

## The GrandKin Program

The Grand Kin Raising Grand Kids Project is an effort developed by grandparents and others raising kin and the MKCA. MKCA is a not-for-profit grassroots organization advocating for, supporting and providing information and resources to people raising their grandchildren, other related children or children of family friends. We are especially interested in Kinship caregivers who are 60 years and older.

### You Are Not Alone!

FACT: The number of children living in Minnesota homes headed by grandparents or other relatives and family friends, according to the U.S Census is an estimated 71,000! Of this number, about two-thirds are headed by grandparents.

Mabel Bellanger has been raising her grand-daughter Trinity, age 6, since she was born. Trinity loves Mabel and calls her "Mom." They live in Ponsford, MN on the White Earth Reservation.



Mabel with Trinity and her Dad, Joseph, 31 yrs. old

### Some Resources:

AARP, Grandparent Information Center  
888/687-2277

[www.aarp.org/families/grandparents/](http://www.aarp.org/families/grandparents/)

First Gov: 800/333-4636

[www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Grandparents.shtml](http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Grandparents.shtml)

(recommended website)

National Center on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

<http://chhs.gsu.edu/nationalcenter>

Resources for children and families  
877-696-6775

[www.hhs.gov/children/index.shtml](http://www.hhs.gov/children/index.shtml)

Social Security Benefits for Children  
800/772-1213

[www.ssa.gov/kids/parent5.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/kids/parent5.htm)

The Grandparent Foundation

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

Generations United

[www.gu.org/Kinsh6261201.asp](http://www.gu.org/Kinsh6261201.asp)

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*For more information about MKCA contact:*

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*www.mkca.org*



**Minnesota Chippewa Tribe**

**Minnesota Indian  
Area Agency on Aging**

**GrandKin Program**

**Regional Service Agency (RSA)  
For The Minnesota Kinship  
Caregivers Association (MKCA)**

*“Grand Kin Raising  
Grand Kids Project”*

## **Grandparents and Relatives Raising Children**

These family arrangements are familiar occurrences among our Indian people. Birth parents are unable or unwilling to parent. A great deal of the time, families have taken on the duties of raising others' children without any legal, financial, medical, or societal help. Families end up raising kinship children on their own. Due to the unforgettable history of the Anishinabeg, distrust for the government has occurred. Many remember the days when Indian children were taken from their homes and placed in institutions or with non-Indian foster homes and some were adopted out. Families may feel if they ask for help they may have to file reports against the parents and possibly get them in trouble. They also may be afraid that the children will be taken away and placed with strangers. They feel in their hearts it is the right thing to do raising the children because they want them to stay within the family.

### **We Are Here To Help!**

The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's GrandKin Program wants to work together in keeping your young ones together and with caring family or friends. We do not want anyone to be afraid or ashamed to ask us for help.

This program will inform, educate, and partner with other organizations in your area to bring information to those in need.

### **Where Services are Available**

Our Agency extends to the Bois Forte, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, and White Earth Reservations. We work closely with reservation-based programs to identify Grand Kin.

### **Information**

We supply information on programs and other resources located in your area that may be helpful to you.

### **Workshops**

We offer Grandkin workshops at various locations throughout the regions. Workshops topics include education and peer support elements, Legal Info, ICWA, FAS, etc. We can also provide transportation for caregivers to attend the workshops.

### **Mentors**

We refer caregivers in need of one-to-one support or assistance to the volunteer mentors.

### **Forums**

We have annual community forums bringing professionals and caregivers together to discuss current issues and programming.

### **TO CONTACT:**

The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe  
MN Indian Area Agency on Aging

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## **Become A Mentor!**

Mentors provide one-on-one support to people with family arrangements similar to their own. Mentors help Kinship family's access information that could improve their lives and the lives of their children.

One of our mentors, Leota White has been caring for her grand-daughters since they were born. They live in Boy Lake, near Remer, MN on the Leech Lake Reservation. Leota says, "They are good girls that stay home and are involved with youth and school activities." The girls are competing in the "Ojibwe Quiz Bowl" for the Northland High School in Remer, MN.



Leota with Amber age 15, Abby 14, Cree 10 and Lanae 5, at the GrandKin Holiday Party in Mille Lacs.