

The Matriarchs Report

TAKEAWAYS

It's not just social mores and scripts for younger Americans that are changing, but they're changing for Americans at all stages of life.

Increased rates of gray divorce mean more women in their 60s are single or dating.

- Few gray divorcees remarry or repartner. By 10 years following a gray divorce, 22% of women had repartnered, and 37% of men had repartnered.
- Many single women age 50–69 (48.2%) aren't interested in dating and relationships.
- 29.5% report challenges in navigating today's dating world
- Trends like cohabitation—rising faster in popularity among people in their 60s than among young adults—and “Living Apart Together” are on the rise.

Life spans are longer, meaning the 60s may still be retirement age, but these are no “sunset years.”

- More women are healthy and active longer into life.
- Many women stay active through caregiving for kids or elderly family members.
- The healthcare marketplace has become more responsive to menopause-related healthcare needs, and hormone therapy prescriptions rose by more than 70% between 2021 and 2025.
- Sexually transmitted infection rates are increasing faster among Americans 55+ than any other group, with some forms of infection increasing threefold (chlamydia), sixfold (gonorrhea), or even tenfold (syphilis) in recent years for this group.

More women are working later into life to make money and save up.

- Many express concern about preparing for their own end-of-life care; 41% say they worry about who will care for them as they age.
- Married people and parents are more likely to be better off when it comes to savings and financial planning.
- Men typically have more savings than women, a reflection of the wage gap. This is primarily the result of choices men and women make, not discrimination.
- Women comprised only 12% of Social Security beneficiaries in 1940. Today, they comprise 51%.

Grandparenthood is becoming more stratified.

- Fewer adults in their 50s and 60s will become grandparents at all. The number of grandparents in the U.S. stands at about 65 million today, compared to 70 million in 2018, and that number is decreasing.
- Grandparents who live with or near their grandchildren provide an enormous amount of child care. On average, they provide *500 hours per year*.
- Most grandparents (58.8%) who care for their grandchildren say they do so primarily to build relationships with them (instead of helping their children with child care, 41.2%).
- Higher education is associated with living far apart from extended family.

Most mothers in their 60s report strong relationships with their adult children.

- Concerning trends like the “no contact” movement encourage younger adults to become totally estranged from their parents, but this remains rare.
- Most estrangements are temporary. Fathers are more likely to be estranged from children than mothers, and estrangement is more common in divorced families.
- Among women 50–69, 85% report strong relationships with their adult children.

Leisure time increases with age, but some say they’re more lonely now.

- Recent years have seen a shift toward more screen time and less time spent in community-oriented activities
- Fully 57.8% of the women we surveyed are not part of a church.
- 81.6% told us they aren’t a part of any club that meets regularly.
- Some matriarchs use their leisure time to engage in political activity. Indeed, this group is the most politically active group in the country.

Despite challenges in navigating these changes, most women in their 60s (61.9%) today say they have it better than women of the past, and most (61.7%) express satisfaction with their lives. We need matriarchs, whether in our own families or broader communities, to help guide us and show us how to lead a good and happy life.