

Kinship/Grandfamilies

The Role of Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Programs

Introduction

The growing numbers of grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends who are raising children, known as *kinship* or *grandfamilies*, have unique needs that affect their daily lives, including aging and caregiver supports, child welfare, and legal services.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American Aging Programs (Title VI programs) serve as nationwide lifelines for older adults age 60 and older, family caregivers and, increasingly, people younger than age 60 who have disabilities. Both AAAs and Title VI programs provide a range of supportive services for older adults, including nutrition programs, family caregiver services, in-home personal care assistance, and transportation. AAAs also provide services promoting health, managing disease, and combating elder abuse.



USAging, as a part of its partnership with the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center (led by Generations United and funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Administration for Community Living), conducted a poll of AAAs and Title VI programs in early 2022 to learn more about their efforts to support kinship/grandfamilies. This report summarizes the efforts, funding sources and budgets, and technical assistance needs of respondents. This report uses the term kinship/grandfamily to refer to all families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends raise children whose parents are not available. This report also refers to the grandparents, other relatives, and close family friends raising child relatives as kin/grandfamily caregivers.

Overview of Kinship/Grandfamilies

Kinship/grandfamilies form when relatives take primary responsibility for raising children whose birth parents are unavailable for a variety of reasons that include military deployment, substance abuse, incarceration, or death.

Nationwide, around 2.5 million children whose parents cannot care for them are being raised by grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives.¹ According to its 2021 *Initial Report to Congress* by the Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, these numbers are on the rise.



In many cultures the practice of grandparents raising grandchildren is not unusual. African Americans have a rich history of grandparents or other relatives taking in kin when needed,² as do many Native American³ and Latin American⁴ cultures. Research on the benefits of these family arrangements is slowly catching up to what these cultures have known for generations—when compared to children in non-relative foster care, children in kinship/grandfamilies enjoy greater stability, safety, and

well-being.⁵ Kin/grandfamily caregivers also benefit, with grandparents and relatives raising kin reporting an increased sense of purpose and an appreciation for the opportunity to nurture family relationships.⁶

However, kin/grandfamily caregivers also face challenges. Grandparents raising grandchildren are more likely to be female and low-income⁷ while kin/grandfamily caregivers have more disabilities than the general population.⁸ The children raised by these families also frequently have disabilities. Today, almost half of grandparents raising grandchildren are age 60 or older.⁹ Due to the reasons leading to their formation, kin/grandfamilies disproportionately experience the effects of adverse events such as trauma, substance use disorders, and mental illness.¹⁰ Most children in kinship/grandfamilies are not in the custody of the child welfare system, though those who are raised by kin comprise close to one-third of children in foster care.¹¹

Unlike birth parents, kin/grandfamily caregivers do not automatically possess a legal relationship with the children they raise. This can create difficulties with enrolling children in school, obtaining certain benefits, and/or consenting to health care services for the children.¹² Complicating matters, many kinship/grandfamilies live in poverty.¹³ Benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Medicaid can ease financial hardship, but eligibility rules and benefit amounts vary among states, tribes, and territories.

Even kinship/grandfamilies with resources can face financial strain, as few planned to raise their relative's children. Many children arrive at their kin's homes in times of crisis with little warning. For many older kin/grandfamily caregivers, child-rearing responsibilities arise at a time when they are looking forward to or already in retirement. To make ends meet, some return to the workforce, others delay retirement, and still others spend down savings to support the children in their care. Taking on the role of a kin/grandfamily caregiver can also create a need for different housing. For example, some kin/grandfamily caregivers may need more space than their current home provides to care for children, while others live in retirement communities or senior housing where children are not allowed to reside.

AAAs and Title VI programs, along with their partners, can assist with these challenges. With funding from the Older Americans Act, along with other sources, the Aging Network provides services for older adults and caregivers, including kin/grandfamily caregivers. Many already provide the services most needed by kinship/grandfamilies, including providing information to kin/grandfamily caregivers about locally available services such as support groups, education/training, and respite, assisting caregivers in accessing services, and offering supplemental services. Supplemental services can include help with school supplies, summer camp fees, children's clothing, and legal services.



Funding

AAAs and Title VI programs that serve kinship/grandfamilies rely on funding from a variety of federal, state, local, and private sources to do so. Much of the federal funding supporting kinship/grandfamilies is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL) and the U.S. Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

ACL distributes funds from the Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) and Title VI C Native American Caregiver Support Program (NACSP) to states and tribes/tribal consortia which then fund AAAs and Title VI programs, respectively. These funds may be used to provide a variety of services to kinship/grandfamily caregivers age 55 and older who care for family members younger than age 18. Until 2020, a state could not use more than 10 percent of NFCSP funds on kinship/grandfamily services, however the 2020 reauthorization of the Older Americans Act removed this restriction.

ACF administers the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and Title IV E of the Social Security Act to support foster care services, both of which can help kinship/grandfamilies. In addition to these services, Title IV E of the Social Security Act also establishes optional programs that can benefit kinship/grandfamilies, including the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) and kinship navigator programs.

Methodology

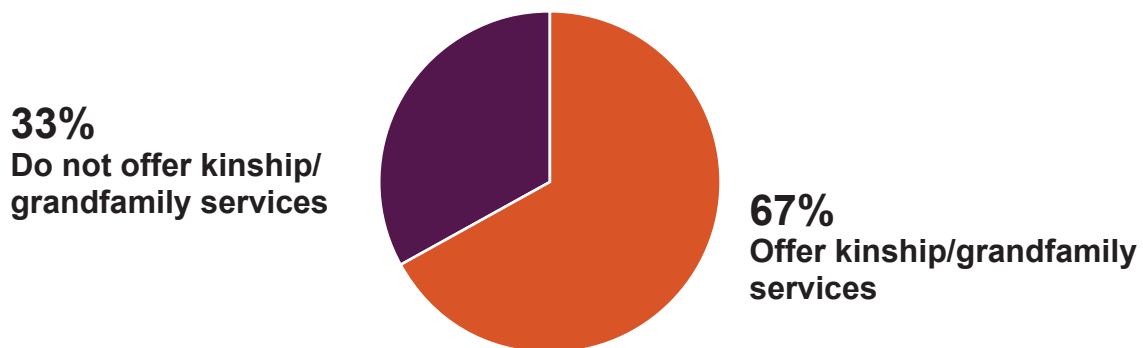
As part of its role with the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network, USAging conducted a poll to learn how the Aging Network supports kinship/grandfamilies and to assess their technical assistance and training needs and interests. The poll consisted of 20 questions, was disseminated to 610 AAAs and to 238 Title VI programs, and was open between April and June 2022. USAging received 213 responses for a response rate of 25 percent. While this is a strong response rate for a topical poll, a response rate of 60 percent is necessary for the data to be considered nationally representative.

Poll Findings

Supporting Kinship/Grandfamilies

Given their long histories of supporting older adults in their communities, AAAs and Title VI programs also serve a wide variety of caregivers. Until USAging conducted this survey, however, no data had existed showing how many AAAs and Title VI programs have programs and services targeted specifically to kinship/grandfamilies. Most respondents (67 percent) indicated that they provide programs and services targeted specifically to kinship/grandfamilies, either directly or through contracts with service providers.

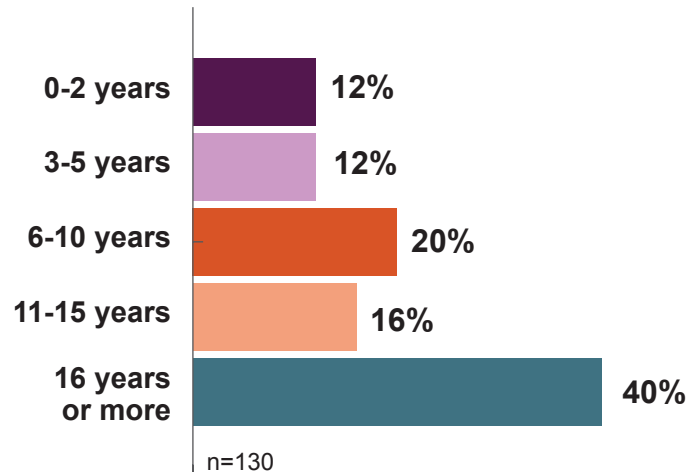
Percentage of AAA and Title VI Programs That Provide or Offer Services Specifically for Kin/Grandfamilies



Additionally, eight percent of respondents indicated that they assist kin/grandfamily caregivers with broader caregiver services, but do not offer services designed specifically for kinship/grandfamilies. The findings reflected in this report focus on those AAAs and Title VI programs that offer services tailored for kinship/grandfamilies.

More than half of respondents (56 percent) have offered services tailored for kinship/grandfamilies for more than 10 years, with 40 percent reporting that their programs have been in operation for 16 years or longer, indicating a deep knowledge of the needs of kinship/grandfamilies.

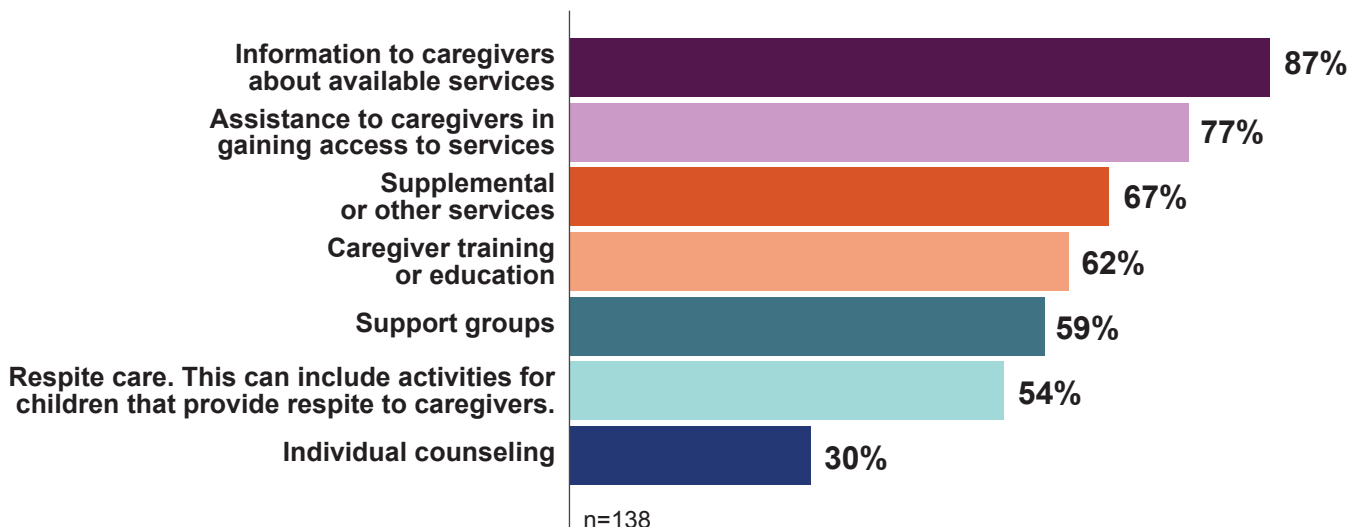
Length of Time AAA and Title VI Kinship/Grandfamily Programs Have Been in Place



AAAs and Title VI Programs Offer Many of the Key Services Needed by Kinship/Grandfamilies

In its 2021 *State of Grandfamilies* report, Generations United identified 11 key services and supports needed by kinship/grandfamilies,¹⁴ including information and assistance in navigating and accessing available services, legal aid, support groups, respite care, financial assistance, and caregiver education. AAAs and Title VI programs indicate that they provide many of these services to kinship/grandfamilies, including providing information to kin/grandfamily caregivers about available services, assisting caregivers in accessing those services, and offering supplemental services. Supplemental services may include help with affording school supplies, summer camp fees, children's clothing, and legal services.

Services AAA and Title VI Programs Provide for Kinship/Grandfamilies

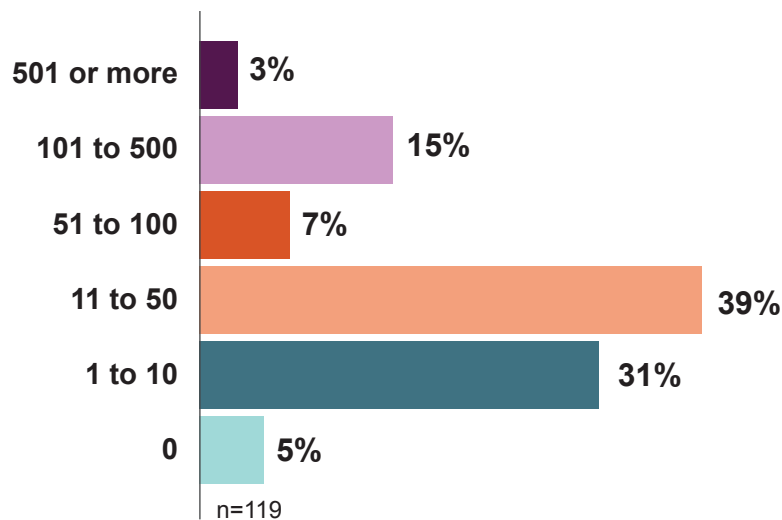


Reaching Kin/Grandfamily Caregivers

Seventy-five percent of respondents served 50 or fewer kin/grandfamily caregivers in the budget year prior to the poll. Eighteen percent of respondents served more than 100 kin/grandfamily caregivers in that budget year.

Additionally, 38 percent of AAAs and Title VI programs serve kin/grandfamily caregivers younger than age 55 and must use non–Older Americans Act (OAA) funds to do so, given the OAA eligibility requirements.

Number of Kin/Grandfamily Caregivers AAAs and Title VI Programs Served in the Last Budget Year

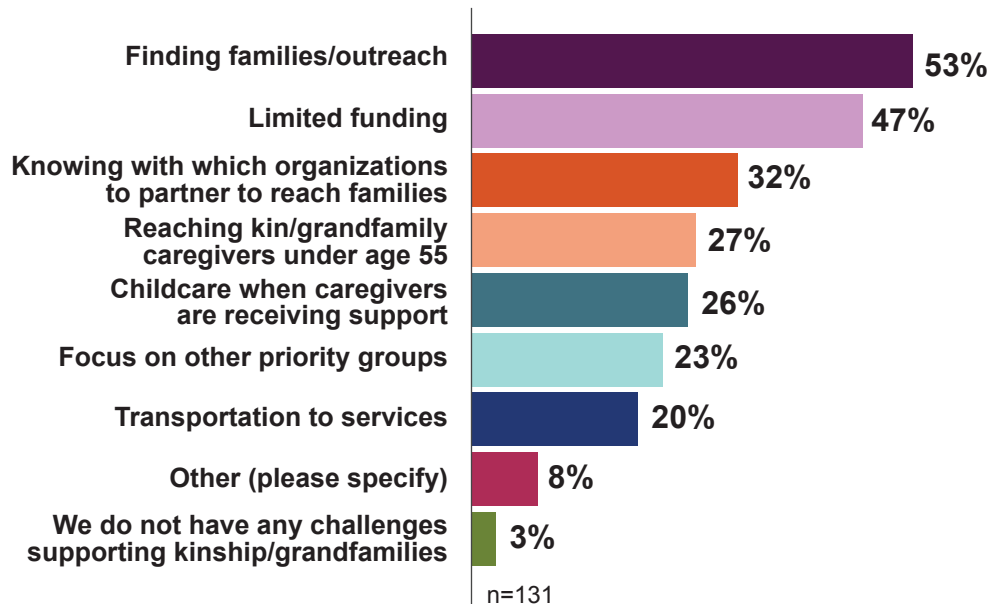


Key Challenges and Partnerships

When asked about the challenges AAAs and Title VI programs face, more than half of respondents (53 percent) identified outreach as a top challenge in serving this population, which suggests an interest in reaching larger numbers of kin/grandfamily caregivers. Forty-seven percent cited limited funding as a challenge, and 32 percent noted that identifying potential partners that can be helpful in reaching kinship/grandfamilies remains a hurdle.



The Biggest Challenges Faced by AAAs and Title VI Programs Related to Supporting Kin/Grandfamilies



Eight percent of respondents specified other challenges, including limited staff and limited availability of kinship/grandfamily services in their communities. Only three percent of respondents indicated that no challenges to support kinship/grandfamilies existed.



Funding to Serve Kinship/Grandfamilies

AAAs reported that, on average, they used nine percent of their NFCSP funds to serve kinship/grandfamilies.

Until 2020, states could not use more than 10 percent of their NFCSP budgets towards kinship/grandfamilies and most states passed that requirement on to AAAs. The poll asked AAAs whether they knew about this change, and more than half (62 percent) indicated awareness that the cap no longer applied. Poll responses indicate that most AAAs have already or were planning to increase their spending for this population because the NFCSP spending cap has been lifted.

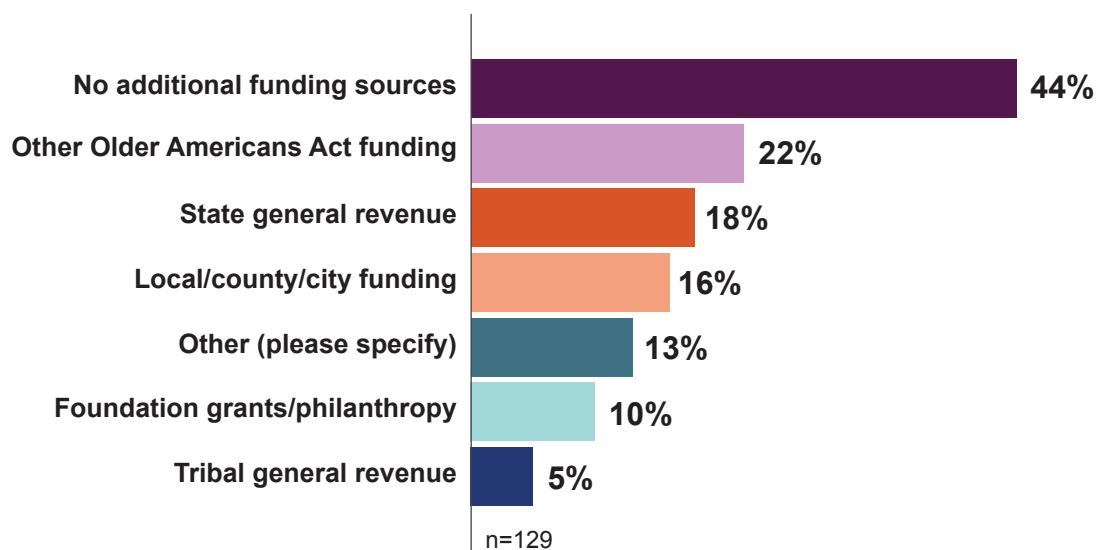
Respondents Use Diverse Funding Streams for Kinship/Grandfamily Services

To provide services for kinship/grandfamilies, AAAs and Title VI programs often rely on a mix of funding, given that the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) and the Native American Caregiver Support Program (NACSP) often cannot cover all program costs. More than half of respondents indicated that they use at least one other funding source to provide kinship/grandfamily services. About one-fifth of respondents reported using other federal funds and/or state general revenue. Ten percent harness foundation grants and/or philanthropy and five percent leverage tribal funds.

Thirteen percent of respondents specified using “other” funds. Among these, most reported using time-limited funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act. Others use state lottery money, university grants, or other federal funding.



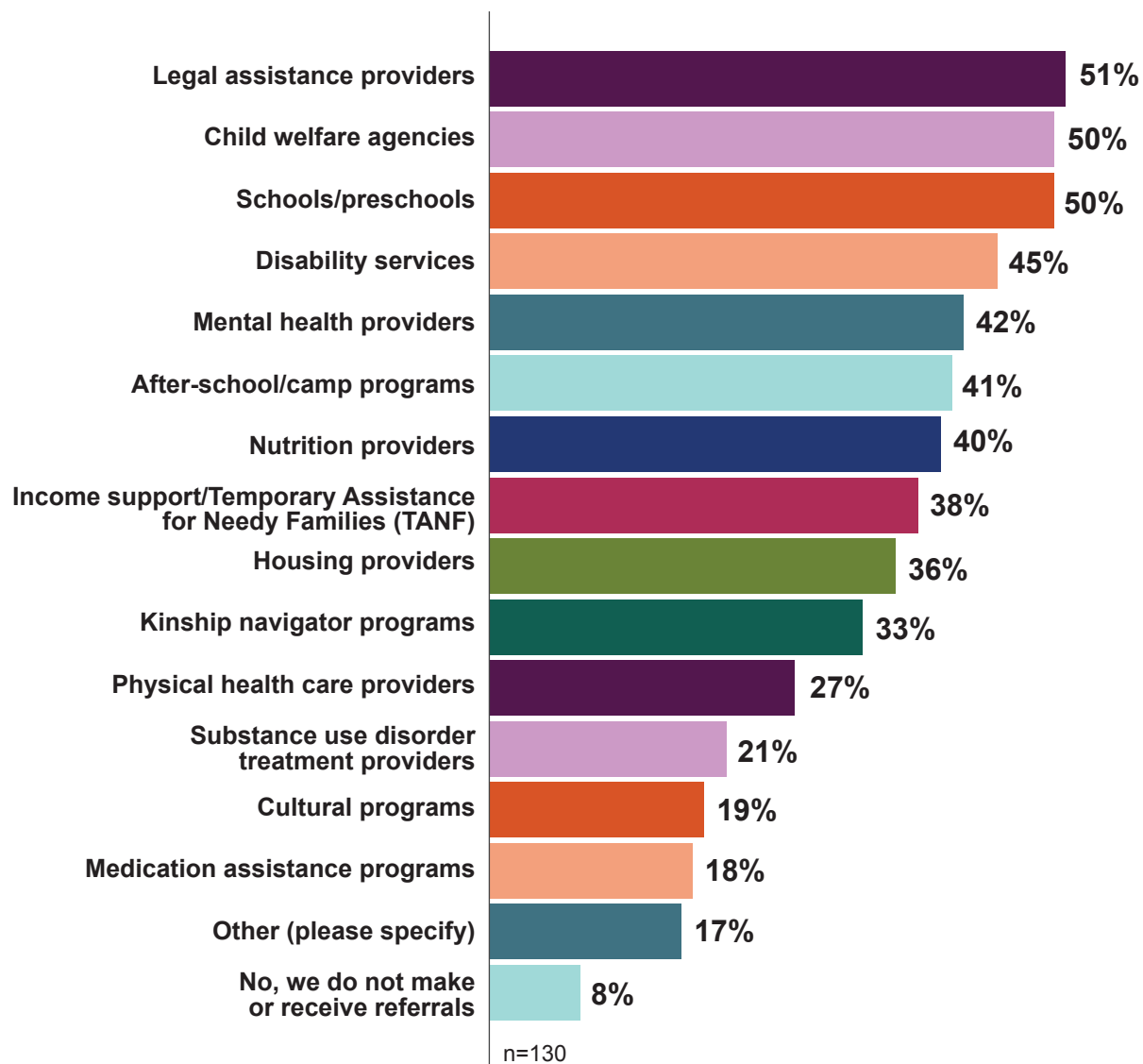
Additional Funding Sources (Beyond NFCSP and NACSP) that AAAs and Title VI Programs Use to Support Kinship/Grandfamilies



AAAs and Title VI Programs Engage a Broad Array of Partners

AAAs and Title VI programs frequently utilize different types of partnerships to expand their outreach and to support kinship/grandfamilies. When asked to identify to whom they make referrals and/or from whom they receive referrals, respondents identified more than two dozen referral partners, including other social services programs, program participants, staff, churches, kin/grandfamily caregiver support groups, and legal assistance providers.

AAAs and Title VI programs Make Referrals to, and Receive Referrals from the Following Entities





Poll respondents most often identified legal assistance providers as their top referral partner for kinship/grandfamilies. Legal assistance providers provide important services to kinship/grandfamilies such as support with guardianship issues. Child welfare agencies and schools/preschools, each of which were named by 50 percent of respondents, followed. Public schools have enormous access to grandfamilies, according to Generations United in its *State of Grandfamilies* report,¹⁵ and as

such, they serve as excellent referral sources of kinship/grandfamilies to AAAs and Title VI programs. Child welfare agencies are also critical partners, ensuring children in these families have access to important benefits.

One-third of poll respondents identified kinship navigator programs as referral partners. Like schools and child welfare agencies, kinship navigators often refer kinship/grandfamilies to the Aging Network. They also help the Aging Network conserve resources given their role with assisting kin/grandfamily caregivers to learn about and access programs and resources.

A separate question in the poll asked whether AAAs or Title VI programs administer kinship navigator programs. Seven percent of respondents (nine AAAs) reported they did so. Eight percent of AAA and Title VI program respondents indicated a desire to do so. Social Security Title IV B funding for kinship navigators is only available to “states, territories and tribes, directly operating a [Social Security] Title IV E [i.e., foster care] program,”¹⁶ but federal law requires Title IV E agencies to collaborate and partner with other providers, including AAAs. Although Aging Network organizations cannot receive this Title IV B funding directly from the federal government, they can subcontract with Title IV E agencies to operate kinship navigator programs.

Respondents Have Diverse Training Interests

Respondents were also asked to share their top training interests. The top five identified were mental health issues facing caregivers and children (33 percent), reaching the target population and/or effective outreach (31 percent), support group models (21 percent), collaborating with schools/preschools (21 percent), and legal issues faced by families (21 percent). Only five percent stipulated that they do not want training in this area.

Top Training Topics Identified by AAAs and Title VI Programs Related to Kinship/Grandfamilies



Among the 75 percent of respondents that serve 50 or fewer kin/grandfamily caregivers each year, their training priorities were slightly different, with reaching the target population/effective outreach (33 percent) identified as the top interest.

PROGRAM EXAMPLE ¹⁷

New Clothes Boost Kinship/Grandfamily Children's Self-Esteem: Bexar (Texas) Area Agency on Aging www.aacog.com/aging-services

Remember your first day of school? Your nervous anticipation about what the other kids would be like; would they like you? You dressed in your new clothes; packed school supplies in your new backpack and headed off, ready or not. Now imagine what the first day of school would be like wearing used clothing that may not be in fashion and carrying an old, worn backpack instead of a brand-new one.

Many children in kinship/grandfamilies cannot afford new clothes or backpacks at the start of each school year. Realizing this, the Bexar AAA in Bexar County, Texas, decided to do something to help. In 2018, the agency partnered with a local nonprofit, San Antonio Threads. For just \$150 per child of AAA funding, San Antonio Threads provides children of kinship/grandfamilies participating in Bexar AAA's Older Relative Caregiver program with two sets of new clothes, a new pair of shoes, a new light jacket or hoodie, new toiletries, and a new backpack. The children, ranging from age five to 18, "shop" for their clothing in a boutique-like setting. Each child also is assigned a volunteer "stylist" to help with their selections.

Bexar AAA Caregiver Services Coordinator Cyndee Pierce has observed positive outcomes from the yearly "Back to School Assistance" event. The children, Pierce reports, not only receive new clothing but also "a boost to their self-esteem." One child noted "feeling down" earlier in the day and then feeling "way better and less sad" after shopping.



The event relies heavily on volunteers. San Antonio Threads receives money, gift cards, and new clothing donations to reduce costs. Bexar AAA spends \$150 per child using National Family Caregiver Support Program funds.

The event is so popular that many kinship/grandfamilies return to participate year after year. Since the event's inception, Bexar AAA and its nonprofit partner have supplied 905 kinship/grandfamily children with back-to-school essentials. In 2022, the program team hopes to serve 330 additional kinship/grandfamilies.

When asked how other AAAs might replicate the program, Pierce suggests researching whether a nonprofit exists in their communities that helps with back-to-school clothing or supplies and partnering with them. To publicize the event, Pierce recommends partnering with schools, support groups for grandparents raising grandchildren, and other community groups.

PROGRAM EXAMPLE

Getting In-Kind Gifts and Pro-Bono Services for Kinship/Grandfamilies. Two Examples from: AgeSpan and Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc. www.agespan.org and www.areaofficeonaging.com

Since 1997, AgeSpan, an Area Agency on Aging, has partnered with other organizations working with older adults to establish the Breakfast Exchange Club of Greater Haverhill under the arm of the National Exchange Club. Club members support the community by fundraising to support the needs of older adults. The Breakfast Exchange Club helps pay for “specific needs” that are outside the AAA’s kinship/grandfamily budget such as holiday gifts for grandparents and their grandchildren, grocery store gift cards, summer camp fees, and other extracurricular activities for children. The Breakfast Exchange Club has also helped a grandchild with vision loss attend a summer camp on Martha’s Vineyard and paid for another grandchild to participate in a cheerleading competition in Florida.

Over time, AAAs can turn one or two partnerships into many. That’s what the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc. did. The AAA has served kinship/grandfamilies for 20 years and supports more than 1,100 kinship/grandfamilies. In this time, the agency has cultivated cost-neutral partnerships with many organizations, including more than 60 nonprofits, managed care plans, government agencies, and universities. These partners offer a variety of free goods and/or pro-bono services to the kinship/grandfamilies the AAA serves. For example, one nonprofit partner provides free winter coats to children in kinship/grandfamilies. Managed care partners pay for



turkeys and hams during the holidays. Other partners help with gift cards, school supplies, space for AAA events, minor league baseball and hockey tickets, and pro bono legal assistance for the families.

When asked how other AAAs and Title VI programs can replicate its success, Collette Cordova, Vice President of Special Contracts and Analytics at the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc. suggested they build and nurture relationships at the local level by engaging in meaningful outreach activities. She also encouraged AAAs and Title VI programs to find opportunities to teach other entities about kinship/grandfamilies. Requests to partners, she says, may start small and build over time.

PROGRAM EXAMPLE

Tutoring Brings Respite for Kin/Grandfamily Caregivers and Success for Students:

Southeast Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability

www.setaaad.org/www

School closures during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions for many around the country. Overnight, parents and kin/grandfamily caregivers suddenly found themselves without daytime childcare and needing to step into the role of teacher or teacher's aide.

In rural Tennessee, the Southeast Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability (SETAAAD) learned that kin/grandfamily caregivers in its service area were struggling with virtual learning environments adopted by the schools. The AAA also learned that, on top of other pandemic-related stressors, kin/grandfamily caregivers worried that the children they are raising were falling behind in school.

In response, SETAAAD partnered with a local tutoring service to support these children academically as well as give their kin/grandfamily caregivers much needed respite. Personalized learning plans, customized to each child's needs, were developed. In its first year, the program supported 30 kin/grandfamily caregivers and 42 children with more than 1,400 hours of tutoring. Outcomes reported by the kin/grandfamily caregivers included lower stress levels, improved relationships with the children they are raising, time for themselves, and feeling less alone. Children in the program saw improvements in their schoolwork and in their self-confidence, which also reassured their kin/grandfamily caregivers.



The cost of the program, during that first year, was just under \$72,000. SETAAAD used time-limited Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to launch the program. With the program's success, the AAA has decided to continue the program using NFCSP funds.

When asked how other AAAs or Title VI programs might replicate their success, SETAAAD staff suggested formally partnering with local tutoring vendors and negotiating the best rates. To find participants, the staff recommends networking with educators, child welfare agencies, after-school programs, courts, and local nonprofits.

PROGRAM EXAMPLE

Gramping: AAA Helps Kin/Grandfamily Caregivers “Have Fun” with their Children: County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov

Aging & Independence Services (AIS)—San Diego’s AAA—asked kin/grandfamily caregivers for feedback and a common refrain, Pam Plimpton, AIS’s Intergenerational Coordinator said, was they “just want to have fun” with the children in their care. They wanted respite from the daily busyness of life and sought opportunities to bond with the children they are raising.

In 2017, AIS, in partnership with Parks and Recreation and regional health and human services colleagues, held its first weekend “Gramping” trip. Kinship/grandfamily campers hiked, played games, face-painted, made s’mores by the campfire, planted trees and learned about nature. Parks and Recreation waived fees for the campsite. Tents and sleeping bags were donated for those who needed them. The County’s Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) and Parks and Recreation staff cooked, washed up, pitched tents, led the activities and did all the work so families could just relax and have fun.

The success of the first Gramping trip led HHSA and Parks and Recreation to offer these campouts as an annual event, and trips were held again in 2018 and 2019. At the 2019 event, wheelchair-accessible cabins were also made available. The number of families participating in these campouts has ranged from approximately nine to 26, and interest in every campout has necessitated the creation of a waitlist.

In planning for future Gramping trips, AIS plans to partner with the local YMCA’s Kinship Support program to reach out to nonprofits and private companies to sponsor the event, donate equipment and supplies, and share information about the event to partners. Family referrals also are expected to come from past Gramping participants.

When asked how other AAAs or Title VI programs can replicate Gramping, Plimpton recommends partnering with their local Parks and Recreation department which have the camping sites and the expertise. She also advises partnering with local businesses and nonprofits. (A local outdoor outfitter donated camping equipment for a previous Gramping trip.) Gramping events cost HHSA between \$3,000-\$6,000 for food and supplies depending on the number of participants. Staff time was another program expense. For AAAs and Title VI programs with smaller budgets or capacity, Plimpton suggests day hikes or “animal encounters” with park rangers. Even arranging brief experiences in nature, she says are “well worth the effort.” It is “so novel...so well received” by many families. Participating in AIS’s Gramping program, Plimpton adds, has been “one of the highlights of my career.”

Summary of Key Findings

Although not required to provide services for kinship/grandfamilies, most AAAs and Title VI programs recognize the critical needs of these families and do—and many have for a long time. In fact, many of the services they provide are those most needed by kinship/grandfamilies, including information and assistance for caregivers, support groups, caregiver training/education, and legal assistance.

While 18 percent reported serving more than 100 kin/grandfamily caregivers, three-quarters of AAAs and Title VI programs served 50 or fewer kin/grandfamily caregivers in their most recent budget year. Thirty-eight percent of respondents served kin/grandfamily caregivers under age 55. Difficulties with outreach and limited funding appear to be key factors in limiting service provision.

On average, AAAs report using nine percent of their the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) budgets on kin/grandfamily caregiver services. Now that the NFCSP spending cap has been lifted, most have or plan to increase their spending for this population.

Many AAAs and Title VI programs detail using a variety of funding streams beyond NFCSP and the Native American Caregiver Support Program to finance their kinship/grandfamily services, including other federal funding, state and local funds, tribal resources, and foundation grants and/or philanthropy.

Additionally, AAAs and Title VI programs typically partner with a variety of entities on referrals, including legal assistance providers, child welfare agencies, schools/preschools, disability services, and mental health providers.

AAAs and Title VI programs identified an array of training interests to respond to the needs of kinship/grandfamilies. The top five were mental health issues facing caregivers and children, reaching the target population and/or effective outreach, support group models, collaborating with schools/preschools, and legal issues faced by families.

AAAs and Title VI programs are working hard to support kinship/grandfamilies in their communities. Despite challenges with outreach and funding levels, AAAs and Title VI programs provide a range of the services and supports most needed by kinship/grandfamilies. With the number of kinship/grandfamilies on the rise, the work of AAAs and Title VI programs as well as the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network will be critical for building cross-sector capacity and partnerships to support this special group of caregivers.

Endnotes

- ¹ Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center, Kinship/Grandfamilies Data, <https://gksnetwork.org/kinship-data/>.
- ² Elizabeth M. Bertera, Sandra Edmonds Crewe, *Parenthood in the Twenty-First Century: African American Grandparents as Surrogate Parents*, Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, February 2013, 23(2): 178-192, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271940072_Parenthood_in_the_Twenty-First_Century_African_American_Grandparents_as_Surrogate_Parents.
- ³ Generations United and National Indian Child Welfare Association, *Toolkit - American Indian and Alaska Native Grandfamilies: Helping Children Thrive Through Connection to Family and Cultural Identity*, 2020, <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2020/07/AIAN-Toolkit-WEB.pdf>.
- ⁴ Generations United, *Toolkit - Latino Grandfamilies: Helping Children Thrive Through Connection to Family and Culture*, 2021, <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2021/11/21-Latino-Grandfamilies-Toolkit-Final.pdf>.
- ⁵ Generations United, *State of Grandfamilies Report 2021: Reinforcing a Strong Foundation: Equitable Supports for Basic Needs of Grandfamilies*, 2021, https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2022/02/2021-Grandfamilies-Report_V14.pdf.
- ⁶ Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and the Administration for Community Living, *Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (SGRG) Act: Initial Report to Congress*, November 16, 2021, https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress_2021-11-16.pdf.
- ⁷ United States General Accountability Office, *Child Welfare and Aging Programs: HHS Could Enhance Support for Grandparents and Other Relative Caregivers*, July 2020, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-20-434.pdf>.
- ⁸ Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and the Administration for Community Living, *Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (SGRG) Act: Initial Report to Congress*, November 16, 2021, https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress_2021-11-16.pdf.
- ⁹ Generations United, *Fact Sheet – Grandfamilies and Kinship Families: Strengths and Challenges*, 2022, <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2022/05/General-Grandfamilies-Fact-Sheet-2022.pdf>.
- ¹⁰ Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and the Administration for Community Living, *Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (SGRG) Act: Initial Report to Congress*, November 16, 2021, https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress_2021-11-16.pdf.

- ¹¹ American Bar Association, *Children’s Defense Fund, Generations United, Kinship Caregiving Options: Consideration for Caregivers*, December 2021, https://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/Documents/Care-Custody/kin-caregiving-options-dec21%202022-01-10%2022_34_13.pdf.
- ¹² Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and the Administration for Community Living, *Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (SGRG) Act: Initial Report to Congress*, November 16, 2021, https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress_2021-11-16.pdf.
- ¹³ United States General Accountability Office, *Child Welfare and Aging Programs: HHS Could Enhance Support for Grandparents and Other Relative Caregivers*, July 2020, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-20-434.pdf>.
- ¹⁴ Generations United, *State of Grandfamilies Report 2021: Reinforcing a Strong Foundation: Equitable Supports for Basic Needs of Grandfamilies*, 2021, https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2022/02/2021-Grandfamilies-Report_V14.pdf.
- ¹⁵ Generations United, *State of Grandfamilies Report 2021: Reinforcing a Strong Foundation: Equitable Supports for Basic Needs of Grandfamilies*, 2021, https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2022/02/2021-Grandfamilies-Report_V14.pdf.
- ¹⁶ U.S. Department Of Health And Human Services Administration on Children, Youth and Families, *Program Instruction*, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/pi2106.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ USAging contacted Title VI programs for potential inclusion as case examples in the report, but did not receive responses in time for publication in this report.

Acknowledgements

This report was conducted by USAging as part of its partnership role with the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center, which is funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Administration for Community Living and led by Generations United. USAging and Generations United would like to acknowledge the AAAs interviewed for the case examples in this report: AgeSpan; Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc.; Bexar Area Agency on Aging; County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services; and Southeast Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability.

The Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center (Network) helps government agencies and nonprofits in states, tribes, and territories work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries to improve supports and services for families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children. For more information, please visit www.GKSNetwork.org.

USAging represents and supports the national network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocates for Title VI Native American Aging Programs that help older adults and people with disabilities live with optimal health, well-being, independence, and dignity in their homes and communities. For more information, please visit www.usaging.org.

The Network is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$9,950,000 with 95 percentage funded by ACL/HHS and \$523,684 and 5 percentage funded by non-government sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

© Generations United & USAging, January 2023.

**The Network is a project of
Generations United.**

**generations
united**

Because we're stronger together®