

Parenting Again: KD’s Journey from Overwhelmed to Empowered



At 61, KD never expected to find herself parenting young children again.

When she became the primary caregiver for her 4- and 2-year-old grandchildren, she suddenly faced the demands of raising a family while navigating the emotional and practical challenges that came with an unexpected life transition. Like many grandparents in similar situations, she often felt overwhelmed, exhausted, and unsure where to turn for support.

KD’s connection with the Early Childhood Resource Center started with a conversation with Parent Engagement Supervisor Candace Tell. A few months later, a flyer from her grandson’s pre-kindergarten class invited her to attend a Parent Café series facilitated by the Early Childhood Resource Center in partnership with the Unified Early Learning System and Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority.

That invitation became a turning point.

During the Parent Café, led by Parent Engagement Coordinator Jyesse Behling, KD found a welcoming space where she could openly share her experiences, connect with other caregivers, and gain encouragement from people who understood her journey. The relationships she built helped her realize she was not alone.

Her journey continued through our *Parenting Again* support group for grandparents raising children, led by Parent Youth Ambassador Lindsey Hosking, and a *Co-Parenting Under One Roof* series led by the Outreach & Parent Education team, where KD gained additional tools, resources, and encouragement. With the ongoing support of the Early Childhood Resource Center, KD also received assistance with everyday needs that helped ease some of the pressures of caring for her grandchildren.

KD’s experience is one shared by thousands of families across Ohio. [According to U.S. Census Bureau data](#), 86,000 Ohio children are being raised by grandparents responsible for their care, and more than 45,000 grandparents have been in a caregiving role for five years or longer.

When asked which program had the greatest impact on her family, KD immediately pointed to the Parent Café. Arriving one week feeling emotionally drained, she left with renewed hope, stronger connections, and the reassurance that support was available.

Reflecting on her experience, KD shared, “I am so happy I found you guys. I really don’t believe it was by accident.”

At the Early Childhood Resource Center, support often begins with a single conversation, a flyer, or an invitation to join a group. Those connections can open the door to education, resources, encouragement, and a community of people who care.

Whether you are a caregiver looking for support or a community member interested in strengthening families, the Early Childhood Resource Center is here to help ensure that no one must navigate these challenges alone.

To learn more about available resources that help families thrive, visit the Family & Resources section of our website at www.ecresourcecenter.org.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021), as reported in the Ohio Grandparent Kinship Coalition's *State of Kinship Care in Ohio* report.