

## **62.6 years . . . 256.89 pounds . . . 35.5 million . . . and a flu shot!**

What does the above mean?

And how do the numbers relate to a flu shot?

Well, they all relate to that white bearded gentleman who recently arrived at your local mall!

According to the sixth annual "[Red Suit Survey](#)," a national survey by [The Kringle Group, LLC](#) (yes it is a real company), the average Santa is 62.6 years old, tips the scales at 256.89 pounds, and with his fellow Santas will see an estimated 35.5 million\* children this year! Wow, that's a lot of Camera Flashes!

These statistics and many others are collected annually in the nationwide, "[Red Suit Survey](#)," produce by [Santa Hollywood](#), Tim Connaghan.\*\* He says, "Some of the statistics are fun, others have more importance as they relate to the business of Santa and his work with children and families."

One of the important survey elements this year was looking at what Santas are doing to keep healthy and protect both themselves and the children from the spread of colds and flu.

With the estimated 35.5 million\* children visiting Santas in malls, shopping centers and at community events this year, it is important to make sure that everyone stays healthy.

72.8 percent of the Santas surveyed reported that at least once or twice a day a child will cough or sneeze directly into Santa's face. Sometimes it is only that one time. On other days and depending on the current level of colds and flu, they report as much as ten, fifteen and in couple of reports, more than two dozen times a day.

The Survey also reported that 80.1% of the Santas reported they got, or were going to get, a flu shot. In addition to these statistics, the Santas were also allowed to offer comments on the questions asked. In the case of fighting colds and flu the Santas also reported on other things they are doing including disinfecting surfaces, changing their gloves more frequently and promoting hand "Santa-tizing" to children.

Connaghan says, "Every year there are requests for information on the Santa Industry and through this survey, the information collected helps answer the many questions asked." 418 Santas responded to this year's survey, the largest response to date.

According to the surveys, over 55% of the Santas have blue eyes. 95.6 % of the Santas are married, and have been, for an average of 31.3 years. And this year's survey reports the average Santa has 2.81 children, 3.92 grandchildren. One in four Santas is a great-grandparent.

Santas favorite cookie is chocolate chip, 42.3%, with Oatmeal Raisin coming in at 22.9%. 97.6% of the Santas surveyed have real beards and 79% report that their favorite holiday greeting is "Merry Christmas."

These surveys answer a variety of questions. "Who is that white bearded gentleman?" "Where did he come from?" "What qualifications does he have?" "Is his beard real?" "Everyone is curious and wants to know about the Man in the Red Suit." He said.

Connaghan added, "In recent years the public has become more concerned about who their children are supervised by and who they visit." "And, in addition to background checks for teachers and youth leaders, they also want to know about Santa." That is why every mall and photo company requires their Santas to have background checks. Independent and professional Santas also pay for their own background checks and secure million dollar liability insurance coverage.

All of this is to give the public a sense of confidence in the men who wear the "Red Suit." Even though the parents are right there with their children, the Santas want everyone to have peace of mind and know that their Santa is Safe to be with.

Through the distribution of the survey information, Connaghan hopes to inform the public on who the average Santa is. The full report of survey statistics and other information, can be found on his web site at: [www.SantaHollywood.com/holidaywatch2010.htm](http://www.SantaHollywood.com/holidaywatch2010.htm)

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When not wearing the Red Suit, Santa Tim, as his fellow Santas call him, spends the other eleven months of the year as the owner of the [Kringle Group, LLC](http://www.KringleGroup.com), a collection of holiday related business, including the [IUSC](http://www.IUSC.com), [RealSantas.com](http://www.RealSantas.com), one of the largest Santa booking agencies in the U.S. and [SantasWardrobe.com](http://www.SantasWardrobe.com), a company that supplies custom suits, boots and accessories for the professional Santa.

At 62, the average age from the national survey, Connaghan is one of the leading Santas in America. He's the author of [Behind the Red Suit](http://www.BehindTheRedSuit.com) and has taught over 2000 Santas and Mrs. Claus at his [International University of Santa Claus](http://www.InternationalUniversityofSantaClaus.com) (IUSC). He started the survey six years ago as part of a convention he was producing and it has now become a way to let America know who is "the man in the Red Suit."

Connaghan is also celebrating is eighth year as the official Santa for the [Hollywood Christmas Parade](http://www.HollywoodChristmasParade.com) and has appeared in movies, commercials, advertisements and television shows including the Tonight Show, Today Show, Deal or No Deal, Dr. Phil, The Doctors, and much more.

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\*35.5 million children is a conservative estimate if 70% of the 50.4 million children, ages 0 – 11, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, visited Santa this year.

\*\* All Surveys and data collected were via a Constant Contact Online Survey distributed to 2,280 Santa across the United States and in Canada. Over 400 Santas responded with statistic answers and over 700 written comments.

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