



Pat Quinn, Governor
Charles D. Johnson, Director

421 East Capitol Avenue, #100, Springfield, Illinois 62701-1789
217-785-3356, Fax: 217-785-4477 • www.state.il.us/aging

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 11, 2009

CONTACT:
Kimberly Parker 312-814-1577

State Recognizes Grandparents Raising Grandchildren in observance of National Grandparents Day

*For more than ten years, the Department on Aging provides support for
Grandparents raising their Grandchildren*

SPRINGFIELD — In observance of this Sunday's Grandparents Day, Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) Director Charles D. Johnson applauds the efforts of some special grandparents who are raising grandchildren. While Director Johnson recognizes their sacrifice, he reminds about resources available to assist.

"It is no small deed for grandparents to take on the role of primary caregiver to their grandchildren, and these days we see more grandparents taking on that role for children whose parents are unable to do so. For those with limited resources, we want let them know they are not alone and there is help," said IDoA Director Johnson. "I want to thank these special grandparents for taking on another round of parenthood and assure them that we are doing more to help them provide a stable environment for their grandchildren."

The *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren* Program helps with efforts to locate, assist and promote awareness of older caregivers who are currently raising their family's children. Created in 1996, the *Grandparents* program offers numerous services that may help during difficult times. The program provides financial assistance for emergency needs, utility bills, medications, food and clothing. The program also offers referral services to local resources, such as support groups and legal assistance.

IDoA awards grants through the *Grandparent Raising Grandchildren* Program to not-for-profit organizations to establish support groups and fund initiatives addressing the needs of kinship families in Illinois. In FY09, 42 grants, ranging in amounts from \$500 to \$26,000, were awarded which totaled more than \$348,000. Services provided by the grants included legal assistance, child care, emergency needs, case management, workshops, training and the establishment of support groups.

IDoA is currently reviewing the applications for FY10. Among the considerations, IDoA looks at geographic areas where the not-for-profit organization proposes to serve, the documented need for the service, and how they plan to implement and /or continue the program.

Grandparents who are raising their grandchildren may also take advantage of supplemental services provided through the Illinois Family Caregiver Support Program, which include legal assistance, assistance with purchasing prescription drugs, transportation, school supplies and any other gap filling services, which attempt to address a short-term caregiver emergency.

For more information about programs that IDoA provides to grandparents and other relatives raising children, visit www.state.il.us/aging or call the Senior HelpLine at 800-252-8966 (for hearing impaired 888-206-1327.)

#