

Grandparents are recognized as important caregivers of their grandchildren. Beginning with the Census 2000 and continuing with the American Community Survey, the U.S. Census has asked respondents if they or anyone in their household has "... any of his/her own grandchildren under the age of 18 living in the house or apartment" and whether the grandparent is "currently responsible for most of the basic needs" of said grandchild(ren). In 2006, about 10% of all grandparents were coresident grandparents—living with a grandchild (U.S. Census Bureau).

- Most (82%) of grandparent-grandchild households are three-generation households, and the remaining are skipped-generation households (households where a grandparent is living with a grandchild, and the grandchild's parent is not in the household) (results not shown).
- Figure 1 shows that two out of five (39%) coresident grandparents reported being responsible for their grandchildren in 2010, slightly down from 42% in 2000.

Characteristics of Coresident Grandparents by Caregiver Status

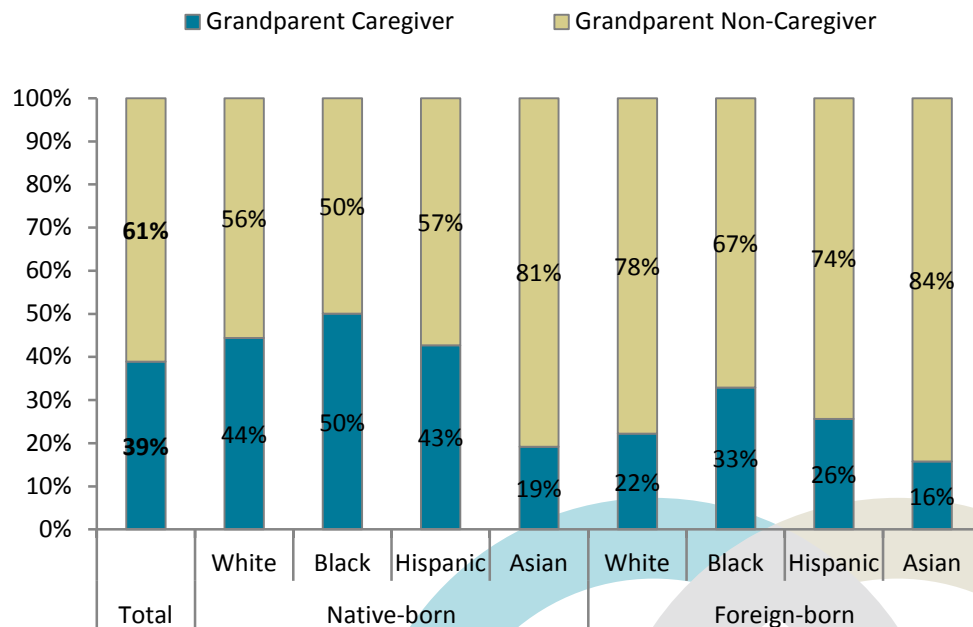
Age and Marital Status

- On average, grandparent caregivers are 4.5 years younger than their non-caregiver counterparts (55.6 years and 60.1 years, respectively).
- The majority (59%) of coresident grandparents are married. Grandparent caregivers are more likely to be married (66%) than grandparent non-caregivers (54%). Thirty percent of grandparent caregivers are single grandmothers compared to 38% of grandparent non-caregivers.

Variation by Race, Ethnicity, and Nativity

- There are similar patterns of caregiving among coresident grandparents regardless of nativity. Nevertheless, native-born grandparents are more likely to be caregivers than foreign-born grandparents.
 - Within race and ethnicity, the smallest difference between native-born and foreign-born is among Asian grandparents (19% vs. 16%, respectively). The largest difference is among White grandparents; 44% are caregivers among native-born compared to 22% among foreign-born.
- Of all coresident grandparents, native-born Black grandparents are most often caregivers (50%) followed by native-born Whites (44%) and native-born Hispanics (43%). Foreign-born Asian grandparents are least often caregivers (16%).

Figure 1. Race, Ethnicity, and Nativity of Coresident Grandparents by Caregiving



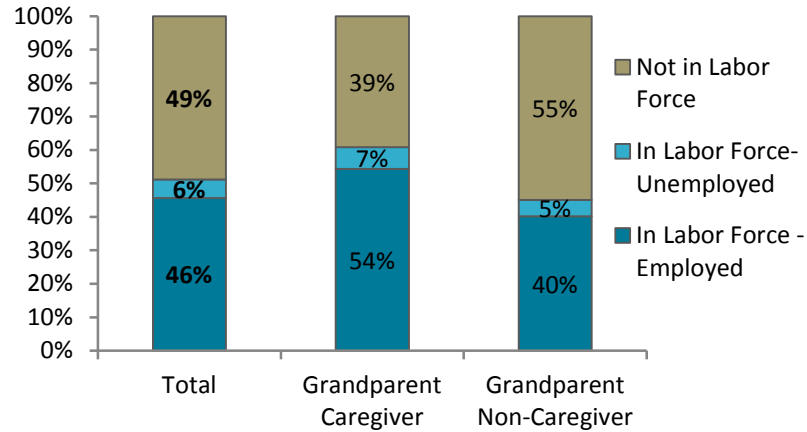
Source: Dalaker, 2001; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2010.

Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

Employment Status

- Half (51%) of all coresident grandparents are in the labor force.
- Grandparent caregivers are more often in the labor force (61%) compared to grandparent non-caregivers (45%).
 - Of those in the labor force, a vast majority (89%) are employed with no difference by caregiver status.

Figure 2. Employment and Labor Force Status of Coresident Grandparents by Caregiving

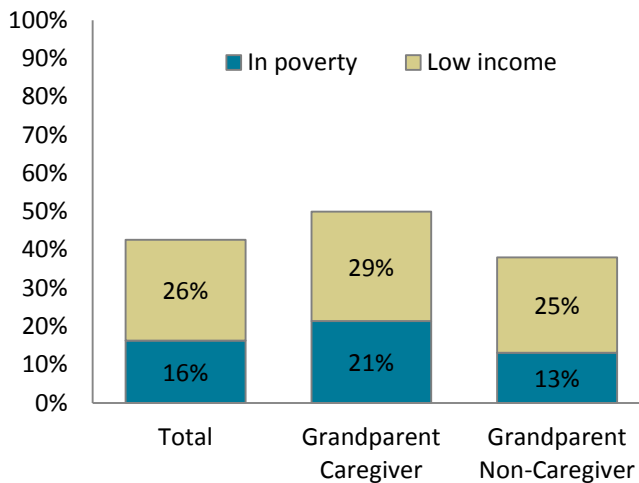


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2010.

Poverty Status

- 42% of all coresident grandparents are either living in poverty (16%) or in a low-income household (26%).
- Grandparent caregivers are more likely to live in poverty and in low-income households compared to grandparent non-caregivers.
 - Half (50%) of grandparent caregivers are economically disadvantaged with 21% living in poverty and 29% living in a low income household.
 - Over one-third (38%) of grandparent non-caregivers are economically disadvantaged: 13% are living in poverty and 25% are living in low income households.

Figure 3. Poverty Status and Low Income Status of Coresident Grandparents by Caregiving

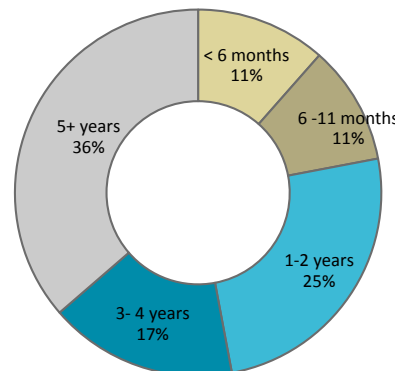


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2010.

Length of Time Grandparent Caregiver is Responsible for Grandchild

- About one-third (36%) of grandparent caregivers report that they have been the caregiver to their grandchild for at least 5 years.
- Nearly one-quarter (23%) of grandparent caregivers were responsible for one year or less.

Figure 4. Length of Time Grandparent Caregiver is Responsible for Grandchild(ren)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2010.

References

U.S. Census Bureau. 2006. "Facts for Features: Grandparents Day 2006: Sept. 10." In Facts for Features CB06-FF.13. Washington DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

Suggested Citation:
Wilson, B. (2012).
Coresident
Grandparents:
Caregivers Versus
Non-Caregivers
(FP-12-18).
National Center for
Family & Marriage
Research.
Retrieved from
http://ncfmr.bgsu.edu/pdf/family_profiles/file115686.pdf



This project was supported with a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, grant number 5 UOI AE000001-05. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the author(s) and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the federal government.