

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOUR IN FIVE SENIORS FEAR THEIR GRANDCHILDREN WILL GROW INTO UNHAPPY ADULTS

Aussie grandparents believe modern day parenting is creating less resilient and more entitled grandchildren

A new study released today by the Australian Seniors Insurance Agency has revealed Australian grandparents worry their grandchildren will become unhappy and much less resilient as they grow into adulthood (81.0% and 64.3% respectively).

The *Raising Modern Australia* report is the eighth instalment of the Australian Seniors Series, an ongoing survey that aims to explore the shifting attitudes, concerns and emerging trends affecting Australia's over 50s. This study examines the views and changing roles of Australian grandparents and the impact they believe modern parenting styles will have on their grandchildren.

The survey identifies a generational shift in parenting behaviours, with the overwhelming majority of grandparents agreeing that parenting styles have changed significantly since they were children (93.8%), and seven in ten fearing this could mean their grandchildren will not enjoy life as they have (70.8%).

Change is not always for the best according to almost three in five seniors, who share the opinion that parenting styles have become worse over the years (58.3%). Among the key shifts in parenting trends, grandparents believe parents spoil children too much these days and are notably less strict (85.8% and 75.9% respectively).

Chief Marketing Officer and Australian Seniors spokesperson Simon Hovell said, "Today's report shows the real concerns Australian grandparents have about the effect modern parenting could have on their grandchildren, and highlights generational differences in raising children.

"We are seeing a fundamental shift in the traditional roles of grandparents and parents when it comes to raising Aussie children. Today, parents are seen to be adopting behaviours that were previously expected from grandparents, such as spoiling children. Interestingly, this has led grandparents to assume more disciplinarian responsibilities, as the research revealed that just under a third (29.2%) of grandparents discipline their grandchildren more than the parents" added Mr Hovell.

When asked about the consequences current parenting styles could have on children, eight in ten grandparents believe the praise and reward-inspired culture that exists today will negatively impact the future of their grandchildren (80.5%), and three quarters believe children will have an increased sense of entitlement in adulthood (77.4%). Similarly, around three quarters of grandparents are surprised by the way children are brought up these days (76.2%), and agree that modern day parenting styles are eroding important values in society (78.0%).

Dr Karen Phillip, psychotherapist said, "It is clear that the seniors of contemporary Australia have identified a significant and paramount shift in parenting styles when compared to when they were raising children. This can often challenge the role that seniors have grown up with given many grandparents today feel they have a responsibility to help parent their grandchildren.

"This report confirms parenting trends do vary from generation to generation, and grandparents have concerns about what this means for their grandchildren. The most useful

thing parents and grandparents can do is have a conversation about their differences of opinion and experiences,” concluded Dr Phillip.

Grandparents today also have concerns with modern day influences that can have an impact on their grandchildren. The research reveals that nearly all grandparents are concerned about the things that are influencing children (94.6%), for example social media and the amount of time spent online. Concerns also extend to their own offspring with three quarters of Aussie grandparents agreeing that parents are not taking the time to simply enjoy being a parent (77%).

Despite the concerns grandparents have, they are happy to make sacrifices to contribute to the wellbeing of their grandchildren. More than seven in ten grandparents agree they have made a lot of sacrifices to care for their grandchildren on a weekly basis, such as having to be on call when needed (73.0%), or altering plans with friends to care for grandchildren (34.6%).

Further, almost a third of selfless seniors have shifted holiday and travel arrangements (28.8%) or have changed work arrangements (16.7%) to be there for their grandchildren. Regardless of this, almost all of those who care for their grandchildren agree this creates positive outcomes for their health (92.5%).

Not only do Australian grandparents contribute with their time, but just under half (44.8%) will contribute financially towards their family for birthday and Christmas presents for their grandchildren (44.8%).

“It is hoped that the strong concerns grandparents have for the future happiness and resilience of the next generation could be mitigated by the support and wisdom they provide their grandchildren, which can help to nurture them into happy, healthy adults” Dr Phillip said.

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About Australian Seniors Insurance Agency

Australian Seniors Insurance Agency was established in 1998 to provide cost effective insurance solutions for the mature Australian Market, a market too often ignored. Australian Seniors Insurance Agency offers car, home, travel, funeral, pet and accident insurance for Australians over 50.

About the 'Australian Seniors Series'

In order to explore the behaviours, values and concerns of senior Australians, CoreData surveyed online 1,000 typical Australians over 50 years old across the nation in September 2017. The sample collection employed soft quotas to monitor representativeness of the Australian senior adult population.

Hard quotas by state were also employed to ensure all the main states were represented with sufficiently robust samples of seniors in the research: NSW = 200, VIC = 200, QLD = 200, WA = 200, Remaining states/territories = 200. A total of 200 parents of children 13 years and under also took part in this survey.