



Addressing issues related to grandparents raising grandchildren

- 1 WHEREAS over two million children are being raised by grandparents;
- 2 WHEREAS these families represent all socioeconomic levels, and all racial and ethnic groups;
- 3 WHEREAS nearly half of grandparent-headed households live on \$20,000 or less;
- 4 WHEREAS grandparents who are forced into the role of primary caregivers experience major upheaval, additional stress, and family conflict; and
- 5 WHEREAS support services generally do not address this group of older persons;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the 1995 White House Conference on Aging to support policies that:

- 6 Establish comprehensive programs for households headed by grandparent caregivers, to include respite and day care, legal assistance, mental health and advocacy services, health care and substance abuse treatment;
- 7 Provide financial, social, and legal supports, as needed, to grandparent caregivers raising grandchildren;
- 8 Remove legal and administrative barriers to grandparent caregivers for access to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and food stamps, as well as other safety net programs;
- 9 Enable AoA funding programs to provide supportive services for grandparents and their grandchildren, to develop grandparents support groups in many settings, including senior centers;
- 10 Promote intergenerational programs to strengthen the family unit in grandparent-headed households;
- 11 Grant legal surrogate decision-making authority to grandparent caregivers in the absence of other responsible persons;
- 12 Educate human service providers about the rights of grandparent caregiver households;
- 13 Protect visitation rights of grandparents;

- 14 Provide culturally and linguistically sensitive information and referral services to grandparent caregivers;
- 15 Use existing local, State, and Federal revenue streams to accomplish the above purposes.

