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Subject: Grandparents raising grandchildren
Date: February 19, 2019 at 11:34 AM
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We have been raising our grandson since Sept. of 2012. When we could see that our son was spiraling downhill fast, we had no choice but to obtain legal custody of our grandson. We choose legal custody, rather than adoption because we were told by our attorney that it is very hard to prove both of the parents unfit plus it is very costly. Our son had sole custody of our grandson since his mother gave him up when he was three. It did not take us long to find out that grandparents have no rights nor is there any financial or legal help for us.

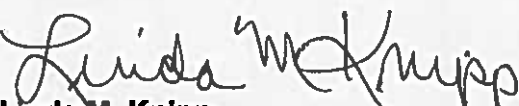
We have been thru mediation, court, counselor's, schools, etc. and it is a very hard learning experience. It is quite clear that no matter what, the parent's are in the right, and we, as grandparents, do not even have a chance to tell a judge what it going on. We have been told on two different court appearances that we are dysfunctional, so if this is true what was the mother that we were dealing with?

It does not matter where I have looked for help for grandparents, I am not heard since the first thing they want to know is what organization I am with. What would it mean to us if someone at the school would be there for us, that we could get free or reduced lunches, not based on income but the grandchildren, send our grandkids to CAMP SWAT at the YMCA for the summer like other foster kids, free tuition at college and the list goes on and on. We take these children to keep them out of foster care and no one cares. We have little support and no back up when it comes to childcare on the weekends or vacations, etc. When will any one listen as we deal with taking great care of our grandchildren?

This is the seventh year that we now raise our grandson. He is a sophomore in high school, musically inclined and doing much better at school. It has been a tough road but we just take "one day at a time". We had to make the decision recently to stay out of the courts for the sake of all of us as his mother is caught up in the court system for months to come with a man that our grandson has been around for over six years. This past year has been a nightmare for my husband and I but we do the best we can for our grandson and continue with his counseling, a private tutor for school, try to do this wonderful "career planning" for his future at school, etc. and where is the help that we can count on? Does the State of Kansas realize that we are not young and this is a hard thing to do every day?

We are not able to come to Topeka but would be more than glad to speak to someone on the phone or have someone come here to hear our story. Why are our grandchildren not classified as foster children if we have legal custody or have adopted them to get the help that we need?

Thank you,


Linda M. Knipp

