Counseling & Older Adult Kinship Caregivers

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“It takes a village to raise a child.”
~African Proverb
What is Kinship Care?

Kinship Care is the "full-time care and nurturing of a child by a relative or someone with a significant emotional connection to the child, such as a close family friend, when parents are not able to provide care."

~Children’s Bureau, Bulletin for Professionals June 2018
Who is Providing Kinship Care?

- AUNTS
- UNCLEs
- GRANDPARENTs
- COUSINS

Close friends of biological parents
Fact about Kinship Care*

32% of placements of foster care children are with relatives (kinship care)

North Carolina data shows similar percentage as the national data

*From the report of The Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) which provides preliminary estimates data for FY 2019
Older Adults as Kinship Caregivers

Of the 32% of children living with relatives, 37% of these children are being raised by relatives ages 60 and older without their parents present.

*From the GRANDFACTS State Fact sheet for Grandfamilies www.grandfamilies.org
Older Adults and Mental Health
What is Mental Health?

“What mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.”

~From Center for Disease Control, https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/index.htm
Who does Mental Health issues affect?

Everyone!
Facts about Older Adults and Mental Health

5.7 million adults aged 65 and older who binge drink in the past month, or the 1.5 million adults aged 65 and older who used an illicit drug in the past month according to SAMHSA’s 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Suicide is the eighth leading cause among people 55 to 64 years of age according to the Center for Disease Control’s 2020 Fast Fact Sheet.
Clinical Implications

- Need for Updated Data on Older Adults and Mental Health
- Need for Updated Data on Older Adults as Kinship Caregivers
- Screening for Mental Health problems at doctor appointments
- Research on best practices for counseling these kinship care families
- Survey participants of Medicare coverage Part B for mental health services
References


