

# THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN RAISING GRANDCHILDREN AND GRANDPARENT CAREGIVER MARRIAGES

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## ABSTRACT

Few studies have examined how raising grandchildren influences the marital relationship of grandparent caregivers even though raising grandchildren may strain marital relationships. This study used nationally representative data to contrast perceptions of spousal relations for grandparents who had recent custody of grandchildren along with their own young children, and grandparents who had recently cared for grandchildren only. Results revealed that grandmother caregivers raising two generations reported poorer spousal relations than grandfather caregivers raising two generations. In addition, grandmother caregivers raising two generations reported more negative perceptions of their marital relationships than those raising one generation. Grandmother caregivers with recent experience raising two generations appear to have a pile-up of stress and role strain, which is associated to their poorer spousal relations. Professionals that work with married grandparent caregivers need to address the potential for marital strain by including both grandparents in support groups that work specifically on enhancing marital relationships.