

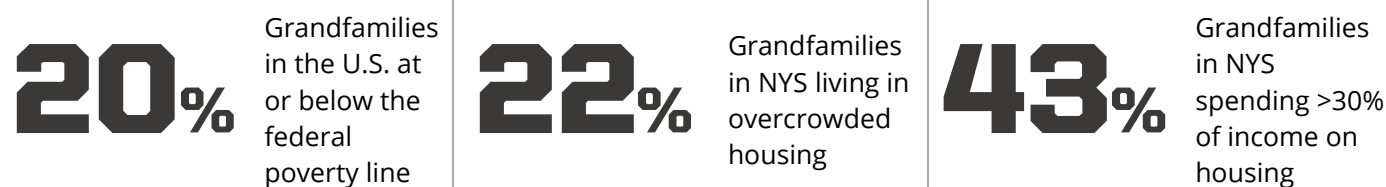
Supporting Grandfamilies: Considerations for Housing

Research Brief

Prepared at the Request of New York County Leaders
Compiled by: Elizabeth Day
Cornell University and University of Oregon

BACKGROUND

Grandfamilies – families in which grandparents or other adult family members are raising children – are a growing population of families needing unique support to help children thrive. 2.5 million children were raised by Grandfamilies in 2022 across the U.S.^{1,2}



HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS & SOLUTIONS

In their 2019 report “A Place to Call Home: Building Affordable Housing for Grandfamilies,” Generations United outlined a variety of ways to support grandfamily housing needs.³

Ways to Support Grandfamilies without Specially Designed Housing

- 1.** “Section 8” Housing Voucher Program Subsidized Rental Housing
 - The Fair Housing Act makes clear that grandparents and other relatives cannot be required to have legal custody of children in their care to qualify for assisted housing.
 - Explicitly clarify in federal, state and local policies that the Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers program should allow relatives raising children to use these vouchers
- 2.** Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) for Grandfamilies
 - Grandparents raising grandchildren in their own home may need more space. ADUs can help address this need
 - Westchester ADU Model Ordinance:
<https://homes.westchestergov.com/images/stories/pdfs/adumo1119.pdf>
- 3.** “Handyman” Programs
 - Handyman programs provide free or discounted services such as child-proofing to older adults or people with disabilities.
 - Funding streams may include HUD Community Development Block Grant, Older Americans Act, or other city or private funds
- 4.** Kinship Navigator Programs
 - Kinship navigators can provide information and referral for grandfamilies and also educate front line housing staff on grandfamilies’ strengths and needs
 - Westchester kinship navigator: [Family Service Society of Yonkers](#)

Considerations for Creating Grandfamily Housing

Grandfamily housing takes many forms, but all have the goal of providing affordable, convenient housing for multigenerational families. This involves features for all generations (e.g., child locks for children; support bars for grandparents) and can be standalone housing or integrated with other populations of families involved in the child welfare system.

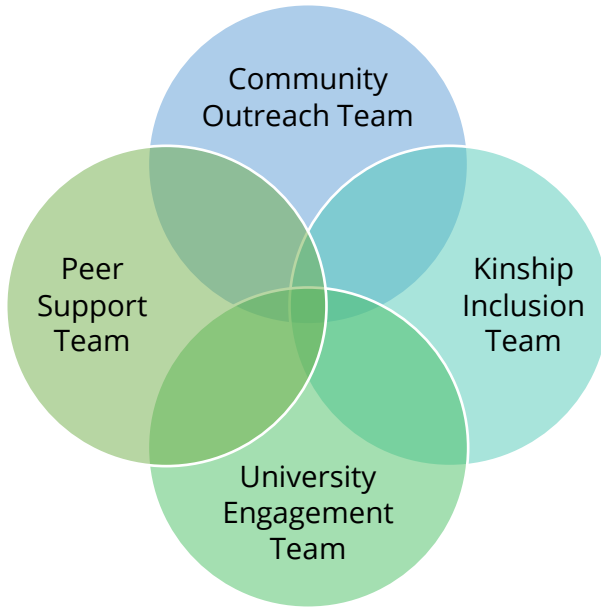
Grandfamily Housing Across the United States

State	Name	Contact
Arizona	Grandfamilies Place of Phoenix	grandfamiliesplace@mebmgmt.com
Arizona	Las Abuelitas Family Housing	520-882-5383
Connecticut	CRT Generations	860-910-4206
Illinois	Roseland Village	773-468-1901
Illinois	Sankofa House	wsafechild@sbcglobal.net 773-542-9900
Louisiana	The Grandparents House (aka Urban Villa Apartments)	info@urecbr.com
Maryland	Clare Courts	410-235-4898
Massachusetts	Franklin Field Housing Development	617-988-5090
Missouri	Pemberton Park	816-921-7275
New Jersey	Elm Street Apartments	973-413-1600
New York	PSS/WSF Grandparents Family Apartments	917-801-4488
Ohio	Kinship Village	216-421-1350
Oregon	Bridge Meadows	info@bridgemeanows.org 503-953-1100
Tennessee	Fiddler's Annex	areels@ucdd.org 931-476-4126
Washington, DC	Plaza West	contactus@missionfirsthousing.org 215-557-8414
Wisconsin	Villard Square	414-461-1787

For more details, visit [the full report](#), page 28.

COUNTY SPOTLIGHT: LARIMER COUNTY, CO

Starting in 2006, a grandparent peer support group, along with a range of county supports, launched the Larimer County Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group. Evaluations in 2008 showed a slew of benefits for grandparents, grandfamilies, and the community.⁴



Support Group Partners

Larimer County Department of Human Services

- Benefits planning
- Child Support

Larimer County Cooperative Extension

Colorado State University

- Center on Aging
- School of Social Work
- Department of Human Development and Family Studies

Namaqua Center

- Partner program of the Larimer Center for Mental Health

GRANDFAMILIES IN NEW YORK STATE

In their 2018 study of grandparent caregivers, Polvere and colleagues⁵ conducted focus groups with 46 grandparents and 34 youth from Harlem, Middletown, Plattsburgh, Rochester, and Yonkers, New York to hear their perspectives on housing needs of grandfamilies. Grandparents and youth described housing challenges that stemmed from four problem domains:

1. Challenges related to poverty
2. Age-related physical challenges
3. Changes in family composition
4. Obstacles to obtaining benefits

"I rent. The problem is we're grandparents and we have grandchildren. That's the problem getting any apartments, senior housing, they don't want you to come in with your children. They're making all this housing and everything for seniors...so this is our problem that we have. Since we took on the responsibility of having our grandchildren, we have problems getting housing." – Grandparent, Yonkers

The authors' recommendations for better supporting grandfamilies included:

- Protect and expand affordable housing for grandfamilies
- Extend the same benefits to grandparents that non-kinship foster parents receive
- Advocate for grandparents raising grandchildren, particularly regarding their housing rights and custody arrangements

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Full report from NYS in 2015: Summarizes findings from the 2015 Homes and Community Renewal study of grandfamilies in New York.

<https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=chsr-cfes-reports-and-briefs>

Generations United: An organization dedicated to supporting grandfamilies.

<https://www.gu.org/explore-our-topics/grandfamilies/>

Program Database: <https://www.gu.org/home/ig-program-database/>

Recent webinar on housing: <https://www.gu.org/resources/recording-reimagining-intergenerational-housing-webinar/>

Contact: Ana Beltran, abeltran@gu.org

Grandfamilies.org: Another organization dedicated to supporting grandfamilies, with a particularly helpful searchable database for state laws and regulations that relate to grandfamilies.

<https://www.grandfamilies.org/Topics/Housing>

Policy Database: <https://www.grandfamilies.org/Search-Laws>

FUNDING & SUPPORT



This brief was completed as part of a project funded by the William T. Grant Foundation and is a joint effort of Cornell Project 2Gen, housed in the Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research at Cornell University, and the HEDCO Institute for Evidence-Based Educational Practice at the University of Oregon. For more information, please contact Elizabeth Day at ead255@cornell.edu.

METHODS

Findings presented in this brief come from a literature review of academic peer-reviewed studies, as well as a review of research and findings from non-partisan think tanks, foundations, and organizations. Given the rapid nature of this search, other relevant studies may exist. In addition, please note that we did not use formal statistical methods for summarizing results and exploring reasons for differences in findings across studies.

REFERENCES

¹ <https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=chsr-cfes-reports-and-briefs>

² <http://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/Documents/General%20Kinship%20Publications/23-Children-Thrive-in-Grandfamilies.pdf>

³ <https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2019/11/19-Grandfamilies-Report-APlacetoCallHome.pdf>

⁴ Fruhauf, C. A., Bundy-Fazioli, K., & Miller, J. L. (2012). Larimer County Alliance for Grandfamilies: A collaborative approach to meeting a community need. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 31(2), 193-214.

⁵ Polvere, L., Barnes, C., & Lee, E. (2018). Housing needs of grandparent caregivers: Grandparent, youth, and professional perspectives. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 61(5), 549-566.