

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency



**Grandparent Caregivers Program:
Annual Status Report, CY2015**
January 30, 2016

D.C. Child and Family Services Agency
200 I Street, SE * Washington, DC 20003 * 202-442-6100 * www.cfsa.dc.gov

Contents

Page

1. Introduction & Program Profile	3
2. Program Achievements	4
Grandparent Caregivers Program Relative Subsidy Transfer	4
Achieved Performance Indicator	4
3. Statistical Overview	4
Estimated Eligible Caretakers & Estimated Grandparents Acting as Caregivers	4
Applications Filed	6
Subsidies Awarded	6
Subsidy Details	7
Families Receiving the Subsidy, TANF and SSI	7
Denials Due to Ineligibility	8
Denials Due to Lack of Appropriate Funding	8
Terminations & Age-Outs	8
Substantiated Instances of Fraud	9
Children Removed from Households while Receiving Subsidy	9
4. Grandparent Caregivers Program Population & Subsidy Overview	10
5. Recommendations for Program Improvement	11

1. Introduction & Program Profile

Introduction

This is the ninth annual report for the Grandparent Caregivers Program (GCP), which the District established under the Grandparent Caregivers Pilot Program Establishment Act of 2005. The Budget Support Act of 2009 moved the program out of pilot status, creating a permanent Grandparent Caregivers Program. Since program inception in March 2006, the DC Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) has served as program administrator. The Establishment Act requires that the annual report include a specific set of statistics (Section 3) and recommendations (Section 4) to ensure program efficacy and continuous quality improvement.

Program Profile

The Grandparent Caregivers Program provides a monthly subsidy to eligible DC residents with low incomes who are raising their grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great nieces, or great nephews. Grandparent caregivers use this monetary support to offset the costs of caring for relative children residing with them in the District who might otherwise end up in the foster care system. In 2015, the program served 785 children total, with a monthly average of 715 children and 480 families served.

Table 1: GCP Statistics			
	CY2013	CY2014	CY2015
Program funding (subsidy portion)	\$4.448M	\$4.64 ¹	\$4.6
New applications received (from families)	86	84	77
New subsidies awarded (to children)	128	129	89
Reapplications received (from existing families)			5
Reapplication subsidies awarded (to children)			5
Children receiving both GCP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) at End of Year	543	551	553
Total number of children who received subsidy in calendar year	756	711	785 ²
Denials due to ineligibility	3	5	4
Denials due to funding (applications on the waiting list as of End of Year)	0	0	0
Subsidies terminated by program or caregiver	25	70 ²	64 ³
Substantiated instances of fraud	1	0	0
Children removed from household while receiving subsidy	2	3	2 ⁴

¹ There was an increase to the number of children/youth receiving subsidy in the District who are 12 years of age and older. Children in this age group qualify for an enhanced daily rate to increase family stability and child well-being. In response, the District Council approved an increase to the GCP subsidy budget for FY2015.

² 785 represents the total number of children that received a subsidy in 2015. 70 represents the number of children that aged-out or were terminated during the calendar year.

³ This number of terminations reflects age-outs, provider requested removals and providers who no longer qualified for the program.

2. Program Achievements

Grandparent Caregivers Program Relative Subsidy Transfer

On December 15, 2015, the *Grandparent Caregivers Program Relative Subsidy Transfer Amendment Act of 2015* (L21-40) became official law in the District.

During the administering of the Grandparent Caregivers Program, CFSA encountered cases where eligible caregivers became unable to provide appropriate care to their charges due to death or failing mental and physical health. These situations left children without an able caregiver and at risk of entering foster care. This issue was the genesis of amending the law. Under L21-40, CFSA now has the ability to transfer a subsidy from an eligible caregiver to another relative who does not meet the initial Grandparent Caregiver requirements but is willing to care for the child. This change will allow children to remain safely in the care of relatives and mitigate their risk of entry into foster care.

Over the past few years, CFSA launched a series of strategies to keep more families together, including diverting children from foster care to their relatives. CFSA views the *Grandparent Caregivers Program Relative Subsidy Transfer Amendment Act of 2015* as an additional support to keep District children out of foster care whenever it is safe and in the child's best interest to do so.

Achieved Performance Indicator

The Grandparent Caregivers Program cuts across all Four Pillars⁵ (Narrowing the Front Door, Temporary Safe Haven, Well Being, and Exit to Permanence). The program is especially valuable in providing the support grandparent caregivers need to prevent children from entering into foster care. Table 2 below shows the outcome and performance indicator achieved for the program.

Table 2		
Outcome: Families will be assisted to remain together and prevent out-of-home placement		
Performance Indicator	Actual 2015	Target 2015
Children receiving GCP services will be diverted from entering out of home placement	99% ⁴	95%

3. Statistical Overview

Estimated Eligible Caretakers & Estimated Grandparents Acting as Caregivers

This section of the GCP Annual Report provides both national and local statistical data on the number of grandparent headed households, the number of children raised by grandparents with no parent present and demographic data regarding race and ethnicity.

⁴Out of the 785 children served by GCP in CY2015, there were only two children removed because of a substantiation of abuse or neglect by Child Protection Services. One child voluntarily entered into foster care and the other child was removed due to the caregiver's failing health.

⁵ CFSA's bold strategic agenda to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families at every step of their involvement with the District's child welfare agency. Each pillar highlights a values-based foundation, a set of evidence-based strategies, and a series of specific outcomes and targets.

National Statistics

Research shows the following with respect to grandparent-headed households nationally:

- 7.8 million children live in households headed by grandparents or other relatives. These households may include children whose parents may be present.⁶
- 2.7 million children (3%) of all U.S. children are raised in “grand families” or kinship care situations.⁷
- Each year more than \$4 billion is saved in taxpayer dollars by these relatives who keep families together, and children out of foster care.⁸
- 40% of grandparents report that they have been responsible for the children for more than five years.⁹

District of Columbia

Grandchildren

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center, in 2014 there were 6,000 District children under the age of 18 living in grandparent led households and an additional 4,000 District children living in households led by a relative caregiver (9% of all children in the District of Columbia). When compared to children in non-relative care, they have more stability, are more likely to maintain connections with siblings, preserve their cultural heritage, and maintain community bonds.¹⁰

Grandparents

In the District, 5,693 grandparents are the head of household and are responsible for their grandchildren living with them. Of these grandparents 2% are White and not Hispanic, 93% are Black/African American, 1% are Asian, and 3% are Hispanic/Latino and may be of any race. Nearly 40% of the children living in these homes have no parents living with them. The majority of these grandparents are under age 60 (56%) and nearly a third live in poverty (31%).¹¹

⁶ Lofquist, Daphne, Terry Lugailla, Martion O’Connell, & Sarah Feliz. “Households and Families 2010: U.S.” 2010 Census Briefs C2010BR-14, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC. 2012. Access January 5, 2015 at <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-14.pdf>

⁷ Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center. 2011-2013 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC). Estimates represent a three-year average. Accessed January 5, 2015 <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/Tables/7172-children-in-kinship-care?loc=1&loct=1#detailed/1/any/false/1218,1049,995/any/14207,14208>

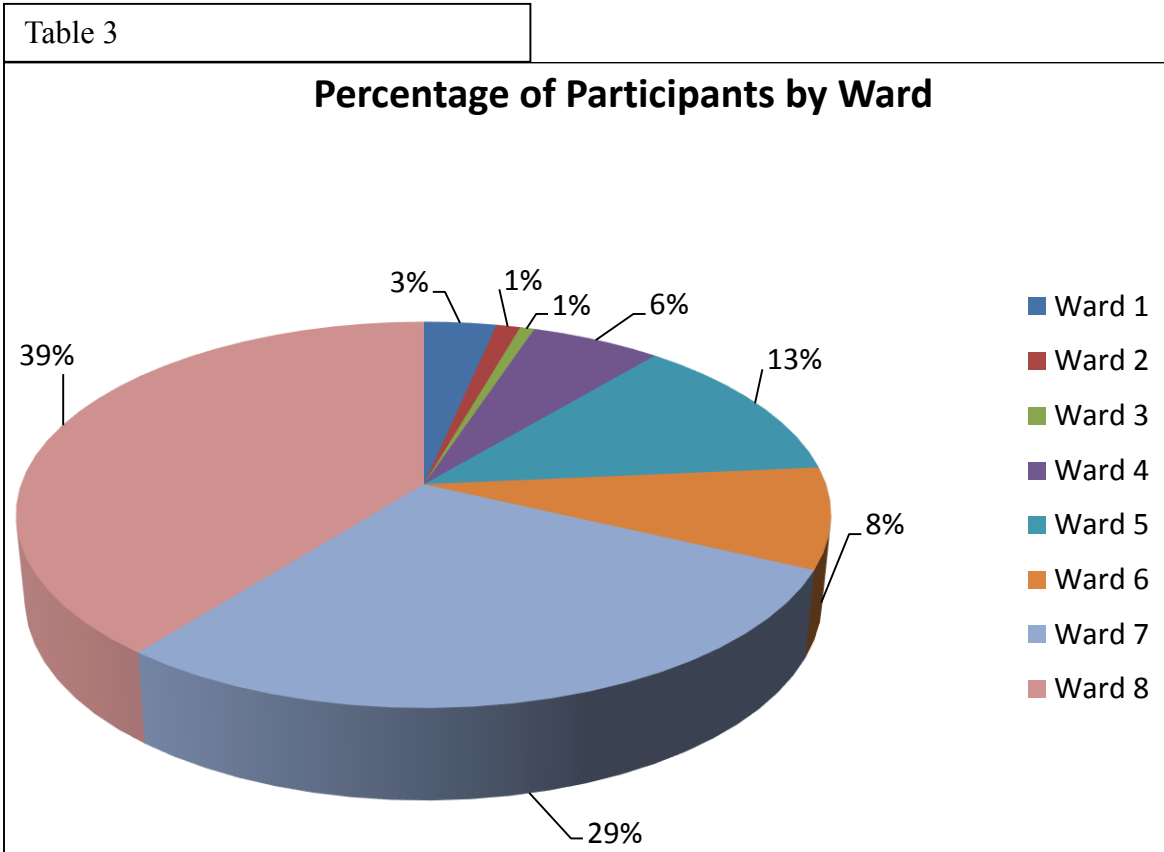
⁸ Generations United calculated this figure based on the federal share of the 2011 national average minimum monthly foster care maintenance payment (\$301) for 1.1 million children. The number of children is approximately one-half of the children being raised in grandfamilies outside of the formal foster care system. We use this number in our calculation due to a conservative estimate that the other half already receives some type of governmental financial assistance, such as a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) child-only grant. We also know that a number of children in grandfamilies have special needs that would warrant higher monthly foster care maintenance payments. The cost of 1.1 million children entering the system would represent all new financial outlays for taxpayers.

⁹ Ellis, Renee R. and Tavia Simmons, “Coresident Grandparents and Their Grandchildren: 2012,” Current Population Reports P20-576, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC. 2015 and “Time for Reform: Support Relatives in Providing Foster Care and Permanent Families for Children.” Kids Are Waiting: Fix Foster Care Now and Generations United, Washington, DC. 2007.

¹⁰ “Time for Reform: Support Relatives in Providing Foster Care and Permanent Families for Children.” Kids Are Waiting: Fix Foster Care Now and Generations United, Washington, DC. 2007 and Conway, Tiffany and Rutledge Q. Hudson. “Is Kinship Care Good for Kids?” Center for Law and Social Policy, Washington, DC. 2007.

¹¹ Ellis, Renee R. and Tavia Simmons, “Coresident Grandparents and Their Grandchildren: 2012,” Current Population Reports P20-576, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC. 2015 and “Time for Reform: Support Relatives in Providing Foster Care and Permanent Families for Children.” Kids Are Waiting: Fix Foster Care Now and Generations United, Washington, DC. 2007.

The GCP demographics mirror that of other families served by CFSA with African American families being the highest population at 85% and most families residing in Wards 7 and 8.



Applications Filed

In CY2015, the GCP received 77 new applications on behalf of 100 children.¹² In addition, five existing GCP participants applied to add five children to their subsidies totaling 105 children in CY2015.¹³ As part of practice, GCP staff followed-up with families who did not complete their application to determine if assistance was needed. Generally, incomplete applications are due to families not being able to prove relationship, residence and/or household income.

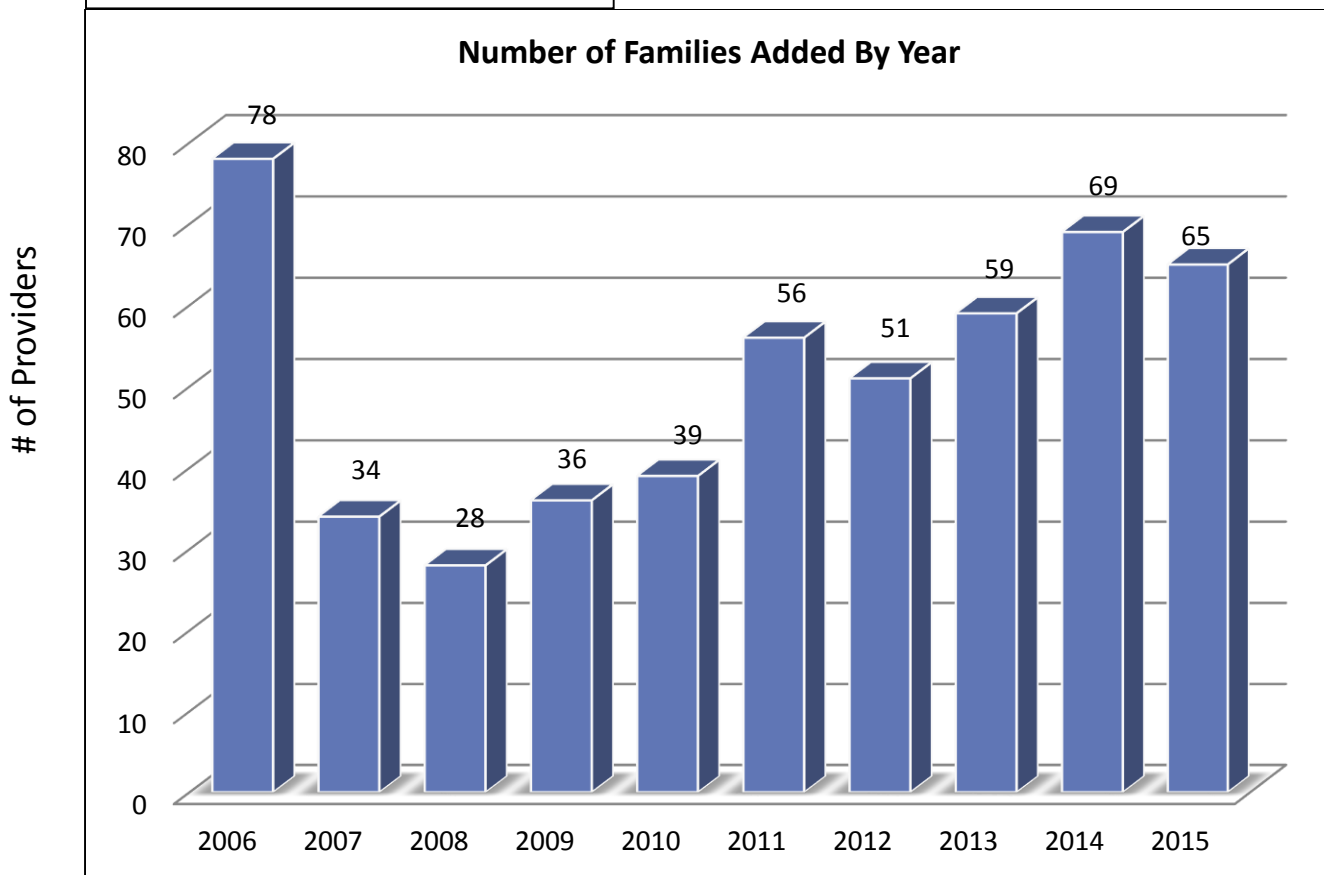
Subsidies Awarded

Out of the 77 new applications (total applications equals the number of families), 65 were approved totaling 89 children (See Table 4). All five of the families requesting to add children to their subsidies were approved bringing the total to 94 children added to the subsidy program in CY2015 (See Table 6). The chart below illustrates the number of new families that began receiving the GCP subsidy.

¹²Potential applicants can receive an application by calling the program directly or downloading the application from the CFSA website (www.cfsa.dc.gov). CFSA has also provided application information to community partners so they can inform prospective caregivers about the program.

¹³ The five children are program re-applicants. Four of the five children were previously terminated upon return to their parents while the fifth child was terminated due to a failure on the part of the family to complete recertification.

Table 4



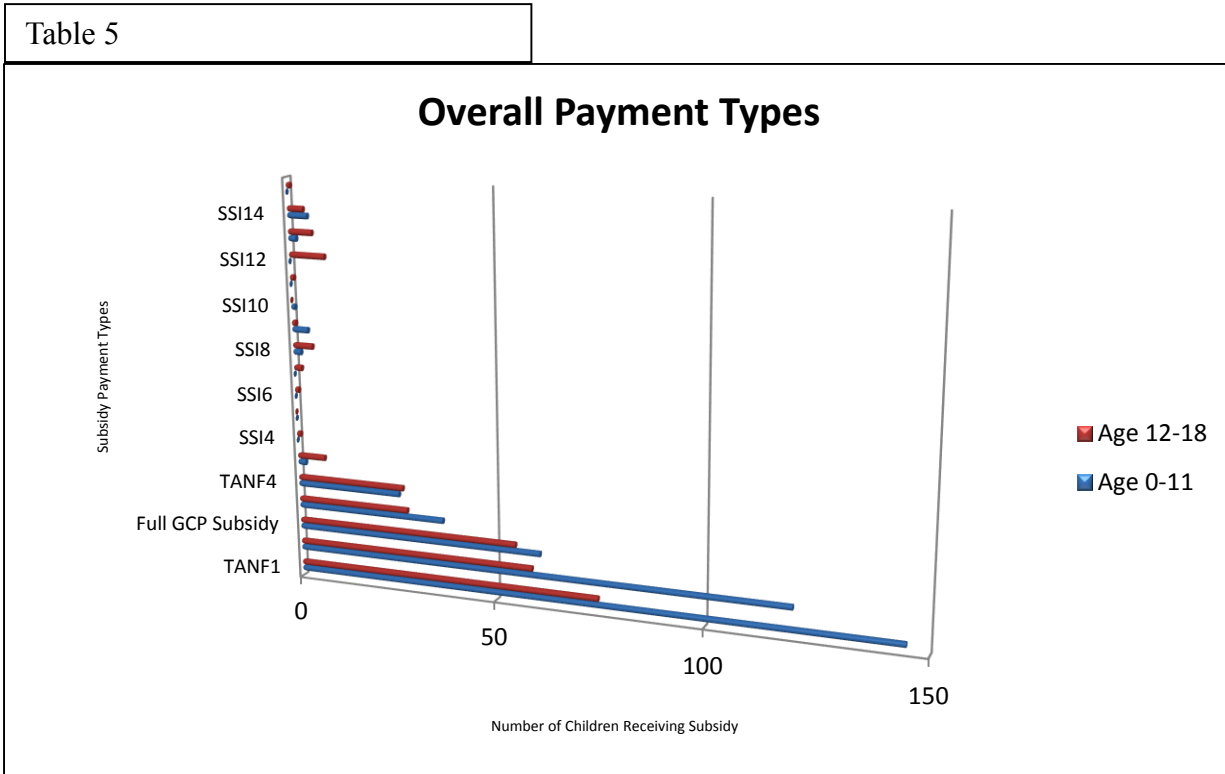
Subsidy Details

A full subsidy payment (without offsets) is \$24.79/day for children under age 12 and \$27.92/day for children older than 12. The average age of children currently in the program is 10 years old. The average daily rate including offsets is \$19.68. This rate has remained consistent since 2012 and represents an average of \$590.40 for a 30 day month per child.

Families Receiving the Subsidy, TANF, and SSI

Of the 723 children receiving a GCP subsidy in December 2015, 553 (75%) also received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). This percentage has been relatively steady throughout the life of the program. In addition, 46 children (6%) received Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a decrease of 3% since the previous year. Pursuant to the Grandparent Caregivers Pilot Program Establishment Act of 2005, the program offsets GCP subsidy payments for these two groups of children by the amount they receive in TANF or SSI. However, children who receive social security survivor benefits from a deceased parent receive a full GCP subsidy.

Table 5 displays the various payment types based on other incomes (offsets) and children’s ages. The numbers following the payment types below (i.e. TANF1, SSI14, etc.) represent the various daily rates provided.



Denials Due to Ineligibility

CFSA deemed only four applications ineligible in CY2015. Reasons included exceeding program income requirements, inability to verify the relationship between the prospective provider and child, and the child’s parent residing in the home. None of these new applicants requested a Fair Hearing to contest their ineligibility.

Eight families did not follow through with the entire application process. These families did not receive a denial letter, as their applications were never fully completed.

Denials Due to Lack of Appropriate Funding

CFSA did not have to deny any applications for lack of funding.

Terminations and Age-outs

Termination statistics are based on individual children, as the circumstances of one child may change and result in termination without affecting other children in the household. Of the 64 children who exited the program during CY2015, 46 youth exited the program due to reaching age 18. The remaining 18 children were terminated for one of the following reasons:

- Death of caregiver.¹⁴
- Another person assumed care and did not reside in the District.
- Caregivers failed to recertify.
- CFSA removed children as part of an abuse/neglect investigation.
- The caregiver's household income increased, exceeding eligibility requirements.
- Birth parent moved back into the home and the family did not qualify for an exception as outlined in the DC Code.

In CY2015, there was one request for a Fair Hearing Appeal for termination from an existing GCP caregiver. The termination was overturned and the caregiver reinstated into the program after the Program Administrative Review (PAR). This family was paid retroactively for the months the subsidy was not received. The outcome of the PAR negated the need to move forward with a Fair Hearing.

Substantiated Instances of Fraud

In CY2015, there were no instances of fraud.

Children Removed from Households while Receiving Subsidy

Out of the 785 children served in CY2015, there were only two children removed from GCP caregivers. In May, a caregiver brought the child to CFSA stating she was unable and unwilling to continue care. In July, a caregiver became medically incapacitated and no longer able to care for the child. Child Protective Services investigated both cases.

¹⁴Prior to the Relative Subsidy Transfer enactment.

4. GCP Population & Subsidy Overview

Statistics	Table 6												
	Month												CY2015 Total
	Jan '15	Feb '15	Mar '15	Apr '15	May '15	Jun '15	Jul '15	Aug'15	Sep'15	Oct '15	Nov '15	Dec '15	
New Applications	5	5	8	7	6	9	7	10	6	3	5	6	77
# of Approved Applications	0	25	1	2	6	2	1	0	1	21	4	2	65
# of Children Approved	0	32	2	7	9	2	1	0	4	26	5	6	94
# of Denied Applications	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	4
# of Terminations	0	0	0	1	2	4	3	2	2	3	1	1	19
# of Age-outs	5	8	4	6	1	1	2	4	4	4	5	2	46
# of Appeals	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
# Waitlisted	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Avg. time for decision	14 days	14 days	14 days	14 days	14 days	14 days	14 Days	14 Days	14 Days	14 days	14 days	14 days	14 Days
# Service Referrals ¹⁵	10	2	8	2	4	6	5	10	5	31	30	15	128
# of Providers Receiving Subsidy	461	459	472	476	473	470	473	470	460	456	480	480	Monthly Average 469 ¹⁶
# of Children Receiving Subsidy	706	702	719	723	719	713	715	709	694	684	715	723	Monthly Average 715 ¹⁷
Total Subsidy Amount Paid	\$431,954.14	\$394,458.05	\$439,695.61	\$427,171.91	\$435,662.87	\$423,446.44	\$437,891.01	\$429,068.54	\$411,082.27	\$428,233.36	\$423,795.07	\$441,292.19	\$5,123,751.46

¹⁵ Service Referrals equals the number of times we refer families to community resources.

¹⁶ Numbers based on a 12-month average.

¹⁷ Numbers based on a 12-month average.

5. Recommendations for Program Improvement

In CY2016, GCP will be participating in Generations United's quarterly advisory group conference calls to obtain national perspective on servicing grandfamilies. In CY2015, GCP staff participated in a webinar with Generations United entitled "Advocates for Families First". In addition, Generations United invited the acting Administrator to present at the Senate Caucus on behalf of Kinship, which is inclusive of GCP.

In addition, GCP plans on re-establishing relationships with local agencies and universities (i.e. AARP, Howard University, etc.) to explore community resources available to grandfamilies and to collaborate and further assess the needs of our grandfamilies. This will serve to prevent disruptions within the households and stabilize these families in their communities.