



Why AACY Believes the Number of Caregiving Youth in the USA is Greater than 1.3 Million Children Ages 8-18 Years

The only US study about caregiving youth is now a decade old! Think how our country has changed since then! The study reported there are an estimated 1.3-1.4 million caregiving children ages 8-18 years old in the U.S. Of these, 38% provide care for a grandparent and 34% provide care for a parent – *Young Caregivers in the U.S.*; National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) & United Hospital Fund, 2005.

What is the evidence to show there are many more than 1.3 million youth caregivers in the US?

- Nationally, there are an estimated 43.5 million caregiving adults among whom 28% (**12.2 million**) also had children under the age of 18 years living at home; their role in caregiving is unknown - *Caregiving in the U.S.*; NAC/AARP, 2015.
- In 2011 there were 7.7 million grandparents in co-residence with their grandchildren. More than 2.7 million grandparents not only live with a grandchild, but also serve as the primary caregiver to that child – about 25% of both grandparent co-reside (26% = 1.8 million) and grandparent caregivers (24% = 648,000) report that they are dealing with a significant disability of some kind - *At Grandmother's House We Stay*, PewResearch, Sept. 13, 2013.
- As of 2012, about half of all adults—117 million people—have one or more chronic health conditions (heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, obesity, and arthritis); one of four adults has two or more chronic health conditions – how many of these have minor children and how many are single parents (*Who is there but children to provide care when the single parent/guardian becomes ill or disabled?*) is not reported – “Multiple chronic conditions among US adults: a 2012 update” *Prev Chronic Dis.*, 2014.
- About 56.7 million people — 19 percent of the population — had a disability in 2010, according to a broad definition of disability, with more than half of them reporting the disability was severe:
 - 30.6 million had difficulty walking or climbing stairs, or used a wheelchair, cane, crutches or walker;
 - 19.9 million people had difficulty lifting and grasping;
 - 9.4 million non-institutionalized adults had difficulty with at least one activity of daily living with 5 million needing the assistance of others to perform such an activity.
 - 15.5 million adults had difficulties with one or more activities such as doing housework, using the phone and preparing meals with nearly 12 million requiring assistance.

It is unknown how many of these are parents/guardians of minor children - U.S. Census Bureau, July 2012.

- There are 57 million Americans living in multi-generation households in 2012, an increase from 46.5 million in 2007. *Fighting poverty in a tough economy*. Pew Research Center, July 17, 2014.
- Caregivers of Veterans who have children under the age of 18 in their household are more likely than those without children at home to say there is no paid care (81% vs. 61%) - *Caregivers of Veterans*, 2010.
- The main reason why children undertake inappropriate caring roles is a lack of adequate support services for their ill/disabled relatives. If appropriate and adequate support services are not provided, most of the care and support required falls to family members.” Statistical profiles of young carers. Centre for Child and Family Research. *Evidence Issue 3*; Aldridge & Becker, 2003.

*Alone, any of these facts warrant additional research relative to the prevalence of caregiving by children, their role and the impact on their lives is all too frequently overlooked. In the end ignorance of ramifications will impact the child and society; our children are the society of tomorrow! **The time to support caregiving youth is NOW!***