



10 Things Professionals Should Know About Grandfamilies

A one-page PEI practice guide for schools, health services, employers and community organizations.

1

Kinship care is broader than grandparents.

A child may be raised by a grandparent, aunt, uncle, adult sibling, cousin, family friend or another trusted person.

2

Do not assume the caregiver has formal legal authority.

Some families have court orders, guardianship or GACP. Others are caring for a child informally.

3

Ask who actually provides the day-to-day care.

Forms and conversations that only ask for a parent can miss the person responsible for school, health, transportation and routines.

4

Privacy matters.

Do not ask the caregiver or child to explain family trauma in public, in front of unrelated staff or simply to satisfy curiosity.

5

A child can love a parent and still need another caregiver.

Avoid language that forces the child to choose sides or treats the parent as the child's identity.

6

Behaviour may communicate stress, grief or trauma.

Attendance, concentration, anger, sleep problems or withdrawal can reflect disrupted caregiving rather than simple non-compliance.

7

Older caregivers may be navigating systems that changed since they last parented.

Explain digital portals, school processes, health forms and benefits without assuming prior familiarity.

8

Financial strain is common even when the family appears stable.

Ask privately about fees, transportation, equipment, school costs, child care and other barriers.

9

One reliable contact person can make a major difference.

Reduce the number of times a caregiver has to retell the same family history to different staff.

10

Include caregivers in service design.

Grandfamilies know where systems break down. Ask what would make the service easier to use and safer for the child.

Use plain language: parent, guardian, caregiver or the child's trusted adult. Learn more at grandfamiliesinc.com/educators-professionals.html