



Virtual Resource Kit:

Guardianship Resources



When a parent is temporarily or permanently unable to care for their child, minor guardianship establishes a legal relationship that allows a trusted caregiver—often a grandparent, relative, or close family friend—to provide a safe, loving, and stable home.

In Wisconsin, this grants the guardian authority to make critical daily decisions regarding the child's healthcare, education, and safety, ensuring the child's well-being is fully protected. Minor guardianship offers a safe path forward without terminating parental rights, allowing families to stay closely connected while working through difficult times.

Whether you are suddenly caring for children or you've had time to prepare, you may still find you have many questions. You can find answers to frequently asked questions about the differences between legal guardianship and foster care by clicking here: [What's the Difference: Foster Care and Legal Guardianship FAQs](#). You can also find a link to schedule a call with a member of the Wisconsin Family Connections Center (WIFCC) staff to personally talk through any questions you may have on that page.

Tip Sheets

Is Adoption or Guardianship a Better Fit?

A practical guide from the Wisconsin Family Connections Center to help your family navigate the emotional, practical, and legal differences between these two permanency pathways.

Is Guardianship the Right Choice for Your Adult Child With Disabilities?

This tip sheet helps parents of adult children with intellectual or developmental disabilities determine if guardianship is the right path. It outlines the legal responsibilities of a guardian, the emotional impact on the family, and how to assess your child's decision-making abilities. It also highlights less restrictive alternatives, focusing on how supported decision-making can protect your child's rights while ensuring they have the ongoing support they need.

Champion Classrooms Courses and Webinars

Understanding the Court Process: CHIPS, Minor Guardianship, and TPR, Rights, Roles, and Responsibilities

The juvenile court process can be difficult to navigate. This webinar demystifies child welfare proceedings by exploring what happens during a Child In Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS) case. You will learn about caregiver rights and legal standing during court involvement, along with a breakdown of the different Chapter 48 minor guardianship options available to families.

Succession Planning for Caregivers of Children: Thinking Ahead

An essential session for caregivers navigating the legal and financial decisions that are connected with long-term care – so the children you love are protected no matter what the future holds.

Thinking About Supported Decision Making

A clear, accessible overview of Supported Decision Making as an alternative to guardianship, helping Wisconsin families of youth with disabilities understand their legal options and plan confidently for adulthood.

Relative Caregiver Series

A series of seven webinars designed specifically for relative caregivers of children, to help the kids in your care heal and thrive.

Resource Library Items

Guardianship Resources

A collection of guardianship resources and specialized information regarding navigating the legal process, answers to frequently asked questions, guidance on making decisions for adult children with disabilities, and ongoing supportive opportunities for caregivers.

Foster Care and Legal Guardianship in Wisconsin: What's the Difference?

When you are welcoming a child into your home, you might be deciding between foster care and legal guardianship. While both options provide a child a safe, stable, and loving home, they work a bit differently and lead to different journeys for your family. This resource page will help you to understand how each path works in Wisconsin, how they compare, and the ongoing support and resources available to care for the child every step of the way.

WIFCC Connected Parenting Support Group

For parents, caregivers, and guardians raising a child with emotional, behavioral, or attachment-related challenges due to a trauma history, this monthly virtual support group offers a safe, confidential space to be seen, heard, and supported by others who truly understand. You do not have to walk this emotional and legal path alone. Come connect with a community of peers, share resources, and discover brain-based, connection-focused parenting tools to help your family thrive.

KINNECT: Relative Caregivers of Children Support Group

A statewide, online group for grandparents, uncles/aunts, siblings, or other relatives acting as the primary caregiver for relative children. This group is open to any relative caregiver of children residing in Wisconsin. Join us for an opportunity to connect with others to learn and share the joys and challenges of being a relative caregiver.

Additional Weblinks and Recommended Online Resources

Wisconsin DCF Kinship Navigator Portal

An interactive resource tool by the Department of Children and Families designed to provide regional legal help, medical care access, and support for caregivers.

Guardianship — Kids Matter Inc.

This downloadable comparison matrix provides a quick visual breakdown of Full, Limited, Temporary, and Emergency guardianships under Wisconsin law.

Subsidized Guardianship Resource for Caregivers Book

An interactive, web-based guide created by the Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS) detailing eligibility rules, annual obligations, and benefit structures.

Wisconsin DCF Subsidized Guardianship Resources

Official legal guidelines, kinship requirements, and application procedures straight from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

Wisconsin Court System Guardianship Forms Directory

Direct access to official, downloadable PDF forms required for minor guardianship petitions.

Grandfamilies.org

National News and resources to assist grandfamilies.

Greater WI Agency and Aging Resources, Inc.

Resources specifically designed for Grandparents raising grandchildren.

Navigating the legal and emotional aspects of minor guardianship can feel overwhelming, but you don't have to do it alone. At the Wisconsin Family Connections Center (WIFCC), our Resource Specialists are here to support your family every step of the way.

Connect with us today by calling 1-800-762-8063 or emailing info@wifamilyconnectionscenter.org.