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SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS
COMMUNICATIONS

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Department on Aging Sponsors Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Forum

(Sedgwick County, Kansas) – The Sedgwick County Department on Aging and Central Plains Area Agency on Aging (CPAAA), along with the Silver Haired Legislature (SHL), the Kansas Children's Service League, and Representative Faust-Goudeau are sponsoring a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Resource Forum. The Forum will be held at the Sedgwick County Extension Center, 7001 W. 21st St. North, in the Bison Room on December 1, from 12:30-2:30pm.

This forum will provide information on how to access the Grandparents as Caregivers Program, funded by legislation passed on May 23, 2006. A panel of professionals and experienced grandparents will present information on additional resources and supports that are available. The number of Grandparents as Caregivers is on the rise in our tri-county area, and especially in Sedgwick County, where the largest population of older adults in Kansas reside, 64,481 adults 60 years and over.

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Kansas Action for Children and American Association of Retired Persons of Kansas report that the number of Kansas children residing in households where grandparents are the main caregivers increased by 43 percent between 1990 and 2000, an increase much higher than the national rate of 30 percent. This means that 17,873 Kansas grandparents and 3,303 Wichita grandparents are providing daily care for their grandchildren. In addition, there are children currently in the foster care system that could be returned to grandparents if support services were available.

The Grandparents as Caregiver Program will be an excellent resource for Grandparents raising grandchildren; it states that a grandparent 50 years of age and older or other relative caregiver caring for a child under 18 years will have access to the following benefits if they meet financial criteria including income less than 130 percent of the federal poverty level. Beginning January 1, 2007 benefits will include reimbursement for grandparents in the program for the cost of care of the grandchild in the amount of \$200 per grandchild per month but not to exceed a total of \$600 per month.

“The Sedgwick County Department on Aging is a great resource to the older citizens in our community,” said Sedgwick County Commission Chairman Ben Sciortino. “This forum is another example of the department’s outreach to this population.”

For answers on aging or information about services available to older adults call the Sedgwick County Department on Aging at 660-5120 or (800)367-7298 or, visit us online at www.sedgwickcounty.org.

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