

A Word about COVID-19...

The Editors

GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research, Practice and Policy

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/grandfamilies>

Recommended Citation

Editors, T. (2020). A Word about COVID-19.... *GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research, Practice and Policy*, 6 (1).

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/grandfamilies/vol6/iss1/2>

This Complete Issue is brought to you for free and open access by the National Research Center on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research, Practice and Policy by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



A Word about COVID-19...

Our country is currently experiencing a historic pandemic that is creating considerable loss and adjustments for everyone in our society. COVID-19 has changed the way we work, play, and interact as a community; doing the ordinary is no longer prescribed. As such, the editors of *GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research, Practice and Policy* believe we need to take notice of how this astounding event is affecting one of our nation's most vulnerable, but durable family groups – grandparents raising grandchildren.

While we are busy trying to settle our own families and friends to make sure they are safe, lets also consider grandparent-headed families during this challenging time. As practitioners, researchers, and decisionmakers working on behalf of these families, we are keenly aware how grandparents have always stepped up to the plate to assume care for their grandchildren, not just because they had to, but because they wanted to. Stepping up to the plate has often meant they experience major financial stress from limited income, causing many grandparents to move out of retirement to return to work on a full- or part-time basis. However, the recent economic decline associated with the coronavirus has created another financial threat from work layoffs, furloughs and temporary suspensions, sometimes without pay. Money will be tight for many families as they struggle to pay the rent/mortgage, utilities, and food.

As our nation contends with the major task of developing and distributing testing kits to groups most at risk for coronavirus, know our grandparents should be included in that listing. If they do not receive priority testing, regardless of age, grandchildren could experience another life trauma and disruption in their young lives. For many grandchildren, their grandparents' care and nurturance is their only source of stability. To lose that stability will undoubtedly increase the risk of more children needing to enter the foster care system.

Presently, social distancing is important as we work to fight this terrible outbreak. But we must also find innovative ways to stay connected to our communities, be ready to test new service delivery models and establish new criteria for program and policy standards to keep families whole and stable. Battling the coronavirus may not be a short term event; it may require long-term solutions from interdisciplinary groups of providers, including social workers, healthcare workers, business and religious leaders, as well as our elected officials. We recognize success may come in small doses, yet we encourage using *GrandFamilies* as a primary resource to share novel approaches to service delivery, and original research findings to advance policy decisions. Promoting global understanding of grandfamilies is our goal as a journal; ensuring the well-being of these families should be everyone's vision.

Be safe.

The Editors

GrandFamilies: The Contemporary Journal of Research, Practice and Policy