

**NOW THAT YOU HAVE CUSTODY**

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# **Rights and Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers**

## **Resource Guide**



## CONTENTS

Introduction	2
<b>Resources</b>	3
Birth certificate/Social Security Card	3
Medical history and immunizations	4
<b>Services</b>	5
<b>Financial Assistance</b>	5
Child Support <i>Are you eligible to apply for it from bio parents</i>	5
When a grandparent should seek custody	5
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) <i>temporary cash help</i>	6
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) <i>formerly food stamps</i>	7
Women, Infants & Children (WIC)	7
Social Security Benefit Information	9
Early Learning Resource Center (Formerly CCIS) <i>Child care expense assistance</i>	9
Healthcare Assistance <i>General info about COMPASS site</i>	10
<b>Medical Services</b>	14
Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	14
Mental Health	14
Immunizations	15
School Health Readiness Program	15
Early Intervention Services	19
Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities (CADD)	19
Crisis Intervention	19
Head Start	19
Parents as Teachers	22
Nature's Classroom	22
<b>Education</b>	23
In Pennsylvania	23
Homeschooling	23
Rules governing opening private, non-public or non-licensed religious schools	27
Parochial Schools	29
Private Schools	29
Pre-schools	29
Pre-K Counts	29
<b>Other Financial Assistance</b>	31
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	31
Outreach Utility Assistance	32
Weatherization Assistance Program (WX)	33
Clothing Help	34
Food Pantries	34
Holiday Help	35
Housing Help	38
<b>Caring for the Caregiver</b>	40
Lancaster County Office of Aging	40
Lancaster County Senior Centers	40
Things you can try to improve family visits	41

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

All court ordered custody has two components, legal and physical. Legal custody involves the right to make long range plans and decisions for the education, religious training, discipline, non-emergency medical care and other matters of major significance concerning the child's welfare. Physical custody involves spending time with the child and making decisions about the child's everyday needs. The court may order legal and physical custody in a number of ways.

Custodian has the right to make medical and educational decisions for the child; parents are entitled to notification and may be included when appropriate.

Here are some of the steps you can take, if you have not already done so:

### 1) GATHER Documents

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security
- Medical History & Immunization Records
- Custody Order
- Education Records, i.e. transcripts, IEP, special service reports from previous schools

### 2) APPLY for Services, as needed:

- Financial
- Medical Assistance
- Healthcare, including Physical, Dental and Mental Health

### 3) ENROLL child in school, as appropriate

### 4) CARE for the Caregiver

***The information contained in the following document has been culled from publicly available sources. It is intended to be used as a reference guide to begin obtaining needed information, not as the final word in any one area. The organizations and agencies, nor their services, that are listed are not being specifically recommended as the best or most effective in the field and should not be assumed to be endorsed by COBYS.***

## RESOURCES

**Where can I get copies of my child's birth certificate and/or Social Security card?**

### **Birth Certificate –Certified Copy**

[www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov)

To **order** certified **copies** of **Pennsylvania birth certificates**, the eligible applicant must be eighteen (18) years of age or older. You may **order** a **copy** of your own **certificate** or one for an immediate family member (spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandparent or grandchild)

<https://www.vitalchek.com/birth-certificates/pennsylvania/pennsylvania-vital-records>

### **Things you may need to have in front of you**

- Temporary Custody Order
- Personal ID
- Personal Photo ID (Current driver's license,
- Current ID card issued by MVA,
- Current passport,
- Current Military IF for active personnel

### **Social Security Card or Replacement**

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

#### **Social Security Administration**

#### **Federal Government Office**

1809 Olde Homestead Ln #104,  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
(800) 772-1213

Monday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Tuesday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Wednesday 9:00am - 12:00pm

Thursday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Friday 9:00am - 4:00pm

Saturday Closed

Sunday Closed

Except On Federal Holidays

### **Bring the following documents with you:**

- Birth Certificate, certified copy
- TCO, original or certified copy
- Personal ID (See Birth Certificate Docs

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

AND One of the Following:

- Doctor, clinic or hospital record
- Religious record (e.g. baptismal record)
- Daycare center or school record or
- School ID

### **Medical History & Immunizations**

*Where can I go to get the child(ren) immunizations/vaccinations/shots/physicals?*

- Consult with your child(ren)'s primary care doctor
- PA state Health Department
  - Pennsylvania Statewide Immunization Information System
  - 877-774-4748 (website is difficult to navigate, I would call)
  - Email: [pasiis@state.pa.us](mailto:pasiis@state.pa.us)

## SERVICES

Information about many available services are on the 211 website.

<http://www.pa211east.org/Lancaster>

### ABOUT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

#### What types of financial assistance are available?

Financial assistance is available to caregivers on behalf of the child/ren in their care.

Kinship Caregivers *may* receive child support assistance from the child's parents if they are still alive. There are no income guidelines applicable to the *Kinship Caregiver* in order to receive **child support** assistance. However, if you choose to apply for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), as the *Kinship Caregiver* you must file for child support.

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF-temporary cash assistance)** is available to *Kinship Caregivers* when the child is a relative. The child's income only is considered in the application. Other benefits, such as **SNAP (Food Stamps)**, will consider the income of the family. **Medical Assistance** is automatically available to children receiving TCA. For specific information about benefits and how to apply, see the attached.

#### Can I get child support for my child(ren)?

Grandparents are not legally responsible to support their grandchildren unless a court orders you to pay support. ... Sometimes a court orders parents to support their children -- pay child support. If you are raising your grandchild, you may be able to receive child support. You should consult a family law attorney.

When a parent, for any reason, is not able to care for or retain custody of a child, grandparents may play a role in the care of the child. The role of grandparents in custody procedures can be very important.

#### Situations When A Grandparent Should Seek Custody

Grandparents that have to take care of a child for an extended period of time, may not always need to take up custodial duties for the child. For instance, if a parent needs the grandparents to watch a child for a short time period, such as a week or even a month, custody arrangements need not be made. However, in the case of the incapacitation, incarceration or death of a parent, the grandparents may make formal custody arrangements for the children.

#### Seeking Shared Custody or Visitation Rights

In many circumstances, shared custody with grandparents can be beneficial for the child, and the remaining parent alike. It may also help preserve the relationship between grandparents and child. Contact with grandparents may even help mend the relationship between the absent parent and child, depending upon the circumstances. Grandparents can seek out shared custody or visitation under these circumstances:

- One of the parents has died
- One of the parents has been incarcerated
- One of the parents is absent

### **Seeking Physical and/or Legal Custody**

Some circumstances may warrant greater action than partial custody or visitation rights. These situations often involve the loss of both parents, or when parental rights have been terminated. Grandparents may find it necessary to take care of the child themselves when neither parent is able to do so. Grandparents may want to seek out physical and legal custody in these situations:

- The grandchild may be at risk of parental abuse or neglect
- One parent has died, and the remaining parent is unfit for care of the child
- Both parents are deceased
- Both parents are incarcerated

Even if the situation warrants grandparents taking responsibility the child, the grandparents must still gain recognition through the court. Most of the time, grandparents may seem like the most immediate logical choice after the parents. Many times, the grandparents simply step in without even needing to be asked. Unfortunately, the ability to make decisions on behalf of a child with absent parents requires approval from the court. In order to apply for the physical and legal custody the grandparent must demonstrate in their application through evidence:

- The parents are divorced, or have been separated for over 6 months (The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has recently addressed the issue of whether grandparents can file for custody when the parents have been separated for more than 6 months)
- The child has lived with the grandparents for over 12 months, and they have provided the role of a parent for the child
- The child began their relationship with the grandparents at the consent of the parents or through a court order
- The grandparents can demonstrate genuine care and concern for the grandchild

### **Urgent Situations**

Sometimes, urgent situations may arise where the grandparent can play an important role in taking custody of the child. By requesting visitation or shared custody, grandparents can formalize an active role in the life of a child when an absent parent, for whatever reason, may not. This can help secure a relationship or link between the child and the absent parents through the grandparents. Doing so can help reduce the likelihood of the absent parent's involuntary termination of parenthood. An absent parent may not necessarily be absent by choice, such as in the case of incarceration, hospitalization, or military deployment. These situations are not abandonment or neglect, however, a parent's absence for over 6 months time can jeopardize their rights to parenthood, regardless of situation. Grandparents can facilitate contact between absent parent and child and prevent the situation from looking like neglect or abandonment.

### **TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE for NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)**

Reminder: *Requires filing for Child Support from Parents*

Assists families whom are caring for their relative's children with "child only" grants (based on child's income). *Kinship Caregivers*, regardless of their personal income, are eligible to apply for these grants on behalf of the children to whom they are related.

**Information and Application:**

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us>

**Documents Needed:**

- Social Security
- Birth Certificate
- Custody Order

**Lancaster County Assistance Office**

832 Manor Street

P.O. Box 4967

Lancaster, PA 17604-4967

**OFFICE HOURS:** 8 AM to 5 PM

Phone: 717-299-7411

LIHEAP (cash) 717-299-7543

LIHEAP (crisis) 717-299-7543

FAX: 717-299-7565

**Am I eligible for Food Stamps?**

**SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP), Family Income Based**

Formerly called the Food Stamp Program, *Kinship Caregivers* may apply for help with food purchases. Eligibility for this program is related to income of the *Kinship Caregiver's family*. These benefits help low-income households purchase healthy and nutritious food at any participating grocery store or other retailer using an electronic debit card.

**Eligibility:** The amount of food stamps you get will depend on the number of people in your household and on how much monthly income is left after certain expenses.

**Apply:** Same as **TANF** (see above)

**WOMENS, INFANTS & CHILDREN (WIC)**

Services & Benefits Provided By WIC:

- Nutrition & Health Education
- Breastfeeding Information
- Free Healthy food
- Referrals to other health and social agencies

**Eligibility:**

*Kinship Caregivers* receiving Medical Assistance for their child, infancy through age 5, automatically meet the income guidelines. For those not receiving Medical Assistance you must meet the income criteria guidelines, which will be determined at your WIC appointment. WIC applicants must reside in Pennsylvania; have a medical or nutritional risk (determined by a qualified nutritionist through a careful assessment of a participant's dietary, environmental, and medical history); and have a gross household income that meets the WIC Income Guidelines at right.

Family Size	Maximum Yearly Family Income
1	\$22,459
2	\$30,451
3	\$38,443
4	\$46,435
5	\$54,427
6	\$62,419
7	\$70,441
8	\$78,403



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### **Application:**

To set up an appointment to apply for WIC, call the WIC office. You will need to bring each person who is applying for benefits to this first appointment, including infants and all children up to age five. In preparation for your appointment, please bring the following items:

### **Documents Needed:**

- Birth Certificate
- Medical Assistance Card (Child's)
- Immunization Record
- Proof of Address

**Appointments** can be made at the following locations:

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### **Lancaster City**

601 S. Queen St.

Lancaster, PA 17603

717.509.3686

Toll-free: 1.800.732.0018

Fax: 717.431.2598

Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8a-5p

Extended hours until 7:00p on  
the first and third Thursday of  
each month

Friday 8a-1:30 p

### **Columbia**

406 Chestnut Street

Columbia, PA 17512

Phone: 717.684.0046

Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8a-5p

Friday 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

### **Ephrata**

40 E. Main St.

Ephrata, PA

Phone: 717.738.0355

Fax: 717.733.7140

Monday – Thursday 8a-5p

Friday 8a-1:30 p

### **Quarryville**

349 Buck Rd.

Suite 1

Quarryville, PA

Phone: 717.786.8542

Hours:

Tuesdays – 8a-5p

Friday 8a-1:30 p

### **WIC on Wheels**

Mobile Clinic

Lancaster County, PA

*Hours:*

Mondays: The Together  
Community Center  
3293 Lincoln Hwy East,  
Paradise

Tuesdays: Meadow Creek  
Family Practice  
435 S. Kinzer Ave, New  
Holland

Wednesdays: Salem United  
Methodist Church  
140 N. Penn St, Manheim

Thursdays: United Church of  
Christ  
247 S. Market St,  
Elizabethtown

**How do I get Social Security Survivor Benefits for my child(ren)?**

**Social Security Administration**

Contact SSA to secure financial payment for an eligible minor child whose deceased parent has paid taxes into the Social Security system.

**Social Security Administration  
Federal Government Office**

1809 Olde Homestead Ln #104,  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
(800) 772-1213

Monday 9:00am - 4:00pm  
Tuesday 9:00am - 4:00pm  
Wednesday 9:00am - 12:00pm  
Thursday 9:00am - 4:00pm  
Friday 9:00am - 4:00pm  
Saturday Closed  
Sunday Closed  
Except On Federal Holidays

**Can I get assistance for Child Care expenses?**

**Early Learning Resource Center (Formerly CCIS)**

ELRC provides childcare subsidies to income-eligible parents/guardians.

**Child Care Financial Assistance**

ELRC provides childcare subsidies to income-eligible parents/guardians with children under the age of 13 if the parents/guardians are working and/or enrolled in training or education programs. In addition, older children (ages 13 to 19) who are developmentally disabled and unable to care for themselves may also qualify for subsidized care. Parents may choose any child care facility that participates in the CCIS program. CCIS pays a portion of the childcare cost directly to the child care provider, and parents/guardians are responsible for a co-payment, based on family size and income.

Family Size	Maximum Yearly Family Income
2	\$32,480
3	\$40,840
4	\$49,200
5	\$57,560
6	\$65,920
7	\$74,280
8	\$82,640

**Eligibility**

The following table shows the ELRC Income Guidelines based on family size and maximum yearly family income to qualify for childcare subsidy (May 2017).

**Applicants must also meet the following conditions:**

- Each adult family member must work at least 20 hours per week, or be enrolled in a state approved training program for at least 10 hours per week and be working at least 10 hours per week.
- The hours of childcare must match the parents'/guardians' hours of work, education or training.
- The parent/guardian is responsible for paying the childcare provider the assigned co-payment. This co-payment varies according to income and the number of people in the family. Families only have one co-payment regardless of how many children they have in care.
- Parents/guardians must report all forms of household income including child support, Social Security, public benefits and any other income.
- The Children and Youth Agency handles referrals to the program for foster families. Income documentation is not necessary, but work hours must be validated.
- Teen parents are eligible to enroll and must attend an education program.
- Children are eligible for subsidies from birth up to age 13. However, if the child has been diagnosed as developmentally or physically delayed, he/she may be eligible for care through age 19, pending verification from a licensed physician.
- The availability of ELRC subsidies is based on the availability of program funding. If funding is not available at the time an application is approved, the child will be placed on a waiting list for future funding.

**For more information:**

**Lancaster City**  
601 S. Queen St.  
PO Box 599  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
Phone: 717.393.4004  
Fax: 717.399.3841

**Columbia**  
400 Chestnut St.  
Columbia, PA 17512  
Phone: 717.684.3333  
Fax: 717.684.2200

**Applications are on the Community Action Partnership website:**

<https://caplanc.org/our-programs/household-stability/early-learning-resource-center/financial-assistance-eligibility/>

**Is there Healthcare Assistance for the child(ren)?**

Check with your healthcare insurance provider to see if there is coverage for your child(ren).

**Contact COMPASS to get info:**

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us>

- Medical Assistance (including MAWD and Medicare Savings Program for Payment of Medicare Premium)
- Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- Medicaid For Former Foster Care Youth

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- Health Insurance Marketplace
- Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
  - Eligibility
  - Family Resources
  - Find CHIP Coverage
  - Frequently Asked Questions
  - THE PROGRAM
  - The Program
  - CHIP puts health coverage within reach for all uninsured kids and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance.
  - Apply for CHIP Today
  - Contact Us!
  - FEATURED
  - Featured
  - Enrollment Figures
  - Reasons to be Insured
  - Success Stories
  - What is CHIP?

### **Eligibility and Benefits**

Most kids receive CHIP for free. Others can get the same benefits at a low cost. If your income is below the lowest amount listed, your child or teen may be enrolled in Medical Assistance.

Use COMPASS to see if you qualify for CHIP and other human services in Pennsylvania. Opens In A New Window

### **How do I know if my child qualifies?**

Based on your family size and income, your child or teen may be eligible if they meet the following requirements:

- Under 19 years of age
- A U.S. citizen, U.S. national or qualified alien
- A resident of Pennsylvania
- Uninsured and not eligible for Medical Assistance

### **Information for Grandparents**

If you're a grandparent, coverage for your grandchildren is not based on your income, unless you have legally adopted the children. Read more to find out if you are covered.

### **Information for Immigrants**

Children legally residing in Pennsylvania are eligible for CHIP regardless of their parents' immigration status. Read more to find out if you are covered.

### **Benefits**

CHIP is there for your kids with quality, comprehensive health insurance coverage for routine doctor visits, prescriptions, dental, eye care and much more, including:

- Immunizations

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- Routine Checkups & Well Visits
- Prescription Drugs
- Dental, Vision, Hearing Services
- Emergency Care
- Mental Health Benefits
- Hospitalization
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Substance Abuse Treatment
- Partial Hospitalization for Mental Health Services
- Rehabilitation Therapies
- Home Health Care
- Maternity Care
- Hospice and Palliative Services
- Medically Necessary Orthodontia
- Autism Spectrum Disorder and Related Services

For additional questions about coverage and benefits, [contact a CHIP health insurance company](#).

### **Information for Grandparents**

If you are raising your grandchildren, one of your biggest worries may be how to keep them healthy and strong. Now, more uninsured kids and teens than ever are getting health insurance through CHIP.

CHIP offers free or low-cost health insurance to uninsured children and teens (up to age 19) who are not eligible for Medical Assistance.

Grandchildren that live with you due to a legal adoption may be eligible for CHIP. When you apply for CHIP, your income will only be counted if you have legally adopted your grandchildren. [Apply online](#) or [find a CHIP insurance company](#) in your county and give them a call!

CHIP's comprehensive, quality health care coverage includes:

- Doctor visits
- Prescriptions
- Dental, vision, eye care
- Emergency care
- Immunizations
- Hospital care
- And more ...

### **What if they don't live with me?**

As a grandparent, you are concerned about your grandchildren's health even if they are not living with you. If you are a grandparent whose uninsured grandchild does not live with you, [download a CHIP application](#) or [call a CHIP insurance company](#) and they will send an application for you to give to your grandchild's parents or legal guardians.

**Establish Physical, Dental and Mental Health of Child:**

- Request Medical Records from Parents or Physician
- Seek Mental Health Evaluation for Child: ‘trauma-informed’ therapy

***Where can I go to get the child(ren) immunizations/vaccinations/shots/physicals?***

- Consult with your child(ren)’s primary care doctor
- Harford County Health Department @ Woodbridge 410-612-1779

## **MEDICAL SERVICES**

### **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)**

#### **Dental Care**

CHIP provides dental care to enrollees. Contact your insurance provider to find participating dentists.

#### **Mental Health Treatment/Drug or Alcohol Abuse Treatment**

CHIP covers medically necessary drug and alcohol and mental health services. Both inpatient and outpatient services are covered.

#### **Children with Special Health Care Needs**

If your child has a special health care need or a chronic condition she or he may qualify for Medical Assistance and/or other services.

#### **Information on Private Insurance Options**

If you want to compare costs or are interested in family coverage, you may wish to obtain information on private insurance options. For other options for families and adults, please visit the PA Department of Insurance website or shop on the Federal Health Insurance Marketplace.

### **Mental Health Providers**

There are approximately 100 different mental health providers in Lancaster County. They range from individual counselors to multi-practitioner offices to providers located in hospitals. It is important to call the provider to ensure that they will accept your insurance, are able to treat children and are able to treat any pre-diagnosed conditions that may exist.

#### **COBYS Family Services**

1417 Oregon Road  
Leola, PA 17540  
717-661-3548  
[www.cobys.org](http://www.cobys.org)

COBYS Family Services' trained staff offer professional psychotherapy and support to individuals, couples, and families at locations in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties. COBYS therapists are providers for several insurance companies, and uninsured clients may qualify for an affordable sliding scale, based on income and family size. Here are the types of issues that our therapists address:

- Individual and Family Therapy
- Depression, anxiety, and other mood disorders
- Relational issues
- Family therapy
- Marital and couple's therapy
- Child and adolescent mood and behavior problems
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

### **Immunizations**

- Check with your child's doctor or public health clinic. However, doctor's offices and clinics may only keep immunization records for a few years.
- Check with your child's school. ...

### **Pennsylvania Statewide Immunization Information System (PA-SIIS)**

The PA-SIIS is a statewide immunization registry that collects vaccination history information. It was developed to achieve complete and timely immunization for all people, particularly in the age group most at risk, birth through two years of age. The PA-SIIS addresses this problem by capturing immunization information from health care providers and storing this information in one central location. If a patient receives immunizations from more than one health care provider, the PA-SIIS consolidates the immunization information from all providers to create a complete and current record.

### **Benefits**

#### **Parents and Registry Participants**

- Provides an official, easily attainable immunization history for school, camp and day care enrollment
- Assists with identifying missing immunizations
- Prevents unnecessary immunizations
- Consolidates, in one site, all immunizations a child has received

#### **Health Care Providers**

- Provides a complete and accurate immunization history for a new or existing patient
- Assists with vaccine management
- Produces immunization records for managed care, day care centers, schools and camps
- Electronically stores all required immunization data, which will assist with Vaccines for Children (VFC) and The Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS) reporting
- Reduces unnecessary paperwork
- Identifies populations at high risk for vaccine preventable diseases
- Helps prevent disease outbreaks

### **Contact Us**

Bureau of Health Statistics and Registries  
555 Walnut St., Sixth Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1914  
877-774-4748  
717-772-3258 (fax)  
pasiis@pa.gov

### **School Health Readiness Program**

Vaccinations are required for children to attend school in Pennsylvania. The Department of Health recently changed school immunization regulations – the provisional period in which students can attend school without their required vaccinations is now five (5) days. Children need not be immunized if the



## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

parent, guardian or emancipated child objects in writing to the immunization on religious grounds or on the basis of a strong moral or ethical conviction similar to a religious belief. Medical exemptions are also allowed. Many vaccination and exemption information links are date specific.

*Required for attendance. See attached or read detailed info below.* The following immunizations are required as a condition of attendance at school in this Commonwealth:

(1) ***Diphtheria***. Four or more properly-spaced doses of diphtheria toxoid, which may be administered as a single antigen vaccine or in a combination form. The fourth dose shall be administered on or after the 4th birthday.

(2) ***Tetanus***. Four or more properly-spaced doses of tetanus toxoid, which may be administered as a single antigen vaccine or in a combination form. The fourth dose shall be administered on or after the 4th birthday.

(3) ***Poliomyelitis***. Three or more properly spaced doses of either oral polio vaccine or enhanced activated polio vaccine, which may be administered as a single antigen vaccine, or in a combination form. If a child received any doses of inactivated polio vaccine administered prior to 1988, a fourth dose of inactivated polio vaccine is required.

(4) ***Measles (rubeola)***. Two properly-spaced doses of live attenuated measles vaccine, the first dose administered at 12 months of age or older, or a history of measles immunity proved by laboratory testing by a laboratory with the appropriate certification. Each dose of measles vaccine may be administered as a single antigen vaccine or in a combination form.

(5) ***German measles (rubella)***. One dose of live attenuated rubella vaccine, administered at 12 months of age or older or a history of rubella immunity proved by laboratory testing by a laboratory with the appropriate certification. Rubella vaccine may be administered as a single antigen vaccine or in a combination form.

(6) ***Mumps***. Two properly-spaced doses of live attenuated mumps vaccine, administered at 12 months of age or older or a physician diagnosis of mumps disease indicated by a written record signed by the physician or the physician's designee. Mumps vaccine may be administered as a single antigen vaccine or in a combination form.

(7) ***Hepatitis B***. Three properly-spaced doses of hepatitis B vaccine, unless a child receives a vaccine as approved by the Food and Drug Administration for a two-dose regimen, or a history of hepatitis B immunity proved by laboratory testing. Hepatitis B vaccine may be administered as single antigen vaccine or in a combination form.

(8) ***Chickenpox (varicella)***. One of the following:

(i) ***Varicella vaccine***. Two properly-spaced doses of varicella vaccine, the first dose administered at 12 months of age or older. Varicella vaccine may be administered as a single antigen vaccine or in a combination form.

(ii) ***Evidence of immunity***. Evidence of immunity may be shown by one of the following:

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- (A) Laboratory evidence of immunity or laboratory confirmation of disease.
- (B) A written statement of a history of chickenpox disease from a parent, guardian or physician.
- (c) **Required for entry into 7th grade.** In addition to the immunizations listed in subsection (b), the following immunizations are required at any public, private, parochial or nonpublic school in this Commonwealth, including vocational schools, intermediate unit, special education and home education programs, and cyber and charter schools as a condition of entry for students entering the 7th grade; or, in an ungraded class, for students in the school year that the student is 12 years of age:
- (1) **Tetanus and diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis vaccine (TdaP).** One dose if at least 5 years have elapsed since the last dose of a vaccine containing tetanus and diphtheria as required in subsection (b). TdaP may be administered as a single antigen vaccine or in a combination form.
- (2) **Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (MCV).** One dose of Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine. MCV may be administered as a single antigen vaccine or in a combination form.
- (d) **Child care group setting.** Attendance at a child care group setting located in a public, private or vocational school, or in an intermediate unit is conditional upon the child's satisfaction of the immunization requirements in § 27.77 (relating to immunization requirements for children in child care group settings).
- (e) **Prekindergarten programs, Early Intervention programs' early childhood special education classrooms and private academic preschools.** Attendance at a prekindergarten program operated by a school district, an early intervention program operated by a contractor or subcontractor including intermediate units, school districts and private vendors, or at private academic preschools is conditional upon the child's satisfaction of the immunization requirements in § 27.77.
- (f) **Grace period.** A vaccine dose administered within the 4-day period prior to the minimum age for the vaccination or prior to the end of the minimum interval between doses shall be considered to be a valid dose of the vaccine for purposes of this chapter. A dose administered greater than 4 days prior to minimum age or interval for a dose is invalid for purposes of this regulation and shall be repeated.

### **Exemption from immunization.**

- (a) **Medical exemption.** Children need not be immunized if a physician or the physician's designee provides a written statement that immunization may be detrimental to the health of the child. When the physician determines that immunization is no longer detrimental to the health of the child, the child shall be immunized according to this subchapter.
- (b) **Religious exemption.** Children need not be immunized if the parent, guardian or emancipated child objects in writing to the immunization on religious grounds or on the basis of a strong moral or ethical conviction similar to a religious belief.

Caregiver- may contact school nurse, the guidance counselor, or the Program Coordinator for appointments.

**Fee:** No one is denied services due to their inability to pay. The Program accepts both Medical Assistance and Private Insurances (exclusive of HMOs). Private pay clients' fees are based upon family income levels and family size.

## **Early Intervention Services**

[www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov)

While all children grow and develop in unique ways, some children experience delays in their development. Children with developmental delays and disabilities benefit from The Pennsylvania Early Intervention program, a state supported network of parents, service practitioners, and others which builds upon the natural learning opportunities that occur within the daily routines of a child and their family.

Early Intervention:

- Provides support and services to families with children birth to age five, who have developmental delays and disabilities
- Supports services and resources for children that enhance daily opportunities for learning provided in settings where a child would be if he/she did not have a developmental delay and disability.
- Provides families' independence and competencies.
- Respects families' strengths, values and diversity.

Early Intervention supports and services are designed to meet the developmental needs of children with a disability as well as the needs of the family related to enhancing the child's development in one or more of the following areas:

- Physical development, including vision and hearing
- Cognitive development
- Communication development
- Social or emotional development
- Adaptive development

Parents who have questions about their child's development may contact the CONNECT Helpline. The CONNECT Helpline assists families in locating resources and providing information regarding child development for children ages birth to age 5. In addition, CONNECT can assist parents by making a direct link to their county early intervention program or local preschool early intervention program. To make a referral for early intervention, please call the CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288 or at

[www.connectpa.net](http://www.connectpa.net)

### **Community Action Partnership of Lancaster County**

601 South Queen Street

Lancaster, PA 17603

717-299-7301

### **Lancaster County Early Intervention**

150 N. Queen Street #517

Lancaster, PA 17603

717-399-7323

- Early Intervention is intended to reduce the impact of developmental delays on a child.
- A child birth to age three is eligible for Early intervention supports if he or she has a 25% delay in any major area of development.
- An assessment is done by a team of child development specialists who visit the child in the home. If the child is eligible, an EI supports coordinator then helps the family create an Individualized Family Service Plan which details supports the child will receive.

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- Lancaster County Early Intervention supports children from ages birth to three years old. If you have a three to five-year-old, and concerns regarding their development, please contact the Preschool Age Early Intervention Program at 717-606-1601.

### **Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities**

1886 Roherstown Road  
Lancaster, PA  
717-735-1920

### **Crisis Intervention**

717-394-2631

### **Head Start**

- Head Start is a high quality, pre-kindergarten program for children ages 3 to 5 from income-eligible families.
- The program provides children with early childhood education, family support services, nutritious meals and health screenings.
- Head Start's early learning program emphasizes language, math, science, art, physical activity and social skills to prepare children for school success.
- Special services are available to ensure that all children can fully participate in the program.
- Head Start's early learning program emphasizes language, math, science, art, physical activity and social skills to prepare children for school success.

### **The Head Start Day**

- The Head Start program uses several formats to meet the varied needs of the local community. Children can be enrolled in a traditional classroom format that meets for either a half-day (3.5 hours) or a full day (6 hours), 4 days a week (Tuesday – Friday) during the school year.
- In some more rural areas of Lancaster County, Head Start services are offered in the home rather than the classroom. A Head Start home visitor meets with participating families weekly to help structure learning opportunities in the home setting. Head Start children and parents who live in the same local area get together at least twice a month for group play and learning opportunities.

### **Nutrition**

- Nutritious meals, including breakfast, lunch and a snack are provided to children attending the centers. Meals served depend upon the child's schedule (e.g. a child attending for the afternoon only will receive lunch and a snack, while a child attending only in the morning will receive breakfast and lunch). The Head Start Nutritionist ensures that any food allergies are addressed and also works with parents to assess their children's nutritional needs and help them plan healthy, affordable meals at home.

### **Health**

- All children enrolled in Head Start receive dental and health screenings with assistance for follow-up treatment as needed. The screenings help ensure that children receive their recommended immunizations and ensure that parents understand the importance of preventive health care.

### **Family Engagement**

- There are a variety of ways for parents to become active in Head Start from volunteering in the classroom to participating in program planning and decision-making. In addition, Head Start staff

Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

work with families to identify, establish and work toward individual goals based on specific family circumstances, and provide referrals to a broad range of community services as appropriate.

**Disability Services**

- Head Start supports children with disabilities and includes them in all services and activities. Our program works closely with Lancaster Lebanon IU 13 to set and implement individualized goals for children who would benefit from additional support. Using the Teaching Pyramid Framework, behavioral health staff provides support in classrooms to ensure the success of all children. In addition, mental health professionals are available for consultation as needed, and Head Start provides referrals to behavioral health providers if further services are required.

**Volunteer and In-Kind Opportunities**

- Head Start has many opportunities for volunteering and strives to build community partnerships that provide goods and services to the children and families we serve. The program welcomes classroom volunteers and appreciates donations in the form of books, school supplies and professional services. Please contact us for more information.

Family Size	Maximum Yearly Family Income
1	\$12,140
2	\$16,460
3	\$20,780
4	\$25,100
5	\$29,420
6	\$33,740
7	\$38,060
8	\$42,380

**Eligibility:**

- Eligible children must be between ages 3 and 5
- Homeless children, foster children and families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) funds for disabilities are eligible regardless of the income guidelines.
- Add \$4,320 for each additional person.

**Enrollment:**

- To enroll your child, please contact Bobbie Frick by email or by phone: bfrick@caplanc.org or 717.299.7301, ext. 3012.

**LOCATIONS:**

**Akron Elementary School**

125 S 11th Street  
Akron, PA 17501  
717-859-0400

**Burgard Elementary School**

111 S. Penn Street  
Manheim, PA 17545  
717.333.6732

**Brecht Elementary School (home-based)**

1250 Lititz Pike  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-291-1733

**Carol B. Winters Center**

57 Laurel Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717.295.1441, ext. 300  
Or, 717.299.7388, ext. 3012

**Clay Elementary School**

250 Clay School Road  
Ephrata, PA 17522  
717.333.1937

**Columbia Head Start Center**

815 Wright Street  
Columbia, PA 17512  
717.684.2706 ext. 302 or, ext. 304

Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

**CAP Childcare Center**

Francine Bunch  
601 S. Queen Street  
P.O. Box 599  
Lancaster, PA 17608  
717.299.7301, ext. 3066

**East Petersburg Elementary School**

5700 Lemon Street  
East Petersburg, PA 17520  
717.569.1211 Ext. 30133 or, Ext. 30204

**Elizabethtown**

800 East High Street  
Elizabethtown, PA 17022

**Highland Elementary School**

99 Highland Avenue  
Ephrata, PA 17522  
717.333.1953

**Lafayette Elementary School**

1000 Fremont Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717.615.5484

**Lititz Center**

Lititz United Methodist Church  
201 East Market Street  
Lititz, PA 17543  
717.625.3362  
Or, 717.333.3362

**Manor Middle School**

2950 Charlestown Road  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-872-9510

**Martic Elementary School**

266 Martic Heights Drive  
Holtwood, PA 17532  
717-284-4128

**Millersville University (home-based, opening Spring 2019)**

40 Dilworth Road  
Millersville, PA 17551

**Mount Joy Career & Technology Center**

Lancaster County Career and Technology Center  
432 Old Market Street  
P.O. Box 537  
Mount Joy, PA 17552  
717.653.3000, Ext. 3057  
Or, 717.333.8198

**Neff Elementary School (home-based)**

25 Valley Road  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-569-8502

**New Holland YMCA**

123 N Shirk Road  
New Holland, PA 17557  
717-354-4747

**Pequea Valley/Together Community Center**

3293 Lincoln Highway East  
Paradise, PA 17562  
717-468-4976

**Quarryville Elementary School**

211 S. Hess Street  
Quarryville, PA 17566  
717.464.1324

**Reamstown Elementary School**

44 South Reamstown Road  
Reamstown, PA 17567  
717-336-1531

**St. James Episcopal Church**

119 N Duke Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-397-4858

**Washington Elementary School**

545 S. Ann Street  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
717-291-6275 x 14003

**Parents as Teachers (PAT)**

- PAT offers a variety of services to teach effective parenting skills, provide early intervention and connect families with community resources.
- PAT is a home-visiting program that focuses on the parent-child relationship. The model provides services to families with children from prenatal through kindergarten. Participating families receive personal home visits, child screenings, group connections, parent workshops and referrals to community resources.

**Eligibility:**

- Participants must live in Lancaster County to participate in PAT. There are no income requirements or costs to participate.

**Nature's Classroom**

- Nature's Classroom is an outdoor early learning center and garden.
- Nature's Classroom gives our Child Care and Head Start students the opportunity to connect with the natural environment and learn outside traditional classroom walls during all four seasons.
- The community garden provides freshly harvested produce to CAP families and provides the ingredients for students to taste new, nutritious foods.
- Nature's Classroom includes a sand table, an outdoor chalkboard, a wooden stage, a sliding board, a water table, a tree stump story circle, and a separate infant area.
- Nature's Classroom is open to the community from 5:15 p.m. until dusk.

## EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) oversees 500 public school districts, more than 170 public charter schools, public cyber charter schools, Career and Technology Centers/Vocational Technical schools, public Intermediate Units, the education of youth in State Juvenile Correctional Institutions, Head Starts and publicly funded preschools, and community colleges. PDE also oversees policies related to public, academic, and school libraries, and the State Library of Pennsylvania.

### OUR MISSION

The mission of the Department of Education is to ensure that every learner has access to a world-class education system that academically prepares children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. Further, the Department seeks to establish a culture that is committed to improving opportunities throughout the commonwealth by ensuring that technical support, resources, and optimal learning environments are available for all students, whether children or adults.

### OUR VISION

Pennsylvania learners will be prepared for meaningful engagement in postsecondary education; in workforce training; in career pathways; and to be responsible, involved citizens.

[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)

**As a general rule of thumb, you should have the following commonly required documents ready so you can enroll your child in school:**

- A **birth certificate**.
- Proof of guardianship and or custody.
- Proof of **residency**. *(For homeowners -acceptable documents include the following: current utility bill (cable, non-cellular phone, or gas & electric) with service address indicated; for renters – acceptable documents include an original current lease (dates within 90 days of registration). Additional documentation (e.g. current utility bill) may also be required.*
- Record of immunizations.
- Common **application**.
- Emergency contact forms.

## Homeschooling

### *Pennsylvania Homeschool Summary*

*If you are homeschooling in the state of Pennsylvania, you need to follow these steps:*

1. **Ensure that you are allowed to teach:** Pennsylvania law requires that the homeschooling parent have at least a high school diploma or its equivalent.
2. **Submit an affidavit to your local superintendent by August 1st of each school year.** Along with this affidavit, you should submit your course objectives. These are available, upon request, from your advisor for all courses taken through Bridgeway Academy. Copies of the Elementary and Secondary Affidavits can be found below. Please note that if you have a tutor sign off on your affidavit, that tutor must be providing instruction to the student.



**3. Teach the required subjects:**

Children are homeschooled for a variety of reasons and some of these reasons may dictate the type of educational materials selected. For example, a family may be interested in a classical education or perhaps a faith-based curriculum.

Some options provide both curriculum and secondary oversight of the work (parents exercise primary oversight); these options are referred to as “umbrella schools.” When using an umbrella school, care must be taken to ensure the mandatory courses and graduation requirements defined by law are met; specific programs may need to be augmented to ensure this.

If a student begins a home education program after having been enrolled in a public or private school, all courses completed also apply to the home education program.

**Mandatory Courses**

Elementary school level (grades K-6), mandatory courses: English, to include spelling, reading and writing; arithmetic; science; geography; history of the United States and Pennsylvania; civics; safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires; health and physiology; physical education; music; and art.

Secondary school level (grades 7-12), mandatory courses: English, to include language, literature, speech and composition; science; geography; social studies, to include civics, world history, history of the United States and Pennsylvania; mathematics, to include general mathematics, algebra and geometry; art; music; physical education; health; and safety education, including regular and continuous instruction in the dangers and prevention of fires. Such courses of study may include, at the discretion of the supervisor of the home education program, economics; biology; chemistry; foreign languages; trigonometry; or other age-appropriate courses as contained in Chapter 5 (Curriculum Requirements) of the State Board of Education.

Note: the Chapter 5 (Curriculum Requirements) of the State Board of Education, mentioned in [24 P.S. § 13-1327.1\(c\)](#) as a resource to find other age-appropriate courses, has been repealed and replaced with *Chapter 4 Academic Standards and Assessment* ([22 Pa. Code Chapter 4](#)). Therefore, supervisors may consult 22 Pa. Code Chapter 4 for information regarding age-appropriate courses.

**Graduation Requirements**

The following minimum courses in grades nine through twelve are established as a requirement for graduation in a home education program.

- Four years of English
- Three years of mathematics
- Three years of science
- Three years of social studies
- Two years of arts and humanities

## Resources

There are sources for obtaining curriculum and support for a home education program.

### *School district resources*

A parent may choose to take advantage the planned courses, textbooks and other curriculum materials appropriate to the student's age and grade level used by the school district. These are available for borrowing simply by requesting them; there is no fee and the school district is legally required to lend them. See [24 P.S. § 13-1327.1\(f\)](#).

### *Additional resource suggestions*

- Public or private libraries
- Curriculum that may be purchased from many diverse sources
- Private cyber schools or other online courses (an enormous selection)
- Correspondence courses
- Umbrella schools (see the accompanying explanation)
- Homeschool cooperatives (Co-Ops)
- MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)
- Dual enrollment in classes at the public school district (at the discretion of the district)
- Enrollment in universities or other higher educational choices
- Selective classes at a private school (cannot be dually enrolled)
- Individuals who specialize in particular subjects
- Relatives
- Self-developed materials
- Internet materials

Note: all of these options are categorized as resources for home education programs and the source of educational materials is the supervisor's prerogative.

Homeschool co-ops are a great source of information for obtaining curricular materials, along with providing various kinds of support for those who homeschool. Some of these are listed on our [Home Education and Private Tutoring](#) homepage (*Support Groups and Resources*).

All that is necessary for obtaining credit for work completed in a home education program, regardless of the source of the curriculum, is for evidence of the work completed to be demonstrated in the portfolio. It is not necessary for the supervisor of the home education program to deliver all instruction personally.

## Umbrella Schools

An "umbrella school" is an alternative source of education which oversees the homeschooling of children to fulfill the requirements of a state government. In PA, it includes instruction that is neither a public school nor a "brick-and-mortar" private school. Examples may include such things as correspondence courses, online schools (except cyber *charter* schools, which are public schools) or any type of distance-learning school (e.g., webinar). Anyone using curriculum from such a source must operate as a home education program with all its legal requirements.

Umbrella schools are not registered with the state and PDE does not recognize a diploma issued by a non-registered school, although other institutions may. However, a home education program utilizing the

umbrella school's curriculum may obtain a PDE-recognized diploma. See the *Diplomas* section of this guide.

### **Dual Enrollment of Homeschooled Students**

A school district may allow students who are homeschooled (or privately tutored) to attend curricular classes in the district's schools, although they are not legally required to do so ([22 Pa. Code § 11.33](#)). Credits taken by dual enrollment also count toward mandatory course completion and graduation requirements in the home education program.

School districts have written policies regarding participation of homeschooled students in curricular programs, such as science classes, computer labs, the arts, and foreign language courses. Please contact your local school district for this information. Unlike extracurricular activities, the provision of these services is totally dependent on the school district's policy and not mandated ([22 Pa. Code § 11.41](#)).

The particular courses and the number of classes a homeschooled student may take by dual enrollment are determined by each school district's policy.

If a class taken by dual enrollment has an associated standardized test associated (e.g., Keystone exam, PSSA), the dually enrolled student must take the test unless they opt out for religious reasons via the provision of [22 Pa. Code § 4.4 \(d\)\(4\)](#).

Students taking a class with the school district by dual enrollment will be assigned a PAsecureID because they are counted with the school district in the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

### **Concurrent Enrollment of Homeschooled Students**

Concurrent enrollment programs are open to students who are enrolled in a school district, a charter school, an area vocational-technical school, a nonpublic school, a private school or a home education program ([24 P.S. § 16-1602-B “Concurrent student”](#)).

Concurrent enrollment is a program administered and developed by a school entity (such as a school district or an area vocational-technical school) and an eligible postsecondary institution that allows students to concurrently enroll in postsecondary courses and to receive both secondary and postsecondary credit for that coursework. The term includes an early college high school program, a gateway to college program or a middle college high school program ([24 P.S. § 16-1602-B “Concurrent enrollment program”](#)).

Concurrent enrollment programs have not been funded by the state for a number of years. However, [24 P.S. § 15-1525](#) and [22 Pa. Code § 11.5](#) are not the same as a concurrent enrollment program and participation by homeschooled students is at the discretion of the school district for this option.

### **Private Schools**

Students may not enroll in a private school and simultaneously be homeschooled; however, a student may take selective classes from a private school.

### **Standards**

Homeschool parents sometimes ask what content is appropriate to a given course. PA has certain standards which a homeschool parent may wish to explore in planning their own program. Nothing

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

requires a home education program to contain the same course content or to offer courses in the same order as the public school regulations.

CHAPTER 4. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT ([22 Pa. Code Chapter 4](#)) contains standards and rubrics for curriculum content for public schools students in various grades.

HINT: On the webpage for [Chapter 4 and Appendices](#), rather than using the hyperlinks at the top of the webpage, scroll down to the bottom of the page where there are assessment rubrics for various grade levels.

The appendices contain assessment rubrics for: (A) Reading; writing; speaking and listening; characteristics of the English language; research. (B) Science and technology. (C) Civics; government; economics; geography; history. (D) Arts and humanities; health; health, safety and physical education; family and consumer services. (E) Career education and work.

Additionally, the [PA Core Standards](#) contain these rubrics in PDF format and can be downloaded and printed. The [PA Core Crosswalks](#) drills down for more detail.

1. **Track your time.** You must document that you have completed 180 days or 900 hours for elementary students or 990 hours for high school students.
2. **Take standardized tests in grades 3, 5, and 8.** A list of the approved tests can be found [here](#), and Bridgeway Academy offers the Stanford Achievement Test each year if you need it.
3. **Prepare a portfolio to present to a certified teacher by the end of the school year.** The teacher's evaluation will need to be submitted to your school district no later than June 30th. Your portfolio should contain evidence of completed school work, documentation of days/hours completed throughout the year, a record of field trips, etc.

There are 14 entities connected with homeschooling in Lancaster County (this is not inclusive of the cyber options which add approximately 10-15 more options/resources). They operate separately and should be called individually for information about how they assist with this schooling option.

### **Opening a Private or Nonpublic School is governed by the Commonwealth**

The Private Academic School Law, Act 1988-11 (PDF), requires that "a private academic school operating in Pennsylvania shall obtain a license to do so, except colleges and universities, schools maintained or classes conducted by employers for their own employees where no fee or tuition is charged, schools or classes owned or operated by or under the authority of bona fide religious institutions or by the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof, schools for the blind or deaf receiving Commonwealth appropriations, or schools accredited by accrediting associations approved by the State Board of Education; however, such schools can choose to apply for licensure."

#### Licensing a Private Academic School

To apply for a license to conduct a private academic school, a school owner shall review and comply with the Regulations Governing the State Board of Private Academic Schools. Upon review of the regulations, the Division of Planning requires that the education director and owner attend an in-service seminar held

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

usually the first Tuesday of the month at 1:15 PM by the division staff. The in-service is only held at the Department of Education in Harrisburg, PA and you must have a confirmation letter/email to attend this in-service. Please email [ra-nppss@pa.gov](mailto:ra-nppss@pa.gov) to sign up. At the time of your attendance, you will receive the licensure application.

Please note that the Division does not mail the private academic licensure application.

After reviewing the fully completed application packet, a Division staff member will contact the owner or education director to schedule an onsite visit of the school, at which time staff will take measurements and pictures of the rooms.

Once the application is deemed complete the licensure application will be presented at a meeting of the State Board of Private Academic Schools, at which time the State Board of Private Academic Schools will approve or deny the application. The education director and teacher familiar with the proposed school will be requested to attend this meeting. If the Board approves the application, the school shall receive an approval letter, and then the license to display in the school.

### Private Academic License Renewal

A private academic school license is renewed annually on the anniversary date of the license. The annual renewal fee is based on the enrollment and category of the license held by the school. A renewal packet and invoice is submitted to the school's education director 60 days prior to the license expiration date. The school owner and/or education director is responsible for submitting the renewal application and fee to the Division prior to the expiration date. Upon confirmation of compliance, the renewal license will be issued.

If the school is not compliant, the owner has 90 days to resolve the noncompliance issues. Upon reaching the 90-day deadline, if the issues are not resolved, the renewal license is denied and the school has 10 days to appeal the denial.

### Registering a Nonpublic/Non-licensed School

The Pennsylvania School Code, Section 13-Pupils & Attendance 24 P.S. 13-1327 requires a school that be owned or operated by or under the authority of a bona fide religious institution to be registered with the Department of Education by filing the notarized Affidavit/Certificate of Nonpublic Non-licensed Day School Operated by a Bona Fide Church or Other Religious Body in Pennsylvania (PDF).

A nursery/preschool owned or operated by or under the authority of a bona fide religious institution is exempt from registration since it is not a school age grade level school. The school owner can, however, choose to apply for a private academic school license through the Pennsylvania Department of Education or a certificate of compliance to operate the nursery/preschool level through the Department of Human Services, Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

Informational packets for constituents/owners who want to operate a nonpublic/non-licensed religious school under the Pennsylvania Department of Education can be obtained by contacting the Non-Public /Non-Licensed school area at [ra-nppss@pa.gov](mailto:ra-nppss@pa.gov).

### **Parochial Schools**

For information contact  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg  
4800 Union Deposit Road  
Harrisburg, PA 17111  
717-657-4804

### **Private Schools**

There are 57 private schools in Lancaster County: religious, secular, single-gender, all school levels. They operate separately and should be called individually for information.

### **Pre-schools**

There are approximately 46 pre-schools in Lancaster County: public, private, religious and secular. They operate separately and should be called individually for information. Pennsylvania early learner provider requirements can be found at

<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/provider/earlylearning/earlylearningproviderrequirements/index.htm> Additionally, the Commonwealth does offer Pre-K Counts as an option. [www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)

### **Pre-K Counts**

- Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts (Pre-K Counts) provides quality half-day and full-day pre-kindergarten to eligible 3 and 4 year olds in Pennsylvania.
- Pre-K Counts is designed for children who:
  - Are between age 3 and until the entry age for kindergarten;
  - Are at risk of school failure and living in families earning up to 300 percent of the federal income poverty level (such as a family of four earning \$72,900) who may also be English language learners or have special needs.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Why does my child need to attend a high-quality pre-kindergarten program?**

- Children who come to kindergarten without all the skills they need often stay behind and struggle in school. Quality pre-kindergarten prepares children for reading and math, but also for paying attention, following directions and getting along with others.
- Pre-kindergarten gives children a chance to learn, become excited about school and be better students.
- By enrolling your eligible child in quality pre-kindergarten, your child has a better chance of being ready for kindergarten and grade school. This strong early start in pre-kindergarten means they have a better chance of doing well in school, going on to college or career training, and getting a good job. All of this can start by enrolling your child in a Pre-K Counts classroom!

#### **What can I expect from a Pre-K Counts classroom?**

Pre-K Counts classrooms will:

- Have teachers with the education and expertise to teach young children;
- Use a curriculum that will help your child grow, academically and socially;
- Regularly review your child's progress and choose teaching and learning activities that are best for your child;
- Help you and your child adjust to pre-kindergarten and smoothly move on to kindergarten;

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- Offer a small class size (20 students per one teacher and one aide) so that your child can have plenty of one-on-one time with the teachers.
- By enrolling your eligible child in Pre-K Counts, you can give your child a great start to a bright future.

### **How much does Pre-K Counts cost?**

- Pre-K Counts is free to eligible families. Providers may charge for non Pre-K Counts programming such as wraparound child care.

### **How can I enroll my child in a Pre-K Counts classroom?**

- Contact the Pre-K Counts program directly for enrollment information. There are Pre-K Counts classrooms in most of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. To find one near you, visit [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us) and click on "Early Learning and Development Programs," "Find a Provider," "Preschool," and PA Pre-K Counts.

### **Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program**

- The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) administers the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program. This program, for existing Head Start grantees, provides state funds to supplement federal allocations to expand high quality pre-kindergarten Head Start services for eligible children throughout Pennsylvania. Head Start Programs may enroll additional three or four-year-old children and/or expand full day and full year service opportunities for children and families.
- Participating Head Start programs have demonstrated the need for additional Head Start services in their service area; the ability to expand, either independently or in cooperation with a local school district, a licensed child care center or registered family child care home; the ability to comply with federal Head Start and state child care requirements for Head Start provided extended day services, if applicable; and the ability to work collaboratively with child care, if a child care collaboration is used for extended day services.

## OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### **Tabor Community Services**

308 E. King Street, Lancaster, PA 17602

717-397-5182

[www.tabornet.org](http://www.tabornet.org)

- Barshinger Financial Empowerment Center
- More integrated and holistic view of finances focused on debt management/credit counseling
- Certified counselors to help work on credit scores
- 1<sup>st</sup> time home buyers program
  - Set up to understand the process as early as possible
  - Matched savings program
    - Will match money 2-1 up to \$1000 to save/help with down payment
- Not a mandatory crossover between housing and financial aspects of Tabor
- Workshops on finances available to Community, not just those getting other services
  - Core financial literacy workshops (free and open to public) taught by banking professionals
    - 2 times per week
    - Banking basics
    - Loans (predatory lending)
    - Budgeting basics

### **Energy Assistance, Utility Help**

#### **LIHEAP (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program)**

##### **Lancaster County Assistance Office**

832 Manor Street

Lancaster, PA 17604

717-299-7543

Statewide Hotline 866-857-7095

Statewide Customer Service Center 877-395-8930

Cash/Crisis Winter months only

[www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov)

LIHEAP helps families living on low incomes pay their heating bills in the form of a cash grant. Crisis grants also are for households in immediate danger of being without heat. With cash grants, a one-time payment is sent directly to the utility company/fuel provider, and will be credited on your bill. Cash grants range from \$200 to \$1,000 based on household size, income, and fuel type. Remember: This is a grant and does not have to be repaid.

#### **Eligibility**

- You must meet income guidelines
- You don't have to be on public assistance
- You don't need to have an unpaid heating bill
- You can rent or own your home
- Here are the LIHEAP income requirements for 2018-19:



## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- |                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Household size</u> | <u>Income limit</u> |
| 1                     | \$18,210            |
| 2                     | \$24,690            |
| 3                     | \$31,170            |
| 4                     | \$37,650            |
| 5                     | \$44,130            |
| 6                     | \$50,610            |
| 7                     | \$57,090            |
| 8                     | \$63,570            |
| 9                     | \$70,050            |
| 10                    | \$76,530            |
- For every additional person: Add \$6,480

### How to Apply

To apply, you will need: names of people in your household, dates of birth for all household members, Social Security numbers for all household members, proof of income for all household members, and a recent heating bill. There are three ways to apply for LIHEAP: online ([www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us)), on paper (download and print from [www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov)), or in person (at Lancaster County Assistance Office). After your application is reviewed, you will receive a written notice explaining your eligibility and the amount of assistance you will receive. Please allow 30 days for a response.

### Crisis Grants

Households experiencing a heating crisis may be eligible for additional benefits through the LIHEAP crisis program. Emergency situations include:

- Broken heating equipment or leaking lines that must be fixed or replaced
- Lack of fuel
- The main heating source or second heating source (a source that is used to operate the main heating source or used if the main heating source is not working) has been completely shut-off
- Danger of being without fuel (less than a 15-day supply)
- Danger of having utility service terminated (you've received a notice that service will be shut off within the next 60 days)

### Outreach Utility Assistance

Provides emergency assistance and service planning to individuals and families who are facing financial hardships. The program provides support with utility payments for UGI and PPL customers to help reduce utility debt and arrange for more manageable payment options going forward.

The team also provides referral services to customers who need information and assistance in accessing other community resources such as housing, food, clothing and other needs. Specialized resource and referral services are available to support older adults.

### Eligibility

Outreach Income Guidelines

Family Size	Maximum Yearly Family Income
1	\$18,090
2	\$24,360
3	\$30,630
4	\$36,900
5	\$43,170
6	\$49,440
7	\$55,710
8	\$61,980

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

Please schedule an appointment with your local CAP office to determine if you are eligible for services. Utility assistance requires an active utility account and you must meet the income guidelines listed below.

### LOCATIONS:

#### **Lancaster City**

601 S. Queen St.  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
Phone: 717.299.7301  
Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Friday – 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

*(walk-ins welcome)*

\* Closed from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. daily

#### **Columbia**

400 Chestnut Street  
Columbia, PA 17512  
Phone: 717.684.8047  
Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Friday – 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

*(walk-ins welcome)*

\* Closed from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. daily

#### **Ephrata**

40 E. Main St.  
Ephrata, PA 17522  
Phone: 717.733.6562  
Hours:

Monday – 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday – 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.\*\*

Wednesday – 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Thursday – 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.\*\*

Friday – 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

*(walk-ins welcome)*

\* Closed from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. daily

\*\* Tuesday and Thursday afternoons by appointment only (home visits)

#### **Quarryville**

349 Buck Rd.  
Suite 1  
Quarryville, PA 17566  
Phone: 717.786.4468  
Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

\* Closed from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. daily

#### **United Way of Lancaster County**

630 Janet Avenue  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-394-0731

### **Weatherization Assistance Program (WX)**

Pennsylvania's Weatherization Assistance Program increases energy efficiency in homes by reducing energy costs and increasing comfort while safeguarding health and safety.

#### **Uses:**

On site energy audits are conducted to assess conditions in homes and to identify the most cost-effective energy saving measures to be installed. Weatherization services include but are not limited to:

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- Blower door guided air sealing to effectively locate and reduce air-leakage throughout the home
- Installation of attic, wall, basement and crawlspace insulation and ventilation to reduce energy loss
- Heating system modification or replacement to increase the efficiency and/or safety of the heating system
- Minor repairs, and/or health and safety measures are provided (when necessary) to allow the safe and effective installation of the weatherization measures
- Client education on the proper use and maintenance of the installed Weatherization measures and ways to reduce energy waste everyday

### **Eligibility:**

Low-income individuals (at or below 200% of the federal poverty level), with priority given to higher risk residents such as the elderly, disabled individuals, families with children and high energy users.

### **Funding:**

The average expenditure per household is \$7,105 depending on the home audit results.

All Energy Assistance programs are facilitated by the agency listed below that serves Lancaster County:

### **Community Action Agency of Delaware County**

1414 Meetinghouse Road  
Boothwyn, PA 19061  
610-521-8770

### **Clothing Help**

#### **Lancaster County Council of Churches**

812 N. Queen Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-291-2261

### **Food Pantries**

These entities have their own eligibility requirements and should be contacted directly.

#### **Alpha Omega Church-The Brethren**

708 Wabank Rd  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-394-3021

717-393-8379

#### **Community Action Program**

33 E. Farnum Street  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
717-299-3943

#### **Assembly of Christian Churches**

220 W. King Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-295-7539

#### **Conestoga Valley Christian Community Services**

2420 Gehman Lane  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
717-208-3711

#### **Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church**

450 E. Strawberry Street  
Lancaster, PA 17602

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

### **Crispus Attucks Community Center**

407 Howard Avenue  
404 S. Duke Street  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
717-394-6604

### **Ebenezer Baptist Church**

701 N. Lime Street  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
717-392-4292

### **Emerald Foundation Community Campus**

2120 Oregon Pike  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-560-7572

### **Lancaster Brethren In Christ Church**

1865 Fruitville Pike  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-569-5011

### **Lancaster County Council of Churches**

812 N. Queen Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-291-2261

### **Lititz Warwick Community Chest**

200 W. Orange Street  
Lititz, PA 17543  
717-627-0770

### **New Creation United Methodist Church (Bilingual)**

10 W. Farnum Street

Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-393-3035

### **New Holland Area Food Bank**

221 E. Main Street  
New Holland, PA 17557  
717-354-5722

### **Salvation Army**

131 S. Queen Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-397-7565

### **St. John's Episcopal Church**

321 W. Chestnut Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-299-1188

### **United Way of Lancaster County**

630 Janet Avenue  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-394-0731

### **Water Street Mission**

210 S. Prince Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-393-7709

### **\*Pet Pantry of Lancaster County**

26 Millersville Road  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-983-8878

## **Holiday Help**

### **Brownstown Area Churches**

14 School Lane Avenue  
Brownstown, PA 17508  
717-656-7570

Home delivery of Christmas meals is available, and they also serve one to families and children at a local Lancaster site.

**Columbia Christmas Ladies**

Location is 10th and Mifflin Streets

Columbia, PA 17512

717-397-2267

Using reservations, a free Christmas meal can be served, and the elderly, disabled, and homebound can receive transportation as well.

**Conestoga Valley Christian Community Services**

2420 Gehman Lane

Lancaster, PA 17602

717-208-3711

The services around the holiday include Christmas Eve Food Box Giveaway, Adopt a family, and referrals to financial aid and other local charities, such as for clothing or more.

**Cross Roads Brethren in Christ Church**

800 Donegal Springs Road

Mount Joy, PA 17552

717-653-1616

**East Donegal/Conoy Area Christian Charity**

Coffee Goss Road

Maytown, PA, 17550

**Ephrata Area Social Services**

227 North State Street

Ephrata, PA 17522

717-733-0345

Gifts, toys, and more are available in the Ephrata and Cocalico region of Lancaster County and Pennsylvania.

**First Baptist Church**

612 North Duke Street

Lancaster, PA, 17602

717-392-8818

**Holiday Hope**

717-826-3272

Toys, gifts, and more is provided for low income families. They also offer Thanksgiving assistance too.

**Lancaster County Council of Churches**

Address: 344 North Marshall Street

Lancaster, PA, 17602

717-291-2261

Various Christmas programs are run. Presents for children, food baskets for single moms, and free toys may be passed out as the result of donations. They also offer shelter for the homeless, financial aid, and other assistance.

**Lancaster County Project for the Needy**

They run the Christmas Food Basket for the county. All holiday assistance is first come and served, and there are free groceries and other items passed out.

**Lititz Warwick Community Chest, Food Bank**

Lititz, PA, 17543

717-627-0770

Groceries and food items are passed out so people can get a free meal.

**MHA, Holiday Gift Project**

Address - 630 Janet Avenue

Lancaster, PA, 17601

717-397-7461

Free gifts and holiday joy is for people in hospitals as well as the disabled in the community.

**Salvation Army**

131 South Queen Street

Lancaster, PA 17603

717-397-7565

Programs such as Angel Tree can provide free gifts, winter coats and toys to children of all ages. There are also food baskets and they offer many other social services, such as financial aid, vouchers for winter clothing, Thanksgiving turkey dinners, and more. This is in addition to the Christmas programs.

**Share the Blessing Non-profits**

This agency supports all of Susquehanna Valley. They collect food, gifts, toys, and more, and then provide them to low income and struggling families. Vouchers and gifts certificates may be offered too for families with children, including single parents. [www.sharetheblessing.com](http://www.sharetheblessing.com)

**St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church**

Address is 929 North Duke Street

Lancaster, PA, 17602

717-392-2225

Free meals are available from volunteers. There may also be small gift baskets, games, or toys for children from struggling or unemployed families.

**St. John's United Methodist Church**

3001 Lincoln Highway East

Paradise, Pennsylvania, 17562

717-687-6711

Food baskets, small gifts for children, and other Christmas help is offered.

**St. Joseph Church**

440 St. Joseph Street

Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 17603

717-397-6921

There may be Thanksgiving meals, small gifts for kids, and Christmas food baskets. Applications are for Lancaster families living in poverty.

### **Toys for Tots in Lancaster County**

Several non-profits and charities participate. They collect new, unwrapped toys for kids, infants, and even teenagers. Books, games, clothes, and more may be passed out for Christmas. Apply at <https://lancaster-pa.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-sites/request-toys.aspx>

### **Trinity Evangelical Congregational Church**

44 East Orange Street

Lititz, Pennsylvania, 17543

They **only have a community meal** at Christmas. Telephone number is 717-626-2175

### **Water Street Ministries Outreach Ministries**

Lancaster, PA, 17604

717-393-7709

Free holiday food boxes for Thanksgiving, Easter and Christmas is offered to low income and working poor families.

### **West Green Tree Church of the Brethren**

740 Greentree Road

Elizabethtown, PA 17022

717-653-5367

Free meals, toys, and gift baskets may be provided, such as a Turkey, Ham, and more.

### **Housing Help**

**MUST CALL 211 (CHART) FIRST**

### **Lancaster County Council of Churches**

812 N. Queen Street

Lancaster, PA 17603

717-291-2261

Winter Shelter at the YWCA 110 N. Lime Street, Lancaster, PA 17602.

### **Tabor Community Services**

308 East King Street

Lancaster, PA 17602

717-397-5182

[www.tabornet.org](http://www.tabornet.org)

Go to the website to get more information about these options:

- **Transitional Living Center (TLC)**-Old hotel with different populations providing emergency services for families
  - They will serve all except unaccompanied minors (current DV, D&A, recently released from prison/hospital...none are problems). No convicted sex offenders at TLC.
  - No rigid D&A policy except not on premises. Will do voluntary drug tests for those in recovery to help with goals
  - Overnight guests are strongly discouraged. Not a “visitation site,” but reunification is fine
- **Veteran’s Victory House**-through the VA

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- **Reentry Mgmt Organization**-with LC Prison (UW Reunify, Empower, Prevent Collaborative)
- **Shelter To Independent Living (STIL)**-rapid rehousing program
  - Tabor will help find a place to live, pay rent for a short time to help stabilize a family's situation
  - Receive counseling for up to one year after
- **PATH**-Mental Health Housing. FT case manager that covers the supportive services provided through the 7 contracts Tabor has with 7 subsidized credit houses. Referrals come directly from BH/DS
- **Permanent Supportive Housing**
  - Market View-all Section 8 housing
  - Hearthside-rental apartments
- **Beth Shalom House of Peace**
  - Privately run Female only reentry housing with faith component
  - 5 apartments, typically available for 2 years max



## **Caring for the Caregiver**

*What support services are available for the caregiver and why are they important?*

Support groups and workshops and educational classes can be an important resource to discuss and resolve family dilemmas with peers who are going through similar situations. You can learn more about other community resources, create a network connection, and have an opportunity to share your circumstances with people who really understand and will not be judgmental.

### **COBYS Family Services**

Kinship Navigation  
444 Murry Hill Circle  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-435-8139 ext. 210

### **Lancaster County Office of Aging**

150 N. Queen Street #415  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-299-7979

### **Lancaster County Senior Centers**

#### **Columbia Senior Center**

510 Walnut Street  
Columbia, PA 17512  
717-684-4850

#### **Lititz Senior Center**

201 Market Street  
Lititz, PA 17543  
717-626-2800

#### **Lancaster Neighborhood Senior Center**

33 E. Farnum Street  
630 Rockland Street  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
717-299-3943

#### **Spanish American Civic Association (SACA)**

545 Pershing Avenue  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
717-397-6267

#### **Lancaster Recreation Commission**

525 Fairview Avenue  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717-392-2115

#### **Westminster Place at Long Community**

600 Roseville Road  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-381-4930

### Things you can try to improve family visits

You know that for long term wellbeing of your grandchildren it is best if they are bonded to their biological parents. Here are some ideas that might help you make the visits successful.

**Key thought:** More and better planning—if possible—is often the key to improving visits that are emotionally upsetting, confrontational or infuriating

First, it's not your fault if...

Children may have negative reactions after visits, even visits that went well. A caregiver mom put it this way:

*“Sometimes they come back and they are kind of sad. I think it is because they want to be with their parents... You get a lot of different reactions from children when they go on visits. Some kids will have nightmares the night before or have trouble sleeping. Some will have nightmares that night when they get back home. Wake up in the middle of the night crying.”*

***You may also see other behaviors that signal how stressed children are after visiting their birthparents***

- Crying, sometimes excessively
- Sadness and disappointment
- Acting out, such as ignoring grandparents or other family members
- Give them comfort, space and time.

***The Research says...***

- Written schedules encourage bps to stick to visitation plans and often lead to more visits.
- Children whose bps visit at least once a week tended to rate their parents as normal or healthy.
- Children who were visited at least once every two weeks showed fewer behavioral problems.
- Overall, children who had frequent contact with their parents showed less anxiety and depression and were more likely to have high well-being ratings.

***Try these steps for better parent visits.***

1. Before the visit - The more you can plan ahead, the better.

**Preparation and pre-planning are key.**

- Schedule visits. Research shows visits go better when there is a **written plan** that addresses frequency, time spent, and who will visit.
- For infants and young children, more frequent and shorter visits is best.
- Visits should be structured to give parents the **opportunity to practice** parenting skills.
- Consider arranging times that include challenging situations such as meal times and bedtimes. Parents' visits ideally include **important events** such as doctor appointments, school programs.
- Consider visiting outside your home or the bp's home. Find out what your grandchild would like to do and try and arrange this activity.
- Volunteer to **provide transportation** to and from visit, if possible.
- Avoid withholding visits as a form of punishment.

## Now that You Have Custody: Rights & Responsibilities of Kinship Caregivers

- Have some special before-visit **rituals to comfort** the child and make the time special, such as arranging special clothes or fixing the child's hair in a particular way.
- Ask the child about any items—toys, books, stuffed animals—they would like to take on the visit.
- Be realistic with the child about which family members will be visiting—for example, mom only, mom and dad, and so on.
- Be open about nonfamily members who may be at the visit.
- Set simple, realistic goals for the visit. Focus on what the child needs and wants. Parent visits are not the time to argue, rehash the circumstances that have led to your caregiving role.

### 2. During the visit - You have a complicated role.

- Help the bp by being a **model of appropriate** parenting behavior.
- Be self-**aware of triggers** that flip the lid off the strong feelings you probably have. For instance, if the parent asks for money, or criticizes your parenting, or ignores the child.
- Reinforce the bp's **confidence** in their parenting skills when they show positive traits.
- **Respect** the bps, and treat them fairly.
- Always discuss negative actions of the parents during visits in terms of the choices the parents made. **Do not use blaming** language.
- **Don't assume** that parents know how to play and talk with their children. Remember the parents may be transitioning from a very different world.
- Your first responsibility is to the children—your child's children. Keep them safe.

### 3. After the visit - Good or bad visit, the child needs special attention.

- Spend extra time nurturing your grandchild and showing extra affection. Do this no matter how the visit went, but especially if the visit did not go well.
- Help the child sort through his or her feelings and questions after a visit. Find a quiet place and together do some busywork activity such as coloring, drawing. Try not to go straight to screen time.
- Encourage questions and answer them as honestly as possible.
- Reassure your grandchild about their concerns.
- Ask what the child would like to do at the next visit.
- Document visits that go badly and traumatize the child. You may see a pattern. You may need to get help.

### 4. If the visit is canceled. What now?

- You feel may manipulated, angry and disappointed. **You are ready to blame.** And under it all, you probably feel powerless. Your grandchild probably feels sad, neglected, unimportant. Here are ways to support your grandchild when visits are cancelled:
- Provide additional comforting no matter what the reason for the visit being cancelled.
- Resist the urge to blame the parent for the canceled visit. Simply explain that the parent made certain choices.
- Assure the child that he or she is not the reason the visit was cancelled. The child did nothing wrong. He or she is still loved.
- Try to go ahead and do the activity with the child that was planned with the parents.
- If visits are cancelled often, consider not telling the child about planned visits ahead of time.

***Just for You. If visits are always trouble, break the pattern.***

1. Identify the Potential Problems
  - Think of “what ifs?”
  - What has gone wrong before?
  - What undermines parent-child bonding?
2. Imagine Your Natural Responses
  - How will you feel?
  - What will you think?
  - What are you worried about or afraid of?
  - What might you do?
3. Explore the Best Your Response
  - What is most important?
  - What do you want to happen?
  - What is the best way to make the best happen?
4. Now Practice! Practice!
  - Be patient with yourself.
  - Practice—and mistakes—is how we learn.