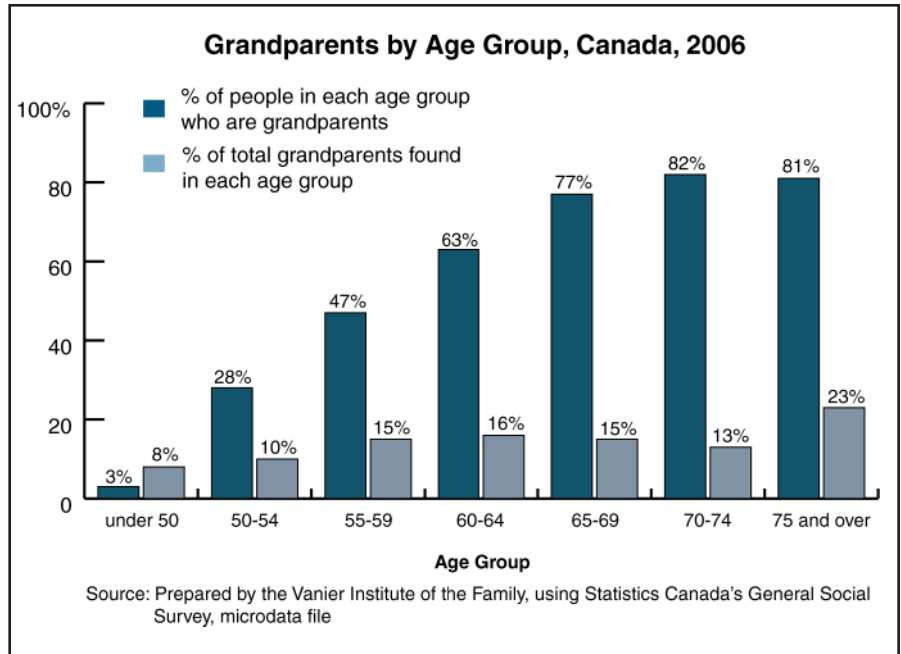


Grandmother, Grand-père, Anaanatsiaq, Popo...

Whether we refer to them in English, French, Inuktitut or Chinese...as a group, Canada's grandparents are a large, diverse and growing part of the Canadian population. We all have grandparents - although some of us may not know them - and most Canadians will become grandparents sometime in their lives.

In 2006, there were an estimated 6.3 million grandparents in Canada (2.7 million grandfathers and 3.6 million grandmothers). This number is up from 5.7 million in 2001, just five years earlier. While only a small percentage of people under 50 years of age (3%) are grandparents, this increases to nearly one-half (47%) of those aged 55 to 59. Among people aged 65 and over, about 8 out of every 10 has at least one grandchild.



Grandparents themselves are a diverse group. About one-half (49%) are under the age of 65, and most of these grandparents are still employed as they save for their approaching retirements. Most grandparents aged 65 and over are retired, but the majority, when they are able to do so, continue to provide valuable assistance to family and friends.

Over the past 15 years, there has been a notable trend in the number of children for whom a grandparent or grandparent couple is the primary provider (where no parent is present in the household). According to the Census of Canada, the number of children under 25 in this situation increased to 54,865 in 2006, up from 41,780 in 1991.

Family Lens

Grand-parenting can be an extremely rewarding and valuable experience. But in an age when families are often separated by the obstacles of "too much distance" and "too little time", relationships with grandchildren can be tough to maintain. For those grandparents providing primary care to grandchildren, the considerable costs of raising a child can be difficult to meet, especially when one is saving for, or living on, a retirement income.