



# Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

The Rewards and Challenges of Parenting the Second time Around



# The challenges and rewards of grandparents raising grandchildren

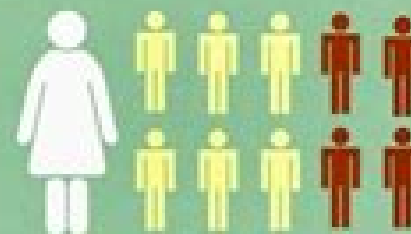


# Statistics

- ▶ 60,179 grandparents are householders responsible for their grandchildren who live with them. Of these:
- ▶ 22,804 (37.9%) do not have parents present.
- ▶ 40,818 (67.8%) are under age 60.
- ▶ 36,228 (60.2%) are in the workforce.
- ▶ 11,615 (19.3%) are in poverty.
- ▶ 16,730 (27.8%) have a disability.
- ▶ 17,392 (28.9%) are unmarried.

One child in 10 in the US lives with a grandparent. Of those, 4 in 10 are being raised primarily by that grandparent.

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Family dynamics are changing rapidly.

Grandparent caregivers are:

- Women: 62%
- Married: 66%
- Age 45-59: 54%
- White: 53%
- Income 1-3 times poverty line: 47%

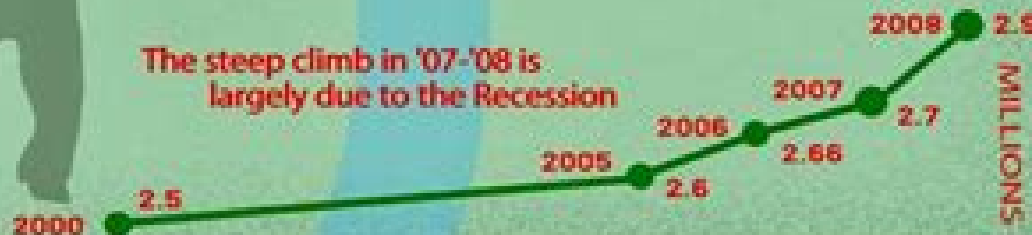


2.9 million US children are being raised by a grandparent.

Long-term commitment:

More than half (54%) of these grandparents report they have been primary caregivers for 3 or more years, and 23% report 1-2 years.

The steep climb in '07-'08 is largely due to the Recession





# Grandparents raising grandchildren

Tip 1:

Acknowledge your feelings

- ▶ Stress and worry
- ▶ Anger or resentment
- ▶ Guilt
- ▶ Grief
- ▶ Overwhelmed



## Tip 2: Take Care of Yourself

- ▶ A healthy you means healthy grandchildren.
- ▶ Hobbies and relaxation are not luxuries.
- ▶ It's okay to expect your grandchildren to help.
- ▶ Find someone you can talk to about what you are experiencing.
- ▶ Look for support groups for grandparents raising grandchildren.
- ▶ Reach out in your community for childcare help.



## Tip 3: Your grandkids will have mixed feelings too

- Your grandkids may resent being separated from their parent and wish to return.
- Your grandkids' feelings may come out in many ways, including behavior.
- Not matter their behavior, your grandkids need your comfort and support.
- Remember that children often act out in a safe place.



## Tip 4: Focus on creating a stable environment

- Establish a routine.
- Encourage their input in their new home.
- Set up clear, age-appropriate house rules and enforce them consistently.
- Make sure that each grandchild has a private space.
- Offer your time and attention.





## Tip 5: Encourage open and honest communication

- Plan regular times when you sit and talk to each other.
- Encourage your grandchildren to talk about their feelings, both good and bad.
- Help your grandkids learn to identify their emotions.
- Young children communicate through play.
- It's okay to say "I don't know".



## Tip 6: Encourage contact with parents (when possible)

- ▶ Don't put your grandchild in the middle.
- ▶ If appropriate, communicate and cooperate with your grandchild's parent.
- ▶ If appropriate, make visits part of your grandchild's routine.
- ▶ Be sensitive to your grandchild's feelings.
- ▶ Help your grandchild deal with disappointment.



## How much should you tell young grandchildren?

- ▶ Avoid telling the child too much.
- ▶ Avoid telling the child too little or nothing at all.
- ▶ Never twist the facts or lie to the child.



# When you start to feel overwhelmed...

What works for you?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is your plan?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



*Love is the  
greatest gift  
that one generation  
can leave to another.*

— *Richard Garnett*

