

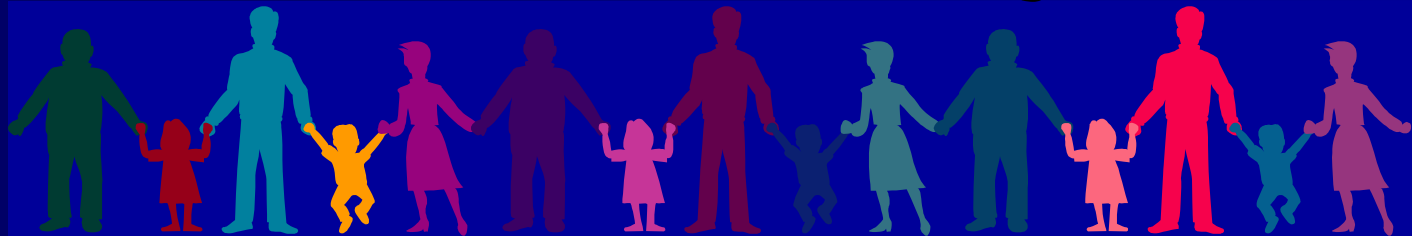
# **Grandparent Family Connections The Family Center**

***Generations United 13th International  
Conference***

***The Intergenerational Current: Across  
the Life Span and Around the Globe***

***September 16, 2005***

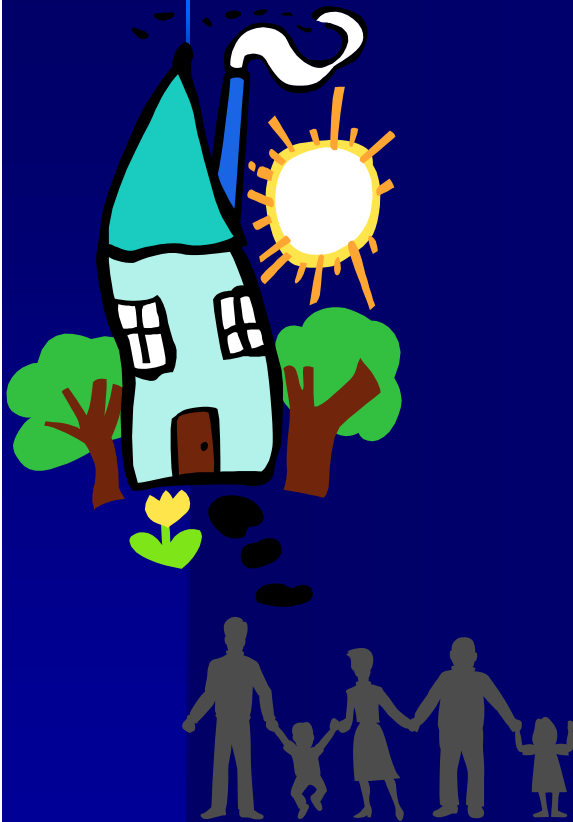
# **Working with Intergenerational Families to Increase Safety, Well-Being, and Permanency**



# The Family Connections Mission

**Family Connections  
promotes the safety and  
well-being of children and  
families through family and  
community services,  
professional education and  
training, and research and  
evaluation.**

**[www.family.umaryland.edu](http://www.family.umaryland.edu)**



# Acknowledgements

## ■ Family Connections

- Original support received from U.S.D.H.H.S. Children's Bureau, Grant 90-CA1580
- Diane DePanfilis, PI; Howard Dubowitz & Esta Glazer-Semmel, Co-PIs

## ■ Grandparent Families

- Pilot tests of interventions with grandparent families supported by Georgia State University & the Hasbro Foundation, MD Department of Human Resources, & Maryland Children's Trust Fund

# Current Support

## ■ Replication of Family Connections with Intergenerational Families

### *(Grandparent Family Connections)*

- U.S. D.H.H.S, Children's Bureau, 5-Year Cooperative Agreement
- Maryland's Title IVE Education for Child Welfare Program (support for some program staff)
- Annie E. Casey Foundation (10% cash match)
- Maryland Department of Human Resources (partial support of operations for Family Connections program)

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# Comments from a Grandparent Caregivers

# Learning Objectives

- ✓ Unique needs of intergenerational families
- ✓ Risk and protective factors associated with child neglect in intergenerational families
- ✓ Principles and intervention strategies for working with intergenerational families to achieve increased safety, well-being, and permanency

# Trends

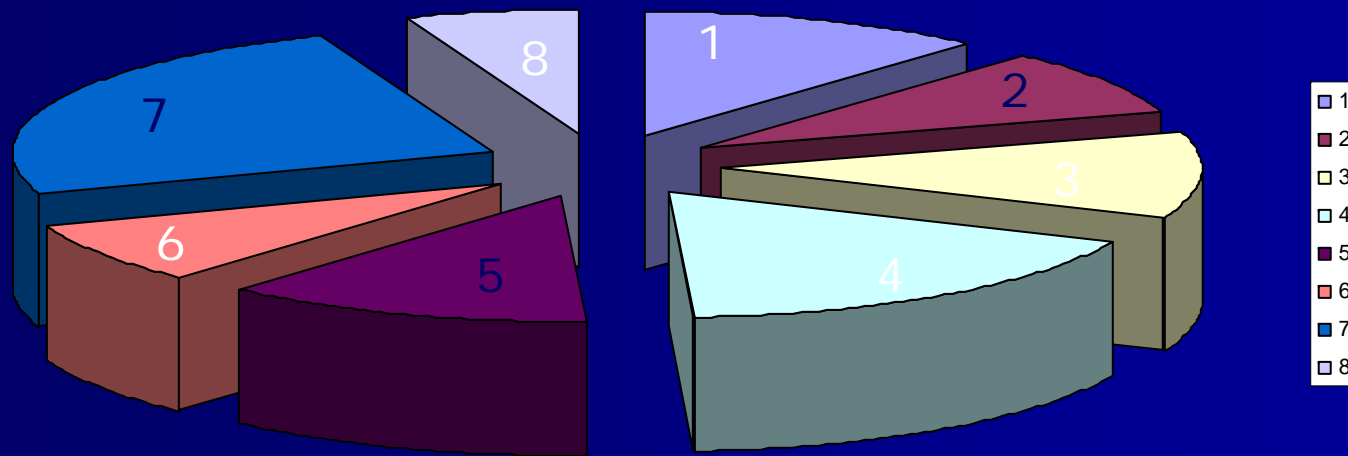
- The 2000 U.S. Census revealed that nationally there are 4.5 million children under the age of 18 living in grandparent-maintained household, and another 1.5 million children under 18 living in other relative-maintained households.
  - The majority of grandparents are between the ages of 55 and 64.
  - 20 to 25% of grandparents are over 65.

# Trends

- In Maryland

- 125, 697 grandparents live with grandchildren and 50,974 are responsible for their grandchildren's needs.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> highest % of children living in grandparent-headed households of all 435 Congressional Districts in U.S. Maryland District 7 (Baltimore City and part of Baltimore Co.)

## Grandchildren in Maryland Congressional Districts



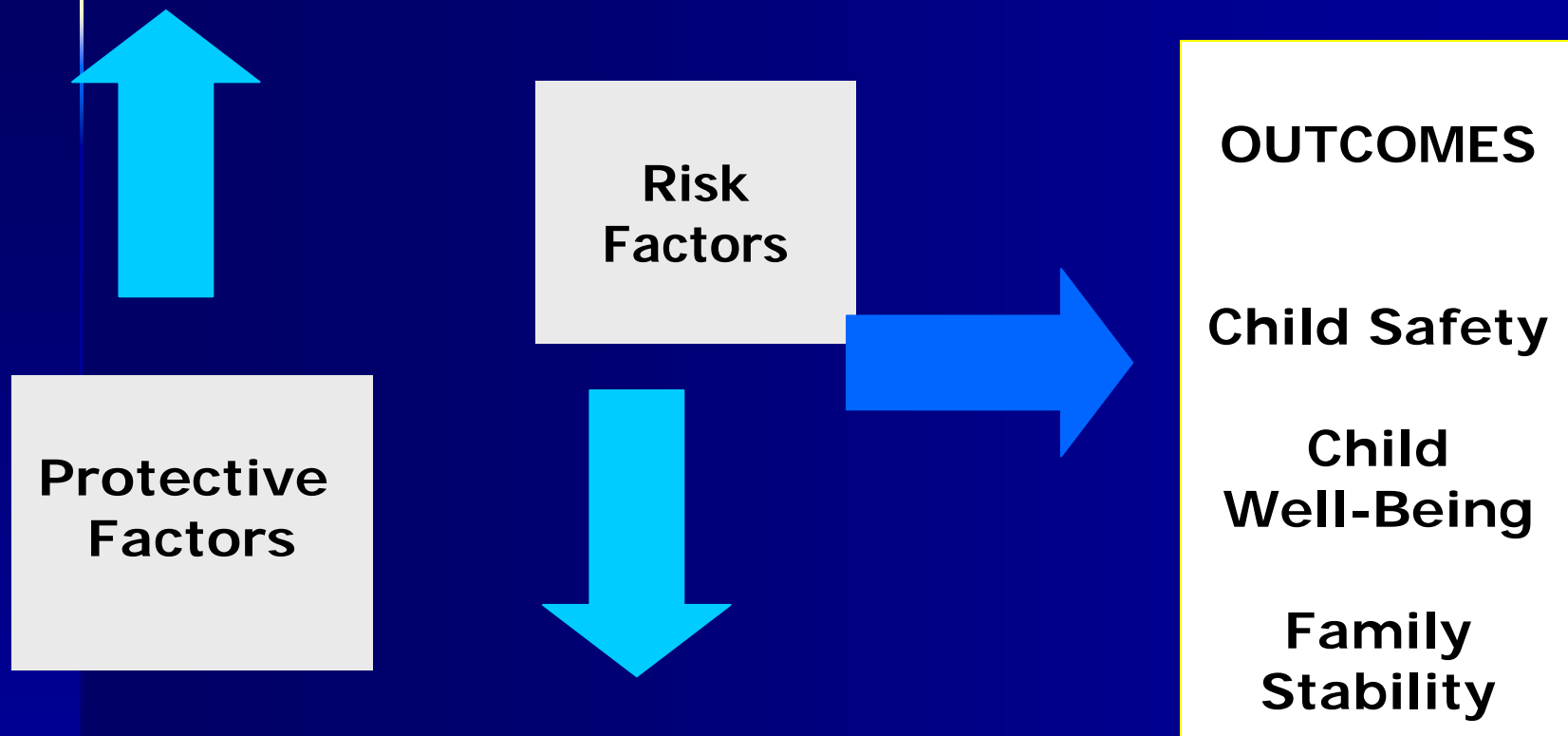
98,836 children in MD live with their grandparents

# Explaining the Trend

A number of factors have contributed to the increase in intergenerational households:

- Increase in drug abuse, especially crack cocaine
- AIDS
- Parental incarceration
- Divorce
- Teen pregnancy
- Rise in single-parent households
- Poverty
- Occurrences of child abuse and neglect

# Prevention Framework



# Challenges & Stressors

Accumulation of risk factors, especially among African-American, urban grandparent caregivers:

- More likely to live in poverty (Fuller-Thomson et al., 1997; Kelley, et al., 2000).
- Providing long-term care (Fuller-Thomson et al., 1997).

## Challenges & Stressors, Cont'd

- Increased psychological distress, social isolation, depression, deteriorating health (Kelley et al., 2000; Minkler & Fuller-Thomson, 1999).
- Intergenerational strain (Climo et al., 1999).
- Complex legal situations (Grant, 2000).

# Challenges & Stressors, Cont'd

## Grandchildren:

- Victims of abuse and neglect.
- Victims of domestic violence.
- Histories of living in unstable and chaotic households.
- Problem behaviors in school, home, and community.
- Emotional, academic difficulties and/or psychological or physical problems (e.g., Sands & Goldberg-Glen, 2000).

# A Population in Need of Services

Though their needs are serious and unique, few programs assist intergenerational families. Grandparent caregivers often fall between the cracks of foster care, aging, education, and disability service systems.



# **Intervention Strategies for Working With Intergenerational Families**

**Increasing Capacity  
and  
Reducing Risk**

# Practice Principles

- Ecological developmental framework
- Community outreach
- Family assessment & tailored intervention
- Helping alliance with family
- Empowerment/strengths-based
- Cultural competence
- Outcome-driven service plans

# Comprehensive Assessment

- Ecological perspective
- Family orientation in philosophy and practice
- Multiple sources
- Outcome driven

# Special Considerations

- Life Stage Issues
- Traumatized Children
- Attachment Challenges
- Intergenerational Conflict
- Legal Issues
- Health Care Issues

# Intervention Services

- Crisis Intervention
- Emergency Assistance
- Individualized Outcomes-Based Services
- Individual and Family Counseling
- Advocacy
- Case Management
- Interdisciplinary Practice

# DISCUSSION

Questions?

Comments?



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