

New Census Data Highlights Multigenerational Households Are On the Rise

According to data just released by the Census Bureau, the number of multigenerational households living together under one roof has increased dramatically.

The United States Census Bureau defines multigenerational households as households that consist of “three or more generations of parents and their families.” These types of living situations span all races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses.

The Census reports that the number of parents under 65 in multigenerational households increased by 75%, while those 65 and older rose 62%. Additionally, the data shows a 40% increase in the number of other live-in relatives, such as the head of household's mother-in-law or father-in-law to 6.8 million.

“I think we’re going to continue to see an increase in multigenerational households,” said Donna Butts, Executive Director of Generations United. “The struggling economy will likely cause people to have trouble staying in their homes or maintaining their homes.”

As Butts explains, “Multigenerational households happen for a number of reasons, some by choice, some by necessity. High housing costs, immigration, unemployment, caregiving, and parents returning to school for more education all contribute to the increase.

“Aging parents are also living longer,” said Butts. “They may have planned well for retirement but are outliving shrinking assets. They move in with their children to stay afloat economically in these very difficult fiscal times.”

For more information on multigenerational households, or to download our fact sheet “Multigenerational Households,” visit Generations United’s web site at www.gu.org.

Generations United, a membership organization of over 100 national, state, and local organizations representing more than 70 million Americans, works to improve the lives of children, youth, and older people through intergenerational strategies, programs, and public policies.