



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Sunbeam Provides School Supplies Nearly 200 Grandfamilies
Sunbeam Partners with AreaWide Aging Agency, TRIAD to provide school supply assistance to grandparents raising their grandchildren

(OKLAHOMA CITY) – On July 27, Sunbeam Family Services partnered once again with the AreaWide Aging Agency and TRIAD, a collaboration of seniors and local law enforcement agencies like the Oklahoma Police Department and Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office, to provide school supply assistance to families in the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program. In total, 190 families, including 442 children, will have the schools supplies they need to succeed this school year, despite the challenges of COVID-19.

"Usually, we do a resource fair where grandfamilies can play games, meet other grandfamilies, and obtain much-needed resources," said Talena Ford, Sunbeam's Senior Engagement Program Manager "This year, resource flyers were prepackaged with school supplies and distributed in a contactless drive-thru event."

The backpacks were filled with items such as pencils, paper, highlighters, pocket calculators, notebooks and folders. The school supply assistance program eliminates the need for grandparents to pay for expensive supplies out of pocket.

Thankful for the support of sunbeam, one Grandmother wrote, "Reagan and I just got home and opened our box. It has EVERYTHING a middle school student needs. Thank you so much!"

Ford knows these families need help in these difficult times stating, "We want grandfamilies to know they are supported and have the school supplies to be successful during this unique school year."

Sunbeam still has school supplies available for grandparents raising their grandchildren. 100 more backpacks are still available to grandparents 55 and older who are raising their grandchildren. These families can apply for these resources through Wednesday, July 29, by going to SunbeamFamilyServices.org/grg and clicking the link to apply. Sunbeam will be reviewing these applications and contacting families by the end of the week.

The nonprofit also offers support groups online for grandfamilies and caregivers. These services empower seniors and grandparents and give them the help they need to continue caring for their loved ones.

Oklahoma ranks ninth in the nation for grandparents raising their grandchildren without the presence of parents in the home. Through the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program, Sunbeam supports Oklahomans age 55 and older raising grandchildren without the presence of parents who live in Oklahoma, Cleveland, Canadian and Logan counties. This program receives funding through Title III-E funds administered by the AreaWide Aging Agency.

For more information about the GRG program and school supply assistance, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org/GRG or contact Talena Ford at (405) 609-6551 or tford@sunbeamfamilyservices.org

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About Sunbeam Family Services

Founded in 1907, Sunbeam Family Services is one of Oklahoma's longest serving nonprofits. The nonprofit helps children, families and seniors learn, grow and thrive. To learn more, call (405) 528-7721, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org, or join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

About TRIAD:

Established in 1997, TRIAD is a collaborative effort between the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office, Oklahoma City Police Department and senior citizens working together to reduce and prevent crimes against seniors. <http://oksheriff.org/community-information/triad/>

About AreaWide Aging Agency:

Since 1973, Areawide Aging Agency has been the principal developer, coordinator and provider of services which meet the needs and advance the dignity, independence, and quality of life of senior adults in central Oklahoma. Areawide Aging Agency is dedicated to advancing the dignity and independence of older adults in our community. Areawide assess the needs of seniors, coordinates programs such as congregate and home delivered meals, transportation, and respite care for caregivers.

Provided by Sunbeam Family Services through a Title III Older Americans Act Grant from Areawide Aging Agency and community partners. The Caregiver Fundamentals Program makes no distinction on the grounds of race, color, gender, age, ancestry, national origin, religion, or disability. A portion of the project costs are met by state and federal Older Americans Act funds from Areawide Aging Agency and the Oklahoma Department of Human Services Aging Services Division. There are no costs to participants; however, donations are accepted. Suggested donation per services: Information Services, \$1/activity; Access Assistance, \$1/activity; Support Group, \$2.50/meeting; Respite, \$2.50/visit; School Supplies, \$5/family; and Training Seminar, \$5/seminar.