

# Wistful Grandparents — 20% of the nationally representative sample



## Who are they?

Wistful Grandparents want to be more involved with their grandchildren but family dynamics get in the way. Their ideas about child-rearing differ from those of their adult children and they don't feel valued as grandparents.

“We fortunately have a wonderful and so satisfying relationship with our daughter, son-in-law and their [children]/our grandchildren. On the other hand, we have NO relationship with our son's family since he got married. One set, awesome and [with] the other set feeling so upset.”

## Family Relationships:

Of all groups, Wistful Grandparents are most likely to have low satisfaction with overall family relationships: with both grandchild's parents, and with the other grandparents (either “no relationship” or “not too good”).

They are the most likely to have a long distance relationship with their grandchild and to have an older grandchild (half are age 9+). These two factors combined with challenging family dynamics result in a very different profile of grandparent-grandchild interaction for this group versus the others. They are significantly less likely than all grandparents to have interacted with their grandchild on a regular basis in the past year: 15% did not see him/her at all, 29% did not speak to him/her at all on the phone, and 69% did not provide daycare, transportation or overnight care.

Key statements they are *more* likely to agree strongly with include:

- I wish I could be more involved in my grandchild's life.
- I don't always agree with how my grandchild's parents 'parent.'
- My ideas about child-rearing conflict with my adult child(ren)'s approach to parenting.
- My (child doesn't/children don't) fully appreciate all I do as a grandparent.

Key statements they are *less* likely to agree strongly with include:

- I feel respected by my child(ren) & grandchild(ren) in my role as a grandparent.
- Being a grandparent is generally a joyful experience.
- Being a grandparent has improved my relationship with my adult child(ren).

## Jewish Life:

While over a 1/3 of Wistful Grandparents belong to a synagogue or minyan, and the majority attended Hebrew school, they are significantly more likely than all others to agree that “I wish I had the Jewish background to teach my grandchild all that I'd like to.” Half have a child whose spouse or partner does not identify as Jewish.

## Opportunities for Engagement:

Challenges with family dynamics and interest in Jewish learning suggest that Wistful Grandparents might be receptive to learning about family dynamics from a Jewish perspective. They may also be interested in exploring their special interests and experiences, and relating them to Jewish stories and values (including the Jewish spiritual tradition) in ways that can be shared with others. Consider resources and strategies to build bridges with grandchildren from afar.

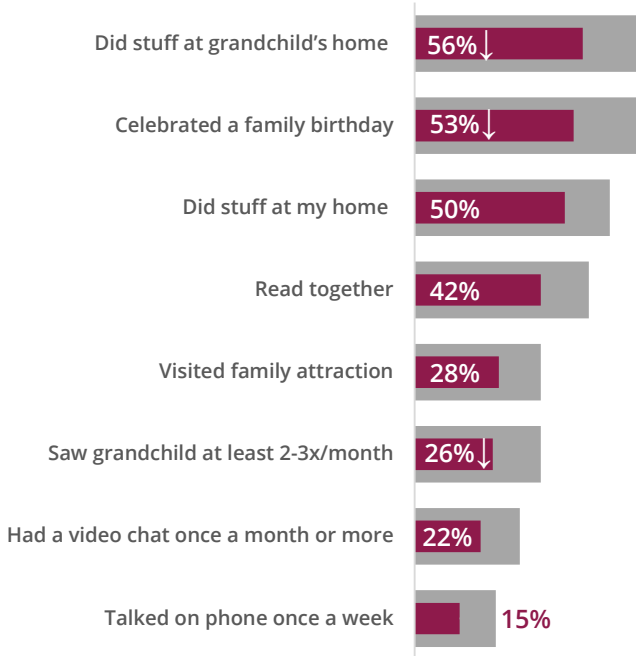
One-on-one outreach to Wistful Grandparents will be the most effective recruitment strategy. Relationship building with grandparents is key but even more so with individuals in this group. Some Wistful Grandparents may find it useful to share family experiences and learn from each other in carefully facilitated settings.

This could be a group (with proper screening) to turn to for help with development, recruitment and training for surrogate grandparent initiatives.

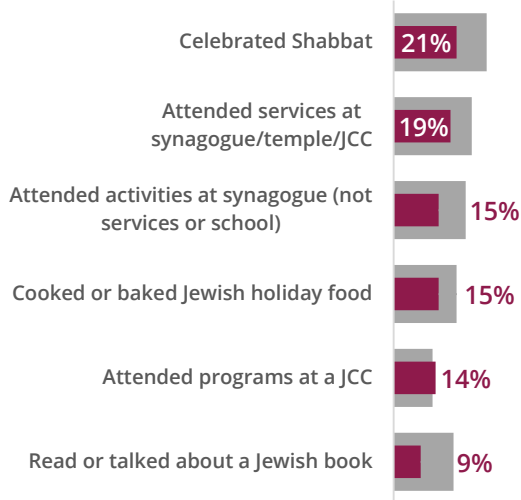
Wistful (n=202)

Total Sample (n=1,017)

### Secular Activities Done with Grandchild - Past Year

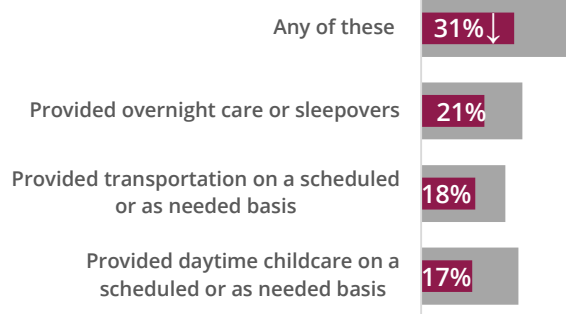


### Jewish Activities Done with Grandchild - Past Year

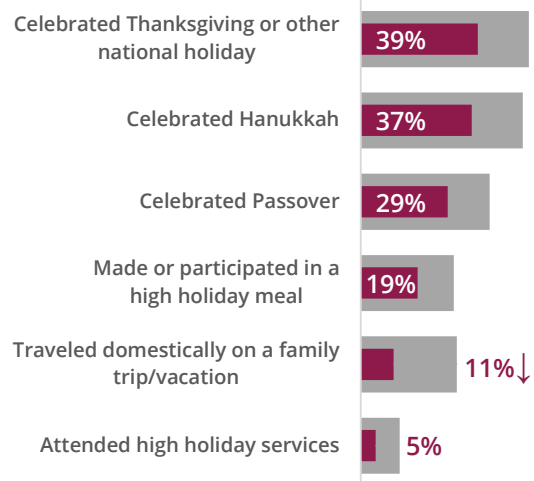


↑ indicates that the % is significantly higher than all of the other groups  
 ↓ indicates that the % is significantly lower than all of the other groups

### Family Support



### Activities Done with Grandchild - Past 3 Years



### Passing on Concepts & Values to Grandchild (% very interested)

