AARP Survey of New York Registered Voters Age 50 and Older: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

AARP conducted a mail survey of registered voters age 50+ in New York State between November 20 and December 21, 2012, to explore their opinions on a number of issues including grandparents raising grandchildren. The findings in this report are based on the mail survey results from the 544 grandparents in New York State and 121 grandparents in New York City who responded to the survey.

GRANDPARENTS CARING FOR GRANDCHILDREN

- About one-half of the registered voters in New York age 50+ surveyed have grandchildren, great grandchildren, or step-grandchildren (NY State: 56%; NY City: 47%).

- One-quarter (26%) of grandparents who are registered voters age 50+ in New York State (NYS) provide care or financial support to grandchildren or their kin’s children, while a slightly higher percentage (33%) of those in New York City (NYC) provide such support. In addition, ten percent of NYS (10%), and NYC grandparents (11%) have grandchildren living in their home.

- Thirty-eight percent of grandparents that are registered voters in NYS report they are in excellent or good health, while 18 percent report being in fair or poor health. In NYC, 35 percent report they are in excellent or good health, while 19 percent report being in fair or poor health.

- Among the grandparents residing in NYS, 22 percent still work, and about the same percentage of NYC (21%) grandparents continue to work. Moreover, only 15 percent of grandparents in NYS and 17 percent of NYC grandparents say they are extremely or very confident that they have enough money to live comfortably in retirement.

- The majority of grandparents in both NYS and NYC are women (NYS: 67%; NYC: 68%). Many grandparents suffer from a disability or impairment keeps them from participating fully in work, school, household, or other activities (NYS: 33%, NYC: 36%). NYC grandparents are less likely to be married (NYS: 55%, NYC: 43%), and twice as likely to be African American (NYS: 10%, NYC: 28%) or Hispanic (NYS: 55%, NYC: 43%).
Methodology

This report is based on data from a mail survey of 5,000 New York State residents age 50 and older who are registered voters. Each respondent was contacted four times receiving the following pieces of mail: pre-notification postcard, the first survey, a reminder postcard, and a second survey.

The survey was fielded from November 20, 2012 through December 21, 2012 and exactly 966 usable surveys were returned by the cut-off date, for a response rate of 19 percent. The full survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval. Responses were weighted to reflect the actual distribution of residents by age and gender.

This report specifically focuses on grandparents. There were a total of 544 grandparents in New York State and 121 grandparents in New York City. The margin of error for the data on New York State grandparents was +/- 4.3 percent, while the margin of error for the data on New York City grandparents was +/- 9.1 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

Statistics representing residents’ responses are reported in percentages which may not add up to 100 due to rounding, multiple response question format and non-response.
AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of more than 37 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment security and retirement planning. We advocate for consumers in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; www.aarp.org; AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a bilingual news source. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at www.aarp.org.

State Research brings the right knowledge at the right time to our state and national partners in support of their efforts to improve the lives of people age 50+. State Research consultants provide strategic insights and actionable research to attain measurable state and national outcomes.

The views expressed herein are for information, debate, and discussion, and do not necessarily represent official policies of AARP.

AARP staff from the New York State Office, Campaigns, State Advocacy and Strategy Integration and State Research contributed to the design, implementation and reporting of this study. Special thanks go to AARP staff including William Ferris, David McNally, David Irwin and Beth Finkel, AARP New York; Rachelle Cummins, Angela Houghton, Kate Bridges, Darlene Matthews and Cheryl Barnes, State Research; and Michael Schuster, Office of General Counsel. Please contact Cassandra Burton at 202-434-3547 for more information regarding this survey.

Research and Strategic Analysis
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