

June

Grandparents Raising
Grandchildren

2007

Advisory
Council
Grandparents
Raising
Grandchildren Task
Force
Blue Ribbon
Report



*Riverside County Advisory Council on Aging
Riverside County Office on Aging*



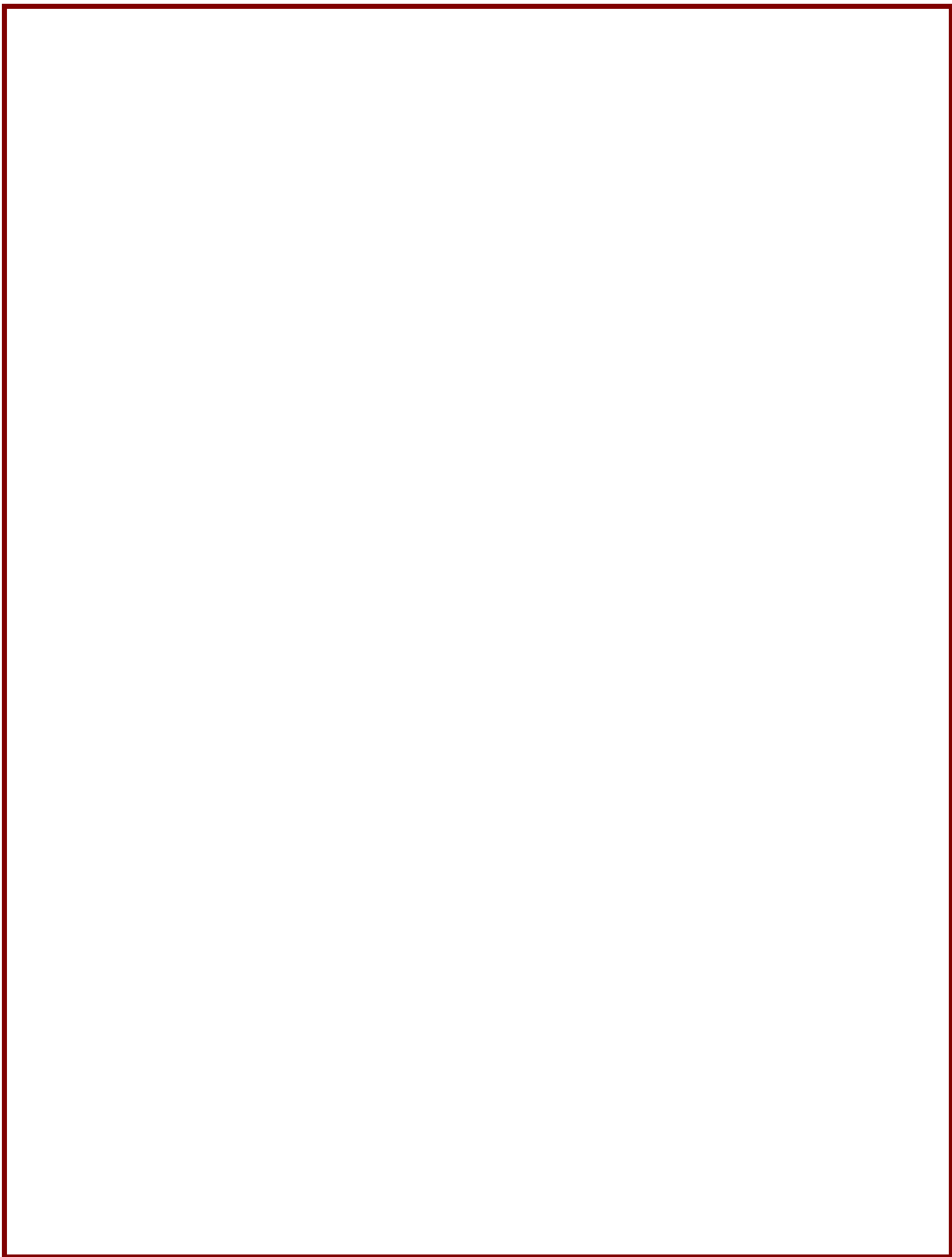
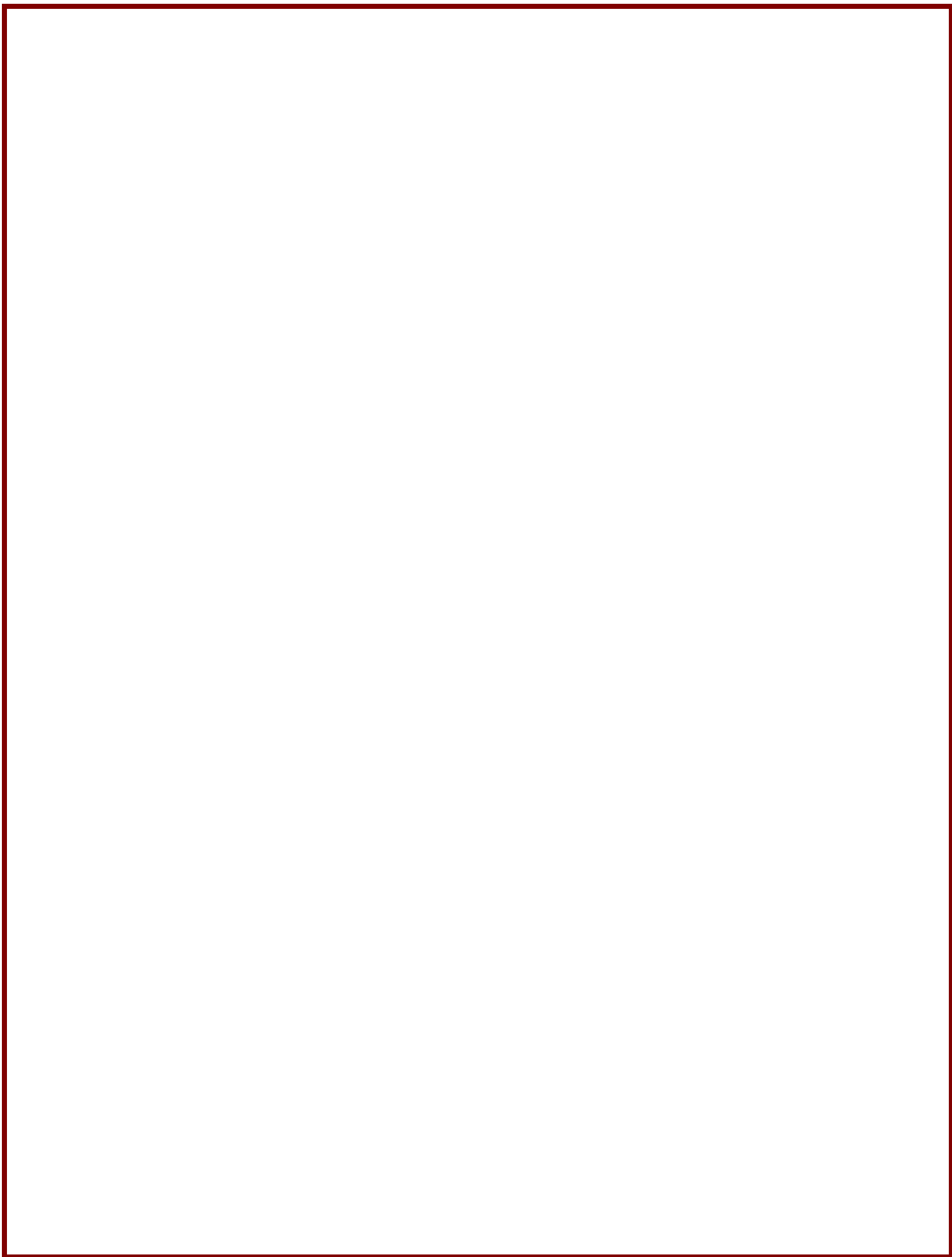




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Introduction

In October 1998, the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force (aka Task Force) was created by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors and their first meeting was convened by the Office on Aging and the Advisory Council on Aging. The Task Force has been directed by the Board of Supervisors to identify a central point of access for grandparents and providers for a more streamlined coordination for the County's system. The Task Force has been active since conception and continues to report back to the Board on an annual basis.



Grandparents increasingly are being called upon to provide full-time parental care to minor grandchildren, and in many cases require the same type of support network provided to foster parents.

In an effort to build awareness and to address priority issues confronted by grandparents raising grandchildren the Office on Aging staff, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force, and Advisory Council on Aging convene forums for grandparents raising grandchildren, Riverside County department personnel, and service providers.

This report provides a brief look at grandparents raising grandchildren demographic data and priority needs related to the grandparents raising grandchildren population. It also includes a summary of a survey distributed during the 2006 Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Forum, "A Tree of Support", followed by recommendations for next steps.



Quick Facts on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

- In 2000, according to the most recent US Census a grandparent was responsible for raising grandchildren in nearly 40 percent of the 45,000 Riverside County households which are composed of grandparents living with one or more grandchild under 18.
- According to the National Center on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, 21.7 percent of the 294,969 grandparents in California who are responsible for their grandchildren, live in poverty.
- In Southern California an estimated 22 percent of grandparents are, effectively, the parents of young children. ¹
- American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) found that 11 percent of grandparents over 50 are caregivers, specifically, 8 percent are providing day care and 3 percent are raising a grandchild. ²
- An estimated 1,277 grandparents age 60 and older with a reported disability were caring for grandchildren under the age of 18 years. ²

¹ Senior Life Magazine (May 06): Dr. Phil & Grand parenting all over again?
By Darcy Alvey

² American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) 2000 U.S. Census Report.

Community Concerns and Priority Needs

In many grandparents raising grandchildren households the parents cannot or will not care for the children due to substance abuse, illness and death, emotional/physical abuse and neglect, economic hardship, incarceration, divorce, domestic violence, and other family and community crises.

The priority needs of grandparents raising grandchildren were identified through public forums and activities of the Office on Aging Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force during the Office on Aging 2005-2009 Strategic Plan Development. The priorities identified at that time continue to be top priority needs of grandparents raising grandchildren.



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Forum: “A Tree of Support”

Primary Objectives of the Forum

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Forum provided an opportunity to inform, acknowledge, and commend grandparents for their commitment in raising their grandchildren. Resources, along with assistance in understanding and navigating through the service delivery system, were a key focus of the Forum.

Forum Presentations

The forum was presented in a panel format with the following agencies represented:

Adult Protective Services
Child Protective Services
Department of Social Services/Warmline
Inland Regional Center
Kin Care
Riverside County Mental Health Department
Riverside County Office of Education
Riverside County Probate Court
Riverside County Probation Prevention Services
Women-Infants-Children (WIC)

Each panelist presented an overview of their department/agency and included a description of the services provided. Following the panel presentations the attendees were given an opportunity to ask questions. The questions asked pertained to resources or information on topics such as assistance in locating services, legal assistance, consultation, childcare, child behavior issues, housing, transportation, insurance, health care, counseling, and financial assistance. Due to the high volume of questions asked, the attendees were informed that the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force will compile the answers and place them on the Office on Aging website www.rcaging.org following the Forum.

Forum Outcomes

Grandparents raising grandchildren that attended the Forum appeared to have gained a better understanding of the resources available in Riverside County and ways to more effectively navigate through the service delivery system.

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program has had a noticeable increase in the volume of phone calls from grandparents raising grandchildren since the Forum.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Forum Survey Summary

September 21, 2006

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren:

A Tree of Support

Forum Attendance: 229

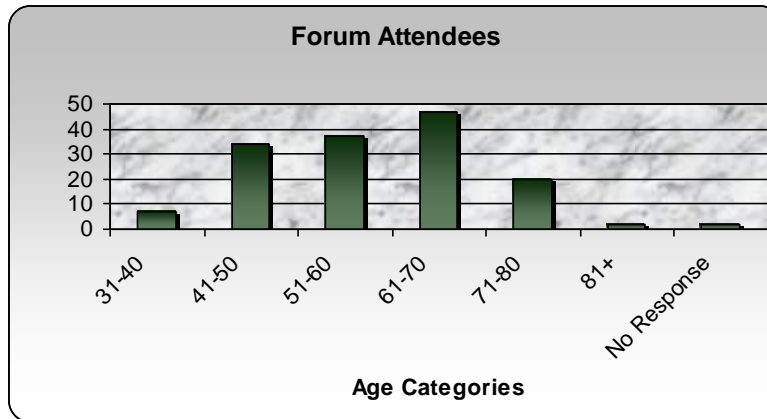
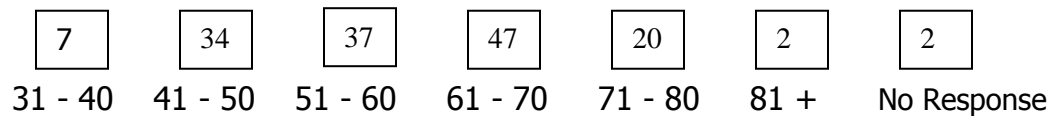
Surveys Turned In: 149

At the September 2006 Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Forum, each attendee was asked to complete a confidential survey to help identify issues they are dealing with on a daily basis. Out of 229 surveys distributed, 149 were returned and compiled in the following summary. The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force would like to give special thanks to all of the individuals who completed the survey. The information will be very helpful in the planning of future Grandparents Raising Grandchildren forums and provide strategies for advocacy, coordination, and outreach next steps.



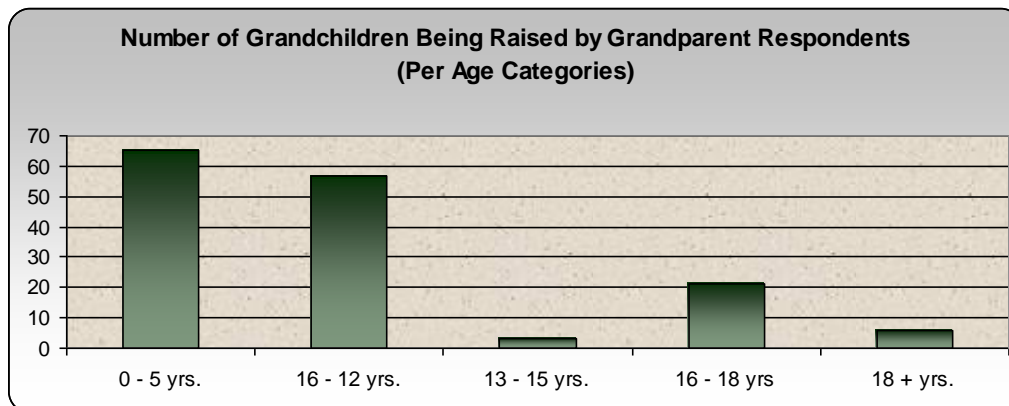
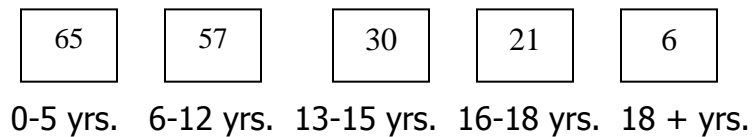
Survey Question 1 Results

Respondents were asked to identify their age category. As identified in the chart below, the largest represented age category is 61 – 70.



Survey Question 2 Results

A total of 131 respondents indicated they are raising grandchildren in their homes; the largest represented age category of the grandchildren they are raising is 0-5 years.



(Note: These figures may not be indicative of the true total of grandchildren being raised as not all respondents included a number of children per category).

Survey Question 3 Results

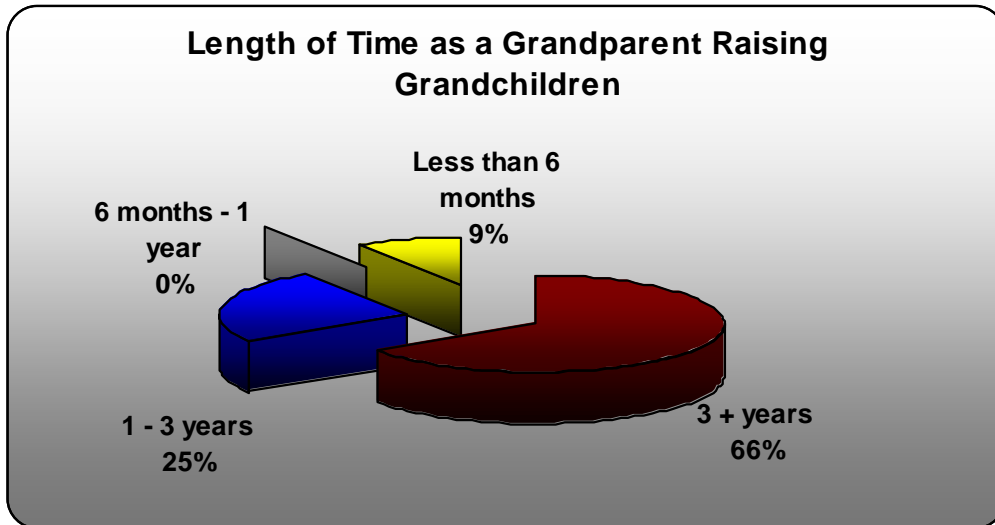
Grandparents raising grandchildren respondents were asked if they are raising a grandchild(ren) with special needs. Out of 131 grandparents raising grandchildren, 39 reported that they are caring for at least one grandchild with special needs; of these 39, 20 are age 61+.

The grandparents raising special needs children identified having received the following types of special needs assistance and mentioned some of the organizations providing the assistance.

Education	Mental Health	Medical	Financial Assistance	Other Supportive Services
Special Education Programs	Bi-polar	Medi-Cal	Cal Works	Respite
Riverside County Office of Education	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity (ADHD)	Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	WIC	Inland Regional Center (IRC)
Individualized Education Program (IEP)	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	Atrial Septal Defect (ASD)	Social Security Insurance (SSI)	Family Resource Center (FRC)
	Counseling	Neurofibromatosis (NFI)		In Home Supportive Services
	Behavioral Assistance			

Survey Question 4 Results

Respondents were asked to select from the following groups the length of time that they have been in the role of a grandparent raising a grandchild(ren). Based on 120 responses the length of time is identified in the chart below.

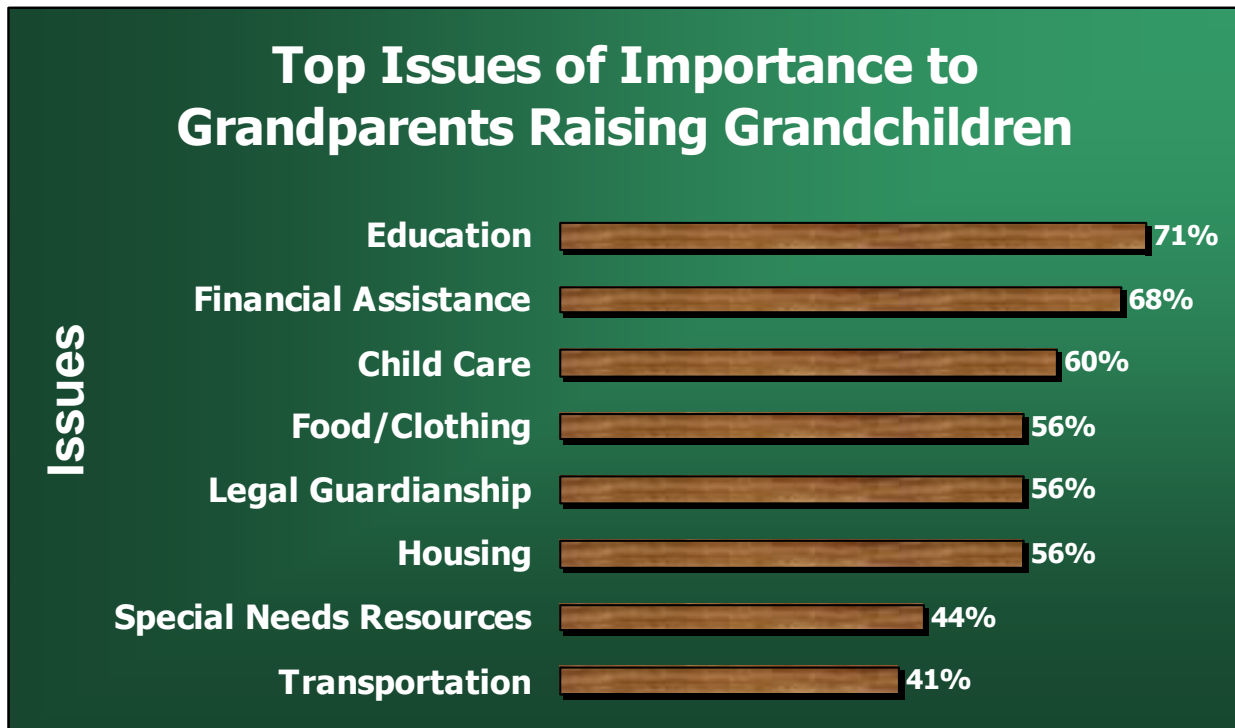


More than half of the respondents indicated that they have been raising their grandchild(ren) for 3 or more years.

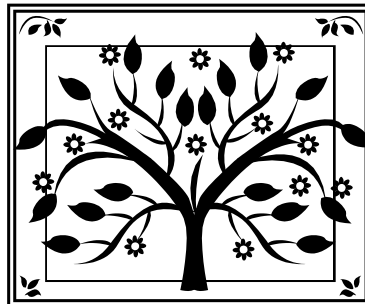


Survey Question 5 Results

Respondents were asked to rate issues based on a scale of very important, important, somewhat important and not important as it pertains to them. The chart below represents the issues identified by grandparents raising grandchildren as most important to them.



Education, Financial Assistance, and Child Care were identified as the top 3 issues of importance.



Survey Question 6 Results

Grandparents raising grandchildren respondents were asked to identify the 3 most critical issues they have been faced with during the past year and which they feel need the most improvement. Below is a summary of their responses by categories.

The most critical issues identified by the respondents were categorized as follows:

Assistance/Miscellaneous

- ◆ Finding quality daycare that would accommodate work schedule
- ◆ Providing information at the annual reviews with changing social workers as a non-needy caretaker relative
- ◆ Emotional support and stability
- ◆ Visitation of biological parents
- ◆ Respite
- ◆ Dealing with emotional needs of children following parent's visitation
- ◆ Balancing work and family
- ◆ Special needs
- ◆ Child support from biological parent
- ◆ Jobs for high school students
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Transportation

Education/Behavior

- ◆ Alternatives for high school children who are meeting criteria
- ◆ Child rearing classes
- ◆ Drug education
- ◆ Extra curricular activities
- ◆ Mentoring
- ◆ Scholarships for camp and colleges
- ◆ Assistance in educating and tutoring
- ◆ Not being able to meet the needs of both mother and father
- ◆ Child's attitudes and anger
- ◆ Child/parent relationship
- ◆ Abandonment issues/behavioral classes

Financial

- ◆ Court costs/legal guardianship made cheaper and easier
- ◆ Extra cost for food, clothing, diapers, and formulas
- ◆ Cost of extra-curriculum activities
- ◆ Quality health insurance
- ◆ Child care expenses

Legal

- ◆ Fighting for Social Security Insurance for tutoring and accommodation
- ◆ Obtaining legal guardianship/adoption
- ◆ Making paperwork easier
- ◆ Parity with Foster Care
- ◆ Dealing with Probate Court

Resources

- ◆ Having access to resources throughout the county
- ◆ Help from regional center
- ◆ Information on grandparents' rights
- ◆ Counseling
- ◆ More communication
- ◆ Support Groups
- ◆ Working with social workers



Survey Question 7 Results

Grandparents raising grandchildren respondents were asked to identify the top 3 resources that have been helpful to them in Riverside County. Over 61 resources were identified and have been placed in three major categories: County, State, and Federal Social Services, Financial/Legal Assistance Agencies, and Other Resources.

The resources following marked with an asterisk were mentioned by more than one grandparent. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program was mentioned most frequently.

County, State & Federal Social Services	Financial/Legal Assistance Agencies	Other Resources
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program *	WIC *	Support Groups *
Riverside County Mental Health *	Financial Assistance *	Respite *
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Forum *	Children Health Insurance Program	UCR Reading Readiness Program
Kincare *	School Free Lunch Program	City of Moreno Valley After School Program
Warmline *	Food Stamps	Family/Friends/Church
Inland Regional Center *	Cal-Works	Guardianships
Department of Public Social Services *	Western Law Center for Disabled Students	Headstart Program
Riverside County Family Services	Inter-Agency Assessment Center	Parent Association of Teachers
Office on Aging	Attorney	Healthy Families
Public Health	Legal Aid	Healthy Children Connection
County of Riverside	Medi-Cal	Nutrition Services
The California Prison System	Social Security Insurance	Health Care/Medical
Riverside County Office of Education	Police	Pre-School Programs
	Subsidized Childcare	211
		Riverside School District
		My Family Incorporated (MFI)
		Special Services
		Child Care

Recommendations For Next Steps

Advocacy

- Advocate, with federal, state, and local officials and key community stakeholders to expand information and assistance and care management services for caregivers of seniors or adults with disabilities, and grandparents raising grandchildren.

Coordination

- Develop and implement a multi-agency Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Customer Satisfaction Tool in order to better identify areas of needed improvement.
- Continue to coordinate to address changing/emerging needs and make appropriate influences on the service delivery system, including educating public social workers and mental health workers countywide on issues of ageism related to grandparents raising grandchildren.
- Continue to coordinate with Board of Supervisor representatives, county departments, school officials, and community agencies, to address the changing and emerging needs of grandparents raising grandchildren.
- In coordination with the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program and key stakeholders, the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force will develop a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Resource and Information Guide that will include information to address the most frequently asked questions of grandparents raising grandchildren.

Outreach

- Provide outreach to increase the number of volunteer advocates for the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program.
- Expand distribution of the quarterly Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Newsletter.
- Develop and implement a campaign to distribute the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Resource and Information Guide.
- Expand outreach to include grandparents raising grandchildren in underserved areas of Riverside County.

Advisory Council on Aging Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force

Betty Rogers, Chair

Board of Supervisor Grandparent Representatives:

District I – Betty Rogers

District II – Billie DeVol

District III – Fran Vigil

District IV – Phyllis M. McGraw, Ph.D.

District V – Carolyn Bradford

Elected Officials:

Senator Hollingsworth Staff	Tom Rogers
Supervisor Buster, District I	Wendy Kolk
Supervisor Tavaglione, District II	Anne Stephens
Supervisor Stone, District III	Robin Reid
Supervisor Stone, District III	Opal Hellweg
Supervisor Wilson, District IV	Elizabeth Romero
Supervisor Ashley, District V	Brenda Salas

Riverside County Departments:

Adult Protective Services	Mark Sellers
Adult Protective Services	Mary Lou Parker
Child Support Services	Joan Del Villar
Court, Family	Vacant
Court, Juvenile Probation	Rosa Strang
Court, Superior Court Probate	Arlene Degen
District Attorney, Family Support	Bonita Garba
DPSS/CalWorks/Medi-Cal	Virginia Irvin
DPSS/Child Protective Services	Allison Donahoe-Beggs
DPSS/Child Protective Services	Susan Mahoney
DPSS/Child Protective Services	Cynthia Marez
DPSS/Foster Care	Teresa Hendricks
DPSS/Warmline	Courtney Barzandeh
Head Start	Vacant
Mental Health	Debbie LeFevre
Mental Health/Older Adults	Barbara Mitchell
Mental Health Substance Abuse	Idonia Davis
Office on Aging/FCSP	Mary Hrinko
Office of Education	Patti Hafner
Public Health Nurse	Nicole Boyd
Sheriff's Department	Captain Darryl Birney

Community Agencies/Organizations:

Community Action Agency	Mary Price
First 5 Riverside	Vacant
Kin Care	Trish Lande
Renu Hope Foundation	Pam Wright
Riverside County	
Foundation on Aging	Vacant
Valley Wide Park & Recreation	Gayle Hepner

Education:

Hemet Unified School District – Sylvia Ortiz
Hemet Unified School District—Nellie Romero
UC Riverside, Moreno Valley – Chutima Ganthavorn, Ph.D.

Grandparent Support Group Leaders:

Hemet – Linda Grant & Fran Vigil
Idyllwild – Jane & Sid Acton
Mead Valley – John Clark
Moreno Valley – Josie LaFata
Perris – Lorena Melendez

Office on Aging Staff

Director	Lu Molberg
Deputy Director, Senior Services	Ed Walsh
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program:	
Program Manager	Valerie Wheat
Social Worker	Chalon Perrell



**To learn more about the
Riverside County Office on Aging,
please call: 1(800) 510-2020 or (951) 867-3800
or visit our Web Site: www.rcaging.org**

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