Charleston Blvd. 1120 Shadow Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89102 Las Vegas, NV 89102
(702) 383-2000 (702) 383-2229
www.umcsn.com www.umcsn.com (Click “Family Resource”)

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS (UNLV) – DENTAL

UNLV’s School of Dental Medicine operates a dental clinic. Work is performed by advanced students under the supervision of licensed dentists who are also instructors. They offer services at reduced rates and also accept Medicaid and other forms of insurance. The clinics are located at:

UNLV School of Dental Medicine
Shadow Lane Campus
1700 W. Charleston Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89102
(702) 774-2400
http://www.unlv.edu/dental/clinics

Another option is Paradise Park Children’s Dental Clinic, which offers dental services on a sliding scale for children under 12. They also take Medicaid.

Paradise Park Children’s Dental Clinic
1750 Wheeler Peak Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89106
(702) 432-3334
SOUTHERN NEVADA HEALTH DISTRICT

The Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) offers community, administrative, nursing and environmental services to ensure the health and well-being of Clark County residents.

Southern Nevada Health District Main Facility
330 S. Valley View Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89107
(702) 759-1000
www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org

Immunizations

The immunization program offers vaccines against preventable diseases to infants, children and adults. This includes:

- Routine immunizations for age-appropriate vaccines.
- Immunizations for travelers.
- Yearly flu and pneumonia vaccine.

The Health District charges a $16 administrative fee per child for one vaccine and $25 administrative fee per child for two or more vaccines. Some vaccines require an additional charge. Contact the Immunization Clinic at (702) 759-0850 for more information and for the locations of Immunization Clinics. Locations are not listed in the phone book, but can be found on the Health District’s website, and the main address is below.

Immunization Exemption

Some parents have medical, religious or other reasons to not immunize their children. In order to obtain an immunization exemption, you must attend a vaccine education class. Call (702) 759-0898 and leave your name and number to schedule the class. You will be notified of the class location, date and time.

SNHD also provides well-baby exams, (702) 759-1307, and sports, camp, ROTC and Scout physicals, (702) 759-0896. Available by appointment only and the fee is $25. Medicaid and Nevada CheckUp are accepted.
TOURO UNIVERSITY

Touro University operates the Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities, which offers evaluation, treatment and consultation for children with autism or other developmental disabilities. They accept most insurance and Medicaid.

Touro University
874 American Pacific Drive
Henderson, NV  89014
(702) 777-4808
http://tun.touro.edu/community/center-for-autism-and-developmental-disabilities/

CLARK COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICE

Clark County Social Service (CCSS) provides medical and financial assistance to Clark County residents who are not eligible for and are not receiving any assistance from a local, state or federal source. If your Medicaid application is pending, CCSS may also be able to help.

Medical services are provided through University Medical Center and its facilities and include services such as outpatient clinic care, pharmacy services, x-ray, laboratory and durable medical equipment usage. Eligibility for medical and financial assistance is determined based on financial, non-financial and resource information that will be verified at the time of application. CCSS office locations are listed on Page 38.

Main Website: www.clarkcountynv.gov
(Click on the “Departments” tab and select “Social Service.”)
To ensure your child’s success in school, you must have ongoing contact with the school system. The information provided in this section is not all-inclusive and some of it will change, so check sources. This section also addresses child care and youth employment.

The school district in Las Vegas, including Henderson, North Las Vegas, Boulder City and other outlying cities in the county, is the Clark County School District (CCSD). CCSD has over 350 schools, most on a 9-month school calendar: elementary schools educating children from kindergarten through fifth grade; middle schools with grades sixth, seventh and eighth; and high schools with ninth through twelfth grade. CCSD also has Magnet schools along with Career and Technical Academies.

After reading this section, log onto the CCSD website at www.ccsd.net which provides information about enrollment, zoning, guidance, counseling, ParentLink, scholarships and many other programs through the school district. Also consider contacting or visiting your child’s school with additional questions and/or to meet school staff, especially your child’s teacher.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE

If the child is in your temporary custody because they have been abandoned (or because of economic hardship), they are considered “homeless” or “in transition.” Therefore, the child has the right to remain at the school of origin; which is the school they had been attending before becoming “homeless.”
If you want to have the child attend your neighborhood school, the child must be enrolled at that school. To locate the school for which you are zoned call (702) 799-6435 or go to www.ccsd.net. To enroll the child you must provide proof of legal custody or legal guardianship.

**Enrollment**

By following the directions at the CCSD website, you will be able to identify your child’s school and download a CCSD Registration form. To begin this process visit www.ccsd.net, click on “Parents” and then click “Enrollment Information.” You can also telephone the CCSD at (702) 799-6435 to obtain this information. Once completed, take the information to your child’s school. If you have any questions contact your child’s school.

The additional documents you will need to enroll your child are:

- Proof of address: a recent utility bill, rent receipt, lease agreement or mortgage statement.
- Proof of child’s identity: original copy of the child’s birth certificate or passport issued by the Southern Nevada Health District. See Page 44.
- Proof of immunizations: available through the Southern Nevada Health District or your child’s health clinic or doctor’s office. See Page 53.
- For relatives raising children, a copy of the Legal Guardianship or Custody Agreement. See Page 12.

**Daily Attendance**

School attendance is required in the State of Nevada between the ages of 7 and 17. Students who are absent must bring a note, written by you, to their teacher within three days of the missed school day. The absence will be recorded as verified. When a student does not bring a note, the absence is considered unverified. Students at the secondary level with two unverified absences run the risk of receiving a truancy citation. Child Protective Services can be called when elementary students have unverified absences. See Page 17.
TITLE I HOPE

If you become the child’s permanent guardian or assume legal custody of a child who has been deemed homeless, the child will receive services through Title I Homeless Outreach Program for Education (Title I HOPE) for the remainder of the school year. In the following school year, the child will no longer be considered “homeless.” Title I HOPE serves children between pre-K and 12th grade and provides the following services:

- Operation School Bell provides clothing for student K-8
- Backpacks and school supplies
- Transportation to school of origin through either a CCSD bus or an EZRider CAT bus pass
- After-school enrichment programs at selected school sites
- Clothing for high school students
- Free breakfast and lunch for students K-12
- Dental and eye care programs through Project SOS. (A referral from the school nurse is required.)

CCSD SERVICES

1) Food Services

All schools have a free or reduced-cost breakfast and lunch program. You can apply for this program at your child’s school, and eligibility is based on your household income. If your child does not qualify for free or reduced rates, meals can be purchased on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Students considered to be homeless can receive free breakfast and lunch, and the guardian does not have to complete any paperwork.

2) Zone Variances

If it is preferable for the child to remain in their previous school you will have to request, and be approved for, a zone variance and be responsible for transportation. Applications for zone variances can be obtained at the school by accessing www.ccsd.net.
3) **Sports and Other Competitive Activities**

If you have temporary guardianship of the child or the child obtains a zone variance, he or she may be declared ineligible for sports for the following year. This is done to prevent recruiting among schools. **Foster Kinship** can help you write a letter requesting an exception from this rule. Call (702) 546-9988.

4) **ParentLink**

*ParentLink* is computer based system (online website or mobile app) to help you effectively monitor your child’s progress in school. You can easily view and keep track of assignments, grades, attendance, cafeteria balances and school messages. To access *ParentLink*, enter the login ID and password that have been provided to you from your child’s school.

5) **Transportation**

If you live two or more miles from your home-zoned school, your child qualifies for bus transportation. Transportation arrangements can be made at the school when you are enrolling your child or by calling (702) 799-8110.

6) **Special Education Services**

Special education and related services are available to students who are found eligible under one or more of the 13 disability categories in the state of Nevada. Disabilities may include mental handicaps, visual impairments, learning disabilities, emotional challenges or speech and language difficulties to name just a few. To access Special Education and related services, contact the school psychologist or special education instructional facilitator at your child’s school.

7) **English Language Learners**

Children whose first language is not English may be eligible for the English Language Learners program through their school. Ask their principal or teacher.

8) **School Nurses**

CCSD School Nurses and First Aid Safety Assistants are allowed to administer prescribed medications and assist students when they are not feeling well. School nurses conduct required vision, hearing and scoliosis screenings. They can provide suggestions to assist families in locating medical and mental health providers.
9) Guidance Counselors

CCSD guidance counselors can be helpful to you and your child as they progress through school as they play an important role in the academic, career, and personal social development of all students. Counselors work with students through classroom guidance lessons, and small groups and are available on an individual basis. The school counseling program also helps prepare students in providing high school graduation information and post-secondary options such as work, military, college, universities, trade and technical programs.

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAM (HSPE)

All Nevada students must pass the High School Proficiency Exams in order to receive a high school diploma. HSPE tests in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The school will notify you when the tests will be administered. Students are encouraged to prepare for HSPE and attend school on test days. More information about the exams and some sample texts for practice can be found at http://www.ccsd.net/students/exam-information/.

A tutorial for the math exam is available at http://succeedinmath.com/home.

DROP OUT PREVENTION

Nevada law requires high school attendance until the age of 17. Exceptions can be made for a 16-year-old with a legitimate reason including working full-time, pregnancy, etc. To request an exemption you need to contact the Guidance and Counseling Department at the number below. CCSD has counselors and other resources available to teens 16 or under who are thinking of dropping out or to teens who have left school and want to return and finish.

The Guidance and Counseling Department
3950 S. Pecos- McLeod, Suite 1-F
Las Vegas, NV 89121
(702) 799-8441
Students who are 17 years or older who want to return to school should contact the Adult Education Office.

**Adult Education Office**
2701 E. St. Louis Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89104
(702) 799-8650

**CCSD Virtual High School**

Some teens struggling to fit into the normal high school environment might do well at a “virtual” high school, where course work is done via the Internet. Students earn credits through online, interactive courses primarily based on eText and supplemental online learning materials. A computer with Internet access and additional technical requirements are needed. Students can attend full or part time and earn a regular high school diploma. The Virtual High School can be contacted via phone at (702) 855-8435 or at [http://ccsdde.net/](http://ccsdde.net/).

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**GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GED)**

Also known as a **Nevada State Certificate of High School Equivalency**.

For teens who have dropped out of school, a GED (General Educational Development) test is an option. A GED means you’ve passed a test that says you know what you need to know from high school even though you didn’t formally graduate and receive a diploma. The GED measures competencies in the areas of English (writing and literature) social studies, science and mathematics.

General requirements:

- 17 years of age or older with parental permission (16 year olds require administrative approval)
- Officially withdrawn from school
- Registration
- GED testing fee of $65
- Proof of identity (i.e. valid driver’s license or DMV identification card
Raising Your Relative’s Kids: How to Find Help

CHAPTER 7—EDUCATION, CHILD CARE AND TEEN WORK

It is required students receive counseling services, which are accepted as a walk-in or scheduled appointments at various locations through Clark County. For more information regarding the GED program call (702) 799-8650 extension 341 or visit http://schools.ccsd.net/aded/ged.htm.

Many community college campuses and literacy agencies offer GED preparation classes. If your child prefers to study on his or her own, books are available at bookstores and at the public library. Literacy Link (http://litlink.ket.org) offers free online pre-tests and lessons.

COMMUNITY AGENCIES

There are many programs to address children’s special educational needs. Below is a partial list of agency services, some of which reach out especially to foster children.

1) St. Jude’s Ranch for Children
   100 St. Jude’s St.
   Boulder City, NV  89005
   (702) 294-7100

St. Jude’s Ranch for Children, which for decades has provided residential services for neglected and abused children, also provides some services in the community. Its Child Focus provides tutoring and educationally focused mentoring for youth in foster care who are 18 and under. It also provides transitional services for teens aging out of foster care. Call for more information.

2) Project We
   2835 W. Pebble Road, Building 2-316
   Las Vegas, NV  89123
   (702) 485-2315
   http://projectwecare.com/Blog/

Project We provides mentoring, independent living and job skills training and other services to at-risk youth ages 12-19, focusing on children in foster care. The primary aim is to help prepare these young people for careers and adulthood.
3) Nevada PEP (Parents Encouraging Parents)

Nevada PEP provides information, training and advocacy for parents or guardians of children who have disabilities. For more information, contact (702) 388-8899.

4) Communities in Schools
   3720 Howard Hughes Parkway
   Las Vegas, NV  89169
   (702) 770-7611
   http://cisnevada.org

Located on 12 campuses in Southern Nevada, Communities in Schools coordinate all types of social services for children in need at these schools. They can make referrals for medical or mental health care, and they work with community food banks to ensure that children have food over the weekend and with local retail stores to obtain clothing. Call to see if the group works with your child’s school.

5) Workforce Development Center of CSN
   Sahara West Center
   2409 Las Verdes St.
   Las Vegas, NV  89102
   (702) 651-4747
   http://sites.csn.edu/workforce/

The Workforce Development Center at CSN offers courses to residents 17 years and older with the goal of workforce readiness. Topics such as ESL (English as a Second Language), GED preparation, and computer literacy and disabled-student programs are available at CSN campuses, school sites and other locations throughout the Las Vegas area.

6) Opportunity Village
   (702) 880-4050  www.opportunityvillage.org

Opportunity Village serves people within our community with intellectual disabilities by providing them with vocational training, employment and social recreation services. Through the programs and supports, people with disabilities are placed in jobs throughout the community.
EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Your teen will likely need some direction in what to do after high school. There are several options for pursuing education, and a conference with the high school counselor is a great place to begin. Some options are listed below.

Millennium Scholarship

High school graduates with sufficiently high grades can qualify for the Nevada Millennium Scholarship that provides up to $2,000 per year for a student to attend any of the state-funded institutions of higher learning. For more information contact the school counselor or log onto http://nevadatreasurer.gov and click on Millennium Scholarship.

Community Colleges

Community colleges are two-year schools that offer low-tuition career preparation in fields such as business management, electronic engineering technology, graphic technology, legal assistance, medical lab technician, real estate, dental hygiene, paramedic and many others. Certificates for work in fields such as air-conditioning, banking, automotive technology, culinary arts and office administration can also be earned.

A community college can also be used as a stepping-stone to a four-year college or university, such as University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) or University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Many classes can be transferred as credits toward a bachelor’s degree. The College of Southern Nevada (CSN) is our local public community college. It has three main sites, listed below. You can get more information and even apply on the website, www.csn.edu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSN-Charleston Campus</th>
<th>CSN-Cheyenne Campus</th>
<th>CSN-Henderson Campus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6375 W. Charleston Blvd.</td>
<td>3200 E. Cheyenne Ave.</td>
<td>700 College Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las Vegas, NV 89146</td>
<td>North Las Vegas, NV 89030</td>
<td>Henderson, NV 89002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(702) 651-5000</td>
<td>(702) 651-4000</td>
<td>(702) 651-3000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Four-Year Colleges and Universities

In general, both colleges and universities offer bachelor’s degrees (BA or BS) in a range of academic disciplines. Nevada has two public universities, UNLV and UNR. The school counselor can assist in information about applying to these or other universities.

**University of Nevada, Las Vegas**
4500 S. Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV  89154
(702) 774-8658 recruitment
(702) 895-3424 financial aid
www.unlv.edu

**Nevada State College**

This is a relatively new college that started in 2002 as part of the Nevada System of Higher Education. Nevada State College offers bachelor's degrees in much-needed fields such as nursing and education as well as in other disciplines in the arts and sciences. Course work is fully transferable to both the universities and the community colleges in Nevada's higher education system. Basic admission requirements include having a 2.0 high school GPA and completion of required high school or community college courses.

**Nevada State College-main**
1021 E. Paradise Hills Drive
Henderson, NV  89002
(702) 992-2000
www.nsc.nevada.edu

**Downtown campus**
303 S. Water St.
Henderson, NV  89015

**Trade and Technical Schools**

More than 100 privately owned, post-secondary schools are licensed by the State of Nevada. Trade/training schools are short-term programs with the goal of immediate placement in the workforce. These schools offer training in a wide range of careers, from computer systems administration to legal assistant to massage therapy. The certificates these schools offer are often similar to courses at a community college, but unlike community colleges, the student cannot usually transfer credits earned toward a four-year degree. These are usually privately run schools and can cost quite a lot to attend. However, most will help you find financial aid.
Note: Beware of Scams
Some schools that advertise as trade or technical schools are worthless and are only trying to get your money without providing the skills or credentials to find a job. Before registering with a trade of technical school, make sure you ask important questions like:

- Are they accredited? By whom? Ask for documentation.
- What is the total cost, and is it due all at once or in several payments?
- What percentage of graduates do they place in jobs? Do they offer job placement?

MORE INFORMATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Clark County Senior Handbook and Scholarship Guide

The Clark County Senior Handbook and Scholarship Guide is published each year by the Clark County School District. It has information on applying to colleges including financial aid and scholarships. It is available from the CCSD Guidance and Counseling office at (702) 799-8441 or can be downloaded at http://ccsd.net/departments/guidance-counseling

Sen. Harry Reid: The Path to College
http://www.reid.senate.gov/services/youth.cfm

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid’s website includes an informational section directed to helping foster children plan for college. It includes a handbook, “The Path to College” that can be downloaded and printed out.

Additional resources:

Federal Student Aid Information Center Hotline
(800) 4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)
http://studentaid.ed.gov

Nevada System of Higher Education
www.nevada.edu

Nevada Private and Public Community Colleges, Colleges, and Universities
www.univsource.com/nv.htm
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Older teens often want to get a part time job to increase their pocket money and their ability to pay for clothing, activities and other personal expenses. As education is often the key to financial success later in life, a part-time job is a positive thing, but should not interfere with your child’s school life. When weighing a part-time job, it’s wise for you and your child to discuss:

- The number of hours and time of day that your child will be working.
- The proximity of the job to home. How will they get to and from work; how much time will that require; and are there any safety considerations, such as a using a bus or coming home at night?
- How his or her income will be used. Will he or she be expected to contribute toward household expenses or save part of the income?

WORK PERMITS

Nevada law requires that teens between 14 and 17 must have a work permit for each job they get. Work permits are available for $1.00 at the Department of Juvenile Justice Services and through community-based offices.

Clark County Juvenile Justice Services
Juvenile Probation Centers
601 N. Pecos Road
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 455-5235

For a listing of the offices and hours where work permits are processed, go to www.clarkcountynv.gov and click Departments, and then click Juvenile Justice link. Under the Services tab, you will find Juvenile Work Permits. This page will provide you with further information.

Your child must first have a job or a job offer to apply for a work permit. You must accompany your child or provide written approval for him or her to take the job. A copy of your guardianship or custody form is also required.
EMployment Programs

Nevada JobConnect has a special section on its website for youth. It includes advice to prepare young people for the job market and listings of youth-friendly employers. The job data bank can be searched by occupation, proximity to a certain ZIP code and other details. The site also offers areas for resume development, job seeker do’s and don’ts, preparing for the interview, and what to do to follow up.

Teens aged 16 and older also can go to any Nevada JobConnect office to get personalized attention in their job search. There are three offices in Clark County:

Las Vegas
3405 South Maryland Pkwy.
Las Vegas, NV 89169
(702) 486-0100

Henderson
119 Water St.
Henderson, NV 89015
(702) 486-0300

North Las Vegas
2827 Las Vegas Blvd. North
Las Vegas, NV 89030
(702) 486-0200

www.nevadayouth.org

Nevada Partners provides education, employment and training services to youth, adults and dislocated workers. The website is easy to access and is a good source of additional information about its services. Particularly relevant to older teens are programs such as these.

- Positive Youth Impact - Nevada Partners has structured specialized services that address the needs of in-school and out-of-school youth, ages 14-21. They offer classes to remedy basic skills and school credit deficiency, case management and wrap-around services to address barriers and risk behaviors, and training that develops qualities that lead to life-long success. Nevada Partners provides opportunities for youth to learn about a broad range of careers and education pathways and after-school, summer and full-time employment.

- Work Readiness - Nevada Partner's participants are encouraged to attend a two-week employability course that provides a thorough understanding of the tools and skills required to pursue, gain and retain employment. Graduates receive a work-readiness certificate and experience great personal and professional growth.
• **Career Development** - Each participant works with a career counselor who assesses the participant’s work history and skills, economic circumstance, family, support network, training and certifications. Participants then work with a career counselor for resume preparation and interviewing practice, access to financial aid information, placement services, referral for job placement and follow-up services.

**Nevada Partners**
710 W. Lake Mead Blvd.
North Las Vegas, NV 89030
(702) 924-2100
www.nevadapartners.com

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**CHILD CARE**

Many relative caregivers work outside the home, or for other reasons, require child care. Locating competent child care can be challenging as you evaluate the quality of the people and the care they may provide your child. Referrals from people you know through at work or church are good places to start.

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**LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES**

Licensed facilities provide some type of quality assurance to you and your child. Facilities are regularly inspected and evaluated by the Nevada Department of Health in order to receive and maintain their license.

**State of Nevada Child Care Licensing**
http://health.nv.gov/HCQC_Childcare.htm

The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services provides a list of licensed child care facilities. It is Web-based information about day care centers’ locations, types of facilities, numbers of and ages of children they take care of and other helpful information. This report can be accessed at the website address above.
The **Children’s Cabinet** provides a referral program that can help you locate licensed child care facilities in areas of your choice. It can also help you to learn what to look for in a good child care facility and problems to watch out for. The organization has two locations:

- 2470 N. Decatur Blvd., Suite 150
- 1058 W. Owens Ave.
- Las Vegas, NV 89108
- Las Vegas, NV 89106
- (702) 823-2966
- (702) 735-9730


**Unlicensed Regular Child Care**

There are risks for you, your child and your property if you choose to use unlicensed child care on a weekly, full-time basis. It is highly recommended you not use unlicensed child care unless you know the care provider well, and that people you know well can vouch for the character and performance of that person.

The local American Red Cross Chapter provides babysitters’ training both in person and online: [http://www.redcrosslasvegas.org/](http://www.redcrosslasvegas.org/) (702) 791-3311.

**SAFEKEY**

**SafeKey** is a before- and after-school recreation program for elementary school children. Generally, SafeKey is operated in the schools and follows their schedule. Homework assistance and snacks are also provided. Most SafeKey sites are operated by the Clark County Parks & Recreation SafeKey Program:

- Walk in registration for the (2013/14) school year is available to the general public. Registration applications are available at all SafeKey sites and Clark County Parks & Recreation Centers. Call (702) 455-8251 to find a location.
- All students must pre-register at individual school sites before participating in the SafeKey program.
- Parents who wish to pay online may contact the SafeKey office at (702) 455-8251 to have an account set up.
- Students must attend the SafeKey site where he/she attends school.
- Regular attendance is on a pre-pay basis and drop-in participants pay per day.
- Hours are generally 7-8:30 a.m. and directly after school dismissal until 6 p.m.
Clark County Parks and Recreation SafeKey Program  
2601 E. Sunset Road  
Las Vegas, NV 89120  
(702) 455-8251  
http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/Depts/parks/Pages/safekey.aspx

For additional programs and sites contact:

Henderson SafeKey  
http://www.cityofhenderson.com/parks/youth/safekey.php

City of Las Vegas SafeKey  
http://www.lasvegasnevada.gov/find/21399.htm

North Las Vegas SafeKey  
http://www.cityofnorthlasvegas.com/Departments/ParksAndRecreation/Safekey.shtm

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE

There are limited resources that provide financial assistance for day care. Three are listed below. They require income verification as part of the application process and are limited in the number of families they can assist each year due to limits in their budgets.

1) Nevada Child Care and Development Fund

If you are working or attending school and need financial assistance in paying for child care, you may apply for assistance from the State of Nevada Child Care and Development Program, administered by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services. You can apply for this subsidy at the same time you apply for Medicaid or TANF.

Your household income and family size are considered in qualifying for this program. The amount of assistance provided is based on a sliding scale, and the assistance is paid directly to the child care facility. Find more information at https://dwss.nv.gov/ChildCareGeneral.html.
2) **Variety Day Home**
990 D St.
Las Vegas, NV 89106
(702) 647-4907

Variety Day Home provides licensed child care on a sliding scale. Income must be verified. They also have some capacity to provide free day care in emergency situations for up to two weeks.

3) **East Valley Family Services**
1800 E. Sahara Ave., Suite 117
Las Vegas, NV 89104
(702) 920-6581

East Valley Family Services provides respite care for people 55 years and older who are caring for a relative’s child. The nonprofit agency will cover 8 to 16 hours of child care to give caretakers a break, either in activities or a caregiver of your choosing.
Your child needs access to recreation and socialization. This is often provided through community programs, many of which are located near your home and/or the child’s school. The information provided in this chapter does not address the entire scope of leisure options for your child. It does however, provide first steps that can give you respite while providing children with healthy alternatives to exercise their bodies, enrich their minds, and provide social outlets in safe, fun and affordable places.

SCHOOLS

Schools are a great source for supervised fun activities for your child. High school for example offers dance, cheer, swimming, wrestling and track and field in addition to traditional sports like soccer, volleyball, baseball and football. Most schools also have clubs structured around students’ special interests such as drama, speech, foreign languages, chess, band, as well as Scouting (Boy Scouts of America) and service clubs like Rotary Interact and Kiwanis “Key” Club. Contact your child’s school for more information.
SPORTS

Sports activities are also offered not only though the schools, but through the municipal parks and recreation departments and YMCA. Contact information is listed later in this chapter. Other options are Little League Baseball (702) 435-9155 or http://nvdist2.org, the Nevada Youth Football League at www.gonyfl.com and Pop Warner Football http://www.lasvegaspopwarner.com.

COUNTY AND CITY RECREATION DEPARTMENTS

Clark County and our cities operate leisure and recreation programs for families, children and adults. There is a fee for many of these programs, though it is often quite reasonable. Use the websites or telephone numbers listed below to identify recreation centers near your home or your child’s school. Inquire about current programs, schedules and fees.

If any of the contact information is out of date (information below is current as of 2013), use the telephone book or websites for current locations and phone numbers of the municipal recreation departments.

1) Clark County Parks and Recreation
2601 E. Sunset Road Las Vegas, NV 89120
(702) 455-8200
www.clarkcountynv.gov
On the website, click on “Departments” and go to “Parks and Recreation.”

There are locations throughout the valley providing parks, sport leagues, mobile sound stages, concerts, social, historical and cultural activities, aquatics classes, camps, equestrian centers, canine facilities and special events. SafeKey and other after-school programs are also provided.

2) City of Las Vegas Leisure Services Department
495 S. Main St.
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 229-6297
www.lasvegasparksandrec.com

Numerous parks, recreation centers, swimming, skate parks and fitness classes for adults and children at dozens of locations throughout the city.
3) **Henderson Parks and Recreation Department**
   105 W. Basic Road
   Henderson, NV 89015
   (702) 267-4000
   [www.cityofhenderson.com](http://www.cityofhenderson.com)
   On the website, click on “Departments” and go to “Parks and Recreation.”

Cultural, recreational and sports programs are offered for all ages. Among the activities are recreation classes, seasonal programs, field trips and excursions, performing arts and dance, and sports leagues. Facilities include four outdoor pools, two indoor pools and 54 parks.

4) **Boulder City Parks and Recreation Department**
   900 Arizona St.
   Boulder City, NV 89005
   (702) 293-9256
   [www.bcnv.org](http://www.bcnv.org)
   On the website, click on “Departments” and go to “Parks and Recreation.”

Recreation classes, open gym, sports and youth programs all offered to the community. Facilities include municipal golf course, swimming, a water park and racquetball.

5) **North Las Vegas Parks and Recreation Department**
   1038 N. Bruce St.
   North Las Vegas, NV 89030
   (702) 633-1171
   [www.cityofnorthlasvegas.com](http://www.cityofnorthlasvegas.com)
   On the website, click on “Departments” and go to “Parks and Recreation.”

Thirty-two city parks and one regional park, with numerous ball fields, a municipal golf course, tennis courts, pools, varied recreation programs, neighborhood recreation center, sports complex and special events.
NON PROFIT AGENCIES

Local non-profit agencies offer great recreation and socialization opportunities for children. Here is a partial list:

1) **Boy Scouts of America**
   7220 S. Paradise Road
   Las Vegas, NV 89119
   (702) 736-4366
   [www.lvacbsa.org](http://www.lvacbsa.org)

   **Boy Scouts of America** - Value-based recreation, skill development, friendship, weekly activities, camping, etc. for boys ages 6 to 18. Boy Scout troops meet weekly at area schools and churches. Programming occurs after school and during the summer vacation.

2) **Girl Scouts of America**
   2941 Harris Ave.
   Las Vegas, NV 89101 (702) 385 3677
   [www.frontiercouncil.org](http://www.frontiercouncil.org)

   **Girl Scouts of America** - Value-based programming for girls ages 5 to 17 in skill development, recognition, camping, cooking and creating. Girl Scout troops meet weekly at many area schools and churches. Programming is provided after school and during summer vacations.

3) **Boys and Girls Clubs**
   2850 S. Lindell Road
   Las Vegas, NV 89126
   (702) 367-2582
   [www.bgclv.org](http://www.bgclv.org)

   **Boys and Girls Clubs of Las Vegas** consists of eight club facilities throughout the valley serving school-age children. Recreation, tutoring and programming in the core areas of character and leadership development, education and career development, health and life skills, the arts, sports and fitness and recreation are provided. The clubs provide both structured activities and serve as drop-in play areas when children are not in school.
4) **4-H**  
*University of Nevada Cooperative Extension*  
8050 Paradise Road  
Las Vegas, NV  89123  
(702) 222-3130  
[www.unce.unr.edu](http://www.unce.unr.edu)

4-H - Head, Heart, Hands and Health is a community of young people ages 5 to 19 across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. In Southern Nevada, learning is accomplished through a variety of delivery modes: after school activities, in-school workshops, 4-H community clubs, various camps and short-term projects.

5) **Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
2000 E. Flamingo Road  
Las Vegas, NV  89119  
(702) 731-2227  
[www.bbbsn.org](http://www.bbbsn.org)

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Nevada** matches children with adult and older teen role models.  Mentoring is either “site-based” (at the child’s school, the Boys and Girls Club or another site) or can be community-based which can include outings throughout the valley. “Bigs” and “Littles” enjoy sports, games, homework and other activities together.

6) **YMCA**  
4141 Meadows Lane  
Las Vegas, NV  89107  
(702) 877-9622  
[www.lasvegasymca.org](http://www.lasvegasymca.org)

**YMCA** - Site-based recreation for families and adults and children of all ages, provided at three Las Vegas locations.  Financial assistance is available.  The YMCA offers programming when schools are not in session (track breaks, holidays, before and after school) as well as aquatics, child care, sports, teen leadership and many other programs to support families.
LIBRARIES

Libraries are a great source of free entertainment. A library card gets you and your child access to free books, DVDs, CDs and magazines. All but the magazines can be checked out and taken home. Movies are loaned for a period of one week. Books, audio books and CDs are loaned for three weeks. Most libraries also have ebooks available to check out if you or your child has a tablet computer as well. Libraries also offer computers and Internet available free to anyone with a library card. Libraries also host movie nights, storytelling and other events.

Here’s a list of local library districts:

1) **Boulder City Library**  
   701 Adams Blvd.  
   Boulder City, NV 89005  
   (702) 293-1281  
   [www.bclibrary.org](http://www.bclibrary.org)

2) **Henderson District Public Libraries**  
   [www.hdpl.org](http://www.hdpl.org)  
   There are four branches in Henderson. Go to the Web site for locations, information about library events and programs and access to online databases.

3) **Las Vegas Clark County Library District**  
   [www.lvcld.org](http://www.lvcld.org)  
   For a complete listing of all libraries in Clark County, visit the Web site, which includes a special area for parents and children, with reading recommendations for all ages.

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VOLUNTEERING

Teens can learn valuable skills and be exposed to a wealth of opportunity by volunteering in our community. This can be accomplished at church and in many public and non-profit agencies like local libraries, Opportunity Village, Three Square, Boys and Girls Club and many others. The website of the **Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada** will direct your teen to options he or she can explore at [www.volunteercentersn.org](http://www.volunteercentersn.org). Volunteer experience adds a lot to both college and employment applications.
THE ENTERTAINMENT SECTIONS OF NEWSPAPERS

The entertainment sections of your local newspaper will list a variety of free or cheap performances and events in the community each week. On Thursdays and Fridays, the Review Journal newspaper publishes the “Neon” which highlights that week’s entertainment.

MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL SITES

**Springs Preserve**
333 S. Valley View
Las Vegas, NV 89107
(702) 822-7700
[www.springspreserve.org](http://www.springspreserve.org)

The **Springs Preserve** is a 180-acre cultural and historical attraction that profiles Las Vegas’s history, environment and future. There you will find a Desert Living Center, gardens, trails, exhibits and events. Volunteer opportunities are available for teens.

**Lied Discovery Children’s Museum**
360 Promenade Place
Las Vegas, NV 89106
(next to the Smith Center for the Performing Arts)
(702) 382-3445
[www.discoverykidslv.org](http://www.discoverykidslv.org)

**Lied Discovery** is an interactive museum for children of all ages. In addition to exhibits children can touch and enjoy, the museum offers educational programs in arts and sciences. An early childhood education program provides enriching activities for preschoolers, from birth to age 5. *YouthWorks* combines mentoring, job skills training, homework support and volunteer opportunities for teens.
NEVADA DIVISION OF STATE PARKS

The State of Nevada operates several parks in Southern Nevada, all within a short drive of Las Vegas, and these parks have entrance fees under $10. For more park information visit www.parks.nv.gov. These are some of the popular parks:

- Big Bend of the Colorado
- Spring Mountain Ranch (Nevada’s newest state park)
- Valley of Fire State Park
- Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort

Other Outdoor Resources

1) Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area
   (702) 515-5350,
   Las Vegas, NV
   http://www.redrockcanyonlv.org/

Red Rock Canyon offers a 13-mile scenic drive, more than 30 miles of hiking trails, picnic areas and a Visitors Center, just 15 miles west of Las Vegas.

2) Lake Mead National Recreation Area
   Boulder City, NV
   (702) 293-8907
   http://www.nps.gov/lake/index.htm

Lake Mead National Recreation Area offers hiking, photography, boating, swimming and fishing opportunities.

3) Hikes and Trails

Go to www.localhikes.com/MSA/MSA_4120.asp for a description and listing of 87 hikes in and around Las Vegas.
CHAPTER 9

BEHAVIORAL OR EMOTIONAL ISSUES

Some children, whether parents, relatives or others raise them, have emotional problems or difficulty in controlling their behavior or making good decisions. A child whose parents cannot raise them or be a source of comfort and support may experience issues related to separation or abandonment. These issues may appear in the child’s behavior. He or she may cling to you or to other adults, or may not attach to you at all. The good news is that research shows that children who are raised by their relatives have better outcomes than those who are raised in other foster homes, especially if both children and caregivers receive counseling.

Untreated, severe emotional problems are a common cause of a child failing to remain at home, even a home intended to be permanent. Untreated emotional problems can also result in difficulties in peer and sibling relationships as well as having an impact on a child’s ability to function in school and social settings, causing strain and stress on you, the relative caregiver.

Many relative caregivers have expressed the need for assistance in effectively managing behavior and emotional problems and in knowing when to seek help and where to get that help. If you are wondering if your child is adjusting normally, it is wise to discuss your concerns with a professional you respect who also knows your child.
PARENTING CLASSES

Many parents take advantage of free parenting classes provided in our community. These can offer valuable tips to help manage special needs well as common behaviors, both of which can be challenging. And while not specifically for relatives raising children, they may be helpful as most focus on a positive parent (caregiver)-child interaction and provide learning opportunities for parent and child.

1) Partners in Parenting
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
(702) 222-3130 or (702) 257-5521
www.unce.unr.edu

Cooperative Extension, through Partners in Parenting, offers the following programs: Little Books & Little Cooks, Family Storyteller, Fun to Play and Child Safety and Welfare, as well as the Kinship Program. Programs are offered at various locations throughout Clark County and are also taught in Spanish.

2) Clark County Parenting Project
(702) 455-529
www.clarkcountynv.gov

The Parenting Project offers a series of free programs to help parents and relative caregivers become more effective in raising their children. The following programs are offered at various locations throughout Clark County and are also taught in Spanish. They include: BabyCare, Nurturing Parents and Families, ABCs of Parenting, ParenTeen Connections and Blended Families.

3) Other agencies that offer free parenting classes are:

Nevada PEP
families with children with disabilities
2355 Red Rock #106
Las Vegas, NV 89146
(702) 388-8899
www.nvpep.org

St. Rose Dominican Hospital
(702) 568-9601
Henderson, NV
http://www.strosehospitals.org
(Family to Family programs, WIC)
Your Parks and Recreation Department may also offer parenting classes. Find the one closest to you and check. Contact information is on Page 72.

If parenting classes aren’t enough, it may be appropriate to seek therapeutic services. It is important to note that you and your spouse and, potentially other family members, need to participate in the assessment, counseling or other treatment. Effective intervention deals with the child in his or her environment, and the family is the primary and most critical part of that environment.

Getting the right information, diagnosis and treatment for mental health issues can be difficult, and you will need to be informed so as to advocate for your child. If a diagnosis is provided (described at the end of this chapter) you need to ask questions, get pamphlets, search the Internet or library, and consider joining a support group. **Nevada PEP (Parenting Encouraging Parents)** is a good place to start.

Listed in the next sections are possible choices for services for your child.
SELECTING A PROVIDER: INSURANCE AND PAYMENT

While most parenting classes (listed above) are free, all therapeutic services have costs associated with them. Begin with your medical insurance provider, be it Medicaid or insurance offered through your employer. There is usually a telephone number on the back of your insurance card. Call that number to identify providers that are connected with your insurance.

Questions to ask your insurance:

- What benefits are provided? (How many therapy sessions are covered?)
- What additional services are covered (assessment, medications, hospitalization, substance abuse services, etc.)?
- What are the limitations on coverage (restrictions due to the child’s age, diagnosis, services not covered, etc.)?

Questions to ask the provider:

- Do you have experience working with families, children of my child’s age?
- Do you have experience treating the issues my family is dealing with?
- Do you take my insurance? What will my co-pay be?

If your child is on Medicaid, you can get many mental health services without a co-pay. For help in obtaining a list of providers that will take Medicaid, you can call your Neighborhood Family Service Center listed on Page 84. Uninsured, or those who have exhausted their insurance benefits, can seek services through Nevada Division of Children and Family Services, listed below.

COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT SERVICES

Nevada’s Division of Child and Family Services
Mental health services are provided for children and youth with “fee-for-service Medicaid.” Services are also provided for children and youth who have no insurance or who have exhausted their insurance benefits. These are provided on a sliding scale, based on your income. Two programs are offered, depending on the age of your child.

**Early Childhood Mental Health Services** (birth to 6 years old) provides services to children with emotional disturbances or high risk factors for such disturbances. The goal is to strengthen parent-child relationships, support the family and enhance the child’s social and emotional functioning. Services include:
CHAPTER 9—BEHAVIOR OR EMOTIONAL ISSUES

- Behavioral and psychological assessments
- Family and individual therapies and behavioral management
- Psychiatric services
- Day treatment for children ages 3 to 6
- In-home crisis intervention
- Office-based and in-home counseling services
- Child care and pre-school consultation, outreach and training
- 24-hour, on-call, emergency professional coverage for clients.

Outpatient Services/Children’s Clinical Services (age 6 though 17) provides community-based outpatient, individual and family oriented mental health services:

- Individual, family, and group therapies and behavioral management
- Psychological assessment and evaluation
- Psychiatric services
- Crisis assessment and intervention
- Clinical case management
- 24-hour, on-call, emergency professional coverage for clients.

Children’s Clinical Services are accessed through one of five Neighborhood Family Services Centers. To determine which center provides services to your ZIP code area, call the West Center at (702) 486-0000.

**West Neighborhood Family Service Center**
6171 W. Charleston Blvd, Bldg 7
Las Vegas, NV 89146
(702) 486-0000

**South Neighborhood Family Service Center**
522 E. Lake Mead Pkwy.
Henderson, NV 89015
(702) 455-7900

**North Neighborhood Family Service Center**
4538 W. Craig Road, Suite 290
North Las Vegas, NV 89032
(702) 486-5610

**East Neighborhood Family Service Center**
4180 S. Pecos Road
Las Vegas, NV 89121
(702) 486-7500

**Central Neighborhood Family Service Center**
121 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Suite 172
Las Vegas, NV 89106
(702) 455-7200
NEVADA YOUTH CARE PROVIDERS

In seeking options for treatment for youth and teens, **Nevada Youth Care Providers** is an umbrella organization that maintains information for 24 agencies in Nevada. Collectively, these agencies provide a full range of services including:

- Assessment
- Office-based individual & family counseling
- In-home counseling and family preservation services
- Day treatment
- Respite care
- Residential treatment
- Psychiatric hospitalization.

**Nevada Youth Care Provider’s** website [www.nevadaycp.org](http://www.nevadaycp.org) provides a link to all of these other agencies, and you can learn up-to-date information about what each agency does, their payment structure and contact information.

PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS AND NON-PROFIT AGENCIES

Other options for outpatient treatment, many not a part of the Nevada Youth Care Providers network, include both private practitioners and non-profit agencies. It is always appropriate to check with your insurance provider (private or Medicaid) about help in paying for these services and all therapeutic services you require. If therapeutic services are available, the insurance company will provide a list of agencies and/or therapists that will accept your insurance.

**Foster Kinship** can provide referrals for children to receive psychiatric-social rehabilitation and basic skills training. They can also explain how Medicaid works with mental health care.

**Foster Kinship**
1530 Paradise Road
Las Vegas, NV
(702) 546-9988
[www.fosterkinship.org](http://www.fosterkinship.org)
VICTIM ASSISTANCE

If your child is the victim of a crime (including serious physical or emotional abuse) free counseling services may be available to him or her. Contact:

Victim Witness Assistance Program
Clark County District Attorney
200 Lewis Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 671-2525

PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALIZATION

A crisis in your child’s life may require in-patient psychiatric hospitalization. This is very expensive and reserved for only the most severe circumstances (when a child is at imminent risk of causing severe harm to him or herself or others). Several hospitals provide a mobile emergency response and will come to your home to assess your child.

Local psychiatric hospitals that provide care to youth and adolescents are:

1) Monte Vista Hospital
   5900 W. Rochelle Ave.
   Las Vegas, NV 89103
   (702) 364-1111
   www.montevistahospital.com

2) Spring Mountain Treatment Center
   7000 W. Spring Mountain Road
   Las Vegas, NV 89117
   (702) 873-2400
   www.springmountaintreatmentcenter.com

3) Desert Willow Treatment Center
   6171 West Charleston Blvd. Building 17
   Las Vegas, NV 89146
   (702) 486-8900
   www.dcf.sate.nv.us/DesertWillow.pdf
In the event of a crisis where your child is at risk of harming themselves or others, you could also call 9-1-1 and ask for police response. Depending on the severity of the behavior the police observe, your child may be taken to University Medical Center for assessment or, if he or she has broken the law, may be arrested and taken to Juvenile Justice Services (more information, Page 92). It is also possible that the police may not remove your child and will direct you to obtain counseling.

CHILDRENS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Many children suffer from a variety of mental health disorders, even children who have lived in healthy environments. However, children who have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect may come to you having experienced severe emotional trauma. Even babies and toddlers can suffer with mental health difficulties. It is important as relative caregivers that you be alert to the behaviors that may signal a serious problem or disorder in babies, young children and teenagers.

The following disorders are unfortunately common among children who are placed in foster homes as well as children who are being raised by grandparents or other kin. This information was taken in part from the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) www.aacap.org.

Anxiety is something that all children will experience throughout their childhood in one way or another. A child may experience anxiety or distress when being separated from a parent or close caregiver, or he or she may develop temporary fears such as fear of the dark. When anxieties become severe enough to interfere with normal daily activities such as going to school or playing with friends, a caregiver would do well to consult a professional for an evaluation and advice. Children with an anxiety disorder may experience the following:

- Constant thoughts and fears about safety of self and caregiver.
- Refusal to go to school.
- Frequent stomachaches and other physical complaints.
- Extreme worries about sleeping away from home.
- Overly clingy.
- Panic or tantrums at times of separation from parents or caregivers.
- Trouble falling or staying asleep or nightmares.
In infants and very young children, you may also notice:

- Serious distress when being separated from you or another parent figure.
- Restlessness.
- Fatigue or listlessness.
- Tantrums or extreme irritability.

Children with anxiety disorders may also experience phobias (irrational fears of specific things), obsessions, excessive worrying and low self-esteem.

**Depression** is defined as an illness when the feelings of depression persist and interfere with a child or adolescent’s ability to function. About 5 percent of children and adolescents in the general population suffer from depression at any given point in time. Children who are under stress, who experience loss, who have attention or learning difficulties, or who have conduct or anxiety disorders are at a higher risk for depression. Even babies and toddlers can be depressed. Depression also tends to run in families.

Children and adolescents who cause trouble at home or at school may actually be depressed but not know it. Because the youngster may not always seem sad, caregivers and teachers may not realize troublesome behavior is a sign of depression.

Early diagnosis and medical treatment are essential for depressed children. This is a real illness that requires professional help. Some of the symptoms of depression are the same as listed above under **Anxiety**.

**Reactive Attachment Disorder** is a complex psychiatric disorder that is characterized by serious problems in emotional attachment to others and is usually evident by age 5. It is associated with the inability of the child to bond with a parent or caregiver in infancy or early childhood.

Infants and children may exhibit the following behaviors:

- Severe colic and/or feeding difficulties.
- Failure to gain weight.
- Detached and unresponsive behavior.
- Difficulty being comforted.
- Overly familiar behavior with unfamiliar adults.
- Excessive irritability, sadness or fear.
- Pre-occupied and/or defiant behavior.
- Inhibition or hesitancy in social interactions.
Most children with this disorder have had severe problems or disruptions in their early relationships. This can be caused by various factors, ranging from abuse and neglect to the child being born prematurely and/or being hospitalized for severe medical problems.

**Conduct Disorder** is a complicated group of behavioral and emotional problems in children. Young children and adolescents with this disorder have great difficulty following rules and behaving in a socially acceptable way. They are often viewed by other children, adults and social agencies as "bad" or delinquent, rather than mentally ill. Some characteristics include:

- Aggression to people and animals.
- Destruction of property.
- Deceitfulness, lying, or stealing.
- Serious violations of rules.

Many factors may contribute to a child developing conduct disorder, including brain damage, child abuse, genetic vulnerability, school failure and traumatic life experiences.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** is not only experienced by adults. A child who experiences a catastrophic event may develop ongoing difficulties known as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The stressful or traumatic event typically involves a situation where someone's life has been threatened or severe injury has occurred. The child may have been the victim of, or witness to, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and violence in the home or in the community, an accident or a natural disaster. A child's risk of developing PTSD is related to the seriousness of the trauma.

A child with PTSD may:

- Show intense fear, helplessness, anger, sadness or denial.
- Learn to numb painful emotions in order to deaden or block the pain and trauma.
- Withdraw emotionally and detach from feelings.
- Have sleep problems.
- Experience irritability and angry outbursts.
- Obsess over the memories.
- Act younger than their age.
- Repeat behavior that reminds them of the trauma.
In infants, you may observe shaking or trembling, sleep problems, extreme fussiness or an exaggerated startle response.

**Sleep Disturbances/Disorders**

Children need the proper amount of sleep in order to function to the best of their abilities. Sleep problems are often associated with a number of conditions and medical problems. Regulating sleep patterns and ensuring that children are getting enough sleep can often decrease and in many cases eliminate problematic behaviors.

**ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)**

ADHD is a medical condition that affects how well someone can sit still, focus and pay attention. People with ADHD have differences in the parts of their brains that control attention and activity. This means that they may have trouble focusing on certain tasks and subjects, or they may seem "wired," act impulsively or get into trouble.

Although ADHD begins in childhood, sometimes it's not diagnosed until a person is a teen—and occasionally not even until someone reaches adulthood.

Because ADHD is a broad category covering different behaviors—attention, activity and impulsivity—it can show up in different ways in different people. Some of the signs of ADHD are when someone has several of these behaviors:

- Difficulty paying attention or staying focused on a task or activity.
- Problems finishing assignments at school or home and jumps from one activity to another.
- Trouble focusing on instructions and difficulty following through.
- Loss or forgetfulness of things such as homework.
- Distracted even when doing something fun.
- Problems paying close attention to details or committing careless mistakes.
- Trouble organizing tasks and activities.
- Difficulty waiting his or her turn.
- Interrupts or intrudes on other people.
- Blurs out answers before questions have been completed.
- Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms about when seated.
- Restlessness.
- Talks excessively and has trouble engaging in activities quietly.
Some parents, at some time, may find themselves and their child involved in the **Department of Juvenile Justice Services**. This is a brief chapter on what you may expect.

Many misdemeanor offenses, such as curfew and petty larceny, are referred to the juvenile court as a result of the police officer issuing the youth a ticket known as a “citation.” The citation is an order to appear at the Intake Office at **Juvenile Court** on a specific date and time. You or your spouse must also appear with the child. If the date is inconvenient, call the number on the citation and ask that the appearance time be changed to a more convenient time.

In instances of a felony offense, such as burglary or auto theft, as well as some misdemeanors, the police will “arrest” your child and transport him or her to juvenile court for “booking.” The child will be placed in handcuffs for his or her safety and that of the police officer’s. At booking, the child will be asked for identifying information and will be searched (again, for his safety and that of others) and will be placed into a cell. You will be contacted and directed to go to juvenile court immediately to meet with a juvenile probation officer (JPO). You can expect the JPO to inquire into all facets of your child’s life, including behavior, drug or alcohol use, school performance and other lifestyle choices. Your child will be asked about the offense he or she has been arrested for. If your child is viewed as a threat to community safety or at risk of not appearing for future court hearings, he or she may be detained in juvenile detention until a judge reviews your child’s case.

- 91 -
If your child admits guilt, or is found guilty at trial, the court will impose a sentence which can include a warning, order of payment of a fine or restitution, counseling, a period of supervision, or incarceration in a correctional facility. The severity of the sentence is based on the severity of the offense, your child’s record with the court and overall behavior.

There is not a single road map that will describe the outcomes of the more than 20,000 youth referred to juvenile court each year. In all cases, you will be asked for your input, will have the opportunity to ask questions, and should your child want an attorney and you cannot afford one, you will be offered legal counsel through the Public Defender’s Office. Should the court order counseling or other services, you are required to participate. If your child is placed in a correctional facility or treatment home you will be required to pay for part of the cost of his or her care based on a sliding scale.

Further information about Juvenile Court can be found at: www.clarkcountynv.gov and click on Departments and then Juvenile Justice. Particularly helpful is the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section.

Probation Juvenile Intake
Family Court Bldg.
601 N Pecos Rd,
LV, NV 89101.
(702) 455-5380

“Life of Crime” Program

“Life of Crime” is a special educational program designed to reach out to teenagers aged 12-17 and their parents. It is conducted in the courtroom of the North Las Vegas Municipal Court. "A Life of Crime" is a two-part program, lasting about 2.5 hours in total. For the date of the next program or to make a reservation, please call the North Las Vegas Municipal Court at (702) 633-1130, option #3.
CHAPTER 11

TAXI ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)

The Taxi Assistance Program, formerly Senior Ride, provides discounted taxicab fares to Clark County seniors 60 and older and persons with disabilities through coupon booklets that are accepted by all taxicab companies in Clark County. In 2013, you can purchase $20 coupon books for $10. Each person can purchase up to five coupon books each month. That's $100 worth of cab fare for $50.

Initial registration requires a personal appearance at the Nevada Division of Aging Services between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. A State of Nevada issued picture I.D. is required in order to verify age and residency, as well as an IRS Form 4506-T Request for Transcript of Tax Return to verify income. Those with a permanent disability who are under the age of 60 must also bring a letter from the Social Security Administration or their doctor stating such to prove eligibility. A two-person household must make less than $62,040 to be eligible.

Purchases can be made at the time of registration; subsequent purchases can be made through the mail.

Taxi Assistance Program
Division for Aging Services
1860 E. Sahara Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89104
(702) 486-3581
www.nvaging.net
Click on “Programs & Services” and then on “Taxi Assistance Program.”
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Operated by the **Regional Transportation Commission** (RTC), the CAT bus provides valley-wide bus service. Schedules and routes are available online at [www.rtc southernnevada.com](http://www.rtc southernnevada.com), click on *Public Transportation*. The website has a feature that allows you to enter your start and end destinations to receive a route. The RTC also has a mobile phone app that tells you when the bus is coming and where the nearest bus stop is. Discounted fares are available to youth ages 6 to 17, seniors 62 and over and persons with disabilities. You must first apply for a Reduced Fare ID card at either:

- **Downtown Transportation Center**
  600 S. Grand Central Parkway
  Las Vegas, NV 89106
  (702) 228-7433

- **South Strip Transfer Terminal**
  6675 Gillespie St.
  Las Vegas, NV 89123

The customer service booth is open 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Verification of identity and age is required (driver’s license, birth certificate or Medicare card).

**CAT Bus Passes**

The **Family Resource Centers** (FRC) can often assist with free bus passes for use on the CAT bus but call first to check. A list of FRCs can be found on Page 35.

**CAR SEATS**

You may now have responsibility for children who are still in car seats. Nevada law says all children younger than 6 or less than 60 pounds must be buckled in a child restraint system—either a car seat or booster seat, depending on the child’s age. Car seats should always be installed in the back seat because of the danger of air bags that protect front-seat passengers. Here’s what the experts advise:

- Babies 1 year and under ride in a rear-facing seat (longer if they still fit).
- Children up to 3 years old ride in a car seat facing forward.
- Children 4-7 ride in a booster seat.
- Children 8-12 continue to ride in the back seat with a seat belt on.
Properly Installing a Car Seat

Installing a car seat can be tricky. You can get help from several places:

1) **SeatCheck.org**
   National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration
   www.seatcheck.org
   866-SEAT-CHECK (866-732-8243)

2) **Family to Family Connection**
   St. Rose Dominican Hospitals
   (702) 568-9601

Getting a Car Seat

The **Department of Motor Vehicles** has a website with tips on what to look for if you are buying a car seat. It is [http://www.dmv.org/how-to-guides/buying-child-seat.php](http://www.dmv.org/how-to-guides/buying-child-seat.php). It also recommends several websites where you can buy a car seat. The information is at [http://www.dmv.org/marketplace/Child-Car-Seat.php](http://www.dmv.org/marketplace/Child-Car-Seat.php)

If you cannot afford a car seat, here are some places that might be able to help you:

1) **St. Rose WomensCare Centers of Excellence**
   100 N. Green Valley Parkway, Suite 330
   Henderson, NV  89074
   (702) 492-8000
   or
   7220 S. Cimarron Road, Suite 195
   Las Vegas, NV  89113
   (702) 616-4901

2) If you are working through the county Department of Family Services to be licensed as a foster family, you may be able to get a car seat through **Peggy’s Attic**, which provides donated items for families such as yours. Ask your caseworker.
IMMIGRATION ISSUES

IMMIGRATION ATTORNEYS

In conversations with immigration advocates and agencies that may have contact with undocumented residents, it has become clear that immigration issues are very complex. In fact this is one area of the law where “self help” is discouraged, for if court or immigration paperwork is filed improperly, you run the risk of bringing attention to yourself or to those you are trying to help. The filing of improperly prepared documents could actually result in deportation.

It is strongly advised that in all issues related to undocumented workers, green cards, naturalization and immigration you obtain the services of an attorney familiar and competent in immigration law (especially as immigration reform works its way through Congress and into law). To begin this search, you might contact the American Immigration Lawyers Association at www.aila.org.

Before hiring an attorney, check him or her out. Talk with friends and relatives and make sure this person is licensed to practice law in Nevada. You can find that out by going to the Nevada Bar website at www.nvbar.org and clicking on Lawyer Referral and Information Service. The telephone number is (702) 382-2200. Once you contact an attorney, ask about his or her success in getting legal residency for their clients by asking what percentage (or numbers) of former clients are now legal residents of the U.S.

If you are in the country without authorization, there are potential risks that may confront you. If you are taken advantage of, the unethical attorney, or person posing as one, knows you might not contact the police for fear of deportation.
RESOURCES

An agency that provides easy-to-understand information is the **Immigrant Resource Center** in San Francisco, California. They have published *Living in the United States: A Guide for Immigrant Youth*. This is available on the Internet at [www.ilrc.org](http://www.ilrc.org). A few of the helpful hints found in this guide are listed below:

“….Things Every Undocumented Youth Should Know”

Stay out of trouble with the law. In some places, police will hand your name over to immigration authorities. In many places, the police will not do that but if you commit a crime, it will make it harder to get legal status in the future.

- Don’t cross the border. Once you leave the country, you can’t legally re-enter the U.S.

- If you are working illegally, you should still pay taxes. This will improve your chances of getting legal papers in the future. See the section “How to get a green card” for more information. (This is in the *A Guide for Immigrant Youth* at the web link above.)

- If you’re male, register for the “Selective Service” when you turn 18. The immigration police will *not* see your information. Like paying taxes, this will make it easier to get legal papers in the future.

- Having a child will not help you become legal. Some people believe this, but it is not true.

- Do not lie and say you are a U.S. citizen when you are not. This could hurt your chances of ever getting a green card or get you deported.
In addition to the tips above, *A Guide For Immigrant Youth* also provides the following advice for youth with Lawful Permanent Residence (LPR) status. A lawful permanent resident card is also known as a “green card. These helpful hints are in addition to those listed above.

“…*Things Every Youth with a Green Card Should Know*”

- If you change your address, tell the immigration authorities immediately. You need to do this within 10 days of the move. Go to [http://www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) and click on “Change your address.”

- You need to get a new green card every 10 years. Your status doesn’t change, but you need to replace the card. Look at your green card to find its expiration date. You also must renew your green card at the age of 14 whether or not it has been 10 years.

- To travel outside the United States you need a passport from your home country. If you later become a U.S. citizen then you can use a U.S. passport.

- Don’t leave the country for long periods. If you are gone for six months you might have complications, and if it’s for more than a year, you might not be able to re-enter the United States. If you have a good reason to be gone for a long time, you can ask for permission. You need to do this before the trip if possible.

- Apply for U.S. citizenship when you are eligible.

Another resource that provides information about benefits available to immigrants is the [National Immigration Law Center](http://www.nilc.org) at [www.nilc.org](http://www.nilc.org).

If your parents are deported, call [Foster Kinship](http://www.nilc.org), a nonprofit agency, at (702) 546-9988. They can provide a referral to a center that may be able to provide services.
### IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

Use the following pages to help keep a record of important information.  
(Child Care, Parents, Mentor, School, Counselors, Doctors, etc.)

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**Raising Your Relative’s Kids: How to Find Help**

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ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

This informational guide was created with the generous assistance of caregivers and children in kinship families, social service agency heads and staff, educators and residents concerned about the thousands of families living in these not-so- unusual circumstances. All of their time and work was donated, and the information and insights they provided were invaluable. The result is “Raising Your Relative’s Kids: How to Find Help.” This guide, written in 2008, provides information that will remain relevant for many years.

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Sincerely,

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