

## **AARP/SDRTA GRANDPARENT ESSAY CONTEST**

**Beginning in 2003 AARP South Dakota and the South Dakota Retired Teachers' Association have co-sponsored an annual Grandparent Essay Contest for South Dakota fifth graders to raise awareness of the more than 8,000 children in South Dakota who live in grandparent-headed households.**

**More than 2,300 children in South Dakota live in households headed by other relatives. Of the children living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives in the state, more than 5 are living there without either parent present.**

**AARP's commitment to this issue includes publishing a quarterly report that tracks the number of grandchildren being raised by grandparents in each state as well as providing state-specific resources to grandparents so that they may access assistance programs that may aid them. Additional information on grand parenting issues and state statistics can be found at**

**<http://www.aarp.org/family/grandparenting> or at <http://www.grandfactsheets.org>.**

**Retired Teacher' Associations in several communities in South Dakota conduct the contest on the local level each school year, with the classroom winners' essays due on February 1. Guidelines and the appropriate forms can be found on the SDRTA website (<http://www.sdrta.net>).**