



PRESS RELEASE

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New Report Finds that for Every One Child in Foster Care with Relatives, 23 are Raised by Relatives Outside of the System

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Dec. 3, 2014 — The number of youth in foster care who are raised by grandparents and other relatives increased from 23 percent a decade ago to 27 percent, according to a new report released by Generations United today. Yet, for every one child in foster care with relatives, 23 are raised by relatives outside of the system.

“The new report, *The State of Grandfamilies in America: 2014*, shines a light on the challenges grandfamilies face and the incredible service they provide our country,” said **Donna Butts, executive director of Generations United**. “By keeping children out of foster care, they save taxpayers more than \$4 billion annually.”

The report includes an infographic that shows 7.8 million children live in grandfamilies, where grandparents or other relatives are the householders. Nearly one-third of children in all grandfamilies do not have their parents living with them in the home. About 2.7 million grandparents are responsible for most of the basic needs of grandchildren living with them.

These diverse families come together for a variety of reasons - including job loss, out of state employment, military deployment, divorce, deportation, illness, death, substance abuse, incarceration, or mental illness.

“Children fare well in relative care,” said **Jaia Peterson Lent, deputy executive director of Generations United**. “They have more stability, experience fewer moves and are more likely to maintain connections with brothers and sisters and preserve cultural heritage.”

“As Congress considers future improvements to the foster care system,” Lent added, “it is critical that we do more to support children with relatives both inside and outside the system.”

The report offers recommendations to help guide the development of supportive policies and services for grandfamilies. These include:

- Making family care a priority
- Empowering children, youth and caregivers to advocate for themselves

- Preparing caregivers to meet the specific needs of children and youth in their care

The report will be available at www.gu.org on **Wednesday, Dec. 3, 5pm**. To read an advanced copy, or view the infographic, contact Alan King at aking@gu.org.

Generations United will release *The State of Grandfamilies in America: 2014* **tomorrow, Dec. 3, 5pm to 7pm**, at **25 E Street NW**.

Generations United will honor Senator Chuck Grassley with its first-ever Grandfamilies Champion Award. Senator Tammy Baldwin will announce Generations United's new advisory council on grandfamilies.

To schedule an interview with one of our experts, contact Alan King at aking@gu.org. Experts available for comment include:

- **Donna Butts, executive director, Generations United**
- **Ana Beltran, special advisor, Generations United's National Center on Grandfamilies**
(Ms. Beltran can also do interviews in Spanish)
- **Jaia Peterson Lent, deputy executive director, Generations United**

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For nearly three decades, Generations United has been the catalyst for policies and practices stimulating cooperation and collaboration among generations, evoking the vibrancy, energy and sheer productivity that result when people of all ages come together. We believe that we can only be successful in the face of our complex future if generational diversity is regarded as a national asset and fully leveraged. The National Center on Grandfamilies is a critical part of Generations United's mission and strives to enact policies and promote programs that support relative caregivers and the children they raise. www.gu.org