

Case Study #13

RESERVE GRANDPARENTS SCHEME, DENMARK

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APPROACH

"Reserve grandparents" are typically older people who have retired from work, who have the time and energy to undertake the role. They provide informal social care to children who are ill or whose parents are either unable to take off or who have weak social ties who they can rely on in such situations.

A reserve grandparent lives in the same local area as the families they support. Staff from the managing organisation check their health and criminal record and make a home visit prior to selection. Grandparents also take courses in first aid and knowledge of childhood illnesses before they participate.

Reserve Grandparent Scheme' initiatives are supported in seven locations across Denmark. One of these is in the municipality of Gladsaxe and is managed by a local non-profit association. The scheme operates under a maximum ratio of five families per participating grandparent. Currently, five grandparents offer standby support to 25 families in the town. They receive a small payment (€4.25 per hour) from parents in exchange for the care they provide.



IMPACT

The scheme is praised as good practice on the European Union Platform for Investing in Children. The scheme appears as a positive example of cohesion of civil society and intergenerational solidarity.

Particularly in Gladsaxe, which is praised as best practice, the demand for substitute grandparents outstrips supply. "Our challenge is to recruit grandparents", explains Helle Kristine Petersen, coordinator of the Gladsaxe scheme. "Many have a busy and active life and we need make sure to take into account their preferences in terms of days when they want to volunteer".

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Sources

IU Early Years Transformation Horizon scan



Department
for Education

