

IF YOU ARE A GRANDPARENT IN THE ROLE OF PARENT YOU MAY NEED NEW COPING SKILLS

Grandparents who find themselves in the role of parents face new problems at a time in their lives when their own life plans are put on hold. The parent role creates lifestyle changes: work life, financial strain, routine shifts, and social life. Although grandparents love their grandchildren and want to do what is best for them, this can be a real rollercoaster: grief, anger, fear, resentment.

Grandparents find themselves in this role because of their own children's circumstances, which include: mental illness, substance abuse, economic hardships, teen pregnancy, divorce, death, domestic violence and other challenges.

- Nationwide, some statistics indicate 6.3 percent of children are living in grandparent-headed households. This is a jump of 30% from 1990 to 2000
- Many grandparents serve as part-or full-time day care providers, as well, not included in these numbers)

TIPS TO HELP GRANDPARENTS COPE:

1. Prioritize and simplify routines – do one thing at a time
2. Make time for yourself
3. Set clear limits with grandchildren
4. Ask for help: Children may be eligible for government assistance (Financial, health, insurance, food stamps)
5. Get support – join a support group with others in your situation, get counseling, find all of the resources available to you.