# CoEHD Grant Application Form

Submit this application form by one of the following due dates along with your proposal. Applications must be received, at tate-center@wmich.edu, by 5:00 p.m. on August 15, November 15, March 15, and June 15.

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| Application |
| Applicant Name:  | Andrea B. Smith |
| Title:  | Professor |
| Department: | TLES |
| Title of Proposal:  | Services for Caregiving Grandparents: Assessing Effectiveness of New Delivery Formats |
| Amount Requested:  | $2,000 |
| Dates of Project:  | March 15, 2015 – March 14, 2016 |
| Evaluation Guidelines |
| Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree **5 4 3 2 1** |
| The proposed research/creative activity is well conceived and organized. |  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]        5 4 3 2 1 |
| The proposed work will increase the likelihood that the applicant will secure external funding in the future. |      [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]        5 4 3 2 1 |
| The methods and/or procedures are clearly stated and appropriate for the proposed activity. |      [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]        5 4 3 2 1 |
| The plans for data analysis or evaluation critique are clearly stated and appropriate for the proposed activity. |      [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]        5 4 3 2 1 |
| The costs for the proposed budget are clearly itemized and justified. |      [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]        5 4 3 2 1 |
| This project has the potential to advance the scholarly/creative reputation of WMU.  |      [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]  [ ]        5 4 3 2 1 |

**Services for Caregiving Grandparents: Assessing Effectiveness of New Delivery Formats**

**Andrea B. Smith**

**Background and Purpose:**

This pilot project will compare effectiveness of two formats (limited meetings versus independent learning) for providing information and support to custodial grandparent caregivers. Established research findings support the provision of face-to-face psycho-educational support groups for custodial grandparents (Dannison & Smith, 2003; Hughes, Waite, LaPierre & Lou, 2007; Vacha-Haase, Ness, Dannison & Smith, 2000; Face-to-face support groups have been shown to be highly beneficial in reducing grandparent caregivers’ stress and increased perceived social support. However, many grandparent caregivers are prohibited from participating in face-to-face groups for varied reasons, including lack of transportation, employment restraints, childcare issues, and limited time to attend sessions. Additionally, ongoing support groups are expensive to deliver, and services for grandparent caregivers may not be consistently available within local communities.

The purpose of this project is to determine 1) if custodial grandparent caregivers actively participate in alternative format approaches (*Self-Directed* or *Mixed Format)*, 2) what factors influence grandparents’ successful utilization of each format and 3) the relative effectiveness of *Self Directed* versus *Mixed Format* approaches in a) reducing stress and b) enhancing grandparents’ perceptions of their caregiving roles. Comparing these two approaches allows evaluation of both the effectiveness (content) and acceptability (format) of these delivery systems (Campbell & Miles, 2008).

**Rationale and Significance:**

Numbers of custodial grandparent caregivers in the United States continues to increase. Nearly one million grandparent householders provide care to grandchildren without the in-home presence of birthparent(s) (U.S. Census, 2011). Additionally, numbers of multi-generational households have also increased significantly (U.S. Census, 2011). The effectiveness of ongoing face-to-face support groups is well documented. However limited research exists related to the effectiveness of alternative formats for providing support and information to grandparent caregivers. Limited resources and competing needs common in family service agencies necessitates research-based approaches that are cost-effective, meet participants’ needs, and achieve expected outcomes. Self-instructional and hybrid formats hold potential for reaching populations of caregiving grandparents, including those living in remote locations and those who are unable, for varied reasons, to attend successive support group meetings.

The Second Time Around: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren continues to be a highly regarded curriculum for providing support group services to grandparent-headed family members. However, cultural shifts have influenced adults’ expectations related to group participation and content delivery. Adult learners increasingly value involvement in programs allowing instant access, flexibility, choices, and awareness of their complex circumstances (Dolbin-MacNab, Roberto & Finney; Campbell & Miles, 2008)**.** Providing information to grandparent caregivers in both *Self-Directed* and *Mixed* formats recognizes changed attitudes toward learning. Evaluating both effectiveness and acceptability of these formats will provide pilot data information that can influence future directions for programming.

**Procedures**:

Subjects will be recruited from the Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative (ENLC) in Kent County. Thirty (30) participants will be recruited and randomly placed into each group. All qualifying participants will attend an open house event, will complete HSRIB permission protocols, and will participate in pretest assessments. Participants will receive a copy of *My Not So New Role: Parenting a Second Time Around*, a seven-chapter guide that will be developed to provide information, self-care and independent learning activities for caregiving grandparents. Participants will randomly be assigned to one of two groups. The *Self-Directed* group participants (Group A) will be asked to read and complete activities for all seven chapters within a one- month period. *Self –Directed* group participants will be encouraged to contact the facilitator by email throughout the duration of the project to answer questions. Post-test assessments will be collected individually, with participants choosing to attend one of two scheduled meeting times.

After the initial open house meeting, the *Mixed Format* (Group B) participants will meet together as a group for a kickoff session. A facilitator will engage participants in team building activities, a group discussion of challenges related to caregiving, and will provide participants with the option to join a group Facebook page. *Mixed Format* group participants will also be provided with a copy of *My Not So New Role,* will receive instructions about using this book, and will be encouraged to email the facilitator with any questions. The *Mixed Format* participants will meet one month later for a second group session and will complete post-test evaluations at that time. All participants (Groups A and B) who attend the open house, any associated group sessions, and complete post-assessment evaluations will receive a gift card incentive. HSRIB approval will be obtained prior to the initiation of any program services.

**Data analysis**: Participants will provide basic demographic data including information specific to their caregiving role. Participants will also complete the *Beck’s Depression Inventory*, the *Cohen Perceived Stress Scale* and the *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Survey—Revised* as pre- and post-test assessments. *Beck’s Depression Inventory* and *Cohen Perceived Social Support Scale* are well-established standardized instruments that have been used in many research studies to assess participants’ depression and perception of available social support. The *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Survey-*Revised is a validated instrument developed for the Grandparent Resource Site Project, funded by the WK Kellogg Foundation. This 50-question survey was specifically designed to determine participants’ knowledge and efficacy related to their caregiving grandparent roles. The project evaluator will utilize Analysis of Co-Variance (ANCOVA) to determine differences between pre- and post-test responses of project participants. The project evaluator will also assess 1) themes addressed via Facebook communications, 2) types of information and support offered by participants via Facebook, 3) amount and type of participant/facilitator email communications and 4) level of completion of *My Not So New Role* chapter activities. Additionally, both groups of participants will be asked to provide feedback on 1) informational content of each chapter in the *Your Not So New Role* , 2) relevancy of associated activities in name of book, 3) clarity of open house session, 4) content and delivery of group sessions (where applicable), and 5) utility of Facebook page involvement.

**Results**, **Implementations and Dissemination:** Expectations are that individuals in both groups will benefit from participation in this project. A second expected result is additional insight and increased clarification about program formats (Self-Directed or Mixed Format) which are effective in decreasing stress and increasing perceived social support among grandparent caregivers.

This pilot study will provide information that will support additional research related to the effectiveness of varied group formats for populations of caregiving grandparents. It is anticipated that pilot data will support future grant writing initiatives. Data obtained from this project will be disseminated at major conferences (Generations United, Gerontological Society of America, etc.) and through the National Research Center for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (website and Grandfamilies journal).

**Budget**

(Omitted.)

**Bibliography**

Campbell, L. & Miles, M. (2008). Implementing parenting programs for custodial grandparents. In Hayslip, B. & Kaminsky, P. (Eds). Parenting the Custodial Grandchild: Implementations for Clinical Practice. New York: Springer, 115-130.

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Dolbin-MacNab, M. ,Roberto, K. & Finney, J. (2013). Formal social support: Promoting resilience in grandparents parenting children. In Hayslip, B. & Smith, G. (Eds.), Resilient grandparent caregivers: A strengths-based perspective. New York: Routledge, 134-151.

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