



STATE OF GRANDFAMILIES

2023



BUILDING RESILIENCE

Supporting Grandfamilies'
Mental Health & Wellness



INFOGRAPHIC



**generations
united**

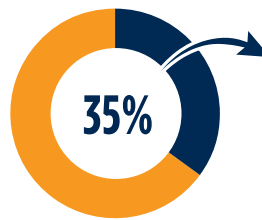
Because we're stronger together.®





About **7.6 million children** live with a relative other than their parent who is the head of the household.ⁱ

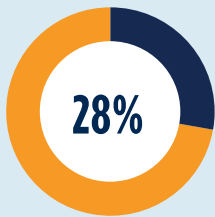
At least **2.4 million children** are being raised by a relative or close family friend and do not have a parent living in the household.ⁱⁱ



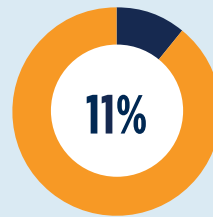
of children in foster care are being raised by relatives.ⁱⁱⁱ
(133,873 OUT OF 391,098)

Children enter grandfamilies as a result of experiences that place them at risk of mental health problems.

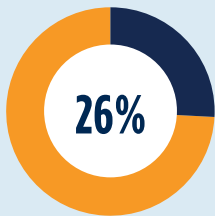
Prior to going to live with kinship caregivers:



of children in kinship care have experienced neglect



of children have experienced physical abuse



of children have experienced parental substance abuse^{iv}
(also known as substance use disorders)

Grandparents Responsible for Grandchildren

More than 2.3 million grandparents are householders responsible for grandchildren living with them.^v



are married



are age 60 and older



are in the workforce



speak English
"less than very well"



live below the
poverty line



have been caring for a
grandchild for five or more years



have a disability



have no parents of the
grandchildren present in the home

Grandfamily Caregivers Experience Chronic Stress Due to:



Financial strains



Concerns over the behaviors and needs
of the children they are raising



Navigating service
systems



Difficult relationships with the
children's birth parents^{vi}



Children in grandfamilies experience limited access to mental health services for depression, stress, and behavioral or emotional issues.^{vii}



Improved access to mental health supports and concrete material supports (such as financial, food and nutrition, housing, etc.) improves mental health outcomes for children and caregivers in grandfamilies.^{viii}





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When children cannot stay with their parents, they do best in grandfamilies.^{ix} Youth in kinship care always showed more positive changes in their social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes than youth in non-relative foster care—especially when their caregivers experienced a reduction in depression over time or were never depressed.^x

i U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). Table S0901 – Children Characteristics, 2022 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2022.S0901?q=S0901:Children+Characteristics>

ii Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center. (2023, September). *Children in Kinship Care in the United States, 2021-2023*. Source: PRB analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement. Estimate represents a three-year average. <https://datacenter.aecf.org/data/tables/10455-children-in-kinship-care?q=20loc=1&loct=1#detailed/1/any/false/2479,2097,1985,1757/any/20160,20161>

iii U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2022, June). *The AFCARS report, Preliminary FY 2021 Estimates (No. 29)*. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/afcars-report-29.pdf>

iv Garcia, A., O'Reilly, A., Matone, M. et al. (2015). The Influence of Caregiver Depression on Children in Non-relative Foster Care Versus Kinship Care Placements. *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 19, 459-467 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10995-014-1525-9>

v U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). Table B10050 – Grandparents Living with Own Grandchildren Under 18 by Responsibility for Own Grandchildren by Length of Time Responsible for Own Grandchildren for the Population 30 Years and Over, 2021 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2021.B10050?q=B10050:Grandparents+Living+With+Own+Grandchildren+Under+18+Years+by+Responsibility+for+Own+Grandchildren+by+Length+of+Time+Responsible+for+Own+Grandchildren+for+the+Population+30+Years+and+Over>. For all other data points in this graphic, the source is: U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). Table S1002- Grandparents, 2021 American Community Survey 5-year estimates <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2021.S1002?q=S1002:GRANDPARENTS>:

vi Lee E, Kramer C, Choi MJ, Pestine-Stevens A, Huang Y. (2020). The Cumulative Effect of Prior Maltreatment on Emotional and Physical Health of Children in Informal Kinship Care. *J Dev Behav Pediatr*. 2020 May;41(4):299-307. doi: 10.1097/DBP.0000000000000769. PMID: 31985605. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31985605/> as cited in Xu Y., Jedwab M., Lee K.A., and S. E. Levkoff. 2022. "The Negative Effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on Behavioral Problems of Children in Kinship Care: The Protective Role of Kinship Caregivers' Mental Health." *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders* May. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10634266221076475>

vii Lee, E., Clarkson-Hendrix, M., Lee, Y. (2016). Parenting stress of grandparents and other kin as informal kinship caregivers: A mixed methods study, *Children and Youth Services Review*, 69, 29-38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.07.013>

viii Hayslip, B., Knight, R. P., Page, K. S., Phillips, C. (2020). Thematic Dimensions of Grandparent Caregiving: A Focus Group Approach. *GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research, Practice and Policy* 6(1) (2020). <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/grandfamilies/vol6/iss1/5>; see also: Lin, C. (2018). The relationships between child well-being, caregiving stress, and social engagement among informal and formal kinship care families. *Children and Youth Services Review* 93(2) (2018). <https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/cysrev/v93y2018icp203-216.html>; Swanke, J., Yampolskaya, S., Strozier, A. & Armstrong, M. (2016). Mental health service utilization and time to care: A comparison of children in traditional foster care and children in kinship care. *Children and Youth Services Review* 68 (2016). <https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/cysrev/v68y2016icp154-158.html>; Smithgall, C., Mason, S., Michels, L., LiCalsi, C. & Goerge, R. (2009). Intergenerational and Interconnected: Mental Health and Well-Being in Grandparent Caregiver Families. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services* (2009): 167-175. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1606/1044-3894.3869>; Smithgall, C., Mason, S., Michels, L., LiCalsi, C. & Goerge, R. (2006). Caring for their Children's Children, Assessing the Mental Health Needs and Service Experiences of Grandparent Caregiver Families. *Chapin Hall*. (2006). <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED506800>; Casanueva, C.C., Smith, K.E., Ringeisen, H., Testa, M., Dolan, M. & Burfeind, C. (2023). Services to Support Children Involved with the Child Welfare System. OPRE Report #2023-039, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/services-support-children-living-kinship-and-nonrelative-foster-care-2008-2009>.

ix Xu, Y., Wu, Q., Levkoff, S., Jedwab, M. (2020). Material hardship and parenting stress among grandparent kinship providers during the COVID-19 pandemic: The mediating role of grandparents' mental health. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 110 (2020) 104700. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0145213420303550?via%3Dihub>; see also Garcia, A., O'Reilly, A., Matone, M. et al. (2015). The Influence of Caregiver Depression on Children in Non-relative Foster Care Versus Kinship Care Placements. *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 19, 459-467 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10995-014-1525-9>

x Generations United. (May 2023). *Children Thrive in Grandfamilies*. <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2023/05/23-Children-Thrive-in-Grandfamilies.pdf>