



URECARES STIPEND AND RESPITE PROGRAM

2025 Summary Report



UReCares provides financial help to unlicensed relatives caring for children, ensuring kids stay connected to family.

Between May and September 2025, the program distributed \$200,000 to 120 families through three rounds of payments, providing \$1,650 or more per household. This effort reflects the program's commitment to reducing financial barriers for families who step up to care for their kin and ensure children remain safely connected to their extended families.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

UReCares families represent a diverse cross-section of Alaska’s kinship caregivers—grandparents, aunts, uncles, and siblings—who provide love and stability outside of the formal foster care system.

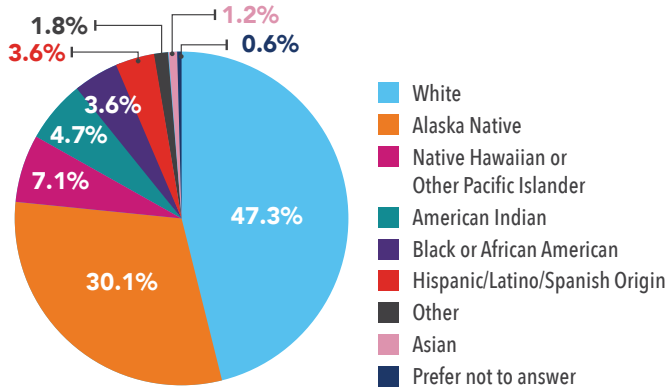
Caregivers and Children

120 = **512**
families people

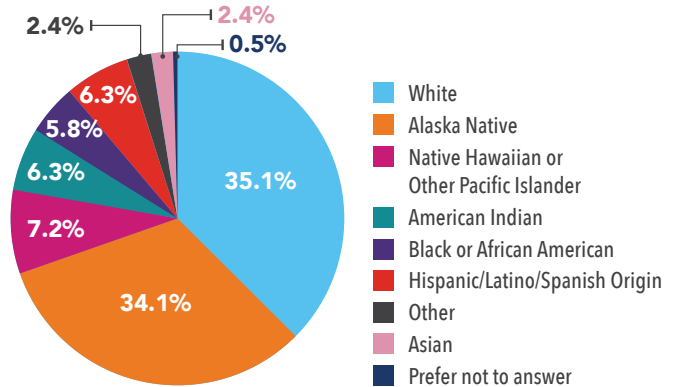


213 adults
65 0-3 yr olds
234 4-17 yr olds

Caregiver Race and Ethnicity



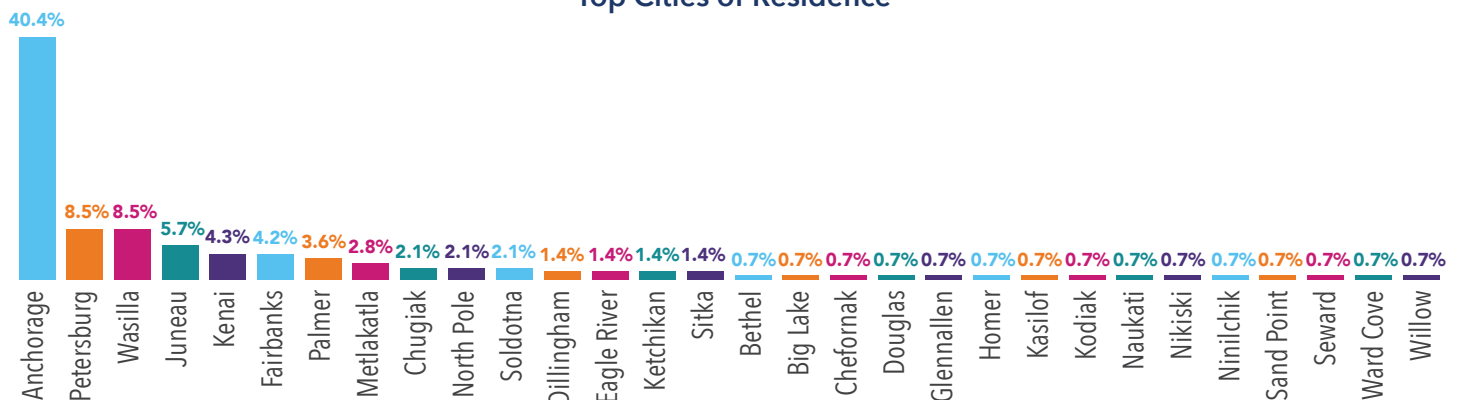
Children’s Race and Ethnicity



This diversity underscores the broad reach of UReCares among Alaska’s families.

GEOGRAPHIC REACH

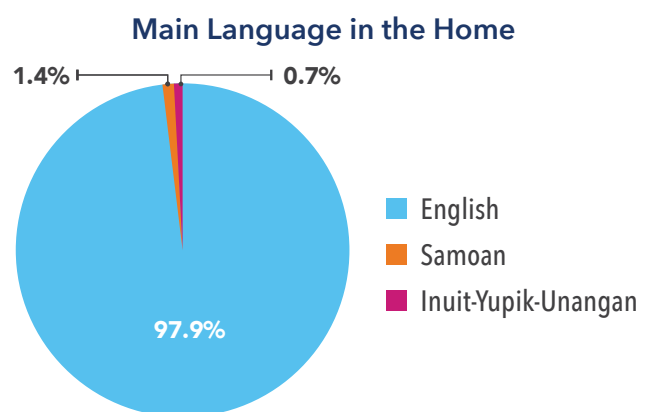
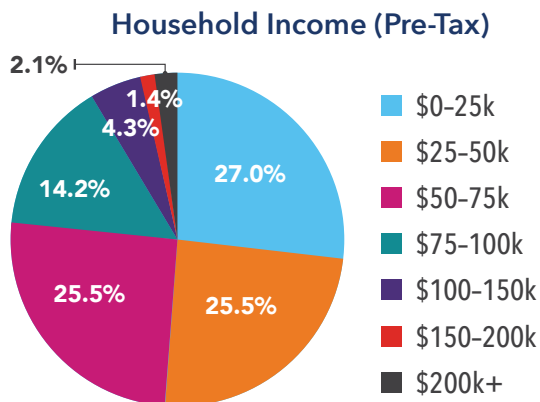
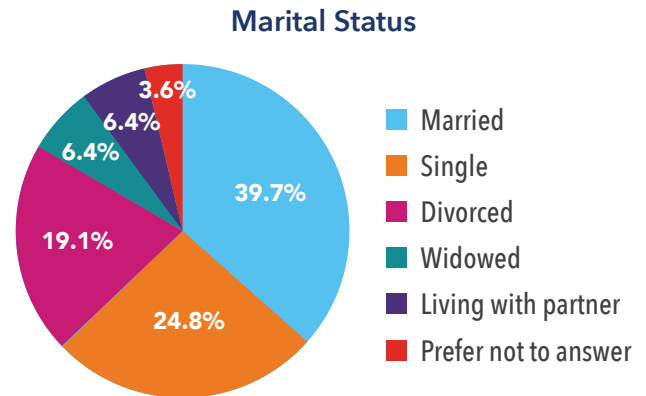
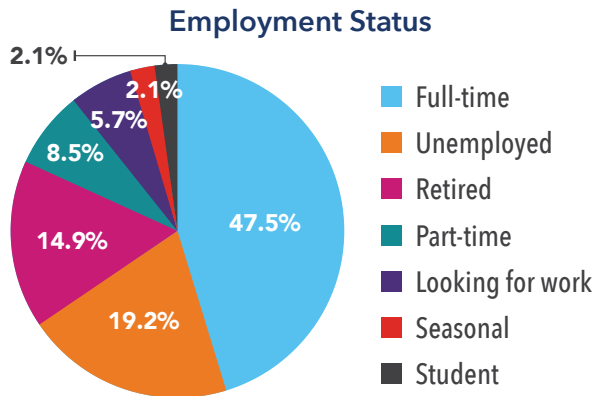
Top Cities of Residence



This statewide distribution demonstrates that the UReCares program reaches families across Alaska’s urban centers and remote communities alike.

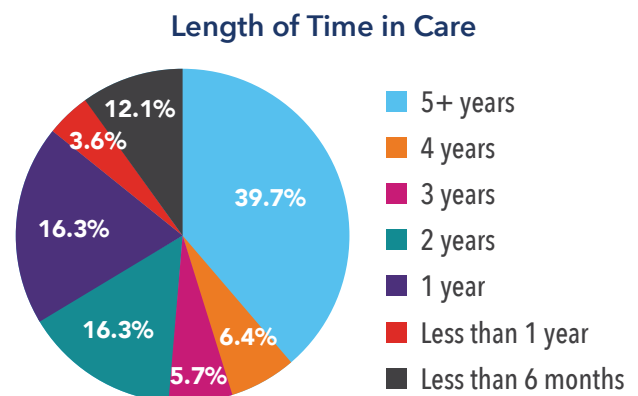
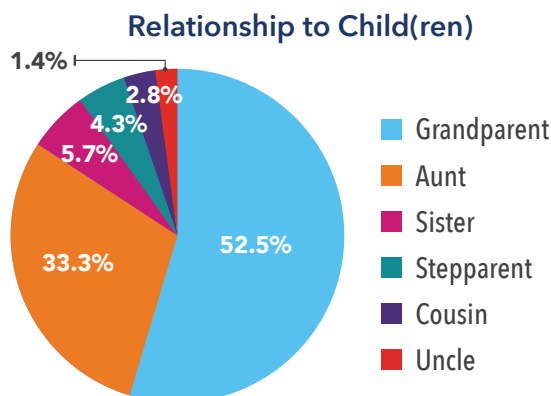
CAREGIVER DEMOGRAPHICS

Caregivers in the program demonstrate resilience and resourcefulness despite financial and employment challenges.



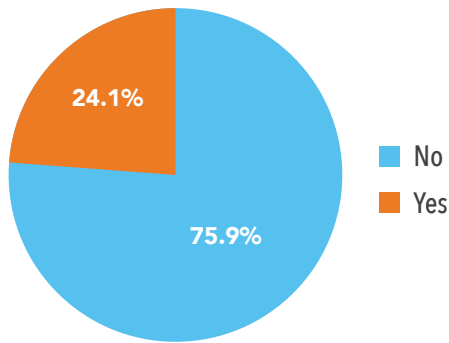
These figures show that the majority of UReCares households are working-class families managing care responsibilities within modest means.

CAREGIVING CONTEXT

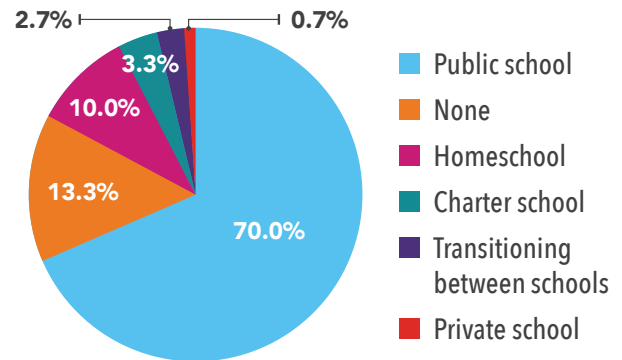


CAREGIVING CONTEXT *continued*

Childcare Use



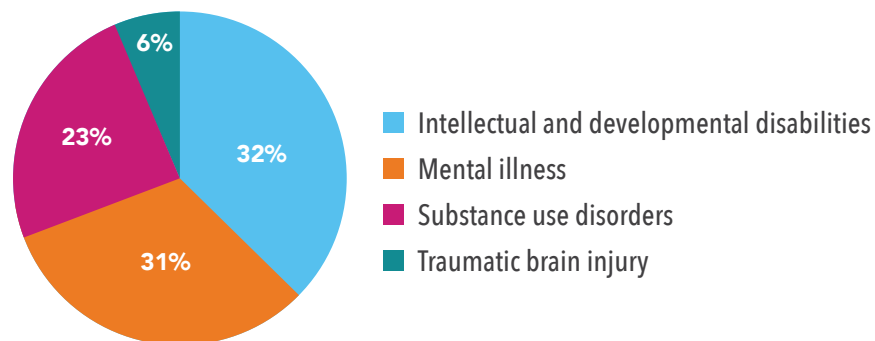
School Enrollment (for school-aged children)



These patterns highlight the stability of long-term care and the importance of public education to kinship caregiving households.

FUNDING AND FAMILY IMPACT

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority funds the UReCares stipends, supporting families affected by its beneficiary categories. UReCares participants self-reported that their families are impacted by one or more of these categories:

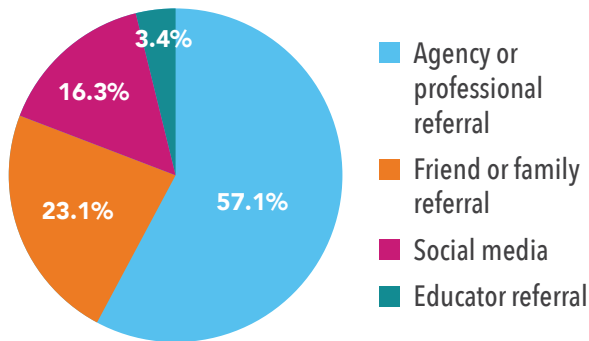


This data reflects how many kinship families are caring for loved ones with complex behavioral health or developmental needs. These challenges add additional layers of emotional and financial strain, making the Trust's investment in UReCares particularly impactful.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

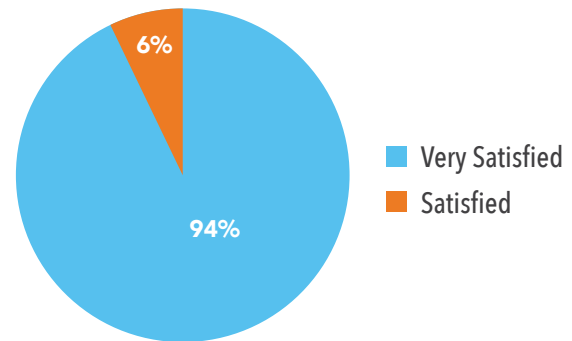
Caregiver feedback offers valuable insight into program outreach, participant experiences and satisfaction, the emotional and practical realities of caregiving, and the factors influencing families' decisions not to pursue foster care licensure.

How They Heard About the Program



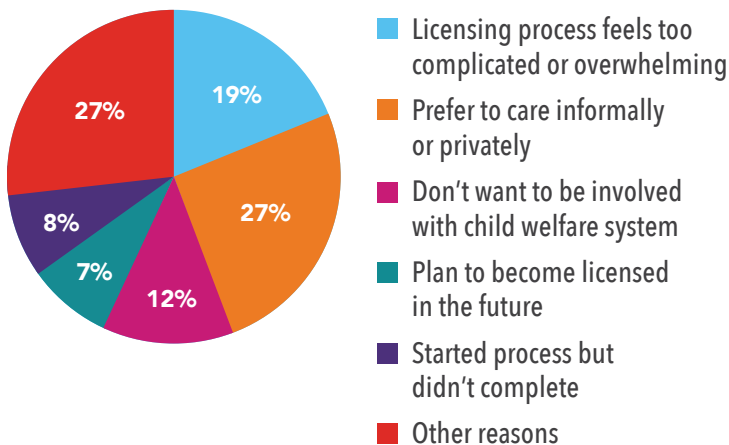
These findings highlight the importance of community partnerships and peer networks in reaching caregivers and supporting family stability.

Program Satisfaction



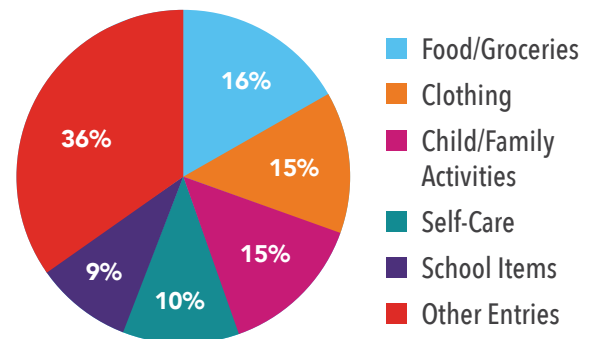
This high satisfaction rate reflects the program's strong impact in supporting Alaska's unlicensed relative caregivers.

Reasons Why They Aren't Licensed Foster Parents



These findings underscore the need to simplify licensing processes and build trust-based supports that honor caregivers' desire to provide care independently while maintaining strong connections to available resources.

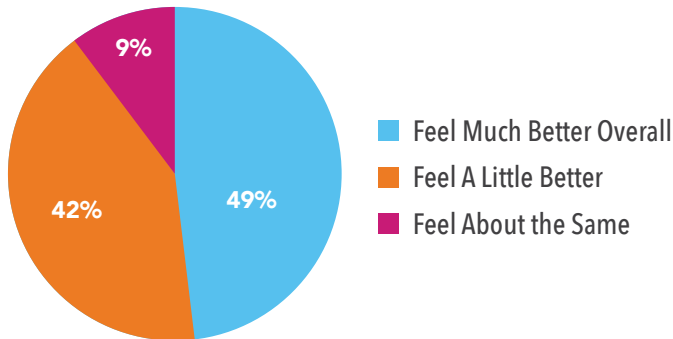
Stipend Use



These findings highlight how caregivers use stipends to meet essential family needs—most often for food, housing, clothing, and activities—underscoring the importance of flexible financial support that strengthens overall family well-being.

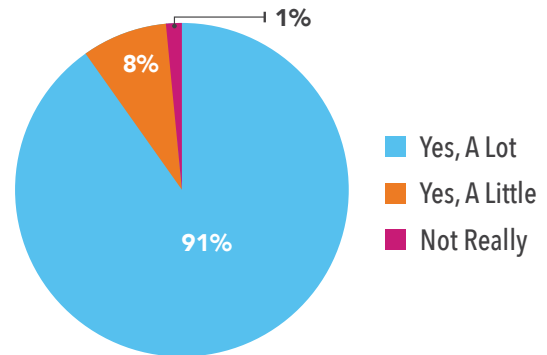
PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK *continued*

Well-Being Outcomes



Since joining the UReCares program, caregivers have reported significant improvements in their overall well-being. These results suggest that the program's financial and emotional support contribute positively to caregivers' mental, emotional, and physical health.

Do Caregivers Feel More Valued with Support



When asked whether receiving financial support made them feel more valued as a caregiver, the results show that the stipend not only helps financially but also validates caregivers' vital role in keeping families together.

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

"It's amazing what this program offers caregivers, the support we need to provide for our loved ones. I wouldn't change anything about this program. Thank you for the love and support this program has provided and done for my family."

"This summer I was able to do things with my sister I never would have been able to without the support of this program. It feels very good to know that what I'm doing for her is really making a difference and there are people that support my decision to take on this responsibility."

"I'm very grateful for this program. At the time, I didn't know if I would be able to continue being a caregiver because there's not very many places I've gone where they've helped me with my grandson. It just seems like it's so much harder to find support in my situation, so I'm so grateful for Volunteers of America and this program."

"It helped a lot. My food stamps for the kids didn't come through, and I live off social security, so the money helped me get what I needed to take care of my grandkids. Thanks so much for all of the help."

"I appreciate being noticed as a foster parent even if I'm not licensed, it's nice to know that I'm not left out and faced to do this alone."

"This provided extra support with the items I needed for the baby's development."

"Though the money was a huge benefit to our family, knowing that there are people out there that understand and appreciate what we've been through was of the greatest help and a positive motivator."

"Raising extended family members is expensive. They have special needs that have been neglected, our kids are older and hungry, but because we are over income we can't get food stamps. We've spent hours in therapy, time away from my job. There should be some monthly assistant to relieve the financial burden of helping."

"It has brought our family some needed time together and lessened some burdens."

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

"This was a lifesaver for me! I've been working all my life and always made very good money. Now I'm faced with health conditions and with adding the grandchildren I haven't been able to work. I'm fighting to get back there and this helped me so much! I could pay rent and some bills easier."

"You were all so helpful as I'm struggling as a single grandmother navigating taking care of my special grandchildren. There's nothing I would suggest to change as you were so kind and helpful!!"

"I feel so much more supported and had a huge relief over this summer thanks to this program."

"The funds sure helped through these few months, which gave me the opportunity to dote on my grandchild's needs, like clothing, food/snacks and learning supplies. THANK YOU!"

"This program helps strengthen our relationship with our family."

"It was the biggest blessing in a huge time of need."

"The financial support has been greatly appreciated and the surveys helped bring things to light that I had not thought about."

"It's been a great help. I like how the money was split up so it was able to help more than a one time payment would have."

"I'm happy to be recognized for my efforts. I never planned on raising a grandchild."

"This is a helpful program, I don't see anything that needs improving."

"Wonderful program, I'm extremely grateful."

"These stipends are much appreciated. I'm a single parent and don't get paid as a licensed foster parent."

SUMMARY INSIGHTS

The UReCares Program continues to fill a vital gap for unlicensed relative caregivers across Alaska, providing financial relief, stability, and connection. The data shows that caregivers are diverse, deeply committed, and often managing complex family and health dynamics. By helping families remain intact, UReCares not only supports individual households but strengthens Alaska's broader network of community care—keeping children safely with their families and within their communities, preventing entry into the foster care system, reducing childhood trauma, and saving the state and federal government millions of dollars in formal care costs.