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ABSTRACT

This study examined the performance of Black grandparents, the contributions they make to their families, and the obstacles that limit their success as grandparents. It also sought to identify the content of suitable curriculum for grandparents and recommend guidelines for the establishment of grandparent education programs. A sample of 626 unrelated subjects--204 grandparents of 6 to 18-year-old grandchildren, 128 parents of 6 to 18-year-olds, and 294 grandchildren ages 6 to 18--were surveyed, using the Grandparents Strengths and Needs Inventory. The age and sex of grandchildren had a significant effect on certain variables. Overall, the amount of time grandparents spent with grandchildren had a significant positive influence on perceived effectiveness. Grandparents and parents of younger children felt that grandparents deserved scores higher than children assigned them for handling the difficulties of their role. The findings indicate that grandparents should be encouraged to further develop their teaching strength, should be recognized for the gift of time they share with grandchildren, and should rely on their grandchildren as an essential source of information. (MDM)

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Strengths and Needs of Black Grandparents as Perceived by Grandchildren, Parents, and Grandparents

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Black Grandparents: Intergenerational Relationships

Grandparents in Black families are often described by their relatives as heroes. The reason for this complimentary assessment is that the contributions they make go beyond the set of expectations usually associated with being a grandparent(Greenfield, 1993; Hill, 1987; Jendrick, 1993; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990 Minkler, 1993; Poe, 1992). Black grandparents are more likely than grandparents from other ethnic groups to have a grandchild living with them (U. S.Bureau of Census 1991). This obligation is commonly accepted without assurance of help from relatives who are likely to be preoccupied with their own economic survival. A study of 60 Black grandparents raising grandchildren determined that 97 percent of them received no consistent assistance from family members in carrying out their surrogate role (Burton, 1992). Even when Black parents bring up their children, grandparents often share some responsibility for providing care and guidance . Educators have observed that Black students are typically supervised by grandparents before and after school (Minkler, 1993; Winfield, 1991).

The devotion of Black grandparents commonly results in a close relationship with grandchildren. Indeed, Black teenagers frequently identify grandmothers as the source of adult advice they respect the most. (Strom, Collinsworth, Strom, & Griswold, 1992). Nevertheless, policymakers continue to overlook the benefit for Black boys and girls that could occur if the grandparents who regularly look after them had access to further learning. Since most of these grandparents did not graduate from high school, it is sometimes supposed that they would lack interest in learning about their role. On the contrary, grandparents want to succeed and realize that education can help them adjust their goals and childrearing methods to fit the demands of a more complex and increasingly dangerous environment. (Graham, 1992; Hale-Benson, 1986; Jendrick, 1993; Strom & Strom, 1993).

The purposes of this study were to examine Black grandparent performance, describe the contributions they make and detect obstacles that limit their success, identify the content of a suitable curriculum for them, and recommend guidelines for establishing grandparent education programs to enhance their success.

Method

Sampling and Assessment

The sample of 626 non-consanguineous subjects included 204 grandparents of 6-18 year-old grandchildren, 128 parents of 6-18 year olds, and 294 grandchildren from 6-18 years of age. A nearly equal number of subjects were drawn from urban centers in the southeast and southwest regions of the nation. More grandmothers participated in the investigation than grandfathers. A majority of grandparents, whose ages ranged from 38 to 82, took care of their grandchildren daily or often. The parent generation had more formal education and earned a higher income than grandparents. Most of the parents lived close to grandparents. The school age grandchildren were not relatives of the adult subjects but came from families with similar levels of education and income. Demographic characteristics for the sample are show in Table 1.

Insert Table 1

Meetings at churches and senior centers informed older adults that an effort was being made to determine the educational needs of grandparents and the results would be used to prepare a suitable curriculum for them. Grandparents who were willing to share their views self-administered a survey which required from 15-30 minutes to complete. Those with more than one school-age grandchild chose a particular grandchild to think about while responding to the items. School principals sent a letter to parents stating the purpose of the study and inviting them to share their views by completing a survey.

during one of several social events scheduled at the school. Children were administered their survey by teachers who directed them to describe how a particular grandparent of their choice performed her or his role.

Instrumentation

The Grandparents Strengths and Needs Inventory identifies favorable qualities of grandparents and aspects of their relationships in which further personal growth is needed (Strom & Strom, 1993). There are three versions: one for grandparents, another for parents, and a grandchild version. Persons who complete the grandparent version report self-impressions about family relationships. In the other two versions, parents and grandchildren offer their views about a particular grandparent. The rationale for using multiple sources of perception is that educational programs to strengthen family relationships can be enhanced when the viewpoints of more than one generation are taken into account.

The three generational inventory measures grandparent effectiveness with Likert-type items. Each item has four possible answers: Always, Often, Seldom, and Never. Items are the same for each generation of respondents but stated differently. For example, item 11 appears respectively in the grandparent, parent, and grandchild version as follows: I am good at listening to my grandchild; My parent is good at listening to my child; My grandparent is good at listening to me. The 60 items are equally divided into six subscales that emphasize separate aspects of grandparent development. These subscales are intended to reveal perceptions regarding:

- satisfaction -aspects of being a grandparent that are pleasing;
- success- ways that grandparents successfully perform their role;
- teaching- kinds of learning grandparents are expected to provide;
- difficulty-problems encountered with grandparenting obligations;
- frustration- behaviors of grandchildren that upset grandparents; and

information needs- knowledge needed about grandchild experience.

Validity of the inventory was determined by a factor analytic study of 2,000 grandparent, parent, and grandchild inventories (Collinsworth, Strom, Strom, & Young, 1991). Analysis of responses from culturally diverse families in the United States and three generational samples in Japan have yielded potential and concerns alpha coefficients between .90 and .94 with subscale alphas between .82 and .93. (Strom, Collinsworth, Strom, Sato, Sasaki, Sasaki and Nischio, 1994). High alpha coefficients were also calculated for the present investigation of Black grandparents, between .91 to .94, with subscale alphas between .81 and .92.

Design and Analysis

Data processing yielded mean scores for each subscale on the inventory as well as two overall mean scores. The overall strength index, known as "grandparent potentials" , is an average of the 30 items comprising the satisfaction, success, and teaching subscales. The overall needs index, identified as "grandparent concerns" is an average of the 30 items which make up the difficulty, frustration, and information needs subscales.

A combination of manova analysis of variance, univariate analysis of variance tests, and t-test procedures were used to confirm the results and assist in the interpretation of data. Five independent variables including generation of subject, gender of grandparent, age of grandparent, gender of grandchild, age of grandchild, and amount of time grandparent and grandchild spent together were analyzed by manova. The effects of these variables on perceived grandparent effectiveness as assessed by six subscales of the inventory were tested.

Manova analyzed all subject responses and tested for equality of group means. The five independent variables were tested to determine the effect, of each variable separately and in combination, on grandparent effectiveness as measured by the six

subscales of the inventory. Main effects and first order interaction effects for generation and each of the other independent variables were tested.

Univariate tests were performed to determine significance levels for each of the dependent variable subscales with the independent variables, as well as interaction effects. This procedure located the dependent variables contributing to the significant differences between the groups. Two-tailed t tests were performed on pairs of subscale and item mean scores for all comparison groups in the analysis. Additionally, effects of grandparent income, education, and employment were explored by t-testing.

Results

Table 2 presents a summary of the manova findings. There were significant differences in perceived grandparent effectiveness among the generations, $F(12,996) = 6.57, p = .001$. The gender of grandchild, $F(6,497) = 3.23, p = .004$, age of grandchild, $F(6,497) = 2.98, p = .007$ and amount of time a grandparent and grandchild spent together, $F(6,497) = 6.59, p = .001$ also influenced how grandparents, parents, and grandchildren viewed the effectiveness of grandparents. The model contained testing for interaction effects which included generation paired with each of the other independent variables. The only interaction effect was generation and grandchild age, $F(12,996) = 2.22, p = .01$.

Multivariate tests of equality of mean scores for two different levels of gender of grandparent and grandparent age failed to discover significant differences. Therefore, according to this test, it can be concluded that subjects did not vary in their perceptions of grandparent effectiveness as a function of grandparent age and gender. T-tests failed to show grandparent level of education, employment, income, or distance from residence of a grandchild as significant factors contributing to the spread in dependent variable scores.

Insert Table 2

Generation and Grandparent Performance.

The overall F statistic generated from the full model was significant for the three groups based on generation membership ($p < .001$). Univariate F tests were also calculated, testing for generation effects on each of the six dependent variables. The subscale univariate F tests found that satisfaction ($p < .001$) difficulty ($p < .001$) and frustration ($p < .01$) contributed to differences among the three groups of subjects. Manova calculations with generation as a single variable also yielded significant effects, $F(12, 1238) = 8.52, p = .001$. Generation group was shown to have significant influence on perceived grandparent effectiveness.

Table 3 shows subscale and overall index mean scores as a function of generation. An absolute mean score of 2.5 serves to differentiate between favorable and unfavorable performance. When a higher score is recorded, the source assigning it has identified an area of strength. Conversely, a score below 2.5 suggests that further growth is needed. The resulting comparison of the way grandparents view themselves and how they are seen by family members offers a more reliable perspective of their strengths and needs. All three generational groups assigned favorable scores to grandparents. Grandparents rated themselves highest for teaching and success and lowest on the information needs and frustration subscales. Parents and grandchildren however, assigned lower scores than grandparents did on teaching and success but rated them higher for satisfaction.

T tests were also used to determine specific differences between generations on the six subscales of the inventory. Table 3 shows parents felt grandparents experienced significantly greater satisfaction ($p < .001$) than was reported by the grandparents. In addition, parents gave higher ratings to grandparents on satisfaction ($p < .01$), handling difficulties ($p < .001$) and coping with frustrations ($p < .001$) than grandchildren reported for grandparents. Grandchildren considered their grandparents to be less involved with

teaching ($p < .001$), less able to deal with difficulties ($p < .001$) and frustrations ($p < .001$) than was indicated by grandparent self impressions.

Insert Table 3

Gender of Grandchild

The gender of grandchild influenced perceptions of grandparent effectiveness, $F(6,497) = 3.23, p = .004$. Univariate tests from the full model revealed differences for satisfaction ($p < .05$), difficulty ($p < .004$); frustration ($p < .001$) and information needs ($p < .001$). For each of these subscales grandparents of granddaughters received higher ratings. There were no interaction effects for gender of grandchild and generation.

Calculating a single independent variable Manova, the manova test of equality of means yielded significant results for grandchildren, $F(6,286) = 4.95, p = .001$. This finding indicates that, according to grandchildren, grandparent effectiveness is influenced by grandchild gender. Univariate tests were used to ascertain the subscales and generation of subjects contributing to differences. Grandparents reported greater satisfaction ($p < .05$) and less difficulty ($p < .05$) when their grandchild was a grand daughter. Parents agreed with this perception. Granddaughters scored grandparents higher than grandsons did for performance in dealing with role difficulty ($p < .001$) and frustration ($p < .001$), as well as meeting information needs ($p < .001$). Interaction effects using only generation and grandparent gender as independent variables yielded no significant findings.

Age of Grandchild

Grandchild age influenced how grandparents, parents, and grandchildren evaluated grandparents, $F(6,497) = 2.98, p < .01$. Univariate tests determined that grandparents of grandchildren between ages 6-11 scored higher on satisfaction

($p < .001$) than those with grandchildren from ages 12-18. Further analyses revealed specific generation groups contributing to significant findings. Grandparents scored themselves higher on satisfaction ($p < .05$), difficulties ($p < .05$) and frustrations ($p < .05$) when they had younger grandchildren. Parents agreed with these views. Grandchildren between age 6-11 scored their grandparents higher on satisfaction ($p < .05$) while older grandchildren (ages 12-18) reported higher scores for difficulties ($p < .001$), frustration ($p < .05$), and information needs ($p < .01$).

Interaction effects were located using univariate tests. Parents of each child age group and the children scored grandparents higher for satisfaction and ability to cope with difficulties than was reported by grandparents. Level of success and involvement in teaching was higher in the self ratings of grandparents than recorded by the children and parents of both age groups. Older grandchildren (age 12-18) and their parents saw grandparents as better informed than did younger children (age 6-11) and their parents.

Grandparent and Grandchild time Time Spent Together.

The amount of time grandparents spent with grandchildren had a significant influence on perceived effectiveness, $F(6,497) = 6.59$, $p = .001$. Univariate tests revealed differences for the satisfaction ($p < .001$), success ($p < .001$), teaching ($p < .001$), difficulties ($p < .001$), and frustration ($p < .01$) subscales. Grandparents who spent five or more hours per month with a grandchild scored higher on every subscale than did the grandparents who spent less time.

Using time as an independent variable, Manova procedures yielded significant results for grandparents, $F(6,196) = 2.80$, $p = .01$; parents, $F(6,121) = 3.19$, $p = .01$; and grandchildren, $F(6,282) = 2.24$, $p = .05$. Grandparents who spent five hours or more per month rated themselves more positively for satisfaction ($p < .001$), success ($p < .01$), teaching ($p < .01$), and difficulties ($p < .05$) than the grandparents who spent less time. Similarly, parents felt grandparents who spent more time were more satisfied ($p < .01$).

more successful ($p < .001$), more involved in teaching ($p < .001$), and more able to handle role difficulties ($p < .001$). Children whose grandparents spent more time with them saw them as more satisfied ($p < .05$), more involved in teaching ($p < .05$), and more able to handle family difficulties ($p < .05$). Tests for interaction of generation and time spent together were nonsignificant.

Generation and Grandchild Age Interaction

The full model calculations confirmed this interaction, $F(12,996) = 2.22, p = .01$. Univariate tests determined that the difficulty and information needs subscales were sources of effect. Grandparents and parents of younger children felt that grandparents deserved higher scores for handling the difficulties of their role than children assigned them. Parents with older children recorded similar scores for grandparents as parents of younger children. Grandparents with older children and older children themselves felt grandparents should have lower scores. Grandparents with younger grandchildren viewed themselves more favorably than grandparents of older grandchildren on the information needs subscale. But the greatest difference was found between responses of the two age groups of grandchildren. Older grandchildren supported higher scores for grandparents than younger grandchildren did.

Discussion

Black grandparents were considered successful in their own estimate and in the opinion of relatives. It was also found that they could be more effective by taking into account observations of family members. Specific issues for curriculum consideration can be drawn from inventory items on which the generations agreed as well as the items that significantly differentiate them.

Grandparent versus grandchild views. A comparison of the grandparent self impressions with ratings from grandchildren revealed significant differences for 33 items (55%). On these discrepant items, grandparents scored themselves higher for 28 (85%) of them. Greater satisfaction was reported for having a grandchild share feelings and doing things together that a grandchild enjoys. Boys and girls saw grandparents as more satisfied than grandparents reported or liking a grandchild's outlook on life, appreciating the way a grandchild stays in touch, willingness of a grandchild to help, amount of time parents spent with a child, and how well a grandchild does at school.

Success was viewed differently too. Grandparents rated themselves higher than grandchildren did for all ten item of the success subscale. Specifically, they considered themselves to be better at learning from their grandchildren and learning from their sons and daughters than was observed by the grandchildren. The level of grandparent involvement in teaching was also disputed. Grandparents saw themselves as being more involved in teaching how to care about feelings of others, teaching religion by example, showing good manners, defining right and wrong, modeling how to learn throughout life, passing on family history and traditions, and illustrating how to handle arguments.

Grandparents also scored themselves higher than grandchildren did on all ten items of the difficulty subscale. They saw themselves as being more able to accept a grandchild's values, offer advice to sons, daughters and grandchildren, admit personal ignorance, keep a conversation going with grandchildren, discuss controversial issues, find time to be with a grandchild, look at things in new ways, get along with sons and daughters, and get along with grandchildren.

According to grandparents, they cope better with the frustrations of grandchild behaviors that are upsetting than is detected by grandchildren. They see themselves as more able to accept a grandchild's sense of morality, arguments with the grandchild, a grandchild's choice of friends, and how a grandchild treats them. Grandparents assign

themselves higher scores than grandchildren did for understanding the goals of their grandchild, and knowing how a grandchild is being raised at home.

Grandparents versus Parent Views. The adult groups differed significantly on 15 (25%) items. Parents assigned grandparents the higher scores for 11 (73%) of the items. Parents attributed greater satisfaction to grandparents than the grandparents reported for having a grandchild share feelings, liking a grandchild's outlook on life, amount of time parents spend with their child, being asked for advice by a grandchild, and being aware of how well a grandchild does in schoolwork. Grandparents regarded themselves as more able to learn from their grandchildren than was observed by the parents.

Grandparents said they were more involved in teaching religion, good manners, and expectations for a grandchild. Parents rated grandparents higher for their ability to offer advice to daughters, sons, and grandchildren, and for their willingness to look at things in new ways. Parents believed grandparents deserved higher scores for their acceptance of a grandchild's manners.

Parent versus Grandchild Views. The perceptions of parent and grandchild differed significantly for 27 (45%) items. Parents rated grandparents higher than grandchildren did on 24 (89%) of them. They saw grandparents as being more satisfied with how grandchildren shared feelings, amount of time parent and child spent together, being asked by grandchildren for advice, the way a grandchild spent free time, and doing things that a grandchild enjoys. In contrast, grandchildren felt grandparents were more satisfied about a grandchild offering to help them. Parents felt grandparents do a better job of teaching how to care about others than was assessed by grandchildren.

Parents scored grandparent higher for all ten items on the difficulty subscale. They saw grandparents as more able to accept a grandchild's values, offer advice to a son or daughter, admit personal ignorance, sustain a conversation with grandchildren, give advice to grandchildren, discuss controversial issues, find time to be with their

grandchild, look at things in new ways, get along with a son or daughter and get along with a grandchild. Similarly, parents perceived grandparents as coping better with the grandchild behaviors that are upsetting. They viewed grandparents as more able to accept a grandchild's sense of morality, parent discipline of the grandchild, arguments with a grandchild, how a grandchild is being raised, a grandchild's choice of friends, how a grandchild treats a parent, and how a grandchild treats the grandparent. Parents and grandchildren agreed that grandparents need to have more information about the daily problems experienced by grandchildren

Program Implications

Grandparent education courses are offered in public schools, colleges, senior centers, retirement communities, and long term care facilities. The content for these courses was developed in response to concerns expressed by the original participants who were mostly white from middle class backgrounds (Strom & Strom, 1991; 1992). National fieldtesting demonstrated that grandparents who completed twelve weekly lessons improved their influence. The favorable attitude and behavioral changes claimed by grandparents were corroborated by parents and grandchildren (Strom & Strom, 1993). In order to adjust the emphasis of this unique educational program so that it is suitable for other populations, data must be gathered about target groups that is accurate and culturally sensitive. Based on the impressions of three generations in this study, the following recommendations are meant to assist leaders who want to establish educational programs for Black grandparents.

Grandparents should be encouraged to further develop their teaching strength.

Black grandparents recognize the power of example and realize that children imitate the behaviors they observe. Grandma Margaret recalled washing dishes with

her daughter as they watched 4 year old James playing outside. When James went close to the road, his mother ran outside and yelled : "Get your butt out of that street mister and come in here right now." James reluctantly came in and mother was relieved that he had not been hurt. Later in the day when Margaret was ready to return home she saw the car of a neighbor friend coming down the street. The friend stopped to talk while Margaret stood on the curb. It was only a few moments before she heard her grandson James yelling from the porch.: "Grandma, get your butt out of that street." Margaret told her daughter to say goodbye to James so he would not see his grandmother laughing.

Preschoolers are not the only grandparent observers who learn from example. Lamar, age 12, said: "Grandma Lettie, when I get older, I want to be just like you. " Lettie replied: "But Lamar, I don't have much to show for myself after years of hard work." Lamar pointed out: "Grandma, you've got more friends than anybody I know." What a nice compliment. Lettie is seen by her grandson Lamar as an example of success despite her poverty

All three generations assigned Black grandparents highly favorable scores for being accessible to grandchildren, their willingness to listen, the encouragement they provide, readiness to offer emotional support, and their consistent effort to teach the nonacademic lessons children that need to know. Even when grandparents had little formal education, they tried to support child development by teaching respect for the feelings of others, demonstrating their religious faith, using good manners, reinforcing a sense of right and wrong, giving advice, and illustrating the benefit of continued learning. Educators should appeal to the appreciation Black grandparents have for teaching. They need to acquire new methods for helping grandchildren deal with the adverse peer attitudes, opinions, and behaviors they encounter at school and in the neighborhood.

Grandparents should be recognized for the gift of time they share w/ h grandchildren.

Studies of childrearing competence have traditionally emphasized family differences in socioeconomic background and level of formal education. It has been common to assume that advantages in childrearing are mainly a function of these variables. In this study and our previous investigations of family interaction, the influence of a nontraditional variable has been examined. This variable involves access to grandparent time. Whereas socioeconomic status and formal education are fixed variables which grandparents cannot control, time for their grandchildren is a variable they can manipulate. The way a grandparent spends time is a matter of choice, a personal decision that can make a profound difference in amount of family influence. It was determined that grandparents who spent more time with their grandchildren knew them better than grandparents who devoted less time. Consequently, they set more reasonable expectations for grandchildren who, in turn, were more likely to invite them to be listeners and provide advice (Strom & Strom, 1993).

Giving time to children is an option for all adults whether they be wealthy or poor. Hazel was waiting for daughter Miriam to go with her to weekly choir practice at the church. Before they left the house, Hazel heard her 7 year old grandson Ben ask his father: "Dad, will you read to me? The teacher said we're supposed to have someone read this whole book to us tonight." Ben's father glanced at the book and indicated: "I don't have time for that now because my favorite show is coming on television in a few minutes. Wait till later." After his program ended Ben's dad went out to the garage to do some chores so the reading that was promised never took place. Later that night when Ben's father told him to get ready for bed, Ben imitated his dad by repeating: "I don't have time for that now. Wait till later."

A more promising circumstance is reported by Bessie who takes care of 4 year old granddaughter Ashley every afternoon while her mother is at work. Bessie was on the phone one morning with her daughter and asked to speak with Ashley: "Why does she want to talk to me?" Ashley said. Bessie replied: "Tell her that I just wanted to say

Hello." Ashley's response to her mom was "Tell grandma I'm busy." At noontime when Bessie came to take care of Ashley, the little girl explained: "Grandma, when you called me on the phone I was busy doing my writing." Bessie admitted she was disappointed not to have a talk on the phone but understood Ashley was making good choices about how to spend her time without being interrupted unless it was something important.

Bessie resembles many Black grandmothers who offer the gift of time to their grandchildren. A majority of custodial grandparents report that this role has meant having less time to get household chores done, less time for their spouse, less time for socializing with friends, less time for recreation and relaxation, and less time to be alone. Yet most of them do not resent their childrearing obligation nor complain of being cheated out of the dreams they wanted to pursue during the years of retirement. Instead, two-thirds of these grandparents feel that taking care of their grandchildren adds quality to their life by giving them a greater sense of purpose (Jendrek, 1993).

Grandparents should rely on their grandchildren as an essential source of information.

Black children experiences many situations that their grandparents did not face when they were youngsters. Accordingly, intergenerational conversations should emphasize what growing up is like now. Because children are the best source of learning about their impressions, they ought to do most of the talking. Boys and girls frequently want to discuss how friendships can be kept without compromising morality, how to be safe and still avoid getting involved with a gang, ways to handle disputes with teachers and peers, and how to deal with the uncertainty involved in making everyday decisions. All three generations believe that grandparents should know more about the day to day problems grandchildren have at school and in the neighborhood, things they are afraid of and worry about, the struggle to set reasonable goals, coping with stress and conflicts. Because older Black people missed educational opportunities that are widely available now, they should avoid becoming a source of unreasonable pressure for school grades.

Black grandparents communicate easily with grandchildren. But they are not doing as well as could be expected if they were better informed about the way individual grandchildren and parents see things. The younger generations feel that grandparents overestimate their willingness to admit personal ignorance, look at things in new ways, learn from grandchildren, learn from sons and daughters, keep a conversation going with grandchildren, and discuss controversial issues with an open mind. It is possible for grandparents to acquire these desired attitudes and skills when they are demonstrated and practiced in a low risk group setting .

Grandparent curriculum should focus on helping children set goals and solve problems

Black teenagers have a high rate of pregnancy, school dropout, and involvement in criminal activity. In contrast, adolescents who learn how to set their own goals have a sense of direction, show confidence in being able to reject peer pressures for behaving in ways that are not in their best interest, and rely on constructive methods to respond to academic expectations at school. These healthy characteristics are supported best by grandparents who, in addition to nurturing strengths, have acquired effective problem solving and guidance skills.

It is a mistake for grandparents to suppose that nurturant behavior is sufficient to help boys and girls grow up. Grandchildren feel that grandparents have an inflated self impression of their ability to cope with difficulties and frustrations of supporting child development. Since Black grandparents are expected to offer boys and girls advice beyond childhood, curriculum for the adults should include an understanding of the difficulties teenagers experience along with strategies to assist them in overcoming predictable difficulties .

Charlene was credited by a fourteen year old granddaughter Marva for urging her to get as much education as possible so she could make more choices and achieve personal goals. Marva observed: "Grandma, I want to be just like Maureen." Charlene

replied: "Does that mean that you're going to have four babies like your sister did? "No way. I want to be pretty like her but will pick and choose when I have my babies. You taught me that. And I'm glad that you helped Maureen raise her babies or she would have given them up. You're always there for your grandkids no matter what the situation is grandma. We know we can count on you even when you're disappointed in us."

Grandparents should make an effort to know each grandchild as an individual.

Grandparents should participate in activities that a grandchild enjoys, discuss values and plans, admit personal ignorance when they do not know something, view social change in new ways, think about possibilities for conversation while watching television together, and learn about the worries and fears of every grandchild. Racial prejudice deserves particular attention since it can have a powerful impact on self-esteem and personal identity. Older adults and children should share how they deal with unfair treatment from people of other backgrounds.

Grandparents with young grandchildren ought to recognize the value of play in the development of creative thinking. Using play as a method for teaching honors child strength and encourages boys and girls to see their imagination as a powerful resource. Black grandparents tend to discourage fantasy play because they suppose it will fail to prepare children for the realities of living in a harsh environment. On the contrary, fantasy is a valuable defense for living with adversity. Play offers choices, enables a sense of what is possible, and motivates the persistence needed to succeed in the real world. Children should be encouraged to retain creative abilities so they are able to generate the alternative solutions everyone needs for resolving personal conflicts (Strom, 1981).

Curriculum for grandparents should help them support education for grandchildren.

Grandparents should be aware of changes in education, the difficulties of being a student, and ways families can cooperate with teachers to support child development. One way to build this understanding is by establishing grandparent education councils in schools. Knowing how to find out about higher education opportunities and financial assistance is important so grandparents can guide as well as motivate grandchildren who might otherwise give up on pursuing their dreams.

The grandparent curriculum should clarify worries and concerns expressed by single parents, identify the risks these women commonly experience, and show how grandparents can help. The majority of Black youngsters live with one parent who is likely to become a grandparent at a younger age than women from other ethnic groups. Relationships between grandparents and single parent daughters can improve when classes offer practical and creative alternatives for an extended family to share its load and meet the needs of every member.

An increasing number of Black grandparents have begun to recognize they can be powerful examples of the benefit that comes from continued learning. At the end of a grandparent education course, Betty said: "The whole family is having a special dinner tonight for me because I am the first person in our history to ever graduate from a grandparent class. When my son Robert came over to the house with the invitation, he said "Mom, we're proud of you for setting an example for how to keep learning through a lifetime."

Conclusion

Black grandparents commonly care for their preschool and elementary grade grandchildren. Later, when these same youngsters become teenagers, they will usually identify grandparents as their most trusted advisors. This progression of influence suggests that the guidance of at risk Black children can be improved by providing

suggests that the guidance of at risk Black children can be improved by providing further education for the grandparents whose advice they seek and value. All three generations portrayed Black grandparents as effective teachers, nurturant caretakers, good listeners, and a reliable source of emotional support. These attributes explain why Black grandparents are such a powerful influence in the lives of their grandchildren.

Black grandparents can be more successful by focusing intergenerational conversations on the experiences of grandchildren, getting to know each one as an individual, establishing appropriate expectations for them, and helping with goal setting as well as problem solving. Grandparents should share constructive ways they have learned to cope with unfair treatment from other people, make known the value of creative thinking, understand school expectations of students, know how to arrange for help when children have academic problems, and identify grandchild opportunities for higher education. Classes that enable Black grandparents to improve their success will contribute directly to the development of children and help ensure a better future.

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Table 1
Percentage of Black Grandparents, Parents and Grandchildren
Representing Each Demographic Category

| | Grandparents (n = 204) | Parents (n = 128) | Grandchildren (n = 294) |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Grandparent Age | | | |
| 40-59 years | 50 | 44 | 34 |
| 60+ years | 50 | 56 | 66 |
| Grandparent Gender | | | |
| Male | 20 | 16 | 19 |
| Female | 80 | 84 | 81 |
| Grandparent Marital Status | | | |
| Married | 57 | 46 | 43 |
| Widowed/Divorced/Single | 43 | 54 | 57 |
| Grandparent Employment | | | |
| Retired/Unemployed | 47 | 50 | 64 |
| Parttime/FullTime Employment | 53 | 50 | 36 |
| Grandparent/Grandchild Time Together | | | |
| 0-5 Hours Per Month | 29 | 30 | 35 |
| 5+ Hours Per Month | 71 | 70 | 65 |
| Grandparent Distance from Grandchild | | | |
| 0-24 miles | 78 | 70 | 76 |
| 25+ miles | 22 | 30 | 24 |
| Parent Gender | | | |
| Male | 32 | 22 | 23 |
| Female | 68 | 78 | 77 |
| Parent Marital Status | | | |
| Married | 48 | 66 | 42 |
| Widowed/Divorced/Single | 52 | 34 | 58 |
| Grandchild Age | | | |
| 6-11 Years | 58 | 59 | 39 |
| 12-18 Years | 42 | 41 | 61 |
| Grandchild Gender | | | |
| Male | 40 | 47 | 41 |
| Female | 60 | 53 | 59 |
| Grandchild in Grandparent Care | | | |
| Daily/Often | 78 | 59 | |
| Seldom/Never | 22 | 41 | |
| Grandparent/Parent Education | | | |
| High School or Less | 53 | 36 | |
| More than High School | 47 | 64 | |
| Grandparent/Parent Income | | | |
| Less than \$20,000 | 54 | 40 | |
| \$20,000 or More | 46 | 60 | |

Table 2

Analysis of Variance and Independent Variables for Black Grandparent, Parent and Grandchild GSNI Respondents

| Source of Variation | Test Statistics | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | df | Multivariate F | Satisfaction | Success | Teaching | Univariate F Difficulty | Frustration | Information |
| Grand Mean | 1 | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| Generation | 2 | 6.57*** | 7.42*** | .31 | 2.09 | 15.23*** | 4.23** | 1.30 |
| GP Gender | 1 | .67 | .59 | .16 | .03 | .04 | 1.52 | 1.13 |
| GC Gender | 1 | 3.23** | 4.04* | 2.33 | .72 | 8.16** | 14.71*** | 12.92*** |
| GP Age | 1 | 1.23 | 1.81 | 3.20 | 2.12 | 1.05 | 2.65 | 3.92* |
| GC Age | 1 | 2.98** | 10.38*** | 2.42 | .00 | 1.37 | .01 | .23 |
| GP and GC Time Together | 1 | 6.59*** | 24.08*** | 20.25*** | 21.99*** | 16.04*** | 5.88** | .55 |
| Generation & GP Gender | 2 | .59 | 1.75 | .41 | 1.04 | .33 | .70 | .86 |
| Generation & GC Gender | 2 | 1.20 | .43 | .52 | .56 | 1.90 | 1.53 | .73 |
| Generation x GP Age | 2 | 1.04 | 1.05 | 1.53 | .15 | .11 | .10 | 1.00 |
| Generation x GC Age | 2 | 2.22** | .50 | .82 | .60 | 6.76*** | 2.73 | 3.11* |
| Generation x Time | 2 | .80 | .61 | 1.67 | 1.47 | .46 | .69 | .69 |

* .05 significance level. ** .01 significance level. *** .001 significance level.

Table 3

GSNI Subscale Between Generation F-tests and t-tests for 204 Black Grandparents, 128 Parents and 294 Grandchildren Subjects as a Function of Generation Group Membership

| Subscale Variable | M Grand-parent | SD Grand-parent | M Parent | SD Parent | F Value | F Prob | t Value | t Prob |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|-----------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| Satisfaction | 3.24 | .47 | 3.43 | .44 | 1.14 | .419 | -3.81 | .001 |
| Success | 3.39 | .44 | 3.33 | .51 | 1.31 | .087 | 1.16 | .249 |
| Teaching | 3.57 | .43 | 3.48 | .50 | 1.38 | .042 | 1.76 | .079 |
| POTENTIALS | 3.40 | .37 | 3.41 | .42 | 1.30 | .094 | -.31 | .757 |
| Difficulty | 3.34 | .49 | 3.39 | .54 | 1.22 | .201 | -.84 | .403 |
| Frustration | 3.21 | .62 | 3.34 | .61 | 1.03 | .842 | -1.87 | .062 |
| Information | 2.65 | .79 | 2.66 | .91 | 1.34 | .060 | -.06 | .952 |
| CONCERNS | 3.07 | .54 | 3.13 | .54 | 1.01 | .958 | -1.00 | .317 |

| Subscale Variable | M Parent | SD Parent | M Grand-child | SD Grand-child | F Value | F Prob | t Value | t Prob |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|----------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| Satisfaction | 3.43 | .44 | 3.29 | .53 | 1.47 | .014 | 2.63 | .009 |
| Success | 3.33 | .51 | 3.32 | .52 | 1.06 | .737 | .08 | .937 |
| Teaching | 3.48 | .50 | 3.42 | .55 | 1.21 | .228 | .95 | .344 |
| POTENTIALS | 3.41 | .42 | 3.35 | .46 | 1.19 | .267 | 1.42 | .156 |
| Difficulty | 3.39 | .54 | 2.96 | .83 | 2.31 | .000 | 5.36 | .001 |
| Frustration | 3.34 | .61 | 3.02 | .81 | 1.78 | .000 | 3.94 | .001 |
| Information | 2.66 | .91 | 2.56 | .86 | 1.12 | .449 | 1.00 | .318 |
| CONCERNS | 3.13 | .54 | 2.85 | .70 | 1.65 | .001 | 4.03 | .001 |

| Subscale Variable | M Grand-child | SD Grand-child | M Grand-parent | SD Grand-parent | F Value | F Prob | t Value | t Prob |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| Satisfaction | 3.29 | .53 | 3.24 | .47 | 1.28 | .057 | -1.21 | .228 |
| Success | 3.32 | .52 | 3.39 | .44 | 1.38 | .014 | 1.51 | .133 |
| Teaching | 3.42 | .55 | 3.57 | .43 | 1.66 | .000 | 3.33 | .001 |
| POTENTIALS | 3.35 | .46 | 3.40 | .37 | 1.55 | .000 | 1.39 | .165 |
| Difficulty | 2.96 | .83 | 3.34 | .49 | 2.83 | .000 | 6.40 | .001 |
| Frustration | 3.02 | .81 | 3.21 | .62 | 1.72 | .000 | 2.89 | .004 |
| Information | 2.56 | .86 | 2.65 | .79 | 1.20 | .154 | 1.18 | .239 |
| CONCERNS | 2.85 | .70 | 3.07 | .54 | 1.68 | .000 | 3.92 | .001 |