



Family Profile No. 01, 2023

Prevalence of Grandparenthood in the U.S.

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In 2021, approximately 63.5 million adults age 50 and older were grandparents, according to the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The SIPP is a nationally representative household-based survey and is designed to provide comprehensive family and social information on individuals and families. Because the SIPP gathers information on all individuals who lived in a surveyed household, and directly asks respondents if they are a grandparent, it is one of the few surveys that identifies non-resident grandparents. In this profile, we identify the prevalence of grandparenthood among adults aged 50 and older and examine their demographic characteristics including race/ ethnicity, educational attainment, and current relationship status. This profile is an update of [Stykes, Manning, & Brown, 2014](#) and [Wu, 2018](#). It is also the first in our series on grandparents in the U.S.

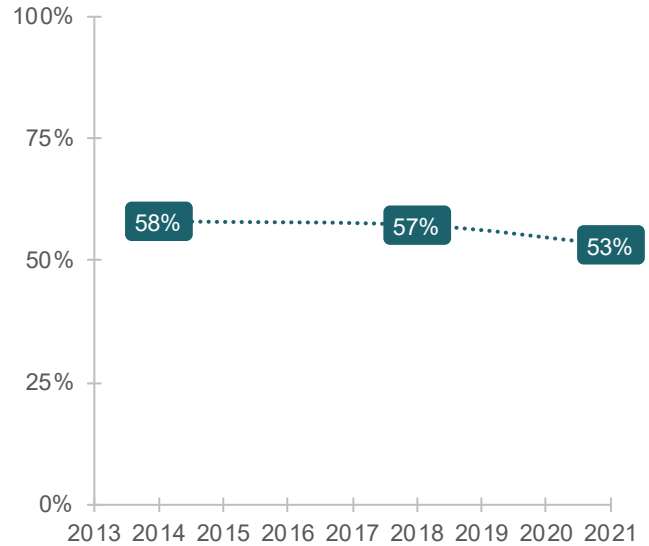
- The share of older adults who report having a grandchild has declined in recent years from 58% of those aged 50 and older in 2014 to 53% in 2021.

Race/ Ethnicity and Grandparenthood

- Among adults aged 50 and older, a greater percentage of Black older adults were grandparents (56%) than those of other racial/ ethnic backgrounds in 2021.
- With only slightly smaller shares, 54% of Hispanic older adults and 53% of White respondents aged 50 and older were also grandparents.
- Those of Asian ethnicity had the smallest share reporting to be a grandparent—only about two-fifths said they had a grandchild.

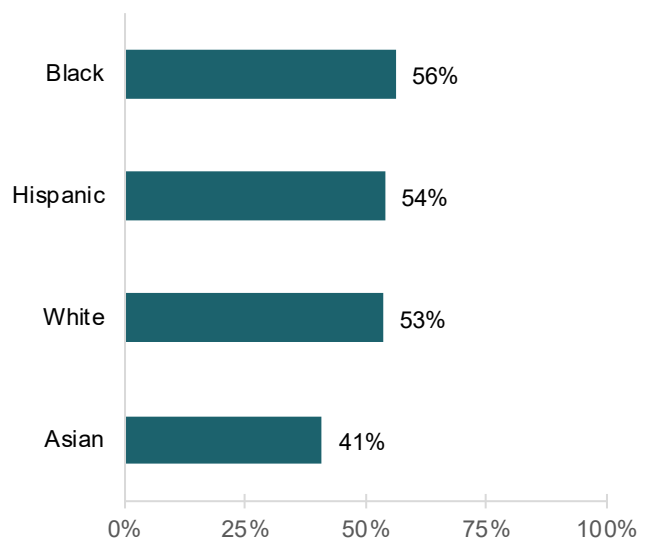
While the number of grandparents has increased from 62 million in 2018 to 63.5 million in 2021, the share has dropped from 57% to 53% of those aged 50 and older.

Figure 1. Trend in Grandparenthood in the U.S., 2014, 2018, and 2021



Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2014, 2018, & 2021

Figure 2. Grandparenthood by Race/ Ethnicity, 2021

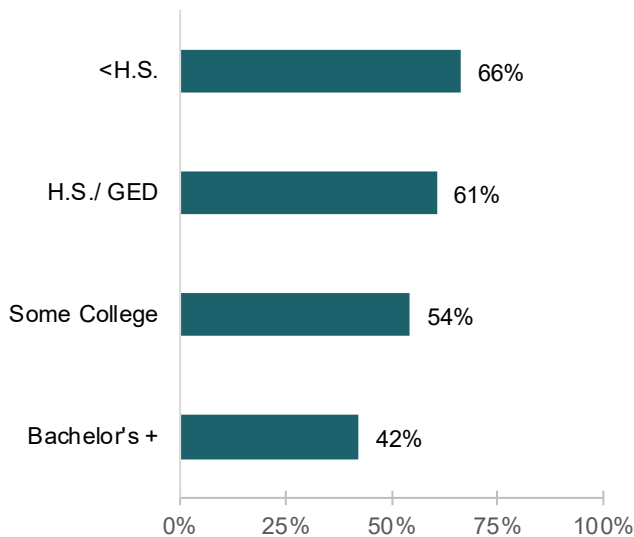


Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2021

Educational Attainment and Grandparenthood

- The prevalence of grandparenthood decreased as educational attainment increased.
- Among those aged 50 or older in 2021 without a high school diploma/ GED, two-thirds were grandparents.
- Sixty-one percent of those with a high school diploma and 54% of those with some college were grandparents in 2021.
- Being a grandparent was least common among older adults who had at least a bachelor's degree (42%).

Figure 3. Grandparenthood by Educational Attainment, 2021



Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2021

Data Source:

U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation 2014, Wave 1, 2018, and 2021.

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp.html>

References:

Stykes, B., Manning, W. D., & Brown, S. L. (2014). Grandparenthood in the U.S.: Prevalence of grandparenthood among adults aged 50+. *Family Profiles, FP-14-14*. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research.

<https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/college-of-arts-and-sciences/NCFMR/documents/FP/FP-14-14-grandparent-50-plus.pdf>

Wu, H. (2018). Prevalence of grandparenthood in the U.S. *Family Profiles, FP-18-03*. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <https://doi.org/10.25035/ncfmr/fp-18-03>

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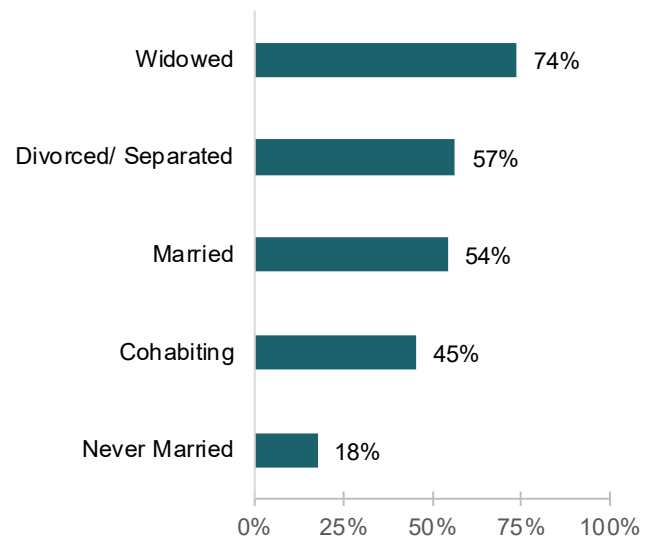
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Relationship Status and Grandparenthood

- Being a grandparent was most common among widowed adults, at 74%. This is not unexpected because the widowed are more often older.
- Similar shares of married and divorced/ separated adults were grandparents (57% and 54%, respectively).
- Slightly less than half (45%) of cohabiting adults aged 50 and older were grandparents.
- About one in five (18%) of never married older adults reported being a grandparent.

Figure 4. Grandparenthood by Relationship Status, 2021



Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, 2021