



PARENTING
The Second Time Around

WORKSHOP 1

*It Wasn't Supposed to
Be Like This*

WORKSHOP 1

It Wasn't Supposed to Be Like This: Life as a Parenting Grandparent

Objectives:

- ❖ An informal friendly environment for learning and discussion will be established.
- ❖ Participants will identify the ambivalent feelings that may accompany their role as parenting grandparents.
- ❖ Participants will hear examples of identifying, accepting and reflecting feelings.
- ❖ Participants will brainstorm ways to find sources of strength and help for themselves and their grandchildren in their families and communities.

Materials needed:

- ▶ Copies of handouts for each participant
 - Handout 1-1 Making a Paper Hat
 - Handout 1-2 "I Just Wanted to Be a Grandma"
 - Handout 1-3 "Feelings"
 - Handout 1-4 Books for Adults
- ▶ Chalkboard and chalk or Poster paper and markers
- ▶ A master list of page "Feelings" (to be posted in front of the room)
- ▶ A master list "What would make your life less stressful?" (ready to post during the workshop)
- ▶ Pencils for each participant
- ▶ Large sheet of newsprint for each participant, scotch tape
- ▶ Markers

- ▶ Copies of supplemental material for each participant
 - Supplemental Material 1-1 When a Parent has Died
 - Supplemental Material 1-2 If a Parent is in Prison
 - Supplemental Material 1-3 What About Counseling?
 - Supplemental Material 1-4 Stress Busters
 - Supplemental Material 1-5 Grandparents as Parents: Child Care Concerns

20 Minutes Introductions

The workshop facilitators introduce themselves and speak very briefly about their past experience as group leaders. They then demonstrate how to make a newsprint hat (see *Handout 1-1*). Participants are invited to make a hat, and mark it clearly in large letters with the name they wish to be called during the program. Participants then don their hats and introduce themselves. It will be helpful if each person also gives the names and ages of the grandchildren for whom he or she is caring. Facilitators conclude this activity by saying that they hope everyone will feel free to speak openly during the workshop, but that personal information is to be regarded as strictly confidential and should not be discussed with anyone who is not a workshop participant or leader. Just as the paper hats remain behind when participants leave, so should all personal stories be kept "under our hats."

10 Minutes Warm-up activity

The workshop leader can introduce the topic of this workshop by reading the poem "I Just Wanted To Be A Grandma." (*Handout 1-2*)

Having the kids full-time changes many grandparents' dreams and expectations. Some had hoped to retire and travel, or to garden, read or relax. Some just looked forward to a quiet orderly apartment and exclusive use of the remote control for the TV. Most looked forward to visits to and from grandchildren – and to peace and quiet following their visits. But when grandchildren move in full-time a lot of dreams fall apart and life can become hectic, noisy, full of demands and very stressful.

15 Minutes Group Activity

Give each participant a copy of *Handout 1-3* and a pencil. As you do so, say "Most people have very strong feelings when they 'change hats' from being a Grandma or Grandpa to being Mommy and Daddy as well. As I read the following list, put a check by each feeling you have had."

Post the master list you have prepared of "feelings" from *Handout 1-3* in front of the room. Read each word from the "feelings" list aloud, slowly, allowing participants to consider and check on their handouts the feelings they have experienced.

30 Minutes Total Group Discussion

Begin by asking "How many of you checked just one feeling? How many of you checked two or three? Some of you may have checked every feeling on the list AND added a few of your own! (If others were added, put them on the master list.) However many you checked, we can probably all agree that the situation of parenting a grandchild elicits a strong emotional response!"

Acknowledge to the participants that all feelings are legitimate, even those that are perceived as "negative." When we feel scared, or angry, or sad, few of us find comfort in being told "You shouldn't feel that way" or "You'll get over it" or "Think of your blessings." Instead, most of us feel better if we hear statements of acceptance, sympathy and understanding. Like children, we all appreciate having our feelings recognized and accepted ("I hear you feel angry about having to go back to work."). Once feelings are acknowledged, we can begin to think about addressing the issue ("Perhaps there are some community supports that can help ease the financial burden."). Facilitator should select a few examples from the following list to illustrate ways to attempt and acknowledge feelings (do NOT read entire list!).

Feelings:

I feel sad that my adult child's life is a mess.

I don't fit in with friends my age who are not caring for children.

I resent having to take care of children all over again.

I feel tired all the time.

I worry because I don't have enough money to take care of the children and myself.

I don't know how to deal with kids today - they are so difficult and have so many needs.

I worry that something I did or didn't do made my child unable to take care of his or her children.

I'm afraid I'll get sick and not be able to take care of the children.

I wish I could have a better relationship with my own child.

I'm afraid the children will be taken away from me.

I feel so relieved to have the children with me.

It's hard to take care of a family again – but the good times make it all worthwhile.

Examples of Acknowledgement:

"I hear you - it's hard."

"You feel kind of left out - as if you don't belong."

"It's tough to start again."

"Taking care of kids is exhausting."

"Money worries can drag you down."

"All kinds of new challenges crop up."

"You wanted to be a perfect parent."

"It's hard to know how to plan ahead."

"You still love your kid."

"The future seems so uncertain."

"Relief feels really good."

"In spite of everything you're happy it's worked out."

35 Minutes Caring for Ourselves so We Can Care for Grandchildren

The workshop leader can use the following to introduce this topic: One of the grandparents quoted in *Relatives Raising Children* by Marianne Takas (Brookdale Foundation Group, 1998; P.11) says: "I raised my own children alone after my husband passed away," explains Maria, a lively woman now in her 60s. "But even that didn't prepare me for raising my niece's two boys when she died of AIDS." Realizing she couldn't do it alone, Maria turned to other family members, neighbors, and her church for help. She also joined a support group of relatives raising children, and took advantage of government services and benefits. "My advice," says Maria, "is to look for help however you can get it. You may be single but you don't have to be alone."

The facilitator can say or post the following list:

- Parenting is hard work
- Grandparenting is even harder
- Grandparenting a child who's come out of a crisis is even harder still
- Grandparenting when you have less energy than you used to doesn't help

Post the list you have prepared "What Would Make Your Life Less Stressful?" in front of the group. On it include (but do not be limited to) the following:

- Time-off (respite care)
- Counseling/mental health assistance
- Up-to-date parenting information
- Financial assistance
- Legal advice
- Child care
- Grocery shopping assistance
- Food stamps
- Furniture
- Toys
- Backrubs
- Health insurance
- Medical care

Ask participants to identify other items for you to add to the list.

Now, next to the list we have just made, let's add community resources that may provide services, advice, or goods. Begin the list with some suggestions such as:

Community Resources:

- Other family members and friends
- Grandparent support groups (maybe we'll become one!)
- Preschool/Head Start/local school/child care/after school programs
- Cooperative Extension
- United Way
- Big Brother/Big Sister
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- YMCA/YWCA
- Salvation Army
- Volunteers for America
- Hospital Thrift Shops
- The faith community (churches and religious institutions).

The leader will have to tailor this "starter list" to available local resources.

Ask participants to help you with additional sources of help for this list.

We strongly recommend two books from the Brookdale Foundation Group, 126 East 56th Street, New York, NY 10022 (Phone 212-308-7355)

Relatives Raising Children and *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren* (Both are by Marianne Takas).

If possible, give each participant one or both of these books. If that is not possible, have your copies with you at every workshop. Demonstrate their usefulness by looking for information during the sessions. For instance, in this workshop you may want to refer to the section "Finding help with expenses and practical needs" on pp. 25-26 of *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*. The Brookdale Foundation allows you to make copies from this book as long as it is credited as a source and the copies are distributed without profit.

Closing Activity:

Ask each participant to chat with a neighbor in the group about one way to reduce stress during the next week. Suggest that they check in with each other at the next meeting to see if their ideas "worked."

And/or (as time permits)

Reading aloud a children's book is a pleasant way to provide closure for this workshop. A few suggestions for books are:

You Are My I Love You by Maryann Cusimano

All Kinds of Families by Norma Simon

Love is a Family by Roma Downey



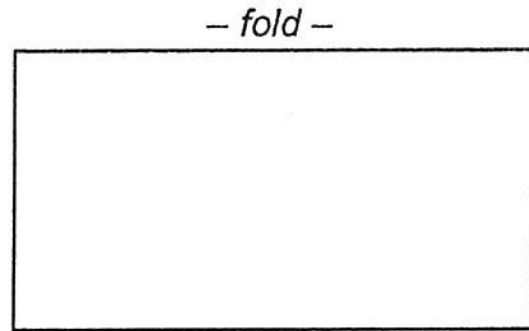
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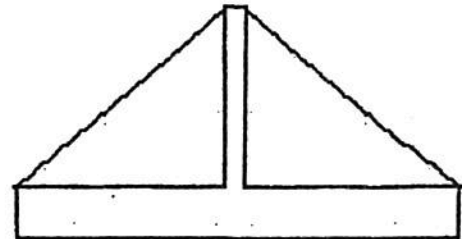
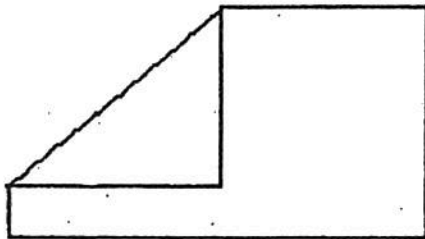
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Making a Paper Hat

- **Step 1:**
Fold a newspaper sheet in half.
(they usually come that way!)

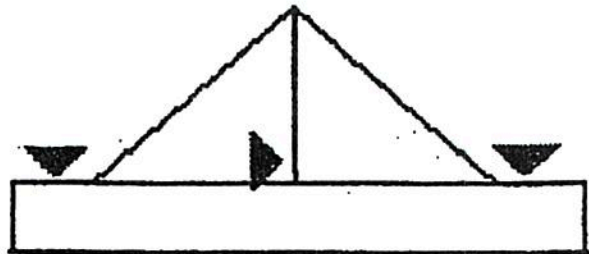


- **Step 2:** Fold both top corners in towards the middle evenly.)



- **Step 3:** Fold the bottom up on both sides, each to their own side.


A little piece of tape where the arrows are keeps the hat together for hours of paper hat fun!



- **Note:** You may have to trim the paper down a little if the hat is too big.

I Just Wanted to be a Grandma

By Jo Rompaey, from *The Brookdale Newsletter* of AARP Grandparent Information Center



I just wanted to be a grandma
When the grandbabies were born.
Play with the little ones and hold their hands,
Maybe let them help me bake cookies.
I wanted to take them to the park and play in the sand,
But I had to be their mother instead.




I just wanted to be their grandma,
Take them to the movie or the country fair;
Maybe walk through the woods and watch the birds,
Take them with me for a short vacation, fly through the air.
But I had to be their daddy instead.

I'm older now and slower now. I'm tired,
Too tired to let them help color eggs,
And too tired to help them bake a cake,
Or chop fruit for Jell-O, or let them help wash dishes.
I just work to get it done.

We don't play hide-and-seek under the covers any more.
Where's Jeremiah? Where'd that kid go?
We don't tickle ribs and necks and thunder thighs.
I don't ask, "Are you Mammy's boy?" anymore.
I know who they are, but who am I?

I can't be Mommy, because I'm Mother - or Daddy.
But I'm not Mother or Daddy -
There are other peoples called those names.
And I don't want to be Mother or Daddy.
I just wanted to be a grandma.

My grandkids have been cheated;
They don't have a mother or daddy -
They're off down the road somewhere, doing their thing.
And the kids don't have a grandma because
I have to be somebody that I don't want to be.
And I've been cheated, too.
I just wanted to be a grandma.



Feelings

Put a check by the feelings you have had as a result of becoming a parent again.

- I feel sad or angry that my adult child's life is a mess.
- I don't fit in with friends my age who are not caring for children.
- I resent having to take care of children all over again.
- I feel tired all the time.
- I worry because I don't have enough money to take care of the children and myself.
- I don't know how to deal with kids today - they are so difficult and have so many needs.
- I worry that something I did or didn't do made my child unable to take care of his or her children.
- I'm afraid I'll get sick and not be able to take care of the children.
- I wish I could have a better relationship with my own child.
- I'm afraid the children will be taken away from me.
- I feel isolated . . .
- I feel relieved to have the children with me.
- I feel happy that we are living together.

Books for Adults

General

- Author:** Sylvie De Toledo
Title: *Grandparents as Parents A Survival Guide for Raising a Second Family*
Date: 1995
A guidebook for any grandparent who is raising a grandchild.
- Author :** Deborah Doucette-Dudman
Title : *Raising Our Children's Children*
Date : 1997
The social, legal and emotional issues faced by grandparents as parents, such as custody battles, housing issues, and prior mistreatment of the children.
- Author :** Lillian Carson
Title : *The Essential Grandparent: A Guide for Making a Difference*
Date : 1996
An easily readable book that honors grandparenthood, dispelling grandparenting myths and helping readers develop their own grandparenting strategy.
- Author :** Arthur Komhaber
Title : *Contemporary Grandparenting*
Date : 1996
A synthesis of current knowledge about grandparents and their role in families and society. Includes a chapter on grandparents raising their grandchildren.
- Author :** Eda J. Leshan
Title : *Grandparenting in a Changing World*
Date : 1997
Insightful, witty advice on such topics as grandparents who remarry, grandchildren who live far away, grandparents raising their grandchildren, and more.
- Author :** Katherine Gabel
Title : *Children of Incarcerated Parents*
Date : 1995
- Author :** Barbara Hermie
Title: *Coping When a Parent Has AIDS*
Date : 1993

Author: John J. La Valle
Title: *Coping When a Parent Is In Jail*
Date: 1995

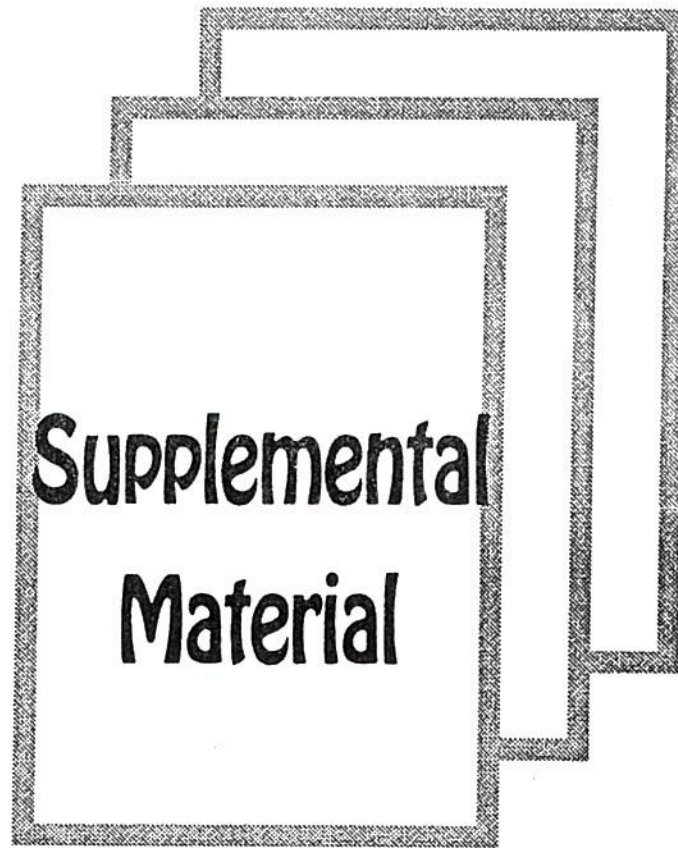
Author: Jim Fay
Title: *Grandparenting With Love & Logic: Practical Solutions to Today's Grandparenting Challenges*
Date: 1994

Author: Marianne Takas
Title: *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Guide to Finding Help and Hope*
Date: 1995

Available for \$4.00 or \$5.00 by writing: The Grandparent Guide, The Brookdale Foundation Group, 126 E. 56 Street, New York, NY 10022.

Author: Traci Truly
Title: *Grandparents Rights: With Forms (Take the Law into Your Own Hands)*
Date: 1995

Title: *Help For Grandparent Caregivers*
Legal issues currently in print. Call The Brookdale Center On Aging of Hunter College at (212) 308-7355 to obtain a copy. A fee is charged. The Brookdale Center On Aging of Hunter College is located at 425 25th Street, New York, NY 10010.



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When a Parent has Died

One of the saddest and most painful situations a grandparent can face is helping a child deal with the death of a parent. There are no easy answers, but there are ways to help.

► *Let your grandchild grieve.*

Let your grandchild grieve. It's natural for our grandchildren to feel deep sadness, loss, fear, and even anger. Talking -- and crying --- can help. Many children need and can benefit from counseling, a support group, or other special programs for children who've lost parents. Check with local mental health programs and community listings in your local paper.

► *Let yourself grieve.*

You've had a loss, too, especially if the parent who died was your child. Look for support for you, from friends, support groups or counseling. It's good to be honest with your grandchildren about the sadness you're feeling, but try not to use them as your support system.

► *Help your grandchild to remember, but also to move on.*

Your grandchild may be comforted by making an album, writing stories, or any other activity that helps keep the parent real and remembered. Don't worry if many memories are sad ones, but do try to focus on the good.

If a Parent is in Prison

Another painful situation is when a parent enters or is in prison. It's very tempting to let that be the end of all parent/child contact, at least until the parent gets out, but that's usually a mistake. More than ever, your grandchild will be struggling with feelings of loss, fear for the parent, and shame. Keeping that prison door from slamming too hard can be the best way to help. Hard as it is, many grandparents who've been there recommend these ideas:

▶ *Help your grandchildren*

to write letters and send pictures, and invite the parent to write back.

▶ *Some prisons have programs to help children visit comfortably,*

and may even have other services such as family support groups. To find out, call the prison and ask to speak to visitor services, social services, or the prison chaplain.

▶ *Explain honestly, but gently,*

that your grandchild's parent broke a law, and this is the result - just as your grandchild might get a "time out" for breaking a family rule. But also explain that it was a mistake, and doesn't mean the parent is a bad person.

What About Counseling?

Most children who have had a troubled relationship with parents can benefit from counseling with a mental health professional

Your grandchildren have been through a lot. They may be filled with all kinds of feelings: anger, sadness, fear, confusion. A counselor can help, meeting with your grandchild regularly, perhaps once or twice a week. That regular session is a chance for the child to work through feelings about all that has happened. A good counselor will listen, ask

questions, and offer ideas. Counselors also use play, drawing, and stories to draw children out and help them to feel better.

A good counselor can work with you to help your grandchild to heal and to grow. That team approach can also take some of the pressure off you. For example, if your grandchild seems angry a lot, a counselor can help the child with those feelings. Then, if there's a blow-up at home, you don't have to fight it out. You can say, as calmly as possible, "I understand you're angry (or hurt or sad). Maybe you could talk about it with Mrs. Smith next Wednesday."

► *Types of counselors*

Clinical social workers often have experience working with children who've been abused or neglected. They are trained to work with families, and can be a very good choice. Look for the initials "MSW," "CSW" or "LicSW" after the counselor's name.

A *psychologist* ("Ph.D.") or a *school counselor* ("EdD") may be a good choice if your grandchild also needs work around school issues.

If your grandchild has serious medical problems *and* serious mental health problems, you may want to consider a *psychiatrist* ("MD").

► *Types of counseling your grandchild might benefit from:*

Individual therapy. Your grandchild would meet one-on-one with the counselor. Individual therapy gives a child lots of adult attention, and may help the child to feel safe.

Group therapy (or support group). Several children with something in common meet with one or two counselors. A group might be, for example, "Children being raised by grandparents" or "Children who were sexually abused." Group therapy can help children feel less alone, and let them learn from others.

Family therapy. Members of a family who want to get along better meet with a counselor. Family therapy can also help the adults in the family to help the children with their problems.

Usually, before a child starts any counseling, there's one or more meetings when a counselor meets with the child to try to learn what the child needs. That's a good time to talk with the counselor about what type of counseling will help your grandchild most. Sometimes a combination works well, such as individual therapy once a week, and a support group twice a month.

Paying for counseling. If your grandchildren are covered under any health insurance plan you have, mental health services may be covered. If not, you might want to apply for Medicaid, the no-cost government-sponsored health coverage.

Stress Busters

Whatever you do, don't forget to take care of yourself! When grandparents start raising grandchildren, it's common for stress-related health problems to start or get worse. You can help keep it from happening to you, and stay strong for your grandchildren, by taking care of yourself now.

- ▶ See your doctor regularly and follow his or her advice.
- ▶ At least three times a week, try to spend twenty minutes walking quickly and quietly.
- ▶ Insist on a regular "quiet hour" in your household, whether it's naptime for infants or stereo (with earphones) for teens.
- ▶ Take the children places that are restful for you. A park with playground or a public pool can be nice, as long as they're not too crowded.
- ▶ Look for places where your grandchildren can enjoy time apart from you (and you can enjoy the break). "Story hour" at your library might be a good choice for youngsters, while community centers or groups like YMCA, YWCA, or Boys and Girls Clubs, 4-H or Scouts may have programs for older children and teens. Many programs are free or low cost.

Grandparents As Parents: Child Care Concerns

Are you struggling with caring for your grandchild and needing time for yourself? Are you working full or part-time and concerned about leaving your child with someone else? Many of us are facing the same tough questions. Finding a competent caregiver that can provide short-term care while you run an errand or take time to pamper yourself is important for your family's well-being. Feeling comfortable with working outside the home and leaving a child with a caregiver is an individual decision and also important to the emotional health of your family. This issue is dedicated to these concerns as you provide a nurturing home for your grandchildren.

Do children who are cared for in day care centers or day care homes develop more poorly than those who are cared for at home? The question concerns many. Dr. Joanne Curry O'Connell, of Northern Arizona University studied the research on this question. She said that no consistent, negative effect of out-of-home child care has been found by more than a dozen child development investigators.

In other words, as far as we can tell, children who are given quality care outside the home generally do as well as those cared for at home. Some children develop better in out-of-home child care; some do better with in-home care. What is best for your grandchild? That depends on your grandchild, the way you care for your grandchild at home and the quality of out-of-home child care available to you.

Types of child care

Find out what child care is offered in your community or county. Decide what you can afford and what you believe is best for your grandchild(ren) and you.

Avoid, if possible, child care arrangements where you have to travel a long distance, or rush from work to pick up your grandchild.

Don't be afraid to ask questions to put your mind at ease, including, "What would you do in an emergency," "What will you do if my grandchild cries a lot," "What do I do if my child is sick," and "Do I have to make other arrangements on those days?" Make sure you feel comfortable with the child care center or the sitter you choose.

Suggestions:

- ▶ Privately funded/for-profit child care programs. These programs offer full-time care. You can find them in the yellow pages of the phone book listed under child care.
- ▶ Family day care home. Contact your local Department of Social Service or local Child Care Council for a list of registered family day care homes in your area.

Choosing quality child care

As a grandparent raising your grandchild(ren) in this busy society, one of the questions that often arises is, "How do I choose a caregiver when I have to be away?" There are two important questions to ask yourself before you decide on a caregiver. First, is the caregiver fond of your grandchild(ren) or children in general? Children need lots of loving attention. Second, will the caregiver be there during your hours of need in the months to come? Children need to form close bonds with people, and can suffer if they have too many caregivers.

Children do best when you are happy and when they have a caring, sensitive caregiver at home and in day care.

You may worry about leaving your child in someone else's care. The more you trust your caregiver, the more secure you will feel. Here are some general questions to ask yourself as you choose a caregiver.

Does the caregiver:

- ▶ Have child-rearing attitudes similar to yours? If not, are they willing to adopt your philosophy in working with your grandchild(ren)? Is there a written policy on file or in a parent handbook?
- ▶ Understand what children can and want to do at different stages of growth?
- ▶ Spend time holding, playing with, and talking to your grandchild?
- ▶ Have enough time to look after all the children in his or her care?
- ▶ Welcome visits from you?

Does the home or center have:

- ▶ A clean and comfortable look?
- ▶ Equipment that is safe and in good repair?
- ▶ Nutritious meals and snacks, if provided by the caregiver?

Are there opportunities for children to:

- ▶ Be held, cuddled, rocked, smiled at, talked to?
- ▶ Relax and rest when they need to do so?
- ▶ Walk and explore safely?
- ▶ Play with things that develop their senses of touch, sight, and hearing?
- ▶ Learn language? Does the caregiver talk to the child, name things, describe what he or she is doing, respond to the child's action?

Other considerations:

- ▶ Do they have appropriate state child care licensing? Is the certificate posted?
- ▶ How many children is the center/home licensed to care for at one time? Are they licensed for infants as well as toddlers, other pre-schoolers, and school-age children?

Quality, not quantity, in food choices

When feeding toddlers and preschoolers, quality is more important than quantity. Your grandchild will be healthier eating small quantities of foods high in nutrients than eating large amounts of foods low in nutrients. The amount of food children eat depends on their development. Active children naturally eat more. Size, age, sex, previous nutrition and health history also influence your grandchild's appetite. However, there will be much variation in the quantity of food your grandchild desires, both from day to day and month to month.

Heredity may set the limits your grandchild can reach, but the eating patterns established in early childhood will determine whether the limits of growth and development are reached.

Choosing a preschool

Preschools may differ since they often do not offer infant or school-age care but instead focus on the preschool-age child. Here are a few questions to consider if you are choosing a preschool:

- ▶ Are you invited to observe in the classroom? If so, on what basis: scheduled or drop-in? Do they have an open door policy for visiting? Spending one to two hours in a class will show you what the school has to offer.
- ▶ Are the caregivers willing to answer your questions? Would they talk to you on a regular basis about your grandchild's progress? Once your grandchild has enrolled, will you be welcome to visit and observe at any time? You and the caregivers need to work together as a team to help your grandchild grow.
- ▶ Do teachers seem to enjoy and respect the children? Is there hugging and holding and warmth between the teachers and children? Do teachers talk and listen to the children? Are there enough adults to provide good supervision and attention? Children's relationships with caregivers are important.
- ▶ Do the children seem happily involved in activities? Are there enough age-appropriate play materials for all children?

You will not be happy about your grandchild's preschool unless you believe your grandchild is in a safe, healthy, nurturing place. The extra time it takes to find the right care will pay off in your own peace of mind and in your grandchild's development.

Child Care Centers require immunizations

If you are considering enrolling your grandchildren in a child care center, their immunizations must be up-to-date. You will need an immunization record that lists the dates of each immunization.

The law says child care centers must make sure all children enrolled have their immunizations. The child care center staff must see your record so they can complete official records for their files. An original, up-to-date certificate must be maintained on file at the child care center.

The immunizations required by child care centers are the same ones every child needs for protection.

Getting off to a good start

Leaving your grandchildren in day care or preschool for the first time may be hard for all of you. Your grandchildren will face new adults, new children, new places, new things, new routines, and new limits. They may be scared about being alone and angry with you for leaving them. You may worry that they will embarrass you by crying or misbehaving. These feelings are normal responses to beginning something new. Some planning may reduce them.

You have taken the first step by carefully selecting child care that you think is right for your grandchildren. You have found child care workers you like and can begin to trust. Now you should talk with your children about what is going to happen. They may not understand everything you say, but they certainly will pick up on your feelings of confidence. If possible, visit the program with your grandchildren before their first full day. Let them watch and explore with your help and protection.

**FOR INSPIRATION: You should carefully
Observe the way toward
Which your heart draws you, then
Choose this way with all your
Strength.**

Martin Buber

Talk with the caregiver about your grandchildren before they begin the program. Tell the caregiver about your grandchildren's eating and sleeping schedules, any health concerns (such as allergies), and any situations at home that may affect their behavior. If your grandchildren are taking prescription medicine, also discuss this with your caregiver and complete permission paperwork for your grandchildren to be given the medication in your absence. You will want to talk about what upsets your grandchildren and how they can be comforted.

On the day your grandchildren start in the program, be sure you bring all the forms,

clothes, equipment, and food the caregiver requests. Bring one of your grandchildren's favorite things, such as a stuffed animal, a blanket, or a toy car, if the center permits. Arrive a few minutes early so you can talk with the caregiver, put away your grandchildren's things and sit with them to see how they are adjusting to the new setting. With a calm face and hugs and kisses, say, "Good-bye" when it is time to leave. Tell them when you will return.

Of course, your grandchildren may cry, scream, kick, or retreat to a corner with their thumbs in their mouths. They may like this place, but they want you with them and need to say so. Even though it is very hard, keep walking. Remember, you trust the caregiver and trust your grandchildren. It may help to call the caregiver in an hour to learn how your grandchildren are doing.

When you pick up your grandchildren, greet them with warmth and words that show you know it was hard on them. Tell them you are proud that they made it through the day. Don't be surprised if they are both glad to see you and mad that you left.

Learning how to say good-bye to people we love is difficult. Most of us struggle with this all our lives. This may be your grandchildren's first experience in saying goodbye to you on a daily basis, and it will take time for all of you to learn how to do this easily.

Long after your children can say good-bye without tears or anger, they may show signs of this stress when they are with you. Children often are angels at school (where they want to please these new adults) and are terrors at home (because you are safe and home is where they can blow off steam). After starting child care, some children change their eating and sleeping patterns. Some children need more time curled up in their grandparents' laps or sucking their thumbs. These behaviors will change as your grandchildren become more comfortable in the child care program.

You can help most by trusting the caregiver's ability to teach, care for, and comfort your grandchildren. Trust your grandchildren's ability to learn these new and difficult skills. Trust yourself and the decisions you have made about the caregiver. Remember, you are helping your grandchildren learn how to adjust to changes that may be frightening. We all need to learn to do this.

Grandparent circle

Another alternative for having child care easily available is to begin a grandparent circle. Share child care time with other grandparents in your community. This concept is practiced in many communities by parents who earn time by keeping others' children in their circle and then letting someone else in the group care for their children. There may be other grandparents wanting to begin such a system and need someone to simply initiate it. Reach out to others in this way. Grandchildren benefit from playing with others and grandparents benefit from the free time.

Adapted by Laura Stephenson, Clark County Extension Agent for Home Economics, with input from Mary Fant and Sam Quick from: "Parent Express Newsletter Series" written by Dorothea Cudaback, D.S.W., University of California Cooperative Extension Service. From the Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture.

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PARENTING

The Second Time Around

WORKSHOP 2

Getting to Know You

WORKSHOP 2

*Getting to Know
You and Your Grandchildren***Objectives:**

- ❖ To focus discussions on children's feelings.
- ❖ To provide an overview of development as a foundation for "how to be and what to do" with grandchildren.
- ❖ To introduce the concept of individual differences and the role of temperament in behaviors.
- ❖ To suggest that each grandparent keep a journal or memory book about life with their grandchild(ren), including photographs if they are available.

Materials needed:

- ▶ Master list of community resources developed in Workshop 1
- ▶ Copies of handouts for each participant
 - Handout 2-1 Grandchildren's Feelings
 - Handout 2-2 Erikson's Developmental Stages
 - Handout 2-3 Nine Traits of Temperament
 - Handout 2-4 Sample Journal Entries
- ▶ Pencils for each participant
- ▶ Copies of supplemental materials for each participant
 - Supplemental Material 2-1 Infant Development
 - Supplemental Material 2-2 Toddler Development
 - Supplemental Material 2-3 Preschool Development
 - Supplemental Material 2-4 Primary Child Development
 - Supplemental Material 2-5 Middle Childhood Development
 - Supplemental Material 2-6 Nine Through Eleven Year-Olds

20 Minutes Warm-up Activity

At the last meeting we talked about *your* feelings. Today we will look at the development and feelings of your grandchildren. Assuming a parental role for your grandchild is likely to result from an event or situation neither you nor the child planned or even dreamed might happen. It is to be expected that every person involved – adults and children – will have strong, perhaps conflicting, feelings about their new roles and responsibilities. You, as the adults have the challenge of dealing with your own emotions while at the same time trying to help your grandchildren accept the BIG changes in their lives. It would be nice if children could express gratitude to you for giving them a safe and stable home. Unfortunately, what you may hear instead is:

"I hate you!"

"I want Mommy!"

"Take me home!"

"You're so mean!" or worse

You may also hear:

"Can I stay here Grandma?"

"I feel safe with you."

"You take good care of me."

Perhaps you and the children will enjoy a short happy honeymoon but sooner or later most children will test new situations to be sure that the people in charge say what they mean and mean what they say. Once children begin to feel safe and at home with you they may test you to be sure they can count on you to be strong and consistent. Look at the sheet I am handing out to see if you can identify feelings your grandchildren may have. (Distribute *Handout 2-1*)

When dealing with emotional reactions it may help to remember that, as we said at the last workshop:

"All feelings are OK – even mean ones. But all feelings must be expressed in ways that are not harmful to people or animals." It's hard to live with this principle because it's hard to hear children express their negative feelings of pain, anger, rejection or abandonment. Children who have had a difficult experience may be difficult to live with for a long time. Their acting-out behavior may in fact be a compliment to you because it indicates that they feel comfortable and safe. They need two things above all others:

- 1) An ongoing relationship with an adult who loves them and will stick with them through good times and bad.
- 2) A home in which people live, talk and play peacefully and safely, according to a predictable routine.

Children's books can be useful tools in helping children talk about their feelings. Look for the following at your local library:

How Are You Peeling? by Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Today I Feel Silly and Other Moods that Make My Day by Jamie Lee Curtis

40 Minutes The Second Family

(A suggestion for the facilitator: If you can, enliven your presentation with overheads, posters, illustrations, cartoons or photographs of the participants' grandchildren.)

We are often told that children today are different than children were a generation ago. Some believe we live in a more permissive society in which children are allowed to be disrespectful or to misbehave in ways that would not have been allowed in the past. Others believe that "the information age" and its technology have made children more aggressive and defiant than children used to be. Television and other media have been described by one writer as "The Second Family" (Taffel 1999).

The good side of the information age is that we know more now about human growth and development than ever before in our history. However, it's very hard to translate what we know into practice. Although most of us are eager to drive a new car, try new recipes or use new tools and appliances we are often reluctant to try new ways of child rearing. In the following activity we will take principles of healthy development and brainstorm ways to apply them to parenting children. One word of caution – children who have experienced difficult or traumatic events may seem younger than their age. The difficult or traumatic events they have experienced may include:

death or serious injury of their parent	financial hardship
chronic illness or disability	homelessness
domestic violence / child abuse and neglect	incarceration of parent
inability of parent to care for child	

Infants (0-18 months) *Trust* (I live in a world that will take care of me.)

One principle about infant development is that babies need to develop a sense of basic trust in the world and the people who care for them. This idea has replaced previous notions of keeping babies on a fixed schedule, as well as replacing fears that babies can be "spoiled." Helping infants develop a sense of trust means feeding them (when they let us know that they are hungry) and responding to them rather than letting them "cry it out" when they cry. It means that when they struggle to roll over, sit, crawl, stand and walk adults are responsible for insuring that they are safe by childproofing the environment. And it means allowing them time and space to explore and play, rather than remaining in cribs, seats, swings, playpens and strollers.

Toddlers (1½ – 2½ years) *Autonomy* (I am becoming a person apart from others.)

The developmental need of toddlers is to establish themselves as separate, independent persons. This can be a painful process for both children and adults, as toddlers have very limited abilities and often tackle tasks that are impossible for them – or even dangerous. They also have an incredible amount of energy and a desire to explore everything around them. Adults need to allow toddlers to make decisions and try to do things in areas that are safe and will lead to success. Ask the group how an adult might encourage a toddler to feel autonomous (independent) in the following situations:

Eating spaghetti

Learning to use a toilet

Carrying a large bag of plastic bottles for recycling

Can anyone think of another good example of a toddler trying to establish his or her "personhood"?

Preschoolers (2½ – 5 years) *Initiative* (*I've got a good idea – will you let me try it out?*)

Children of pre-school age (2½ – 5 years) must develop a sense of "initiative" – that means, they must develop confidence in their own good ideas. They need opportunities to play in ways that encourage them to pretend, to build, and to manipulate objects with different textures and shapes. The goal is always to provide play experiences that stimulate or elicit ideas from them. Ask the group how an adult might encourage a preschooler to develop initiative in the following situations:

- 1) Eating breakfast
- 2) Dressing
- 3) Coloring with crayons

Can anyone think of a good example of a preschooler trying to develop confidence in his or her own ideas?

School-age Children (6 years – 12 years)

Industry (*I want to learn to do things the way others do them.*)

As children move into school their feelings of trust, autonomy and initiative will influence their behavior and continue to be reinforced or undermined by school experiences. In addition they develop a sense of industry which involves an interest in rules, playing with friends in groups and activities that have a "right" and a "wrong" way to do things. In the early grades children get a feeling of satisfaction from learning to read and write and they take pride in checking off chores or responsibilities on a list. They may be interested in joining clubs or organizations. They respond well to clearly stated rules and have a strong sense of justice. "It's not fair!" is often heard among children in this age group. They will test to be sure that adults will respond lovingly to them and can keep them safe. They may also struggle to be autonomous "You can't make me!" and "You're not my boss!" are likely responses to an adult request or direction. Finally they need reassurance that they are capable of making good decisions and that their ideas are worthy of respect. Here again it's important to accept feelings while insisting on roles to insure safety.

You have to say many times "I care about you and I will not let you hurt yourself or anyone else."

Ask the group how an adult might encourage a school-age child to develop a sense of industry (accomplishment) in the following situations:

- Learning to read
- Playing board games (like checkers, Monopoly)
- Doing household chores

Are there any other examples we can think of?

Adolescence (13 years – 18 years) *Identity (I want to figure out who I am.)*

It has sometimes been said that toddlerhood is the "first adolescence" and that teenagers raise again and more seriously some of the same issues they struggled with at a very early age. It is as if they ask themselves "Who am I?", "Who's in charge?", "Can I make decisions about my body, my life?" Hormonal changes can bewilder teens and the adults who care for them, as they seem to flip between joy and depression, confidence and uncertainty. Teens often gauge their personal worth by how well or how poorly they fit in with a peer group. Clothes, hairstyles, language, music and attitudes can all become symbols of belonging and being valued by a group of friends. Teens need calm, supportive adults who recognize the difference between harmless symbols, of belonging to a peer group (such as hairstyle or clothes) and more dangerous behaviors such as substance abuse or sexual promiscuity. As grandparents the challenge will be to sort out harmless from harmful symbols of fitting in and belonging for your teenaged grandchild. If behavior appears to endanger the safety of your teen look immediately for community services and resources that can help you both.

Ask the group how adults can foster a sense of identity (confidence in oneself) in the following:

Clothes

Friends

Privacy

Choice of TV programs, video, and movies

40 Minutes Individual differences

We have just made some generalizations about responding to a few simple needs of children at different ages. As you all know no two children are alike. Responding appropriately to individual needs is a challenge. Some useful research on "temperament" can help us understand why children react differently in similar situations.

Temperament can be defined as the style of behavior. It is not why children do what they do (which we call "motivation"). It is not what children do (which we call "behavior"). ***It is how children do what they do.*** Nine behavioral traits are thought to make up temperament. Each trait is genetically established, but environment and the people in the environment influence the extent to which the trait will be expressed. Distribute *Handout 2-3*. As we review and define each trait on this handout, think about one of your grandchildren and where he or she might be on the continuum*. Think also about your own temperament and how well it fits (or doesn't fit) with your grandchild. For example, if your grandchild is "very active" on activity level and you are "not at all active" how do you think you can live comfortably together?

* If time permits this can be done as a group activity. The facilitator reads aloud and defines each trait and the participants mark on the continuum the point that seems to best describe their grandchildren.

20 Minutes Summary

When each trait has been reviewed and discussed the workshop leader can say in his or her own words, "We've covered a lot of ground tonight, so before we leave and you get swept back into busy family life let's talk about one possible way for you to document life with your grandchild. That is, by keeping a journal with the kinds of entries I have invented on *Handout 2-4*.* Perhaps you can begin a journal as we go through our workshop series.* Not only will it be of value to you personally, but also it may be an important record for you to have as we consider legal matters. If time permits, ask each participant to share with the person sitting next to him or her a journal entry that could be interesting, useful, or fun to look back on. One person may want to remember the time a toddler filled the cat's bowl with honey-another may mention the importance of keeping a record of doctor's appointments. Still another may want to keep track of the foods their grandchild will or will not eat. As an alternative to a journal some participants may decide to start a "Memory Book" for grandchildren. Memory Books are scrapbooks, often decorated, which contain mementos of special events or landmarks in the child's life. It should be emphasized that medical records and appointments about legal matters should be carefully documented in writing, whether a journal or Memory Book is used.

When some sharing has occurred say, "Thanks for coming! See you next time!"

* If possible distribute notebooks to be used as journals to each participant.



WORKSHOP 2

Getting to Know You

PARENTING

The Second Time Around

Grandchildren's Feelings

Put a check by the feelings you think your grandchild has had as a result of becoming a child parented by a grandparent(s).

- I'm happy to be living with my grandparents.
- I feel sad that my life is a mess.
- I don't fit in with friends who live with their own parents.
- I resent having to live with my grandparents, in a different place, etc.
- I feel bored all the time.
- I worry that we won't have enough money.
- I don't know how to talk to my grandparents (about my wants and needs.)
- I worry that something I did or didn't do made my parent leave me.
- I'm afraid what will happen to me if my grandparent gets sick and won't be able to take care of me anymore.
- I wish I could have a better relationship with my own parents.
- I'm afraid I will be taken away from my grandparent(s).
- I love my grandparents but I want to live with my parents like other kids.
- I feel confused.
- I feel relieved to be with my grandparents.
- I feel happy we are living together.

Erikson's Developmental Stages: Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

Psychologist Erik Erikson has suggested that human beings go through a series of developmental crises or stages as they move from infancy through adulthood. For each of the eight crises identified by Erikson, resolution is important if healthy development is to occur. We believe that Erikson's ideas, loosely interpreted, provide a useful framework for understanding human behavior. We also believe that an understanding of Erikson's basic concepts can be used as indicators of caregiving techniques that will foster healthy development in children.

1. Infants (*birth to fifteen months*) *Trust vs. Mistrust*

The developmental crisis centers around the baby's need to perceive the world as basically friendly and comfortable. Parents and caregivers foster an infant's sense of trust by providing responsive care based on observation of the infant's behavior, making an effort to make the baby feel loved, respected, and capable of eliciting responses from adults. In addition, the baby gains a feeling of well-being because his or her basic physiological and emotional needs are met. Mistrust occurs when the infant feels abandoned, threatened, or uncared-for in a hostile, nonresponsive environment. Thus babies left to cry for long periods in their cribs or are fed and played with only on overly strict schedules may grow to feel that the adults in their lives are harsh and powerful, indifferent to the needs of a helpless child.

2. Toddlers (*about 15 months through 2 1/2 years*) *Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt*

The crisis of autonomy occurs when a child perceives his or her separateness from parents and acts to test or gain personal independence. Auto means self. Toddlers try to develop a sense of self by experimenting, challenging, and exploring. Part of their discovery involves pushing away from the people who so far have controlled them. Thus much of their behavior appears to be negative. "Me do it," "Mine," and "No" are often-heard toddler words which indicate that a child is trying hard to be a person in his or her own right. Toddlers need help in the task of becoming independent. Parents and caregivers who remember that a toddler is trying to develop self-control will understand the child's need for an ally – someone who will help him or her develop autonomy.

Children who are made to feel that they are bad for trying to stand on their own feet, or who are severely punished for saying "no" or "mine" or for refusing to share can develop a lasting sense of shame and self-doubt. Toddlers need safe limits and wise adult supervision, but they also need many opportunities to test themselves. Adults need a strong sense of humor, a lot of patience, and determination to help toddlers develop the inner controls they seek so desperately.

3. Preschool Children (2 1/2 to 5 years) *Initiative vs. Guilt*

For children in this stage, the developmental task or crisis is that of establishing a sense of initiative – the courage to have ideas and try them out. This is the stage of "I can do it." Like toddlers, preschoolers are intensely self-centered, but often their behavior is more positive, more active, and more adventuresome. The toddler practices walking, carrying, filling containers and dumping, going up and down steps, and beginning climbing. Preschoolers can run, hop (sometimes skip), may climb higher than adults would wish, and explore over a wide territory. Most preschoolers have an extensive vocabulary and, in addition to using words they know, experiment with nonsense words or swearing. They enjoy being with children their own age but still require careful supervision because they are quick to insult, hit, bite, or kick their friends and do not always remember rules that are designed to keep them safe.

Being able to develop initiative depends on having many opportunities to explore, to create, and to play in ways that engage every one of the five senses. Adults foster children's initiative when they provide opportunities for play with unstructured materials like boxes, blocks, blank paper and crayons, clay, and miniature housekeeping equipment. Preschoolers can also learn through books, but books can never substitute for hands-on experience with real people and objects for firsthand experience.

Development: A Lifelong Process

Erikson suggests that there are additional developmental crises or stages that continue through adulthood and into old age. We list them here for your information:

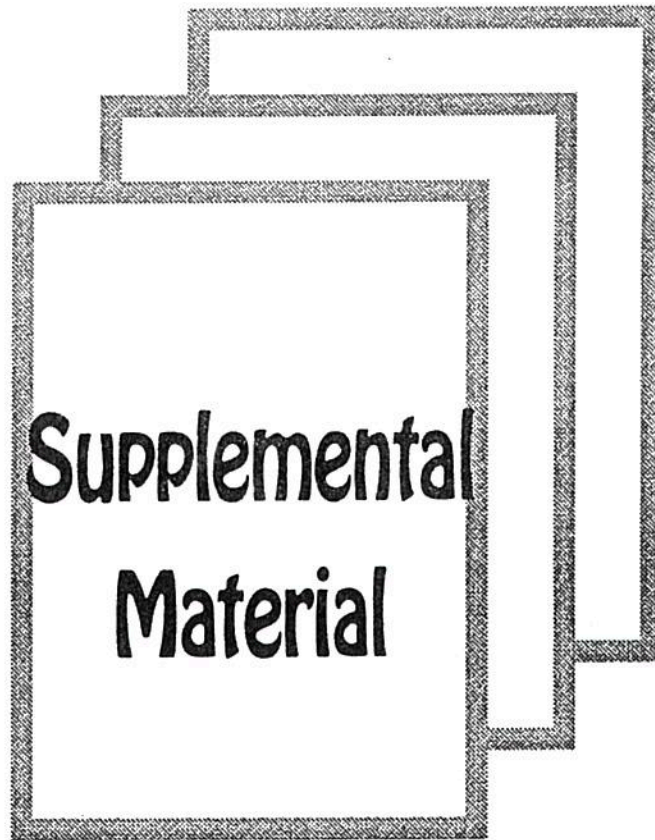
- 4. School-Age (six to twelve years) *Industry vs. Inferiority***
- 5. Adolescence *Identity vs. Identity Confusion***
- 6. Young Adulthood *Intimacy vs. Isolation***
- 7. Adulthood *Generativity vs. Stagnation***
- 8. Old Age *Integrity vs. Despair***

Looking at Temperament

- 1) **Activity level:** *How active is the child generally, from an early age?*
(Very active) _____ (Not active)
- 2) **Rhythmicity/regularity:** *How predictable is the child's pattern of sleep, appetite, etc.?*
(Very rhythmic) _____ (Not rhythmic)
- 3) **Persistence:** *Does the child stay with something she likes? How persistent is he when he wants something?*
(Very persistent) _____ (Nonpersistent)
- 4) **Sensitivity to stimuli:** *How does the child react to sensory stimuli?*
 - Taste**
(Very sensitive) _____ (Not sensitive)
 - Auditory**
(Very sensitive) _____ (Not sensitive)
 - Visual**
(Very sensitive) _____ (Not sensitive)
 - Olfactory (smell)**
(Very sensitive) _____ (Not sensitive)
- 5) **Quality of mood:** *What is the child's basic mood? Do positive or negative reactions dominate?*
(Happy) _____ (Generally Sad)
- 6) **Disractableibility:** *How easily is the child distracted? Can she pay attention?*
(Very distractable) _____ (Hard to distract)
- 7) **Approach/withdrawal:** *What is the child's response to newness – new places, people, food, clothes.*
(Very reluctant) _____ (Enjoys new situations)
- 8) **Intensity:** *Does the child seem to experience passionate emotions – get "locked in" to anger or delight?*
(Very intense) _____ (Mild Reaction)
- 9) **Adaptability:** *How does the child deal with transitions and changes?*
(Adapts easily) _____ (difficult to adapt)

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WORKSHOP 2

Getting to Know You

PARENTING

The Second Time Around

Sample Journal Entries

One of the most helpful things you can do for yourself and your grandchild is to keep a journal. Use the journal to record the child's visits to the doctor, immunizations, trips, and other important events. Use it also to express your feelings - both positive and negative. Your grandchild can keep a journal too. It will be important to establish the rule that journals are private, both those kept by adults and those kept by children. Never be tempted to read your grandchild's journal. For children too young to write, a notebook for scribbling, drawings and early attempts at writing can be kept near the kitchen table. When you are busy in the kitchen suggest that your grandchild work on his or her journal.

March 20, 2001

Took Cheryl to Dr. _____ for regular checkup. Dr. _____ gave immunizations for _____. Asked Dr. _____ about bed-wetting. Dr. _____ said as Cheryl feels more secure bed-wetting may stop.

May 1, 2001

Today was awful! Cheryl tracked mud all over floor. I had just washed. I screamed at her, she cried and ran to the bathroom where she got mud all over there too. Told her she was a bad girl, she said she hated me. Why am I doing this?

June 12, 2001

Sean broke my grandmother's cup. I've told him not to touch it. I cried. Sean cried. I took him to the playground and sat on the bench while he ran around with other kids. Sometimes I wonder why I'm doing this and then I look at him.

We visit school for kindergarten tomorrow.

Infant Development

Paul Nuttall, Professor Emeritus, Human Development, Human Relations, University of Connecticut

You Will Learn:

- ◆ What to expect from infants.
- ◆ All infants are different yet they have similar patterns of development.
- ◆ The first year of life is very important.

Infants

Two infants born at the same time may be very different. Some infants are very quiet and sleep a lot. Other infants are very active. Accepting these differences will make it easier to take care of infants and help them grow and develop.

This fact sheet lists characteristics of most infants. These characteristics are listed for three main areas: physical (body), social (getting along with others) and emotional (feelings), and intellectual (thinking and language) development. Remember that all infants are different and reach the various stages at different times. A child who walks or talks at a younger age than another child is not necessarily "better" or more advanced. All age ranges given are approximate.

Learning more about infant development will help you:

- ◆ plan activities that help infants grow and are fun,
- ◆ feel good about what you do as a provider, and
- ◆ help infants know they can do things and are loved.

Remember that there is no perfect family day care provider. Sometimes you won't know what to do. That is all right. Trust your own judgment and stick to it. Learn as much as you can about infants. It takes time and practice to be a good provider.

Also, there is no perfect infant. Infants are human. They have needs and feelings. Infants look and act differently. Some babies are born quiet. They may want to sleep all the time. Some babies are demanding and very active. Let each infant be himself or herself. Adapt to each infant's behavior instead of pushing the infant to be more like other infants.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Birth to Six Months

- ◆ At birth, infants cannot control their body movements. Most of their movements are reflexes. Their nervous system is not fully developed.
- ◆ For the first few months, infants can see clearly objects that are about 10 inches away from their faces. By 6 months, their vision is more fully developed.
- ◆ By 4 months, most babies have some control of their muscles and nervous system. They can sit with support, hold their head up for short periods of time, and can roll from their side to their stomach.
- ◆ By 5 months, most babies can roll over.

Six to Twelve Months

- ◆ Infants can sit alone.
- ◆ They start to eat and sleep at regular times.
- ◆ By 8 months, they can reach for and hold objects.
- ◆ They eat three meals a day and drink from bottles at various times.
- ◆ They start using a cup and spoon to feed themselves.
- ◆ Infants still take a nap in the morning and in the afternoon.
- ◆ They crawl with their stomach touching the floor, and they creep on their hands and knees.
- ◆ They pull up to stand, they stand holding onto furniture, and they can walk when led.
- ◆ They can pick up objects with their thumb and forefinger and let objects go (drops things). They start to throw things.
- ◆ By the time they are 12 months old, most babies weigh three times what they weighed at birth and are two times as long as they were at birth.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Birth to Six Months

- ◆ They begin to develop trust as their parents and providers meet their needs (for example, feeding them when they are hungry, changing their diapers when needed, or holding them when they cry).
- ◆ When frightened, infants cry and look surprised and afraid. They cry to express hunger, anger, and pain. It is their way of communicating.
- ◆ They are easily excited or upset.
- ◆ They need to be cradled and comforted.
- ◆ It seems as if they cannot tell where their bodies end and someone else's begins.
- ◆ Infants smile in response to a pleasant sound or a full stomach. At about 6 weeks, they smile in response to someone else. By 4 months, they smile broadly and laugh when pleased.
- ◆ They learn to recognize faces and voices of parents and providers.

Six to Twelve Months

- ◆ Infants will talk to themselves in front of a mirror.
- ◆ They respond when you say their names.
- ◆ They get angry and frustrated when their needs (for example, being fed, having diapers changed, being held) are not met in a reasonable amount of time.
- ◆ Eye contact begins to replace some of the physical contact that younger infants seek.
- ◆ They begin to learn what is and is not allowed.
- ◆ They begin to fear strangers. They begin to fear being left by their parents or other care providers.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Birth to Six Months

- ◆ Infants can focus on and follow moving objects with their eyes.
- ◆ They cry in different ways to express hunger, anger, and pain.
- ◆ They babble, coo, and gurgle.
- ◆ They turn to locate the source of sounds.
- ◆ They study their hands and feet.
- ◆ They forget about objects that they cannot see.
- ◆ They explore things with their mouth. They put anything they can hold into their mouth.

Six to Twelve Months

- ◆ Infants make sounds like "dada" and "mama" (two-syllable sounds).
- ◆ They repeat actions that cause a response. (For example, when given a rattle, they will shake it and laugh.)
- ◆ They wave bye-bye and play pat-a-cake.
- ◆ They look for things not in sight.
- ◆ They begin to pretend by acting out familiar activities.
- ◆ They respond to simple directions.
- ◆ They make sounds that can be understood by people who know them well.
- ◆ By 12 months, many infants speak their first understandable words.

Infant Safety

Infants learn by exploring with their bodies. Young children do not learn simply by being told something. They discover meaning. It is important that they have as many chances to explore and learn as possible. They must do this exploring in an environment that is safe. It is the family day care provider's challenge to encourage infants to learn by exploring and to provide a safe environment.

Keep the following safety tips in mind.

- ◆ Infants try to put everything in their mouths. Watch for small objects that can fit in infants' mouths. Children under the age of 3 years should not be allowed to handle small objects because of the danger of accidental choking.
- ◆ Keep all poisonous substances out of the reach of young children. This includes cleaning products and house plants.
- ◆ Be sure to wash objects that children put in their mouths. Many toys and rattles can be cleaned in the dishwasher.
- ◆ Each infant should have a safe crib or playpen to rest and sleep in.
- ◆ Always use the safety straps in infant seats and other furniture. Use federally approved child restraint systems when transporting an infant in a car.

ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH INFANTS

Birth to Six Months

- ◆ Talk and sing to the babies when you feed, diaper, and clean them.
- ◆ Imitate the sounds that the babies make.
- ◆ Point to and say the names of the babies' mouth, ears, nose, fingers, etc.
- ◆ Place toys and other colorful objects where babies can see and/or touch them.
- ◆ Shake a rattle behind a baby's head and let the baby turn and grab the rattle.
- ◆ When you hold or rock the baby, sing lullabies or other soothing songs.
- ◆ Place babies in different positions. For example, place them on their stomach so they can practice lifting their head and rolling over. Encourage hand clasping and kicking.
- ◆ Take care of babies' needs promptly. (For example, feed a hungry baby or comfort a scared baby.)

Six to Twelve Months

- ◆ Play peekaboo or other games in which you disappear and reappear.
- ◆ Give babies a safe place where they can crawl, creep, and pull themselves up.
- ◆ Roll a ball or place a toy where babies have to reach or crawl for it.
- ◆ Give babies toys that squeak.
- ◆ Give babies teething toys.
- ◆ Read aloud books that have large pictures and not much writing.
- ◆ Talk to babies and name objects as you and the babies handle them.
- ◆ Begin to teach what is allowed and what is not allowed.
- ◆ Do not force baby to interact with strangers.
- ◆ When babies indicate that they want help, provide it.
- ◆ Rock and hold babies when they are upset.
- ◆ Let babies fill containers with objects and then dump them out.
- ◆ Change toys often when babies get bored with them.

Remember

- ◆ Babies learn trust and that they are loved when you respond to their needs for food, comfort, and attention.
- ◆ Toys that go in babies' mouths should be cleaned before giving them to another child.
- ◆ Toys should be big enough so that infants cannot swallow them.
- ◆ Games and toys are the tools that infants use to learn.
- ◆ Unless the parents are harsh or critical, the way you and the parents treat the infants should be similar.
- ◆ Taking care of infants is demanding work. When the infants are not in your home, take some time to do something for yourself.

Toddler Development

Cathy Malley, Cooperative Extension Educator, Child Development, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension

You Will Learn:

- ◆ What to expect from toddlers.
- ◆ That toddlers grow and develop at their own rate.
- ◆ Some activities that toddlers enjoy and that help them grow and develop.

Toddlers

When children learn to walk, they are called toddlers. Usually this term is applied to one and two-year-old children. This is a stage in the growth of a child and not a specific age. The toddler stage is very important in a child's life. It is the time between infancy and childhood when a child learns and grows in many ways. Everything that happens to the toddler is meaningful. With each stage or skill the child masters, a new stage begins. This growth is unique to each child. Children have their own time-table.

During the toddler stage, most children learn to walk, talk, solve problems, relate to others, and more. One major task for the toddler is to learn to be independent. That is why toddlers want to do things for themselves, have their own ideas about how things should happen, and use "no" many times each day.

The toddler stage is characterized by much growth and change, mood swings, and some negativity. Toddlers are long on will and short on skill. This is why they are often frustrated and "misbehave." Some adults call the toddler stage "the terrible twos." Toddlers, bursting with energy and ideas, need to explore their environment and begin defining themselves as separate people. They want to be independent and yet they are still very dependent. One of the family day care provider's greatest challenges is to balance toddlers' need for independence with their need for discipline. Toddlers are very concerned with their own needs and ideas. This is why we cannot expect them to share.

Toddlers sometimes get frustrated because they do not have the language skills to express themselves. Often they have difficulty separating themselves from their parents and other people who are important to them. Adults who work with toddlers often find it helpful to appreciate toddlers' need to do things their way.

Usually between two and one half and three years of age, children begin to take an interest in being toilet trained, and by age three they are ready to be known as preschoolers. By this age, most children are toilet trained, have developed verbal skills, are continuing to be more independent, and are taking an active interest in the world around them.



PARENTING

The Second Time Around

A Cornell Cooperative Extension Workshop Series
for Grandparents, Relatives and Others
Who are Parenting AGAIN!

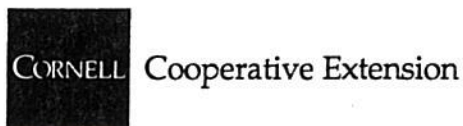
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Graphic Design: Nancy Karp
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PARENTING

The Second Time Around



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(legal issues including custody, visitation, child support)
It is strongly recommended that a well-informed attorney be present
at this workshop.
- WORKSHOP 6 *Standing up for Grandparents/Grandchildren's Rights*
(advocacy, negotiating systems, connecting with community
programs)

Introduction

What is this program?

This manual is designed for people who wish to lead workshops for grandparents or relatives who are in a parenting role with their grandchildren, although not all of them will have legal custody. The manual contains outlines for six workshops, handouts, and supplementary material for the leaders. Some of the supplementary material can be duplicated as additional handouts if participants would find the information useful. Each workshop is estimated to take two hours although groups differ and the leader* will have to be prepared to expand or abbreviate the outlines as indicated by the needs and interests of participants.

Why did we develop the program?

As the role of grandparents as parents of their grandchildren becomes increasingly acknowledged, programs for them are being developed. We have included several of our favorites in our bibliography. However, like Goldilocks, we find some to be too long or too short, too soft or too hard for our purposes as Cooperative Extension Educators. In our experience people may commit to a six-session program but hesitate to enroll in a longer course. We selected our six topics with care, in order to meet the following goals:

- ▶ To acknowledge the ambivalent feelings that may accompany changing roles as grandparents assume parenting responsibilities and children adjust to living with grandparents.
- ▶ To help those who have moved into a parenting role feel more confident, comfortable, and informed about community resources available to them.
- ▶ To provide a forum for discussion about sensitive issues (for example, explaining to children why parents are unable to care for them), including information about mental health resources.
- ▶ To provide an overview of child development, including information about temperament, as a reminder or "brush up" for grandparents.
- ▶ To offer information and practical tips about authoritative discipline.
- ▶ To encourage grandparents to see themselves as advocates for their grandchildren, particularly in accessing legal, medical, social and educational services.

Perhaps it should also be said that our hope would be that participants might, as a result of the workshops, form an informal social support group for themselves, perhaps meeting to discuss matters of mutual interest or to invite community resource people to meet with them in order to present information. At the very least we hope that grandparents and others who complete the workshop series will feel more comfortable and competent in their parenting roles.

* We use the term "workshop leader" and "Group facilitator" interchangeably.

Who are the group leaders or facilitators for this program?

We assume that group leaders* are educators or human service professionals, with experience and skill in group process. We believe that the program will be effective if participants are engaged in discussion or participatory exercises, although inevitably some "mini-lectures" may be necessary. Whenever they are indicated in the workshop outlines we suggest that workshop leaders attempt to present the material in their own words, to encourage discussion, and to illustrate what they have to say with pictures, video clips, photographs or other visual aids. Although we hope that the same facilitator is present at all the workshops, the effectiveness of the program will be enhanced when appropriate visiting resource people are also present (for example, substance abuse counselors, social workers, leaders from the faith community, etc.). We believe it is essential to have an attorney present for Workshop 5; if one is not available we recommend omitting this workshop.

Who are the participants?

Grandparents who are parenting "for the second time around" may well be the unsung heroes and heroines of the 21st century. Without them many children whose parents are unwilling or unable to care for them would be away from families and in the foster care system. The challenges are almost overwhelming - few adults plan to be caring for children, especially those who may be traumatized, deeply unhappy, or with chronic health conditions - while they themselves are experiencing some of the more difficult aspects of growing older. Shortages of time and money, declining health, unfamiliarity with existing community resources (especially in the fields of medical care and education) and confusing legal problems, often combine with grief and guilt about their adult child's inability to parent. We have included several exercises about the feelings grandparents may have about their changed roles. Some group leaders may find our suggestions superficial or overly brief - others may find the grandparents in their group unwilling or unable to discuss in public some of their more private thoughts and feelings. Obviously we urge leaders to respect the feelings of the particular members in each group, and to adjust the program accordingly. Discussions of an intimate and painful nature may require a therapeutic environment and a mental health professional. It will be important for group leaders to recognize their limited capabilities and to see their greatest contribution as the information they can provide about community resources, especially perhaps in mental health.

Cultural sensitivity

The writers believe that there is no single parent education program appropriate for people from all cultures, beliefs, and customs. This curriculum is developed to recognize that all families are unique. They operate within the world through their own cultural practices, religious beliefs, and racial/ethnic diversity. Within cultures individuals and families develop their own unique traditions, practices, and ways of interacting with the world. These workshops are intended to help every family. Facilitators of these workshops are encouraged to be sensitive to the cultural, ethnic, religious, and educational differences among the workshop participants and to adapt the workshop material as appropriate.

* We use the term "workshop leader" and "Group facilitator" interchangeably.

Parenting/Child-Rearing Practices

The parenting principles and practices advocated and taught through these workshops follow years of study and research about child development. Based on information, as well as personal and professional experience, the authors do not support child-rearing practices that are harshly punitive or which incorporate physical or humiliating forms of discipline. While we recognize that some workshop participants will feel differently, it is hoped that the alternative strategies explained through individual workshops will offer grandparents new ideas and methods - or validate their existing gentle and loving practices.

Who are the authors?

The authors of this project are Cornell University Cooperative Extension educators who specialize in work with children and families and the Director of the Grandparent Caregiver Law Center at the Brookdale Center. The Extension educators feel most comfortable with the first four workshops. Each of them would invite specialists in legal matters and advocacy to come as a resource person to the workshops dealing with those topics. None of them would offer Workshop 5 without a well-informed articulate lawyer present as a resource. However, one of the goals of the program is to create a sense of group cohesion and social support among the members, and that requires a consistent leader who knows the participants well, can refer to information and activities from past sessions and can facilitate an appropriate pace and level of discussion. Therefore, visiting resource people with specialized knowledge are very valuable, but should never replace the leader. It might be that a professional who is well trained and experienced in advocacy, or legal matters, would choose to lead a workshop series. In that case the "visiting resource people" could be child development specialists from a local college or Cooperative Extension office, a pediatrician or social worker, or someone who is well respected for professional knowledge about children and families in the community. The leader or facilitator should take responsibility for insuring that visitors understand the discussion format, and are willing to respond to questions from the participants.

What did we learn from the pilot sites?

During the fall and winter of 2001-2002, seventy grandparents or relatives participated in groups to pilot test the materials at the following sites:

The Salvation Army
West Hartford, Conn.

Cornell Cooperative Extension programs in:
Broome, Ontario and Orange counties NYS

Senior Volunteers Program
St. Joseph, Michigan

Jewish Family Services
Kingston, New York

Lutheran Social Services
Minneapolis, Minnesota

The grandparent participants came from urban, rural and suburban homes. Their ages ranged from the thirties to the seventies, and their experiences were widely varied. The evaluations they gave us were thoughtful and helpful, and we have made many changes on the basis of the suggestions we received. However, it is very clear that individual preferences reflect the personal needs and interests of participants. An activity, discussion or handout that one person found helpful might well be termed "useless" by another! For example, some participants enjoyed making paper hats in the first workshop and rated the activity as a good icebreaker, but others disliked it and said the poem was far more meaningful to them. Faced with these kinds of disagreements, the authors usually decided to trust the group facilitator to

make an appropriate choice of the material that would be most appropriate for a particular group. *In every workshop there may be more material than can be covered in two hours, so that there again the facilitator will have to make choices.* We believe it is advisable to cover some subjects in a leisurely, in-depth way rather than moving superficially through everything we have suggested.

Clearly, the role of the facilitator requires an experienced and confident person. From one of the pilot sites we received the following note:

"As stated in your introduction, using this manual requires the expertise of a skilled professional facilitator/ counselor/ social worker/ educator... Materials created extensive discussion but needed strong leadership skills to keep everyone on track . . . I would encourage programs to hire a trained facilitator on a contractual basis to conduct the workshops."

We heard similar comments from several pilot sites. *An experienced, skilled professional facilitator is the key to whether or not the program will be successful.* An additional word of caution - it is very difficult to persuade a support group that is accustomed to setting its own agenda to follow a set of workshop outlines! The sponsoring agency, the facilitator, and all the participants must have a clear understanding of the difference between an educational program and a support group. Each is valuable, but the purposes and structure of each is very different. It is probably easy to move from an educational workshop series to a support group format, but it is very difficult to move a support group into an educational workshop series, without a great deal of explanation to the participants.

Some other comments from the pilot sites may be helpful to those who are considering the program:

"The entire manual should take at least a year to complete (in our program two months for each topic with 2 hour sessions each month)";

"The manual is wonderfully detailed. Facilitators should be STRONGLY encouraged NOT to read the materials to participants. This requires spending plenty of time in advance reviewing each workshop and presenting it in one's own words, using the manual as a 'prompt'";

"Relative caregivers have so many needs; you did a wonderful job of choosing the most important to highlight";

"Having worked for many years in Adult Literacy, I was pleased to see the effort to make the text easy-to-read and understandable. This was consistent throughout the manual. Even the materials from other sources were thoughtfully chosen with a concern for clear communication."

The authors are grateful for these comments and for all the suggestions, criticisms and support so generously given by the sponsors, facilitators and participants at each pilot site. We hope we have incorporated the common sense and wisdom that has been shared in a set of workshops that will be useful, reassuring and informative to participants in the future.

A final note of thanks.

The authors are grateful to a number of individuals who contributed to, and provided support for, the production of this manual. We give a final note of thanks to: Eileen Garvey, Karan Vanderley, Nancy Karp, Sam Corbo and Jerry Reinhardt from Cornell Cooperative Extension - Orange County; Herbert Engman, Susan Hicks, Karl Pillemer, Sandy Rightmyer and Sherry Dodge-Rose from the Dept of Human Development, Cornell University; Kevin Brabazon and Melinda Perez-Porter from the Brookdale Foundation and Bobbi Hull from the Orange County Office for the Aging

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Isabelle Jensen

Denyse Variano

The toddler stage can be a difficult for adults and toddlers. An understanding of this stage of development can make it more fun for everyone. This fact sheet lists some of the characteristics of toddlers. These characteristics are listed for three main areas: physical (body), social (getting along with others) and emotional (feelings), and intellectual (thinking and language) development. Remember that all toddlers are different and reach the various stages at different times.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

One-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They may grow less quickly than during infancy.
- ◆ They may eat less, but they tend to eat frequently throughout the day.
- ◆ Most walk without support by 14 months.
- ◆ Most walk backward and up steps by 22 months.
- ◆ They get better at feeding themselves, although spills should still be expected.
- ◆ They drink from a cup with help.
- ◆ They can stack blocks.
- ◆ They can scribble.

Two-Year-Old Children

- ◆ Children are generally more active than at any other point in their lives.
- ◆ They walk, run, climb, walk up and down stairs alone, and dig.
- ◆ They throw balls and kick them forward.
- ◆ They jump with two feet together.
- ◆ They stand on tip toes.
- ◆ They take things apart and put them back together. They like to screw and unscrew lids.
- ◆ They feel discomfort with wet or soiled diapers.
- ◆ They start to show an interest in toilet training.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They want to do things independently.
- ◆ Temper tantrums are common.
- ◆ They enjoy playing by themselves or beside (not with) other children.
- ◆ They have difficulty sharing toys. They may be possessive.
- ◆ They cannot remember rules.
- ◆ They view themselves as the center of the world.
- ◆ They become increasingly more self-aware. They begin to express new emotions such as jealousy, affection, pride, and shame.
- ◆ They show increasing fears.
- ◆ They may continuously ask for their parents.
- ◆ They have rapid mood shifts. Their emotions are usually very intense but short-lived.
- ◆ Routines are very important.

Two-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They begin to play simple pretend games. Their fantasy play is very short and simple. It does not involve others.
- ◆ They are generally very self-centered and sharing is still difficult. They enjoy playing near other children.
- ◆ They try to assert themselves by saying "no."
- ◆ They sometimes do the opposite of what is asked.
- ◆ They like to imitate the behavior of adults and others. They want to help with household tasks.
- ◆ They become frustrated easily.
- ◆ They refuse help.
- ◆ They still need security.
- ◆ They are more sure of themselves than one-year-old children.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

One-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They are curious.
- ◆ They point to objects that they want.
- ◆ They imitate animal sounds.
- ◆ They name familiar people and objects.
- ◆ They combine two words to form a basic sentence.
- ◆ They use the pronouns me and mine.
- ◆ They use "no" frequently.
- ◆ They name body parts and familiar pictures.
- ◆ They use objects for their intended purpose.
- ◆ They begin to include a second person in pretend play.
- ◆ Their attention span is short.
- ◆ They can hold a pencil and scribble.
- ◆ They are very active.
- ◆ Because of their developing imagination, they have trouble knowing what is real and what is pretend.

Two-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They follow simple directions.
- ◆ They use three or more words in combination.
- ◆ They express their feelings and wishes.
- ◆ They use objects to represent other objects.
- ◆ They still have a very limited attention span.
- ◆ They can memorize short rhymes.
- ◆ They join in simple songs.
- ◆ They begin to think about doing something before doing it.
- ◆ They have trouble making choices, but they want to make choices.

TORIE'S BOOK LIST

Title: Little Bear

Author: Else Holmelund Minarik, Maurice Sendak (Illustrator)

Title: Maybe My Baby

Author: Irene O'Book, Paula Hible (Photos)

Title: The Quiz Book: Clues to You and Your Friends

Author: Laura Allen, Debby Tilley (Illustrator)

Title: The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Author: Eric Carle

Title: Where the Wild Things Are

Author: Maurice Sendak

ACTIVITIES TO TRY

1. Take some time to watch your toddlers playing. Notice the differences in their physical development: height, weight, how they relate to you and to other children, and their energy levels. Some children seem to never sit still, while others seem happy to sit down with a book.
2. Toddlers learn by exploring and experimenting. They love to do things over and over. Some activities that toddlers enjoy are listed below.

One-Year-Old Children

- ◆ Roll a ball to them to catch.
- ◆ Provide blocks for them to build with.
- ◆ Provide safe mirrors for them to look at themselves in. Talk with them about their reflections in the mirror.
- ◆ Let them fill containers over and over again.
- ◆ Have them listen and move to music.
- ◆ Play hide and seek.
- ◆ Let them push or pull a favorite toy.
- ◆ Provide wheeled toys without pedals.
- ◆ Look at picture books with them and talk about the pictures.
- ◆ Talk about the size, shape, and texture of everyday objects.
- ◆ Make comparisons such as "this ball is bigger than that ball."
- ◆ Talk about cause-and-effect relationships such as "if you push this block, the whole pile of blocks will fall over."
- ◆ Teach them simple finger plays.
- ◆ Tell them simple, short stories (especially those about themselves or other two-year-old children).
- ◆ Let them pound a toy workbench.
- ◆ Let them play in a sandbox. Give them water to measure and pour.
- ◆ Let them stack blocks and other objects.
- ◆ Provide things that can be taken apart and put back together (such as pop beads).
- ◆ Ask children to name things in the pictures of picture books. Give them the correct word if they cannot think of it.
- ◆ Give them simple directions to follow.
- ◆ Play matching games and use simple puzzles with them.
- ◆ Encourage pretending by providing dolls, housekeeping toys, dress-up clothes, and toy telephones.

Two-Year-Old Children

- ◆ Encourage toddlers to run, jump, and climb outside.
- ◆ Sing simple songs with them.
- ◆ Sing and act out songs with simple movements.
- ◆ Play pat-a-cake.
- ◆ Introduce art activities such as scribbling and/or painting with crayons, chalk, and paint.
- ◆ Provide play dough and finger paint.
- ◆ Begin toilet training when the toddler is ready. Also, begin teaching hand washing and tooth brushing.
- ◆ Encourage the development of routines.

Preschooler Development

Cathy Malley, Cooperative Extension Educator, Child Development, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension

You Will Learn:

- ◆ What to expect from preschoolers.
- ◆ That preschoolers grow and develop at their own rate.
- ◆ Some activities to enjoy with preschoolers.

Preschoolers

Three and four-year-old children are often called preschoolers. Preschool children are making developmental strides and express an interest in the world around them. They want to touch, taste, smell, hear, and test things for themselves. They are eager to learn. They learn by experiencing and by doing. Preschoolers learn from their play. They are busy developing skills, using language, and struggling to gain inner control.

Preschoolers want to establish themselves as separate from their parents. They are more independent than toddlers. They can express their needs since they have greater command of language.

Fears often develop during the preschool years. Common fears include new places and experiences and separation from parents and other important people. You can expect the preschool child to test you over and over again, to use profanity and other forbidden words, and to act very silly. Preschoolers may still have trouble getting along with other children, and sharing may still be difficult. Because of their developing imaginations and rich fantasy lives, they may have trouble telling fantasy from reality.

They may also talk about imaginary friends. Preschoolers need clear and simple rules so that they know the boundaries of acceptable behavior.

Understanding their growth and development will help you guide preschoolers through this stage. This fact sheet lists some of the characteristics of preschoolers. These characteristics are listed for three main areas: physical (body), social (getting along with others) and emotional (feelings), and intellectual (thinking and language) development. Remember that all preschoolers are different and reach the various stages at different times.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Three-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They walk on tip toes.
- ◆ They stand on one foot.
- ◆ They jump horizontally.
- ◆ They ride a tricycle.
- ◆ They build towers of 6-9 blocks.
- ◆ They catch a ball.
- ◆ They smear or daub paint. They draw or paint in vertical, horizontal, and circular motions.
- ◆ They can handle small objects (such as puzzles, pegboards, and parquetry sets).
- ◆ They grow about 3 inches taller in a year.

Four-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They have more small muscle control. They can make representational pictures (for example, pictures of houses, people, and flowers).
- ◆ They run on tip toes.
- ◆ They hop on one foot.
- ◆ They gallop.
- ◆ They begin to skip.
- ◆ They throw a ball overhand.
- ◆ They pump themselves on a swing.
- ◆ They like unzipping, unsnapping, and unbuttoning clothes.
- ◆ They dress themselves.
- ◆ They can cut on a line with scissors.
- ◆ They like lacing their own shoes (but not tying).
- ◆ They can make designs and write crude letters.
- ◆ They are very active and aggressive in their play.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Three-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They enjoy dramatic play with other children.
- ◆ They begin to learn to share.
- ◆ They need to know clear and consistent rules and what the consequences for breaking them are.
- ◆ Their emotions are usually extreme and short-lived. They need to be encouraged to express their feelings with words.

Four-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They have very active imaginations.
- ◆ They sometimes have imaginary friends.
- ◆ They can be aggressive but want friends and enjoy being with other children.
- ◆ They tend to brag and be bossy.
- ◆ They are learning to take turns and to share. Games and other activities can help preschoolers learn about taking turns.
- ◆ They enjoy pretending to be important adults (mother, father, doctor, nurse, police officer, mail carrier, etc.).
- ◆ They need to feel important and worthwhile.
- ◆ They need opportunities to feel more freedom and independence.
- ◆ They appreciate praise for their achievements.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Three-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They can communicate their needs, ideas, and questions.
- ◆ Their attention span is a little longer so they can participate in group activities.
- ◆ Preschool children learn best by doing. They need a variety of activities. They need indoor and outdoor space. They need a balance between active and quiet play.

Four-Year-Old Children

- ◆ They are very talkative.
- ◆ They enjoy serious discussions.
- ◆ They ask lots of questions, including "how" and "why" questions.
- ◆ Their language includes silly words and profanity.
- ◆ Their classification skills and reasoning ability are developing.
- ◆ They should understand some basic concepts such as number, size, weight, color, texture, distance, time, and position.

ACTIVITIES TO TRY

Three-Year-Old Children

- ◆ Preschoolers need time to climb, jump, and ride tricycles.
- ◆ Let them play with blocks of different sizes and shapes.
- ◆ Have them play with toys that have small parts (such as pegboards and puzzles).
- ◆ Teach them to dress and undress themselves.
- ◆ Have them help with household chores such as setting and clearing the table and watering plants.
- ◆ Provide housekeeping toys.
- ◆ Encourage them to count household objects as you perform household tasks (for example, count the spoons, cups, etc. as you set the table).
- ◆ Read stories to them.
- ◆ Sing songs and have them make up their own songs.
- ◆ Encourage them to dance and move to music.
- ◆ Answer their "how" and "why" questions honestly. Look for answers to preschoolers' questions in reference books with them.
- ◆ Provide paint, crayons, chalk, colored pens, collage materials, and play dough for preschoolers to use.

Four-Year-Old Children

- ◆ Take preschoolers outside to play.
- ◆ Let them test their sense of balance by walking on a straight line, a curved line, and a low balance beam.
- ◆ Provide activities in which preschoolers sort objects (such as buttons or seeds) according to their characteristics.
- ◆ Ask them to make up stories or make up the ending for a story.
- ◆ Help them mix paint to make new colors.
- ◆ Visit places in the community that are of interest to them (for example, the fire station or the library during a story or music hour).
- ◆ Help them set up play stores, farms, or villages.
- ◆ Help them plant seeds and take care of them.
- ◆ Provide a box of dress-up clothes for a play corner. (See how the children play with these clothes. They may imitate people they know. You can learn a lot about children by watching them play.)
- ◆ Make paper bag puppets. Then have a puppet show with the children. Children often express their feelings through this type of play.
- ◆ Play simple board games with them.

Primary Child Development

Paul Nuttall, Professor Emeritus, Human Development, Human Relations, University of Connecticut

You Will Learn:

- ◆ Some activities to help five and six-year-old children grow and develop.
- ◆ What to expect from five and six-year-old children.

Primary School Age Children

Five- and six-year-old children have started to attend kindergarten and first grade. They are often excited about going to school and their new responsibilities. Next to their parents you, as their day care provider, may be the most important person in the life of a five- or six-year-old child, so children of this age may be eager to discuss their achievements and their worries with you.

Children who come to your home after school will have different needs. Many children may seem tired and will need a snack because they have not eaten since lunch time. Children in this age group need a caring adult to talk to. While the children eat their snack, you can talk to them about their day. Five-year-old children may need a nap. Older children may need to run and jump to unwind.

Set limits and let children know what is expected of them. Do this with a soft voice. Be patient and kind. Provide clear and consistent discipline. Each child needs to feel special and cared about in your home. Children in this stage are very enjoyable. They like to be helpful, especially to adults.

Understanding this stage in a child's development will help you:

- ◆ plan activities that are fun, and that help children grow,
- ◆ feel good about what you do as a provider, and
- ◆ help children know they can do things and are loved.

This fact sheet lists some of the characteristics of five and six-year-old children. These characteristics are listed in three main areas: physical (body), social (getting along with others) and emotional (feelings), and intellectual (thinking and language) development.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Growth is slow but steady.
- ◆ They have gained control of their major muscles.
- ◆ They enjoy testing muscle strength and skills. They like to skip, run, tumble, and dance to music.
- ◆ Most children have a good sense of balance. They can stand on one foot and walk on a balance beam.
- ◆ They can catch small balls.
- ◆ They can learn to tie their shoelaces.
- ◆ They can manage buttons and zippers.
- ◆ They use utensils and tools correctly (with supervision).
- ◆ They enjoy performing physical tricks.
- ◆ They can copy designs and shapes (including letters and numbers).
- ◆ They can print their names.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Many children have a best friend and an enemy.
- ◆ They tend to prefer playmates of the same sex.
- ◆ They play well in groups but may need some time to play alone.
- ◆ They do not like criticism or failure. It is best to have each child compete against himself or herself not other children.
- ◆ Children often tell on each other. This is done for two reasons: to help them understand the rules and to get an adult's attention.
- ◆ They think of themselves more than others until about age seven or eight.
- ◆ They can be helpful with small chores.
- ◆ They may enjoy taking care of and playing with younger children.
- ◆ They have a strong need for love and attention from their parents and providers.
- ◆ To them, "good" and "bad" are what parents, you, and teachers approve or disapprove of. They are starting to develop a moral sense (such as understanding honesty).
- ◆ They may become upset when their behavior or school work is criticized or ignored.
- ◆ They are beginning to care about the feelings and needs of others.
- ◆ They begin to develop a sense of humor and may enjoy nonsense rhymes, songs, and riddles.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Their ability to speak and express themselves develops rapidly. This is important for success in school.
- ◆ During play, they practice using the words and language they learn in school.
- ◆ They talk to each other about themselves and their families.
- ◆ They can tell left from right.
- ◆ Most have a lively imagination. When they talk together, their stories seem very real.
- ◆ Their attention span is longer. They can follow more involved stories.
- ◆ They start to understand time and days of the week.
- ◆ They like silly rhymes, riddles, and jokes.

ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH CHILDREN

- ◆ Make time for running, hopping, skipping, jumping rope, and climbing. Do these activities with the children.
- ◆ Encourage children to dance or skip to music. Dance and sing with them.
- ◆ Set up a game of tug-of-war.
- ◆ Teach beginning tumbling skills on a mat.
- ◆ Serve healthy snacks (no junk foods). Let the children help prepare and serve the snack.
- ◆ Have games where children can play together. If necessary, change the rules of the game so everyone gets a chance to win.
- ◆ Give children things for make-believe and pretend play. Use clothes, small plastic cars, people, and animals.
- ◆ Play sorting games.
- ◆ Provide materials for painting, drawing, pasting, and molding clay.
- ◆ Teach simple weaving and basic sewing skills with a large needle.
- ◆ Encourage children to talk about their feelings while working on a project or playing together.
- ◆ Count things with the children. Have them identify numbers and letters on household objects.
- ◆ Read stories aloud (including humorous stories) to the children.
- ◆ Encourage the children to dramatize stories.

Middle Childhood Development



Paul Nuttall, Professor Emeritus, Human Development, Human Relations, University of Connecticut

You Will Learn:

- ◆ Some activities to help seven and eight-year old children grow and develop.
- ◆ What to expect from seven and eight-year old children.

Middle Childhood

Seven and eight-year-old children are in a stage of development often called middle childhood. They attend school and they enjoy mastering lots of new physical skills. They learn rapidly in school. The opinions of their classmates matter more than ever before, and they begin to feel the effects of peer pressure.

Review the rules and limits with the children. Let them help set the limits and rules. Change them when necessary. Let them help plan some activities. They can help solve their own problems.

Seven and eight-year-old children need adults who care about them and will talk and play with them. These can be exciting years for the children and you. You can help them prepare to be healthy teens and adults. Remember that two children of the same age may be at different stages of development. Every child is an individual with different strengths and weaknesses. Each child needs to feel special and cared about.

Understanding this stage in a child's development will help you:

- ◆ plan activities to help children be more independent and have fun,
- ◆ feel good about what you do as a provider, and
- ◆ help children be successful and to feel good about themselves.

This fact sheet lists some characteristics of seven and eight-year-old children. These characteristics are listed in three main areas: physical (body), social (getting along with others) and emotional (feelings), and intellectual (thinking and language) development.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Large muscles in arms and legs are more developed than small muscles. Children can bounce a ball and run, but it is difficult to do both at the same time.
- ◆ There may be quite a difference in the size and abilities of children. This will affect the way they get along with oth-

ers, how they feel about themselves, and what they do. Seven to nine-year-old children are learning to use their small muscle skills (printing with a pencil) and their large muscle skills (catching a fly ball).

- ◆ Even though children are tired, they may not want to rest. You will need to plan time for them to rest.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Children want to do things by and for themselves, yet they need adults who will help when asked or when needed.
- ◆ Seven to nine-year-old children of the same age and sex help each other: *have fun and excitement by playing together, learn by watching and talking to each other, in time of trouble by banning together, by giving support in time of stress, and understand how they feel about themselves.*
- ◆ Children need guidance, rules, and limits.
- ◆ They need help in solving problems.
- ◆ They are beginning to see things from another child's point of view, but they still have trouble understanding the feelings and needs of other people.
- ◆ Many children need help to express their feelings in appropriate ways when they are upset or worried.
- ◆ They need more love, attention, and approval from parents and you than criticism.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ With an increased ability to remember and pay attention, their ability to speak and express ideas can grow rapidly.
- ◆ Things tend to be black or white, right or wrong, great or disgusting, fun or boring to them. There is very little middle ground.
- ◆ They are learning to plan ahead and evaluate what they do.
- ◆ With increased ability to think and reason, they enjoy different types of activities, such as clubs, games with rules, and collecting things.
- ◆ When you suggest something, they may say, "That's dumb," or, "I don't want to do it."
- ◆ They are still very self-centered although they are beginning to think of others.
- ◆ They often say, "That's not fair!" Often, they do not accept rules that they did not help make.

ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH CHILDREN

- ◆ Children learn best by doing. Try to demonstrate instructions for activities or projects.
- ◆ Do projects, games, crafts, or activities in which children use large and small muscles together. Use craft projects that beginners can complete. Do not expect perfection from the children.
- ◆ Encourage cooperative rather than competitive games. Children like to play both cooperative and competitive games. They both help children prepare for the adult world. Help all children feel like winners.
- ◆ Encourage children to collect things like shells, stamps, or flowers.
- ◆ Encourage pretend play because it is still an important learning experience.
- ◆ Make time for running, hopping, skipping, jumping, and climbing.
- ◆ Encourage children to dance or skip to music.
- ◆ Encourage children to talk about their feelings while working or playing together.

Ages & Stages - Nine Through Eleven-Year-Olds

Lesia Oesterreich, M.S., February 1995, Family Life Extension Specialist, Human Development and Family Studies, Iowa State University

Children of this age develop a sense of self and find it important to gain social acceptance and experience achievement. Friends become increasingly important. Secret codes, shared word meanings and made up languages, passwords and elaborate rituals are important ways to strengthen the bonds of friendship. Close friends are almost always of the same sex, although children in this age group are usually increasingly interested in peers of the opposite sex.

Be prepared to use all your "patience" skills if caring for children this age, as they tend to think that they do not need any adult care or supervision. Yet, when they are left to care for themselves, they are lonely, unhappy, and sometimes frightened.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ begins to see parents and authority figures as fallible human beings
- ◆ enjoys being a member of a club
- ◆ rituals, rules, secret codes, and made-up languages are common
- ◆ increased interest in competitive sports
- ◆ outbursts of anger are less frequent may belittle or defy adult authority

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ girls are generally as much as 2 years ahead of boys in physical maturity
- ◆ increases body strength and hand dexterity
- ◆ girls may begin to menstruate
- ◆ improves coordination and reaction time

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ interested in reading fictional stories, magazines, and how-to project books
- ◆ fantasizes and daydreams about the future
- ◆ may develop special interest in collections or hobbies
- ◆ capable of understanding concepts without having direct hands-on experience
- ◆ may be very interested in discussing a future career

IDEAS FOR CAREGIVERS

- ◆ Provide opportunities for older school-agers to help out with real skills. Cooking, sewing, and designing dramatic play props are useful ways to utilize their skills.
- ◆ Provide time and space for an older child to be alone. Time to read, day-dream, or do school work uninterrupted will be appreciated.
- ◆ When possible, allow children to make a short call to a school friend.
- ◆ Encourage children to participate in an organized club or youth group. Many groups encourage skill development with projects or activities that can be worked on in our child care program.
- ◆ Encourage older children to help you with younger children, but don't overdo. Avoid burdening older children with too many adult responsibilities. Allow time for play and relaxation.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for older children to play games of strategy. Checkers, chess, and monopoly are favorites.
- ◆ Remember to provide plenty of food. Older children have larger appetites than younger children and will need to eat more.



PARENTING
The Second Time Around

WORKSHOP 3

Rebuilding a Family

Six Ways to Help Children Feel and Act Better

1. *Every child needs attention.* Maybe the children, when living with their parents, could only get attention by misbehaving. By giving attention to positive behavior, you can show them there's another way.
2. *Misbehaving may be a cry for help.* Children who've been hurt need structure and rules, applied with love, to help them get back on track. As you give them the life and structure they need, they may begin to act out less.
3. *The children in your family may be expressing the anger they feel at all they've been through.* It's a way of saying, "I deserve better." The anger is healthy, but it's coming out the wrong way. You can help them learn to express their anger in a safer more positive way.
4. *There may be physical reasons for behavior and learning problems, such as the mother's drug or alcohol use while pregnant.* Good medical care won't make the problems disappear, but it can help.
5. *Misbehaving in school can be related to learning problems.* No child wants to look or feel "stupid," so some act tough or play the class clown. You can work with the schools to help the children do their best - and praise the children for their efforts and talents.
6. *Finally, children learn by example.* If the children were surrounded by fighting and poor self control before they come to you, it's no wonder that that's what they've learned. You can show them a better example.

Helping Children Deal with Grief

From *Life and Loss: A Guide to Grieving and Breaking the Silence*
by Linda Goldman



Two Myths about Grief and Loss

Myth 1: The goal of helping bereaved children is to "Get them over grief and mourning."

Children and adults are often told that they "should be over this by now. It's been almost a year." Adults who believe this myth deny children the patience to live with and to work with their grief.

Danny's teacher responded to the death of his mom by telling him, "You have to forget about this and go on." Danny said he felt like killing his teacher! The last thing he wanted to do was forget this mom. He needs to remember her in a positive way to take her with him on his journey.

Adults and kids often equate getting over grief with forgetting the person without realizing that their pain is what connects them to their loss. We need to find alternative ways to connect them to the lost person or event, diffuse the pain, and transform it into a positive experience.

Myth 2: Children are better off if they don't attend funerals

Not allowing children to attend funerals creates an environment of denial that does not allow them to actively participate in the grieving process. The funeral provides a structure for the child to see how people comfort each other openly, mourn a loved one, and

honor his/her life. Children learn the ways we say goodbye to the remains of the person who died, and how we show respect for the deceased.

Chad's dad Ray drowned at age 31. Chad was 7. Chad's grandfather told Chad of his dad's death, and they cried together for a very long time. Ray's body was found after several days of being in the water, necessitating a closed casket funeral.

The family, including Chad, worked together to select meaningful items to be placed in the casket. A picture of Chad, a letter from Ray's mom, and some other items were chosen. Chad was made an important part of the funeral process, and by doing so, the funeral process became an important part of him.

During the ceremony, Chad leaned over to his grandfather and whispered, "Granddad, I'm using my imagination right now and pretending I'm reaching inside the coffin and hugging dad." He needed to say good-bye and created a way to do so.

These myths are barriers to the grieving process. They disguise our own vulnerability and feelings of hopelessness, and perpetuate a world of denial. ... We need a new way of looking at a universal issue of grief. We need to educate ourselves and our communities to distinguish between fact and fiction, so that our children can too.

What is *Complicated* grief?

When life issues are unexpressed or unacknowledged, they become locked in frozen blocks of time.

Frozen blocks of time stop normal grief and deny the child the ability to grieve. It can feel as if life stops and time stands still. The natural flow of feelings is inhibited. There is no movement forward until the issues are resolved and the feelings released. Suicide, homicide, AIDS, abuse, and violence are familiar examples of situations that lead to complicated grief.

The grief process is normal and natural after a loss. When children become stuck in this frozen block of time, they are denied access to this normal and natural flowing process. Overwhelmed by frozen feelings, the grief process seems to be on hold or nonexistent. The child is not in touch with his or her feelings of grief, or those feelings are ambivalent and in conflict.

Some causes of complicated grief

- Sudden or traumatic death (including murder, suicide,

fatal accidents, or a sudden fatal illness) can create an unstable and confusing environment in the child's home.

- Social stigma frequently accompanies deaths related to AIDS, suicide, and homicide. Children as well as adults often feel too embarrassed to speak of these issues and suppressed feelings get inwardly projected in the form of self hatred.
- Multiple losses can produce a deep fear of abandonment and self-doubt in children. The child is shocked at this sudden and complete change of lifestyle and surroundings, and may withdraw or become terrified of future abandonment. Nightmares and/or bedwetting could appear.
- When a child has been abused, neglected, or abandoned by a loved one, there are often ambivalent feelings when the loved one's death occurs.
- If the surviving parent is not able to mourn, there is no role model for the child.

WORKSHOP 3

Rebuilding a Family Grandparent/Child/Grandchild Relationships

We strongly recommend that an experienced mental health professional be invited to co-facilitate this workshop and that a directory of mental health resources be distributed to every participant.

Objectives:

- ❖ To discuss feelings children may experience as they adapt to living with their grandparents.
- ❖ To examine one approach for grandparents to use in communicating with their adult children.
- ❖ To consider books and movies as tools for helping us communicate with children.

Materials needed:

- ▶ A display of (10-15) children's books chosen with help of a librarian (see Supplemental Material 3-1)
- ▶ Copies of handouts for each participant
 - Handout 3-1
 - Handout 3-2
- ▶ Directory of local Mental Health and other community resources (each facilitator will have to find or compile a list before this workshop)
- ▶ Copies of supplemental materials for each participant
 - Supplemental Material 3-1 Suggested Reading
 - Supplemental Material 3-2 10 Good Reasons to Read Aloud
 - Supplemental Material 3-3 Growing Pains

15 Minutes Warm-up Activity

Invite participants to describe their attempts to keep a journal. Assure them that they do not have to share information that is private or personal. This discussion is only to explore the process of journaling, not the content. If the discussion seems to be difficult or threatening the facilitator can suggest talking about "Memory Books" as an alternative or addition to journaling. As we described in the last workshop, a Memory Book is a scrapbook filled with mementos of special events or developmental landmarks in the child's life. Some grandparents may choose to make special covers for their Memory Books, or to include letters to their grandchildren, which can be opened on an occasion such as the child's 18th birthday. If time permits participants may decide to work on Memory Books at the beginning of each workshop. The purpose of this "Warm-up" is to stress the importance of keeping informal and formal records, including medical information, about grandchildren.

30 Minutes Helping Children Understand Their Parents Behavior

Helping parents keep their promises is one of the most helpful efforts grandparents can make on behalf of their grandchildren. Unfortunately it is also something over which grandparents have very little control. Broken promises lead to broken hearts when you are a child waiting for a parent to call, visit or bring you a particular item of clothing or a present. If a parent breaks a promise to your grandchild deal with the situation gently and lovingly. Try hard not to "bad mouth" the parent to the child. Instead, leave the child's picture of the parent untarnished. "I know Daddy said he would come. I'm so sorry he didn't make it." Or, "Sometimes Mommy's sickness makes it hard for her to remember. I'm sorry you were disappointed, honey."

Many children are upset after a visit with their parents. Some cry or withdraw, some tantrum, some become angry with their grandparents, or act out in other ways such as:

Clinging	Defiance ("You can't make me!")
Sleeping difficulties	Testing ("Can I stay if I'm bad?")
Bed-wetting	Bargaining ("If I'm good Mom will -")
Eating problems	Fantasizing ("Daddy will come later")
Behaving like a much younger child	Confusion ("Are YOU my Mommy?")

The child who tries to be good all the time, or who seems very mature for his or her age is also exhibiting behavior that requires attention. It may help us hang on to our patience if we can see that behavior often reflects past hurts, as well as current feelings of grief or confusion. Strange as it seems, the fact that a child is able to show us how he or she is feeling can be taken as a compliment! The child may be indicating a feeling that we can be trusted to "be there for him or her," even in the face of difficult, unpleasant or inappropriate behavior.

Some ways to help children are described on Handout 3-1. (Distribute copies to participants and invite them to share experiences which illustrate each point. If it is appropriate, Handout 3-2 can also be distributed and discussed. Supplementary material 4-1 may be an additional useful resource, in addition to the material provided for this workshop.)

30 Minutes Your Adult Child

It may be very hard to talk with your grandchildren about their parents. Short simple, honest explanations are usually best for children of all ages, although as children grow older they may want and need to engage in discussion with you. For a young child statements such as "Mommy has to get better in the hospital right now while I take care of you" or "Daddy has to be in jail for a while. You are going to stay with me until he comes home. He loves you and we love him very much. He did a bad thing, but we still love him. And we love you very much."

Encourage participants to share explanations they have used with their grandchildren. The group may also want to discuss ways to explain their situation to teachers, doctors and others in the community.

If you have remained in touch with your adult child while you are caring for your grandchild you undoubtedly know that it is a challenge to reestablish a good relationship. The best reason you have for doing this is the welfare of your grandchild.

Establishing and maintaining communication with the parent(s) of your grandchild.

The parent of your grandchild may have many mixed-up feelings about your care of his or her child. Among them may be:

- Guilt* ("I'm not a good parent.")
- Anger* ("I'm mad at you for taking my child.")
- Shame* ("It's embarrassing to have my parent caring for my child.")
- Envy* ("How come Mom or Dad can do something I can't do?")
- Jealousy* ("Why won't Mom or Dad take care of me?")
- Fear* ("I'll never get my baby or my mother back.")
- Denial* ("I've done nothing so bad that my child should have been taken away.")

A host of other strong feelings may get in the way of effective communication. Here are some tips that may help:

1. Try to establish an agreement with your grandchild's parent that you both want what is best for the child when there is a problem.
2. Agree to focus on *solutions* to the problem, not on the *people* who may have caused the problem.
3. Acknowledge the need for compromise.

How does this look in practice? Here are a few examples:

The Problem	Person-focused	Focus on Solutions to the Problem
Grandma needs a grandchild's immunization record for school registration.	"You never bring the papers Zara needs."	"The school needs Zara's immunization record."
Zara needs new shoes. Mom bought her a stuffed animal.	"You wasted your money on a toy again! Zara needs shoes."	"Zara really likes her new toy. Next time would you like to buy her sneakers?"
Dad did not show up for a promised visit.	"You made your own kid sick with crying when you didn't show up."	"Can we make a plan so that Zara won't be disappointed if you can't get here for a visit?"

Divide participants into pairs or small groups. Give each person a copy of *Handout 3-3*. Assign one of the following situations to each pair or group for a "solution-based" discussion and response. Ask for reports back from each small group or pair (if the group is small, do not divide it).

The Problem

Solution Focus

When Frankie's dad visits he often watches TV and ignores the child.

Betsy's mother only plays with the baby and not with 8 year old Betsy when she comes to visit.

Alice's mother is sometimes drunk when she comes to pick up Alice for a visit.

Tara (age 6) asks why her daddy is in jail.

Seth (age 8) says he heard the neighbor call his Mom a "crazy witch." (Seth's mother is in a psychiatric hospital.)

Suggest that participants try to focus on the "solution to the problem" in their next discussion with a grandchild's parent.

30 Minutes Using Books to Help You Discuss Difficult Issues with Your Grandchildren

Good children's books are available about all kinds of topics. Stories about children in situations similar to their own are reassuring in that they let children know that his or her experience is not unique and that there are ways to cope with it. A good story can also provide an entry point for discussion of a topic the grandparent has found difficult to introduce. The facilitator – or one of the group participants – can read two or three children's books to the group, pausing between each book to allow the group to talk about ways to use it with grand children. It is to be expected that there will not be unanimous agreement about the books! Some grandparents may like one story, while others find it completely unacceptable! Such disagreement should enable the facilitator to point out the importance of previewing books before sharing them with children, particularly if they are about sensitive issues. Most of the books we have included on our resource lists are for children who cannot yet read easily by themselves. However, many of them are books grandparents may wish to share with older children, in order to use them as departure points for discussion. Although we have suggested age ranges for each book, our suggestions may not pertain to an individual child – sometimes an older child finds a picture book especially appealing and occasionally a book intended for an older child is very helpful to a younger person.

The facilitator should work with a children's librarian to assemble a collection of books particularly chosen to meet the needs and interests of the group. The librarian may be a valuable resource person at this meeting and should be warmly invited to attend. A varied collection, chosen from the lists in the _____ might include:

Robert Lives with His Grandparents by Martha Hickman

How it Feels When a Parent Dies by Jill Krementz

Aarvy Aardvark Finds Hope by Donna O'Toole

An Elephant in the Living Room by Jill Hastings and Marion Typpo

Good-bye Daddy! by Brigitte Weninger

Dinosaurs Divorce: A Guide for Changing Families by Laurene Brown, Marc Brown

Love is a Family by Roma Downey

Let's talk about Living with a Grandparent by Susan Kent

Everett Anderson's Goodbye by Lucille Clifton

Through Grandpa's Eyes by Deborah Kogan Ray

After participants have heard and discussed two or three books they should be encouraged to browse through the collection on display, selecting one or two to share with grandchildren at home.

15 minutes Summary and Closing

Ask each participant to share one thought or idea he or she will try before the next meeting. Will someone begin a journal or a Memory Book? Will someone consider a grandchild's difficult behavior in a different light, perhaps seeing it as an expression of grief, anger or confusion? Will a participant attempt to have a "solution focused" discussion with an adult child? Will anyone share a book with a grandchild, as a way of beginning a discussion about a sensitive topic? A great deal of material has been covered in this workshop and it will be important to help each participant focus on the points that are most helpful and relevant to his or her situation.



WORKSHOP 3

Rebuilding a Family

PARENTING
The Second Time Around

Activities to help young children deal with complicated grief

- Read stories to children that allow them to project their feelings onto the story characters. This opens a dialogue with a child in a way that is not threatening.
- Allow children to visualize their hurt, fear or pain. They can then draw, use clay, or imagine these symbolic feelings being able to talk. If the hurt could talk, eight year old Nancy explained, it would say "Why me?" Nancy had experienced multiple losses, including the death of her younger sister. Feelings of having bad luck or being punished began to emerge.
- Invite children to make a Loss Timeline, filling it in with people and dates in chronological order according to when they died. This Loss Timeline becomes a concrete representation of all the losses one has experienced.
- Create with children a genogram of family tree using a circle and square to represent those people still living and those people who have died in their life. Kids can not only see the extent of the losses they've had, but the support system of the people that are still remaining.

Linda Goldman is a grief therapist and educator. She maintains a private grief therapy practice, working with children, adolescents, women with prenatal loss, and grieving adults. She is the author of *Life and Loss: A Guide To Help Grieving Children* (1994, 2000 2nd ed.), *Breaking*

Additional Resources:

- Cave, Anne Good and Janice Skivington. *Balloons for Trevor: Understanding Death*. Concordia Publishing House, 1998
- Huntley, Theresa. *Helping Children Grieve: When Someone They Love Dies*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1991
- Johnson, Joy and Marvin Johnson. *Children Grieve, Too: A Book for Families who Have Experienced Death*. Centering Corp., 1993
- Kroen, William C. and Pamela Espeland, eds. *Helping Children Cope with the Loss of a Loved One: A Guide for Grownups*. Free Spirit Publishing, 1996
- Mellonie, Bryan and Ingpen, Robert R. *Lifetimes: The Beautiful Way to Explain Death to Children*. Bantam, Doubleday Dell Pub, 1987
- Silverman, Janis. *Help Me Say Goodbye: Activities for Helping Kids Cope When a Special Person Dies*. Fairview Press, 1999
- Worden, J. William. *Children and Grief: When a Parent Dies*. Guilford Press, 1996

The Silence: A Guide To Help Children With Complicated Grief (1996), *Bart Speaks Out: An Interactive Storybook for Young Children On Suicide* (1998), and *Helping The Grieving Child in the School* (2000).

Adapted from the Web site, *Helping Children with Grief*, which can be found at: www.users.erols.com/lgold.

To order *Life and Loss* or *Breaking the Silence*, call toll-free 1-800-821-8312 or email bkorders@tandfpa.com.

The Brown University Child and Adolescent Behavior Letter

Monthly reports on the problems of children and adolescents growing up.

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Establishing and Maintaining Communication with the Parent(s) of Your Grandchild.

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Zara needs new shoes. Mom bought her a stuffed animal.	"You wasted your money on a toy again! Zara needs shoes."	"Zara really likes her new toy. Next time would you like to buy her sneakers?"
Dad did not show up for a promised visit.	"You made your own kid sick with crying when you didn't show up."	"Can we make a plan so that Zara won't be disappointed if you can't get here for a visit?"

The Problem

Solution Focus

When Frankie's dad visits he often watches TV and ignores the child.

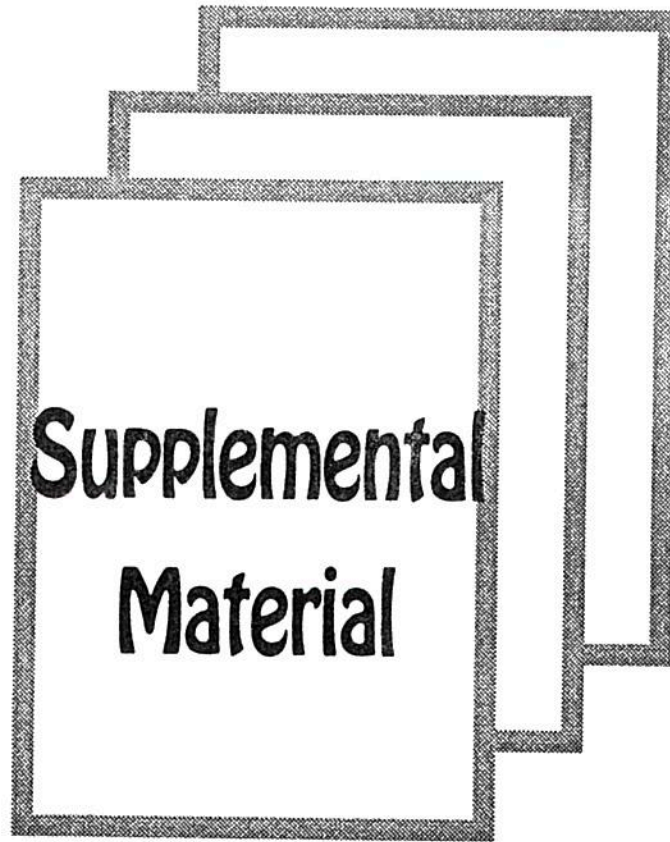
Betsy's mother only plays with the baby and not with 8 year old Betsy when she comes to visit..

Alice's mother is sometimes drunk when she comes to pick up Alice for a visit.

Tara (age 6) asks why her daddy is in jail.

Seth (age 8) says he heard the neighbor call his Mom a "crazy witch." (Seth's mother is in a psychiatric hospital.)

Try to focus on the "solution to the problem" in your next discussion with a grandchild's parent.



WORKSHOP 3

Rebuilding a Family

PARENTING

The Second Time Around

Suggested Reading for Grandparents & Grandchildren

When someone you love dies or is gone for a long period of time the natural reaction is grief. Anyone old enough to love is old enough to grieve. Even before children are able to talk, they grieve when someone they love dies or is absent. These feelings about death become part of them forever.

How adults respond when someone loved dies has a major effect on the way children react to the death. Grandparents who are raising their grandchildren and who are willing to talk openly about the death or prolonged absence of the child's parent will help the children understand that grief is a natural feeling. Children need adults to confirm that it's all right to cry and be sad, and that the hurt they feel now won't last forever.

A child's questions about death need to be answered in language they can understand. Adults shouldn't worry about having all the answers. The most important thing is to answer as best you can and in a caring way.

The following is a list of books for children that deal with losing someone you love and/or being raised by a grandparent:

Aarvy Aardvark Finds Hope

Donna O'Toole

All Ages

1988

An aardvark's delayed grief over the loss of family begins to heal through the support of a caring friend.

Abuela

Arthur Dorros

Illustrated by Elisa Kleven

Four to Eight

1995

While riding on a bus with her grandmother a little girl imagines they are carried up in the sky and fly over the sights of New York City (in Spanish).

Abuela's Weave

Omar S. Castañeda

Illustrated by Enrique O. Sanchez

Four to Eight

1993

A young Guatemalan girl and her grandmother weave some special creations which they hope to sell at the market.

An Elephant in the Living Room
Jill Hastings & Marion Typpo
Seven to Twelve
1984

This book helps children from alcoholic homes learn about alcoholism, and teaches new ways to handle feelings.

A Lei for Tutu
Rebecca Fellows
Illustrated by Linda Finch
Four to Eight
1998

Nāhoa and her grandmother plan to make a particularly beautiful lei for Lei Day. When grandmother becomes ill and is taken to the hospital Nāhoa devises a special plan.

Belle Prater's Boy
Ruth White
Elementary School
1996

When Woodrow's mother disappears suddenly, he moves to his grandparents' home in a small Virginia town. He befriends his cousin and together they find the strength to face the terrible losses and fears in their lives.

Can You Do This Old Badger?
Eve Bunting
Illustrated by LeUyen Pham
Four to Eight
2000

Although Old Badger cannot do some things as easily as he used to, he can still teach Little Badger the many things he knows about finding good things to eat and staying safe and happy.

Dinosaurs Divorce: A Guide for Changing Families
Laurence Krasny Brown and Marc Brown
Five to Twelve
1986

Dinosaur characters depict the range of experiences and feelings encountered by children whose parents have divorced. Simple, direct text and lively pictures encourage young readers to acknowledge and express their own fears and reactions to this experience. (Dinosaur Death is also very good.)

Do I Have a Daddy?
Jeanne Warren Lindsay
Four to Eight
1991

This story provides a model for how to respond to children's questions about a parent they have never seen.

Daddy, Will You Miss Me?
Wendy McCormick
Illustrated by Jennifer Eachus
Four to Six
1999

A boy and his father think of many different ways to be in touch while the daddy spends a month in Africa.

Everett Anderson's Goodbye

Lucille Clifton

Four to Six

1983

Everett Anderson has a difficult time coming to terms with his grief after his father dies.

Good-Bye Daddy!

Brigitte Weninger

Illustrated by Alan Mark Illush

Four to Nine

1995

After spending the day with his daddy, a young bear is sad and angry that his father has to leave. The bear comes to learn that even when a father has to live in another home, the love and caring never go away.

Grandmother's Adobe Dollhouse

Ann Blackstone

Illustrated by Mary Lou Smith

Five to Eight

1984

A tour of Grandmother's dollhouse provides information about the architecture, art, food and culture of New Mexico to her grandson.

Grandmother's Nursery Rhymes

Las Nanas De Abuelita and Nelly Palacio Jaramillo

Illustrated by Elivia Saradle

Four to Eight

1994

A collection of lullabies, tongue twisters and riddles from South America, in English and Spanish.

Grandpa, Is Everything Black Bad?

Sandy Lynne Holman

Illustrated by Lela Kometiani

Five to Eight

1998

An African-American boy learns about his African heritage and learns to be proud of his dark skin.

Grandpa's Garden

Shea Darian

Illustrated by Karlyn Holman

Five to Eight

1996

Every Saturday Grandpa and grandchild work in the garden, sharing words and thoughts. For a time, when Grandpa has a heart attack his grandchild works alone.

It's Okay to Be Different

Todd Parr

Four to Eight

2001

There are many ways to be different and all of them are okay.

Keeping Up with Grandma

John Winch

Four to Eight

2000

When Grandma decides that it is time to have fun outdoors Grandpa has trouble keeping up with her.

Kele's Secret

Tololwa Mollel

Illustrated by Catherine Stock

Elementary School

1997

A young African boy who lives with his grandparents on their coffee farm follows their hen in order to find out where she is hiding her eggs.

Kids and Grandparents: An Activity Book

Ann Love and Jane Drave

Kindergarten age – preteen

1999

A collection of activities to help grandparents and grandchildren stay committed and build on their special relationship.

Let's Talk About Living with Grandparent

Susan Kent

Six to Ten

2000

New York: Rosen Publishing

What it's like to live with a grandparent and some hints for ways to make it pleasant.

Love is a Family

Roma Downey

Illustrated by Justine Garguet

Four to Eight

2001

Lily worries that she will be the only kid in her class who brings just one person to Family Fun Night. It turns out that there were many kinds of families, including grandparents raising a grandson.

Mei-Mei Loves the Morning

Margaret Holloway Tsubakiyama

Illustrated by Cornelius VanWright and Ying-Hwa Hu

Three to Six

1999

A little girl and her grandfather spend the morning at the park in a big city in China.

My Grandmother has AIDS

Valerie Reeder-Bey and Annisha Monic Wiburn

Six to Ten

2000

Aninsha lives with her grandmother, who has Aids. Through the story young readers learn that it is safe to live with, kiss and hug someone you love who is infected with Aids.

Nonna
Jennifer Bartoli
Four to Seven
1975

A boy tells the story of the death of his grandmother, portraying how young children respond to the death of a loved one.

Our Granny
Margaret Wild
Illustrated by Julie Vivas
Four to Eight
1993

A celebration of grandmothers!

Remember Me
Margaret Wild
Illustrated by Dee Huxley
Four to Eight
1990

Although she may forget many things Ellie's Grandma remembers the special times they have shared.

Robert Lives With His Grandparents: A Concept Book
Martha Whitmore Hickman
Illustrated by Tim Horton
Kindergarten-Fourth grade
1995

Robert's parents are divorced and he lives with his grandparents. When his grandmother decides to attend Parents Day at his school, he is afraid of what the other kids will think of him.

Saying Good-Bye to Grandma
Jane Resh Thomas
Illustrated by Marcia Sewall
Five to Eight
1988

When Grandma dies, seven-year-old Suzie and her parents go to the town where Mother grew up to attend her funeral.

Secret of the Peaceful Warrior
Dan Millan
Five to Eleven
1991

A young boy who is harassed by the school bully learns that he cannot overcome fear by running away or by becoming a bully himself. This book teaches children how to resolve conflicts peacefully and how to live as "peaceful warriors."

Sophie
Mem Fox
Illustrated by A.B.L. Robinson
Five to Ten
1994

As Sophie grows bigger and her grandfather gets smaller they continue to love each other very much.

The Boys and Girls Book about Divorce, With an Introduction for Parents.

Richard A. Gardner

Pre-Teen through Adolescence

1992

A warm reassurance and honest answers to questions frequently asked by children of divorced parents.

The Button Box

Margaret Reid

Illustrated by Sarah Chamberlain

Four to Eight

1990

A little boy explores the treasures in his grandmother's button box.

The Day Gogo Went to Vote

Elinor Batezat Sisulu

Illustrated by Sharon Wilson

Five to Eight

1996

Thembi, six years old, and her 100 year old grandmother go together to vote on the day when black South Africans are allowed to vote for the first time.

The Hickory Chair

Lisa Rowe Fraustino

Illustrated by Benny Andrews

Four to Eight

2001

A blind boy remembers a loving relationship with his grandmother and the gift she left him after her death.

The Saddest Time

Norma Simon

Four to Eight

1986

Losing a loved one is the subject of these three gentle stories.

The Tenth Good Thing About Barney

Judith Viorst

Illustrated by Erik Blegvad

Five to Eight

1971

When a cat dies a boy tries to think of ten good things to say about his pet at this funeral.

Through Grandpa's Eyes

Patricia MacLachlan

Illustrated by Deborah Kogan Ray

Five to Eight

1980

Grandpa is blind. But his grandson John learns about new sounds, smells and ways of doing everyday things by "seeing" the world as Grandpa does.

Today I Feel Silly & Other Moods That Make My Day

Jamie Lee Curtis

Illustrated by Laura Cornell

Four to Seven

1998

A child's emotions range from silliness to anger to excitement, coloring and changing each color.

What! Cried Grammy An Almost Bedtime Story

Kate Lum

Illustrated by Brian Johnson

Four to Eight

1992

Patrick's first sleepover at his Granny's house is quite an adventure!

What Grandmothers Do Best

What Grandparents Do Best

Laura Joffe Miller

Illustrated by John Munsinger

Preschool

2000

Grandparents can do many things but best of all, they give you lots of love.

When A Friend Dies

Marilyn Gootman

Illustrated by Deborah Prothrow-Stith

A book for teens about grieving and healing

1994

Sensitively written and sensible.

When Dinosaurs Die

A Guide to Understanding Death

Marc Tolon Brown and Laurie Krasny Brown

Five to Ten

1996

Explains the feelings people may have when a loved one dies and suggests ways to honor the deceased.

When Sophie Gets Angry Really Really Angry

Molly Bang

Five to Eight

1999

Different people handle anger in different ways. When Sophie gets angry she climbs her favorite tree.

You are My I Love You

Maryann K. Casimano

Illustrated by Satomi Ichikawa

Four to Eight

2001

"I am your parent;
You are my child.
I am your quiet place;
You are my Wild"

Gentle verses about the love between parent and child.

You Hold Me and I'll Hold You

Jo Carson

Illustrated by Annie Cannon

Four to Eight

1992

When her great aunt dies a little girl finds comfort at the memorial service being held and in holding too.

Zenon: Girl of the 21st Century

Marilyn Sadler

Illustrated by Roger Bollen

Elementary School

1996

Because Zenon creates trouble at her space station home somewhere in the Milky Way, her parents send her to her grandparents' farm on Earth for the summer.

10 Good Reasons to Read Aloud to Your Children

1. When you hold children and give them attention, they know you love them.
2. Reading to children will encourage them to become readers.
3. Children's books today are so good, they're fun for adults, too.
4. Illustrations in children's books rank with the best, giving children a life long feeling for good art.
5. Books are one way of passing on your values.
6. Books will enable a child's imagination to soar.
7. Until children learn to read themselves. They will think you create magic.
8. Reading together helps develop a child's attention span.
9. When you give children this gift, you create special memories that last a lifetime.
10. Every teacher and librarian they ever encounter will thank you.

Rogers, Fred
Making Friends
Shannon, David
No, David!
Wells, Rosemary
Shy Charles

Toilet Training

Boelts, Maribeth
Dry Days, Wet Nights
Caseley, Judith
Annie's Potty
Cole, Joanna
Your New Potty
Frankel, Alona
Once Upon a Potty (Girls Edition & Boy's Edition)
It's Potty Time (Video)
Lewison, Wendy
The Princess and the Potty
Lindgren, Barbro
Sam's Potty
McGrath, Bob
Uh Oh! Gotta Go! Potty Tales from Toddlers
Miller, Virginia
On Your Potty
Once Upon a Potty for Her (Video)
Once Upon a Potty for Him (Video)
Paterson, Bettina (ill.)
Potty Time
Rogers, Fred
Going to the Potty
Ross, Tony
I Want My Potty
Winston's Potty Chair: I'm a Big Kid Now! (Video)

For more suggestions, check your library's parenting collection. Also check the RCLS homepage at www.rcls.org/chil/chilbib.htm under "special" Growing Pains.

For books for and about children with disabilities, ask about the special collections available to you. These are housed in the Middletown Thrall and Newburgh Free Libraries.

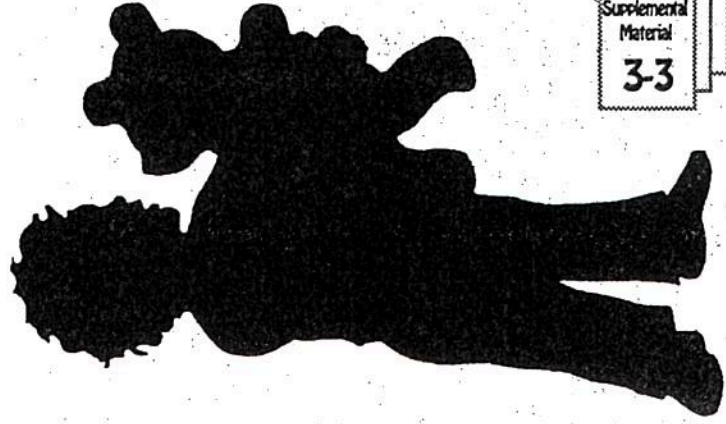
All of the materials listed are available through RCLS. Check the automated catalog for location.

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Ulster Counties
1999

Desktop Publishing & Printing by
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Growing Pains

A Suggested List of
Titles for Adults to Share
with Young Children



Supplemental
Material
3-3

Childhood Fears

- Aylesworth, Jim
Teddy Bear Tears
- Berenstain, Stan
Berenstain Bears In the Dark (Book/Video)
- Bonsall, Crosby
Who's Afraid of the Dark?
- Carlson, Nancy
Harriet's Recital
- Carrick, Carol
Left Behind
- Christelow, Eileen
Henry and the Dragon
- Corey, Dorothy
Will There Be a Lap for Me?
- Crowe, Robert
Clyde Monster
- Emberley, Ed
Go Away, Big Green Monster!
- Gackenbach, Dick
Harry and the Terrible Whatzit
- Goode, Diane
Where's Our Mama?
- Hamm, Diane
Laney's Lost Momma
- Hazen, Barbara
The Knight Who Was Afraid of the Dark
- Hilleary, Jane
Fletcher and the Great Big Dog
- Howe, James
There's a Monster Under My Bed
- Macdonald, Maryann
Sam's Worries
- Polacco, Patricia
Thunder Cake
- Winthrop, Elizabeth
Bear and Mrs. Duck

New Baby

- Birdseye, Tom
Waiting for Baby
- Brown, Marc
Arthur's Baby
- Cole, Joanna
The New Baby at Your House
- Cottringer, Anne
Ella and the Naughty Lion
- Craig, Helen
Angelina's Baby Sister
- Cutler, Jane
Darcy and Gran Don't Like Babies
- dePaola, Tomie
The Baby Sister
- Edelman, Elaine
I Love my Baby Sister (Most of the Time)
- Greenfield, Eloise
She Come Bringing Me That Little Baby Girl
- Henkes, Kevin
Julius, the Baby of the World
- Keats, Ezra Jack
Peter's Chair
- Keller, Holly
Geraldine's Baby Brother
- Knight, Margy B.
Welcoming Babies
- Lasky, Kathryn
A Baby for Max
- A New Baby in My House (Video)*
- Rogers, Fred
The New Baby
- Winthrop, Elizabeth
Bear and Roly-Poly

Relationships

- Alexander, Martha
And My Mean Old Mother Will Be Sorry, Blackboard Bear
- Berenstain, Stan
The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners
- Catalanotto, Peter
The Painter
- Cohen, Miriam
Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire!
- Eisenberg, Phyllis Rose
You're My Nikki
- Gilori, Debi
My Little Brother
- Greenfield, Eloise
William and the Good Old Days
- Hess, Debra
Wilson Sat Alone
- Hughes, Shirley
Giving
- Hutchins, Pat
My Best Friend
- Kvasnosky, Laura
Zelda and Ivy
- Lacoe, Addie
Just Not the Same
- McBratney, Sam
Guess How Much I Love You
- Mills, Claudia
A Visit to Amy-Claire
- Noli, Sally
That Bothered Kate
- Parker, Kristy
My Dad the Magnificent
- Rathmann, Peggy
Ruby the Copycat



PARENTING

The Second Time Around

WORKSHOP 4

*Discipline is Not a Dirty Word,
But It May
Look Different Today*

WORKSHOP 4

*Discipline is Not a Dirty Word,
But It May Look Different Today*

Objectives:

- ❖ Participants will evaluate their own parenting styles and decide whether or not they will change or modify their discipline strategies.
- ❖ Participants will examine the difference between "discipline" and punishment and review several principles of effective discipline.
- ❖ Participants will discuss selected descriptions of adults reacting to children's behavior and determine reactions that are "jellyfish" (permissive), "backbone" (authoritative) or "brickwall" (authoritarian).

Materials needed:

- ▶ Copies of handouts for each participant
 - Handout 4-1 Effective Discipline
 - Handout 4-2 Illustrations of Parenting Style
- ▶ Directory or list of local resources providing help for troubled children.
- ▶ Copies of supplemental materials for each participant
 - Supplemental Material 4-1 When Should Families Talk to a Mental Health Professional about a Child?
 - Supplemental Material 4-2 Coping with Kids Who Drive Us Crazy
 - Supplemental Material 4-3 Time Out

10 Minutes Warm-up Activity

Welcome participants and explain that it is often hard to catch peoples' names in a group situation. Ask everyone to introduce themselves again.

20 minutes Introduction

Begin by reminding the group that the topic of this workshop is "Discipline." You've all raised children so the topic of discipline will not be a new one for you to think about. However, as with most things we can all get a little rusty and there is probably no one among us who would say he or she has all the answers to dealing with children's behavior and misbehavior. In fact, dealing with aggression and discipline problems are among the most urgent concerns for grandparents raising their grandchildren. For our discussion today we're going to define "discipline" as teaching or guiding-not, as it is so often thought of, as punishment. In thinking about the process of discipline as teaching or guiding we'll begin by identifying the parenting style that most nearly fits the ways in which we generally discipline our grandchildren. Of course none of us stick strictly with a single style or strategy. We are all influenced by our culture and the family in which we grew up. There is clearly no single right way to discipline children. We are all likely to move around, trying one approach in one situation and a different one when the situation changes.

Writing as representatives of Cornell Cooperative Extension we are heavily influenced by findings of studies that indicate that, while physical punishment may stop undesirable behavior in the short run, it does not help children develop self-control and, in the long run, it may be responsible for violent, aggressive behavior, or depression, among teenagers and adults. Therefore we do not advocate spanking, or punishing children in painful or humiliating ways. Additionally, we would like to add two cautions: 1) NEVER shake a baby or young child – you can cause serious brain injury or death; 2) You can also cause injury to a baby or young child by swinging or dragging them by their arms.

For the purpose of our discussion we will look at three styles of discipline. As I talk about them think about how well they describe what you do. Some facilitators may enjoy using props to illustrate parenting styles as they describe them. For instance, a marshmallow for permissive, a brick to illustrate authoritarian, and your own straight spine to symbolize authoritative.

1. Permissive Style

One author (Barbara Colorosa) has described this as the "jelly fish" approach in that the people in the parenting role take a "hands off" approach. We all use this approach sometimes, as for example when children argue over a toy and the adult, having confidence in their ability to solve the problem, watches and waits, but does not interfere. If the argument escalates into a fight however, the permissive, hands off approach is no longer appropriate and the adult must intervene in order to keep children safe. A second example might be an adult who tells a young child "No! No! No!" waits for a minute, then says "Oh Okay! Do what you want." *During our workshop we are going to call the permissive approach "jellyfish."*

2. Authoritative

Adults who use this approach have high standards for children's behavior. They establish clear, firm rules, but maintain an attitude of flexibility. And they give children a great deal of support in meeting their high expectations and abiding by rules. As one writer put it "They flood the adult/child relationship with warmth." Adults and children communicate clearly with each other. *This approach nicknamed "backbone" (again, by Barbara Colorosa) is probably the most useful of the three in daily life with children, particularly as it seems to prepare children to do well in American schools.*

3. Authoritarian

The third approach is the *authoritarian* approach. At the extreme, authoritarian adults impose rigid controls and harsh punishments. Unfortunately, for those adults, punishment seems to put a temporary stop to undesirable behavior but does not appear to have lasting positive effects. Mild authoritarian strategies are necessary when adults need to protect the health of children, or to keep them safe. *This approach is called "brickwall" by Colorosa.*

"You must play in the yard, not the road."

"You may *not* hurt the cat."

"You must have a license in order to drive a car."

Ask participants if they can identify the descriptive style they use most often. Do not ask them to tell the group what it is. Instead, ask them to reflect on whether or not the style they most often use is the style they think best. Often adults find themselves reacting to children's behavior by *habit*. Our purpose at this workshop is to emphasize that all adults can change their behavior, but that, in order to change, we must first know what the choices are.

30 Minutes Review the following characteristics of effective discipline with the group. Encourage participants to give illustrations from their own experience for each characteristic.

Although each of the three approaches may be appropriate under some circumstances, there is a set of principles that should flavor them all. (Distribute *Handout 4-1: Effective Discipline*).

1. Teaching and guiding are more effective than punishment.
2. Establish rules clearly and firmly. Enforce them gently. Don't overwhelm children by having too many rules.
3. Maintain your dignity and the dignity of the child (if you lose control and yell, your grandchild will also). Avoid name calling and blaming "You are a bad girl.", "You are a sissy."
4. Have realistic expectations for behavior. (We will give you some printed material about behaviors that are age appropriate.)
5. When children break rules or misbehave use natural or logical consequences instead of punishment.

In the following examples a natural or logical consequence is always related to the child's actions, unlike a punishment which is intended to create pain or unpleasantness for a child:

Action	Consequence	Punishment
Child runs into road.	Child must play in the house.	Child cannot watch TV.
Child hits brother.	Child must play alone.	Child is hit.
Child steals candy.	Child must return candy and apologize.	Child is sent to bed.

6. Say what you mean, mean what you say and do what you say you were going to do. Think carefully before you speak, especially when you are angry.
7. Time out. Asking a child to cool down, or reflect, for a few minutes in a quiet place may be useful. Too often, however, time out becomes overused as a punishment. In order to be effective adults may need to demonstrate that they use it themselves. An adult on the verge of losing self control can say "I'm going to sit at the kitchen table and cool down for five minutes. I need a time out." (Instead of sending children to their rooms or to a "time out" chair, allow them to choose their own safe place to cool down. (See supplementary section p___ for more about "Time Out." In brief, "Time Out" may be useful when it is:
 - ◆ Used sparingly.
 - ◆ Used as an opportunity for adults and children to make a fresh start.
 - ◆ Used with children who can understand its purpose – it is not appropriate for use with infants and toddlers.

Is punishment ever appropriate? Don't we have to use it to teach children how to behave? Many of us have grown up with the idea that punishment is the most effective way to teach children how to behave. Many of us were punished as children and believe we have grown up to be OK adults. We often hear "What was good enough for me as a kid is good enough for my child. I got hit, spanked, etc. and I'm a better person for it."

We know more today than our parents and grandparents knew – more about safe cars, efficient heating systems, nutritious foods. Very few of us would be tempted to paint a child's room with old lead-based paint. We know a great deal more about the effects of corporal punishment than we did a generation ago. In a study that began in 1975 and ended in 1995 researchers (Straus) found the following:

- ◆ Corporal punishment (hitting) does not work better than other forms of discipline in which hitting is not used.
- ◆ In the long run being hit may make children more violent and aggressive (boys) or more depressed (girls).
- ◆ Hitting may stop children's behavior in the short run, but makes it worse in the long run.
- ◆ Children who are hit get the message that it's OK to hurt someone smaller and weaker than you are and that violence is acceptable when other methods don't work.

Then what can we do to "discipline" children? The goal of discipline is to help children develop self control. In order to do this we must help them think about acceptable behavior, which goes way beyond punishing for behavior that is unacceptable.

20 minutes Small Group Activity

Divide participants into groups of three. Try to avoid placing members of the same family in the same group. Distribute copies of *Handout 4-2, Illustrations of Parenting Style*. Review the instructions.

20 minutes Total Group Discussion

Ask the small groups to compare answers. Encourage discussion if there are disagreements. State that there are rarely "correct" answers, as each adult/child situation is different. The purpose of this exercise is to help us all consider a variety of responses to problem behavior.

For further information ask participants to read at home. Distribute copies of "Discipline: What Is It?" Order from Research Park, Business & Technology Park, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850. Facilitators may be interested in *Discipline is Not a Dirty Word (a teaching guide for 6 workshops)* available from the same source.

The authors' preferred responses are: 1-C; 2-B; 3-C; 4-B; 5-B; 6-B; 7-C.

10 Minutes Recognizing and Addressing High Risk Behavior

There are times when the most loving, skilled grandparents will not be able to meet the needs of a deeply troubled child. A child's past history will continue to affect them even when they have become part of a safe, loving family. Some of the behaviors that indicate a need for outside help include:

- Fire setting
- Cruelty to animals
- Inflicting hurt on self or others (*other than playful tussling and occasional fights with siblings and friends*)
- Stealing
- Drugs and alcohol use
- Truancy
- Extreme withdrawal
- Suicidal wishes

If you are worried about one or more of these behaviors' there is help available for you. (Distribute a list or directory of resources in your local community. Include public and private child guidance clinics, mental health clinics, early childhood direction centers, certified psychologists, MSW social workers, psychiatrists, substance abuse programs, crisis intervention centers*, and other resources available. See Supplemental Material 4-1.)

Summary

Almost anyone can force or frighten a child into obeying. However the goal of discipline is for children to learn to control their own behavior – even when adults are not present. A loving, respectful relationship helps children learn acceptable behavior through imitation – wanting to be like adults they love and admire.

Ask participants to share one new idea they gained from this workshop or one new skill they learned.

Thank participants for coming, remind them of the next meeting date, time and topic, and wish them a safe journey home.

*Children of Alcoholics Foundation, 104 W74th St., New York, NY 10023.



WORKSHOP 4

*Discipline is Not a Dirty Word,
But It May
Look Different Today*

PARENTING
The Second Time Around

Effective Discipline

1. Teaching and guiding are more effective than punishment.
2. Establish rules clearly and firmly. Enforce them gently. Don't overwhelm children by having too many rules.
3. Maintain your dignity and the dignity of the child (if you lose control and yell, your grandchild will also).
4. Have realistic expectations for behavior. (We will give you some printed material about behaviors that is age appropriate.)
5. When children break rules or misbehave use natural or logical consequences instead of punishment. For example:

	<i>Consequence</i>	<i>Punishment</i>
Child runs into road	The logical consequence is that the child must play in the house	Child cannot watch TV
Child hits brother	Child must play alone, away from brother	Child is hit
Child steals candy bar	Child must return candy and apologize to manager	Child is sent to bed

A rational or logical consequence is always related to the child's *actions*. A punishment is rarely related to the action, and more often focuses on creating pain or unpleasantness for the child as a *person*.

6. Think carefully before you speak. Say what you mean and mean what you say.
7. Time out. Asking a child to cool down, or reflect, for a few minutes in a quiet place may be useful. Too often, however, time out becomes overused as a punishment. In order to be effective adults may need to demonstrate that they use it themselves. An adult on the verge of losing self control can say "I'm going to sit at the kitchen table and cool down for five minutes. I need a time out."

Illustrations of Parenting Styles

Directions

In your small group please determine the grandparent response that is "jellyfish," "backbone," or "brickwall." Decide which one of the three possible responses for each incident is most likely to teach appropriate behavior (the behavior the child should use).

In your small group please have one person read each incident aloud.

1. Two year old Jessica pours her glass of milk into her dinner.
 - a) Her grandmother ignores the behavior.
 - b) Her grandmother slaps her hand, saying "No, no" and removes her plate.
 - c) Her grandmother removes the plate, gives Jessica another plate with a small amount of food on it, removes the cup and says, "You can drink your milk after you have eaten."

2. Four year old Sam leaves his tricycle in the driveway so that his grandfather has to move it in order to park his car.
 - a) His grandfather drives over the tricycle on purpose, damaging it beyond repair.
 - b) His grandfather shows Sam the "parking place" for his tricycle. He explains that it is important for Sam to put his bike there to keep it from being run over. If the tricycle is left in the driveway Sam will not be able to use it the following day.
 - c) His grandfather moves the tricycle and says nothing to Sam.

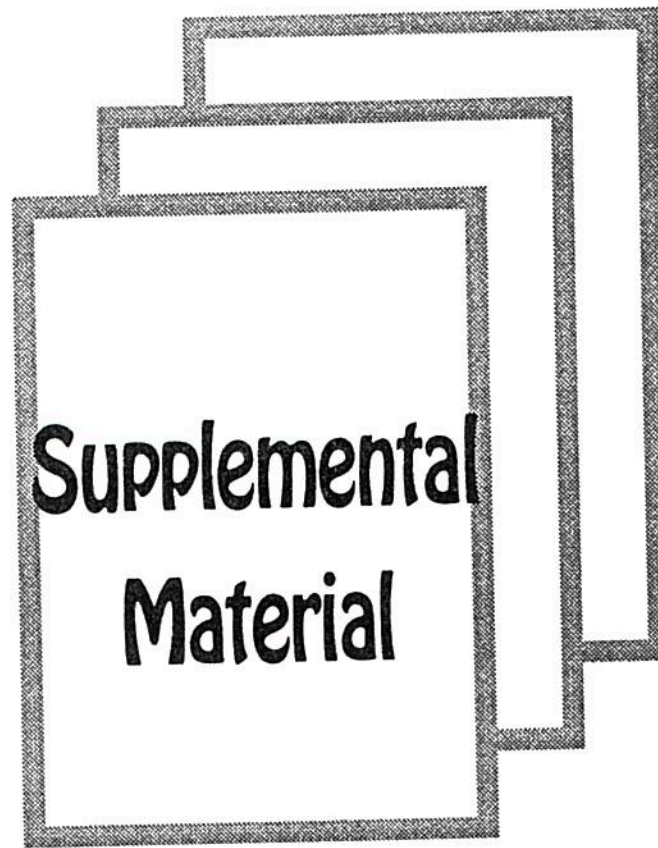
3. Six-year old Elijah is responsible for giving the family dog dry food and water every evening. After the novelty wears off it his grandparents have to nag him to do his chore.
 - a) His grandparents decide it's too much of a hassle and feed the dog themselves.
 - b) His grandmother takes the dog to the Animal Shelter
 - c) When Elijah comes to the supper table his plate is upside down and without food. His grandparents explain that it is a "silent message" reminding him to feed the dog. When the dog has food and water Elijah can turn his plate over and have his meal.

4. Eight-year old Tosha punches and pinches his little brother while they watch cartoons on Saturday morning.
 - a) Any time she does this her grandmother hits and pinches Tosha, "to teach her what it feels like."
 - b) When Tosha hurts her brother her grandfather tells her she has to leave the room and the TV and find something else to do until she can remember to keep her brother safe.
 - c) Her grandfather says and does nothing.

5. Ten-year old Jason lies on the floor, kicking and screaming if he is told he cannot do or have something he wants. His grandmother believes that as a baby he learned to get attention in this way.
 - a) When Jason tantrums his grandmother spanks him "so he'll have something to cry about."
 - b) When Jason tantrums his grandmother gets out a sign she has made that says "We'll talk when you are quiet", puts it where Jason can see it, and sits down to read the newspaper. The first time she did this Jason screamed and kicked on and off for two hours.
 - c) As soon as Jason begins to scream his grandmother gives in, saying she doesn't have the energy to deal with Jason.

6. In spite of many reminders twelve-year old Kristi leaves a wet towel on the bathroom floor every morning.
 - a) Her grandmother continues to pick up the wet towel every day and to remind Kristi to hang it up.
 - b) Her grandmother removes all towels from the bathroom except for the one Kristi has left on the floor.
 - c) Her grandmother limits Kristi to one shower a week.

7. Fourteen-year old Zack is increasingly sullen and rude.
 - a) His grandfather ignores his behavior and says he'll grow out of it.
 - b) His grandfather tells Zack he's "grounded" for a week every time he is rude and sullen.
 - c) His grandfather schedules conferences with Zack's teachers and guidance counselor and asks for advice about how to help Zack.



WORKSHOP 4

*Discipline is Not a Dirty Word,
But It May
Look Different Today*

PARENTING
The Second Time Around

When should families talk with a mental health professional about a child?

By Jennifer Birckmayer

Child rearing and family life can face all families with puzzling demands and challenges. Most of us will occasionally wonder if a child is "normal"; many will wonder if the time has come to seek extra help from a family counselor or therapist. The following guidelines are intended to suggest ways of deciding whether or not professional help from a family counselor, child psychologist or psychiatrist, or qualified social worker would be helpful.

1. *A pattern of persistent behavior in one or more of the following areas may indicate a need for professional help:*

Bullying behavior (either an aggressor or as victim)

For example, children consistently refuse invitations from Eddy to come over to play. A parent finally explains to Eddy's grandfather that his son is afraid of Eddy because he wants to fight instead of play, and friends usually get hurt. If his grandparents can work out ways for Eddy to play in more socially acceptable ways, outside help will not be needed. If they cannot, a professional may be helpful in repairing what must be a very unhappy situation for Eddy.

Destructive behavior (repeatedly destroying their own or other children's toys and possessions)

Inability to distinguish between fantasy and reality after age 6

Persistent lying (after age 5)

Fire setting

Hurting animals with deliberate intent (children under age 5 may not understand that they are inflicting pain)

Stealing

Loneliness (a child who finds it impossible to make friends)

Prolonged sadness, depression or anger (all children have these feelings sometimes. It is cause for concern when they are dominant all the time.)

It is important to remember that many children will exhibit one or more of these behaviors at some point; it is when problem behaviors become a pattern that is repeated that there is cause for concern. For example, it is not unusual for a pre-school child to take, once or even twice, something she wants from a store. Usually, if an adult says, firmly and kindly, "You cannot take things from a store without paying for them. Now we will have to return what you have taken and tell the store manager how sorry we are that this happened," children will understand that stealing is not allowed and they will not do it again. If, however, the child continues to steal in spite of these efforts to stop her, a chat with a professional may be helpful. Similarly, a seven-year-old may find some matches and accidentally start a fire. Serious as the consequences of such an act may be, if an explanation and reprimand prevent the child from playing with matches again, counseling should not be necessary. If however the child persists in attempting to start fires, the professional consultation is indicated. As a third example, many children go through brief periods of time when they do not have friends, or bully a younger child, or are bullied by another. These children can usually be helped by sensitive, imaginative adults who are willing to devote time and effort to helping the child. If, however, adults feel that they have done everything they can think of and the child's problem is persisting, professional advice will be very helpful.

2. *Behavior that is markedly different from the child's usual behavior may indicate a need for help.*

When a usually fearless child develops fears which persists over time, a usually happy child becomes sad or depressed over time, or a child behaves in ways that are markedly different than usual, family members need to pay attention. Sometimes a single event or misadventure has brought about the change, and extra attention, explanations and help in developing some coping skills will be all that is needed. But if the behavioral or mood change persists for a period of weeks, a professional may be able to provide helpful insights or suggestions. It is difficult to decide how long to wait before looking for help. Perhaps the image of a toothache is useful - a few twinges for several days can be treated with over-the-counter medication and a "wait and see" attitude. If however, the tooth aches so persistently that the suffering person can think of nothing other than the tooth, it's clearly past time to go to the dentist. So it is with "behavioral blips." Every child will exhibit some signs of worrisome behavior. It is the persistence, intensity, and duration of the behavior that indicates whether or not help is needed.

3. *Behavior that disrupts, worries, or significantly interferes with the lives of other family members may benefit from consultation with a child psychologist or social worker that has training in work with young children.*

For example, the Evans family is unable to enjoy a meal together at a restaurant, because eight-year-old Nina will not stay with them at the table and runs around, often screaming and disturbing other patrons. (Reminder: If this behavior happens once it may not be cause for concern. If however, it persists and the family is unable to stop it, it can be defined as a problem!)

4. *Behavior that interferes with a child's ability to sleep, eat, play, or interact with others:*

Most children who have had a troubled family or experienced trauma (domestic or child abuse, substance abusing parents, chronic illness of self or other family members, accidents, fires, abrupt or prolonged separation from parents, death or incarceration of a family member) will show through acting out or withdrawn behavior. Then, counseling or family therapy is needed.

Examples:

- a) At the end of the first six weeks of school Lisa is still so afraid of fire drills in her kindergarten that she does not go to sleep before midnight, but lies awake crying and asking anxiously if her grandparents "think there might be a fire drill tomorrow."
- b) Tommy (aged six) has become so afraid of dogs that he refuses to play outside. (Note: If Tommy's fear lasts for a week it can be described as "developmental blip." If, however, it lasts for a month, outside intervention may be needed.)

These guidelines are intended as suggestions only. Behavior that seems problematic in one family may not seem like a problem in another. Families also differ in their abilities to deal with, and tolerate, difficult child behavior. Competent professionals understand these differences among families and will be sympathetic in listening to problems and thinking through solutions. A behavior that is difficult for you may not seem to be an issue for your neighbor or sister. However, one of the characteristics of an effective parent is the ability to find and use community resources. Finding and using a qualified mental health professional may be as important to the well-being of your family as finding and using other forms of health care.

Coping With Kids Who Drive Us Crazy

Tips For Teachers and Caregivers

Introduction

Perhaps the most frustrating aspect of the lives and jobs of those responsible for the care and development of children and youth is dealing with behavioral problems daily. There seems to be no other condition more likely to contribute to parental or professional burnout than the constant frustration of trying to cope with a variety of disruptive behaviors.

Who are difficult children?

When we say that children are difficult, we may actually mean they are...

- ▶ hard to control
- ▶ hard to like
- ▶ hard to reach
- ▶ hard to warm up to
- ▶ hard-hearted
- ▶ hard to predict
- ▶ hard to please
- ▶ hard-headed
- ▶ hard to understand.

For the purpose of our discussion, difficult children are defined as those who regularly behave in ways that are contrary to adult expectations, group norms or defined rules and whose behavior creates some level of conflict. These problem behaviors may include:

- ▶ Defiance; disobedience; non-compliance
- ▶ Inattention; inability to follow directions
- ▶ Wildness (over-active, impulsive behavior)
- ▶ Physical aggression (fighting, biting)
- ▶ Verbal aggression (name-calling, cursing)
- ▶ Deception (lying, cheating)
- ▶ Disruption (acting out, horseplay)
- ▶ Withdrawal (passivity, lack of motivation)
- ▶ Regression (thumbsucking, bedwetting).

In general, behavior can be considered difficult if it:

- ▶ is not related to normal development
- ▶ interferes with normal development
- ▶ seems unusually intense
- ▶ persists or increases in intensity for a period of more than 6 months.

Temperament as a source of difficult behavior

In his book *The Difficult Child*, Dr. Stanley Turecki, elaborating on research conducted by Alexander Thomas and Stella Chess as part of the New York Longitudinal Study, hypothesizes that difficult children are hard to manage because of certain temperamental characteristics. These temperamental qualities are:

High Activity Level Difficult kids are very active, hate to be confined, are restless and wear adults out.

Distractibility Difficult kids have trouble concentrating and paying attention; they don't listen.

Poor Adaptability Difficult kids have trouble with transitions and change of activities or routines; throw tantrums, become stubborn; refuse to give up customary things.

Negative Persistence Difficult kids are stubborn; whine or nag; won't give up; can get "locked in"; have long tantrums that are hard to stop.

Initial Withdrawal Difficult kids resist new situations, people, food, clothes, etc; will protest or hold back.

High Intensity Difficult kids are loud, whether they are happy, angry or sad.

Irregular Rhythms Difficult kids are unpredictable, have mood swings, irregular hours for eating, sleeping, etc.

Low Sensory Threshold Difficult kids are oversensitive to sounds, lights, colors, tastes, smells, pains, temperatures and textures; are easily overstimulated; tend not to like something if it doesn't feel right.

Negative Mood Difficult kids appear to be basically "unhappy"; their moods are usually serious or cranky.

Turecki contends that children are born with certain temperamental qualities that make them appear "difficult," especially when these temperamental characteristics contrast and conflict with an adult's personality style. When parents continue to deal with these children in unproductive ways, difficult behaviors tend to be reinforced.

When we consider children's temperament as cause and/or condition of hard-to-manage behavior, we will also be able to understand the following:

- ▶ Difficult children are normal.
- ▶ Difficult behavior is not necessarily intentional.
- ▶ Difficult children are not all the same.
- ▶ Difficult children can make us feel frustrated, angry, inadequate or despairing.
- ▶ Many traditional disciplinary techniques do not work with difficult children.

Knowing these principles can help an adult learn to deal with the strong feelings that emerge from the constant frustration of trying to cope with a difficult child.

Stress and depression

Another point of view, one advocated by David Elkind in his book, *The Hurried Child*, is that stress is the source of many childhood and adolescent problems. In a misguided attempt to help kids grow up a "cut above everyone else," we often place unrealistic expectations and unnecessary pressures on children and youth. They may react in defensive or aggressive ways. Added to other childhood stressors such as the birth of a sibling, relocation, changing classes or schools, separation, divorce, etc., these pressures to compete, excel, succeed and grow up only make the child more frustrated and unable to cope.

Hurried children experience a great deal of stress from responsibility, change and emotional overload. Education and the media also contribute to this feeling of being overwhelmed by adding school tedium and information overload. School and media-stressed violence can increase children's fearfulness and emotional distress. Depersonalization in the schools and in media images also adds to stress. Children react to stress in several ways:

Free-floating anxiety

The stressed child feels restless, irritable, fearful, unable to concentrate and pessimistic, but is unable to say what the problem is.

Type A behavior

This is the "fight" stress response. Type A children are competitive, combative, impatient and aggressive.

School burnout

For some children, school is like a bad job and can lead to burnout. Some symptoms of burnout are: absences, tardiness, substance abuse, vandalism and disruption.

Learned helplessness

This is the "flight" stress reaction. Stressed children withdraw, become listless and apathetic, and feel powerless.

Premature structuring

Children forced to grow up too fast have their personality structured early, leaving little room for further growth and differentiation.

Until the 1970's, many experts did not think that children suffered from depression. Today, it is estimated that more than 400,000 children between the ages of 7 and 12 show signs of depression. Depression is an emotional attitude involving deep feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness that persist for an extended period of time. Childhood depression is difficult to identify because children tend to act out their feelings rather than talk about them. In addition, the emotional and behavioral clues to depression are not always evident or clear cut. Many behavior problems may in fact be symptoms of severe stress or depression.

Some symptoms for childhood depression are listed below.

Melancholy

- ▶ mood swings, moodiness
- ▶ irritability, hypersensitivity
- ▶ negative, difficult to please
- ▶ feelings or expressions of sadness, hopelessness

Negative Self-Image

- ▶ feelings of worthlessness
- ▶ beliefs of persecution
- ▶ death wishes

Aggression

- ▶ hostile, excessive fighting, sudden anger
- ▶ disrespectful of authority
- ▶ difficult to get along with, quarrelsome

Change in school performance

- ▶ daydreaming, poor concentration, inattention
- ▶ poor memory
- ▶ lack of usual effort, loss of usual interests in school activities

Diminished socialization

- ▶ decreased group participation, withdrawal from others
- ▶ less friendly, outgoing
- ▶ loss of usual social interests

ADD: Attention Deficit Disorder

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) became an official psychiatric diagnosis in 1980. Prior to 1980, ADD symptoms were characterized as minimal brain dysfunction. Although much is known about the cognitive, emotional and behavioral components of ADD, little is known about its origins and effective treatment. ADD students tend to be second class citizens in our competitive society that places great emphasis on rapid achievement. As a result, they lack self-confidence and have low self-esteem. ADD tends to be recognized when children start school and the inability to organize and concentrate become a problem. However, ADD symptoms can be noticed in infancy. The American Psychiatric Association suggests that a diagnosis of ADD can be made if a disturbance lasts a least six months and at least 8 of the following 14 behaviors are evident to a degree that is considerably more frequent than most peers of the same mental age.

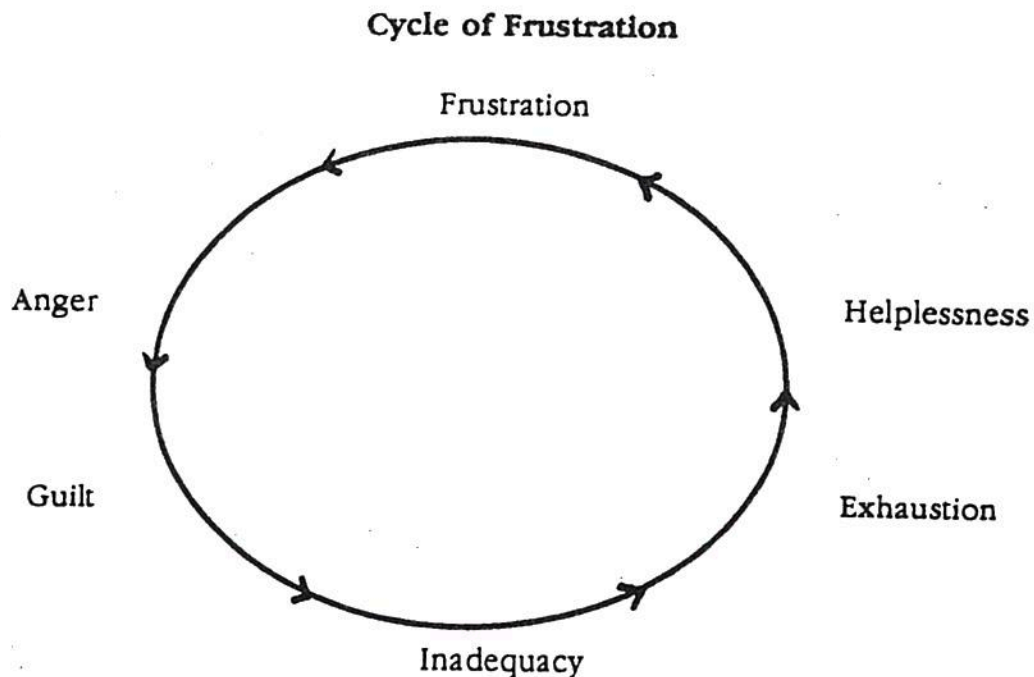
- ▶ Constant fidgeting
- ▶ Cannot remain seated
- ▶ Easily distracted
- ▶ Difficulty waiting turns
- ▶ Blurts out answers to questions before completely asked
- ▶ Cannot follow through on instructions
- ▶ Cannot sustain attention in task or play activities
- ▶ Often shifts from one uncompleted activity to another
- ▶ Incessant talking
- ▶ Often interrupts other children
- ▶ Does not listen
- ▶ Often loses things
- ▶ Often engages in physically dangerous activities

Parents, teachers and caregivers are cautioned against assuming ADD exists without medical corroboration. On the other hand, adults should be aware that these children suffer from attentional deficits that contribute to difficult behavior.

Avoiding vicious cycles

One of the major obstacles to being effective with difficult children is the reliance on past techniques that have not worked. In most cases, these unproductive methods tend to continue the vicious cycle of difficult behavior. Whether or not difficult behavior is the result of temperament or intention, children soon acquire patterned responses to the adult's customary attempts to control behavior. As the child learns to "defeat" the adult's attempts at control, the adult raises the stakes of the conflict. The child, in turn, tends to escalate the acting-out behavior.

There is another vicious cycle that operates here. The figure below shows the cycle of frustration the adult experiences after repeated unsuccessful attempts at disciplining the difficult child. Eventually, if the cycle persists, frustration leads to burnout.



There are several steps an adult can take to break these vicious cycles:

1. Determine whether or not you are engaged in a vicious cycle by:
 - ▶ assessing the wear and tear on yourself and the child
 - ▶ evaluating the effectiveness of your discipline.
2. Disengage from the cycle and the conflict it creates. Don't worry about losing; worry about preserving your and the child's sanity.
3. Build some emotional muscle and take care of your own needs.
4. Try to develop a sympathetic and caring understanding of the child's problem behavior.

The goals of discipline

Discipline is not punishment. Discipline, from the word disciple, is a teaching-learning, leading-following relationship. Punishment is based on the adult's unequal use of power and is a relationship of control only. Punishment without any attempt to teach moral principles or rules of conduct should be avoided since it will only breed resentment and ruin relationships. Discipline, rather than a controlling process, is a helping, teaching process.

The six goals of the adult who uses discipline that is helpful and instructive are:

1. Stop the misbehavior.
2. Teach the correct behavior.
3. Help the child develop self-discipline.
4. Child/youth feels O.K. about the disciplinary process.
5. Adult feels O.K. about the disciplinary process.
6. Maintain, reinforce or strengthen a positive relationship between child or youth and adult.

Stopping misbehavior is the goal of both discipline and punishment. Often, punishment techniques, and even some disciplinary techniques, go no further. To be truly effective, a disciplinary strategy should accomplish each of these six goals to some degree. Teachers and caregivers can assess the value of a particular disciplinary approach by using these goals as criteria to measure its potential effectiveness. It is extremely important that all disciplinary techniques contribute to the development of self-discipline. Ultimately, the goal of parenting and education is the development of mature individuals who are able to make decisions, resolve conflicts, control impulses and take responsibility for themselves. These are the skills of a disciplined individual.

Adults can be more effective in their role as disciplinarians if they take the time to:

1. Assess the basic need that motivates a child's actions. (Remember that children have legitimate needs for attention, love, recognition, control and success, which, if unmet, may result in the pursuit of socially unacceptable behavior.
2. Be sympathetic to the feelings that underlie a child's behavior.
3. Be aware of your feelings in regard to misbehavior.
4. Give the child your love and attention without restriction.

When things fall apart, don't *you*.

All adults have an emotional reaction to the behavior of difficult children that ranges from hardened indifference to helpless surrender to unsuppressed anger (even violence). Your perceptions of the child's behavior and the nature of your relationship with the child will affect this emotional reaction. It is helpful to identify this reaction and understand that you have control over your emotions and their effect on your behavior.

Adults can only reassert control over a problem situation when they are in control of themselves, their feelings and their reactions. While it is difficult to remain calm and in control in the face of really annoying behavior, a calm, neutral, rational approach is essential to finding an effective method of discipline and breaking the vicious cycles that may be occurring.

Here are some steps you can take in order to remain in charge:

- ▶ Don't respond emotionally or instinctually.
- ▶ Disengage. Stand back and view the situation in a neutral, objective and rational way.
- ▶ Don't take the misbehavior personally. If you are asking yourself "Why is he doing this to me?" then your emotions are automatically involved.
- ▶ Focus on the child's behavior and its cause, not motives or mood.
- ▶ Be prepared to change yourself first. You may be the problem.

Uncover the causes of and contributors to difficult behavior

It is important to understand that all behavior is caused and behavior can never be completely changed or modified unless its underlying cause is addressed. Behavior can be caused by external circumstances, such as child abuse, or internal conditions such as hunger or boredom. Children may be able to exert control over some of these conditions, but may be powerless in other circumstances. Some causes for misbehavior may include:

- ▶ Anger or resentment
- ▶ Lack of attention or acceptance
- ▶ Feelings of inferiority or inadequacy
- ▶ Physical discomfort, fatigue, hunger
- ▶ Learning disabilities
- ▶ Impaired eyesight, hearing
- ▶ Stress, frustration
- ▶ Boredom
- ▶ Loss of control, powerlessness
- ▶ Chemical sensitivities, food reactions
- ▶ Illness, allergies, medication
- ▶ Poor impulse control, inadequate coping behavior
- ▶ Feelings of sadness, depression
- ▶ Lack of knowledge about rules, correct behavior
- ▶ Lack of social skills

Take three steps to uncover the possible cause of difficult behavior:

1. **Observe the difficult child in action when he/she is misbehaving and when he/she is doing something right. Make notes of all details.** Put these observations in writing. Ask Who? What? When? and Where? In determining the details of a problem situation and when gathering the facts, it is useful to ask the following questions:
 - ▶ When does the child misbehave?
 - ▶ How often does the misbehavior occur?
 - ▶ Where does the misbehavior take place?
 - ▶ What exactly does the child do?
 - ▶ How do others react?
 - ▶ To whom is the misbehavior directed?
 - ▶ What happens just prior to the misbehavior (its antecedent)?
 - ▶ What seems to trigger the misbehavior?
 - ▶ What are the child's feelings before, during and after?
2. **Document.** It is important to keep accurate written records of the details of each occurrence of misbehavior.
3. **Seek corroboration.** Check your perceptions and observations with others, including teachers, colleagues, parents and supervisor.

Head 'em off at the pass.

As you begin to discover clues to a difficult child's behavior, you will be better able to anticipate problems before they arise. When you first notice warning signs to a child's problem behavior, e.g., the child begins to get loud or "revved up," you can take a number of actions:

Early warning Well before matters reach a crisis point, you can issue early warnings in the form of gentle reminders or firmer assertions that let the child know his/her behavior is becoming unacceptable.

Beat the clock For children who have difficulty with transitions, you can use an egg timer or simple digital alarm and set it five minutes in advance of ending one activity and moving to another. Let the child know that the timer has been set and that when it goes off, he or she must stop the activity and move on. For impulsive children, you can play "Let the clock beat you." If the impulsive child cannot wait for five minutes or sit still for five minutes, set the clock and challenge the youngster to let the clock beat him; that is, go off before he leaves his seat.

Redirection If children seem to be getting out of control in one area or activity, they can often be redirected into other activities. Redirection works best if the substitute activity is similar to and as interesting as the original activity.

Distraction Children who are impulsive and easily distracted can be distracted in a positive sense. When they seem to be getting involved in something undesirable, initiate a game, story, conversation or alternate activity to engage them more positively. Teachers and leaders should always have a "bag of tricks" or repertoire of spur-of-the-moment songs, games or stories they can use to engage bored, restless, whining children.

Cooling off Children who are getting "worked up" sometimes need a chance to cool off. Removing a child from a trouble spot to a neutral spot, allowing the child to "count down" and regain control, calling "time out," and physically comforting a revved up child all help to cool him/her off.

Letting off steam Children who are getting restless, impatient or angry can be given some vigorous activity to release unwanted tension or feelings.

A helping hand When you observe difficult children starting to get "wound up," you can help wind him or her down by your physical presence. Move near a child who is becoming agitated and remain calm. Placing your hand on his/her shoulder can provide a steadying influence. Allowing young children the chance to sit on your lap helps soothe strong feelings. Even older children appreciate a hug or pat on the back.

Discuss the problem privately with the child.

Before jumping to conclusions or taking action, it is important to discuss the problem with the child. Be empathetic. Try to understand the matter from the child's point of view. Here are seven elements of effective communication with children:

1. Talk to the child away from the heat of the moment.
2. Give the child your full, undivided, uninterrupted attention.
3. Encourage the child to talk and, through nonverbal and verbal expressions of approval, convey the message that what the child has to say is important.
4. Respond reflectively. Demonstrate your acceptance and understanding of the child's words by paraphrasing or restating. Phrases such as, "What I hear you saying is...." or "What you're telling me is," give the child feedback and reaffirm understanding of the child's words.
5. Be clear about rules and expectations.
 - ▶ Review the rule and its rationale.
 - ▶ Check the child's understanding of the rule.
 - ▶ Ask the child to restate the rule and why it is necessary.
 - ▶ Tell children what they can do.
6. Use "I" statements to express your own feelings and desires. "You" statements such as "You made me angry!" will make children defensive and block communication.
7. Avoid communication roadblocks such as judging, criticizing, lecturing, sympathizing, preaching, labeling, agreeing or reassuring, which tend to stop open, honest communication.

For children with an attention deficit, you must keep these encounters brief and free from distractions. Help the child organize and remember his thoughts. Keep instructions or explanations brief and simple.

Work together to solve the problem.

It is helpful to regard misbehavior as a problem to be solved and to take a rational, objective problem-solving approach.

1. Identify the most relevant behavior that must change. Remember that it is unrealistic to expect a difficult child to change everything overnight.
2. Explore alternative solutions. Brainstorm ways in which the problem can be solved or corrected. Ask the child for his ideas.
3. Propose one or two choices.
4. Choose a check-up method so you can determine whether or not the proposed solution actually solved the problem.
5. Aim for a win-win solution. Choose a solution that is workable, has the greatest chance for success, reduces conflict and lets everyone concerned come out a winner.
6. Secure some form of commitment - a verbal agreement, a handshake, even a written contract.

Manage the environment, not the child.

Caregivers and teachers may discover that the group environment is a source of boredom, stress or anxiety and an indirect cause of misbehavior. Adults can orchestrate the environment in such a way as to reduce problems and remove obstacles to correct behavior. Setting up room dividers to separate potentially conflicting activities and allowing space and time for active play can help prevent certain problems. Adults can also manage time and activities to establish a better match or "fit" between the child and his/her environment. Announcing in advance and allowing sufficient time for transitions helps the child who is not very adaptable. Allowing some time and space for "blowing off steam" through active play helps the overactive child meet his needs.

Adults can manage the environment in three distinct ways:

1. Adults can modify the physical space so that it encourages correct behavior.
2. Adults can offer stimulating, interesting and developmentally appropriate activities or experiences that provide children with choices, opportunities for self-expression and participation in active play.
3. Adults can manage schedules so there is a balance between vigorous and quiet activities or group and individual experiences so individual needs and differences are met.

The concept of comfort of fit is especially important for the child who is temperamentally difficult. When a child displays certain temperamental differences such as distractibility and low sensory threshold, it is important for adults to try to manipulate the environment to fit the child rather than vice versa. Trying to manage the environment helps reduce the interpersonal conflict that may exist between the adult and the child and shows an acceptance of the child's unique personality.

Difficult children often need a great deal of structure and the security of well-established routines that ensure successful behavior. Structure means that the environment has a clear and consistent emphasis on predictability. A routine is a predictable sequence of prescribed events that occur in the same order every day. Establishing daily routines for waking, mealtimes, homework and bedtime can assist children in gaining control and reduce the daily conflicts that increase the wear and tear on all those involved.

Provide support, comfort and encouragement.

The essence of encouragement, as described by Rudolf Dreikurs, is to increase a child's self-confidence by conveying to him that he is good enough as he is not just as he might be. Some encouraging approaches include:

- ▶ Working for improvement, not perfection
- ▶ Building on strengths, not weaknesses
- ▶ Commending effort, not just results
- ▶ Viewing mistakes as opportunities, not failures
- ▶ Promoting cooperation, not competition
- ▶ Helping the child develop the courage to be imperfect

Adults can provide support and encouragement by:

1. Remove obstacles or barriers to success. For example, if a child finds it difficult to sit still at an activity for an entire half-hour, allow that child a one-minute stretch after ten minutes if he has been able to sit fairly patiently for that long.
2. Use appropriate rewards and consequences. Adults who use consequences must be clear about their expectations for student behavior. Be specific about the undesirable consequences of failing to conform to those expectations and the desirable or positive consequences of being successful in meeting them. In many cases, children and adults can work together to identify appropriate consequences.
3. Provide an opportunity for self-evaluation on the part of the child.
4. Be empathetic to the difficult child's struggles to change or modify his/her behavior. Remember, the child probably finds his own behavior as difficult to change as you find it difficult to manage.

Source: Timothy Jahn, Human Development Specialist. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County

Time Out

By Jennifer Birckmayer

The use and misuse of "time-out" as a technique for helping children develop self-control and socially acceptable behavior.

There are two ways to think about the use of time-out by caregivers of young children.

1. The first of these views is described in a recent child development textbook (Gordon, Ann Miles. (2000). *Beginnings and Beyond*, Albany, NY: Delmar Press, p. 258-259).

"Removing a child from the play area is particularly appropriate when, owing to anger, hurt or frustration, the child is out of control. Taking children away from the scene of intensity and emotion to allow them time to cool off and settle down is sometimes the only way to help them. The teacher is firm and consistent as the child is removed from play. It is important that this discipline technique be used with a positive attitude and approach, not as a punishment for misbehavior.

The time-out period is very much like that used in athletic events: a brief respite and a chance to stop all activity and regroup."

2. A second and very different interpretation of time-out comes from the American Academy of Pediatrics in the book *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child Birth to Age 5* (1993). New York: Bantam Books, p. 365.

"Although you can't ignore dangerous or destructive behavior, you can call a time-out. This technique is most successful with three- and four-year-olds, who generally know when they've done something seriously wrong and understand why they are being punished. Here's how time-out works:

- ▶ Define the behavior you want to stop, and keep track of how frequently it occurs. Punishment of any kind should be used only when your child is intentionally doing something he knows is forbidden.
- ▶ Warn him that if he continues to do this he will be punished.
- ▶ Identify a timeout area, preferably a room that's empty of toys, television, or other attractions - in other words, one that's as boring as possible for the child. If such a room isn't available, use a chair facing the wall in the hall or unoccupied room.
- ▶ When the child does something he knows will result in a time-out, send him immediately to the area you have selected and tell him how long he has to stay there. Five minutes is usually sufficient. Place a timer or clock within view so he can keep track of the time.

- ▶ If he cries or screams, reset the timer for another five minutes. If he leaves the time-out area, return him there and reset the timer.
- ▶ Use a time-out each and every time he violates this particular rule. Also, any time you notice that he's observing the rule, congratulate him for behaving so well."

While we respect the American Academy of Pediatrics and usually agree with the advice it gives we do not agree with its position on time-out for the following reasons:

- ▶ Many studies indicate that punishment may stop specific behaviors temporarily, but does not have long term positive effects.
- ▶ Putting a child into time-out lets him know he has done something wrong but does not teach him what to do instead.
- ▶ Many young children do not understand the reasons for time-out and will cry or scream because they feel abandoned and rejected.
- ▶ Many children refuse to stay in "time-out" and an adult must hold them in the selected time-out place.

When timeout is used effectively it provides a brief respite and allows adults and children to make a fresh start. What does time-out look like when it is used in the way described in the first definition from the book *Beginnings and Beyond*? Let's visit Ms. Gibbons to see to make a fresh start how she uses time out.

On a cold January morning Ms. Gibbons and the four children she cares for are feeling the strain of too much togetherness and too many days spent indoors. Four-year-old Martha and three- and a-half-year-old Marion have bickered, whined and complained about each other for the past hour.

"She took it!" says Martha

"I had it first!" says Marion

On and on and on until Ms. Gibbons feels like screaming. "Girls!" she says firmly, we all need a break so "I'm going to call a time out! Martha I want you to sit on the couch, Marion, you sit in the big chair. I'm going to sit over here with the oven timer set for four minutes." When the timer rings Ms. Gibbons smiles and says, "Well, I feel better. We were getting on each other's nerves, weren't we? Now, let's get out the playdoh and see if we can have some fun."

A second example uses time-out as a punishment. Five-year-old Howie has come in from kindergarten appearing to feel angry and aggressive. He joins the other children in the sandbox but immediately snatches the truck Doreen is using, and tramples on Susan's road. Mr. Mason, his caregiver, says sternly "You know better than that, Howie, go sit in the time-out chair for five minutes."

What will children learn in each of these incidents? In the first example Ms. Gibbons shows the girls an example of "taking a break" from a stressful situation, enjoying a brief rest and making a plan for a pleasant activity together. In the second example Howie learns from Mr. Mason that his behavior is unacceptable but he does not learn what he should have done instead. Additionally, he may learn that his feelings (which may have resulted from a bad day in school) are not of interest to Mr. Mason.

What else can you do? Time-out can be a useful technique, but many people use it as the only one in their child guidance "toolbox." Other tools include:

- ▶ Telling children what they can do instead of what they can't do (example: "Howie, play over here" instead of "Howie don't play there.>").
- ▶ Involving children in problem solving "Howie, we have a problem. Doreen was having a turn with the truck and Susan is working on a road. What can we do to help? "
- ▶ Respecting children's feelings even when limiting their behavior ("Howie, it looks to me like you had a bad day at school; I'd like to hear about it, but I can't let you interfere with what the girls are doing.>").
- ▶ Offering choices ("Howie, you can play in this corner of the sandbox or you can find something else to do.>").
- ▶ Changing the environment instead of the behavior (Howie, let's take a walk around the yard - there's a spider web I want to show you.>").
- ▶ Giving rules and limits children can understand (Howie you may not disrupt the girls' work you will have to leave the sandbox if you do.>").
- ▶ Setting a good example ("Howie, sometimes when I feel mad I find it helps to go for a walk - let's try it together.>").

Summary:

When time-out is used as a punishment it may stop the behavior for a little while but will not have a lasting positive effect.

Time out is useful when:

- ▶ it is used sparingly
- ▶ it is used as an opportunity for adults and children to regroup, regain self-control and make a fresh start.
- ▶ it is used with children who understand its purpose - it is not appropriate for use with babies and toddlers.



PARENTING
The Second Time Around

WORKSHOP 5

*Protecting and Planning for
Your Grandchild's Future*

WORKSHOP 5

Protecting and Planning for Your Grandchild's Future: Finding Help with Legal Issues

Special Note: An attorney who is well informed about legal issues of concern to grandparents will be an essential resource for this workshop.

Objectives:

- ❖ Participants will review a list of legal issues and identify the ones of greatest interest to them.
- ❖ Participants will hear a legal specialist discuss the issues identified as being of greatest interest.
- ❖ Participants will receive printed information about legal issues of interest to them.

Preparation Needed:

Facilitators should note that the most important work they will do for this session involves *preparation*. And the most important part of the preparation will be identifying and inviting a legal expert who is familiar with grand parenting issues to attend this session. If you or the participants do not know such a person, try the following:

Your local Legal Aid Society. Look in the government pages of your telephone directory.

Your local Bar Association to see if there might be a lawyer who will join you "pro bono" (free!)

Law School Clinics. Make a telephone call to the office of the dean. A law school student or a faculty member with interest in grandparenting legal issues.

Local area Office on Aging usually has a legal service provider.

When you talk with the legal expert who has agreed to join you, tell him or her something about the participants. Explain the following activity to the visiting expert before he or she comes to the meeting. Provide a copy of the list of topics well before hand, so that he or she can be prepared to discuss them. Give your visiting expert a copy of the Background Information, article by Gerard Wallace "*Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren; A New Family Paradigm.*"

Materials Needed:

- ▶ Flip Chart and Markers for List of Legal Topics
- ▶ Paper and Pencils for each participant
- ▶ *Grandparents Guide to Navigating the Legal System* from National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. Free in lots of 100. One copy for each participant. (Phone 1-800-966-1935)
- ▶ The article "*Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren*" (see Supplemental Handouts), and subsequent articles in the NYS Bar's Elder Law Attorney, by Gerard Wallace are an excellent background for you and the legal expert who will be your guest. Be sure to give it to the expert at least two weeks before a workshop, as it is a substantial amount of reading!

- ▶ Copies of handouts

Note: It is not necessary or useful to give all the participants all the handouts. Try to encourage them to be selective.

Handout 5-1	Enabling Nonparent Caregivers
Handout 5-2	Visitation Rights: How to Cope, What to Consider
Handout 5-3	Finding Help with Expenses and Practical Needs
Handout 5-4	Planning for the Child's Lifelong Security
Handout 5-5a	Reaching Agreements
Handout 5-5b	If You Must Go to Court
Handout 5-5c	Finding Help in Selecting a Lawyer
Handout 5-6	Legal Issues for Grandchildren with Special Needs
Handout 5-7	Suggested Reading (Professional & Consumer Resources)

Facilitators may put all out and allow participants to take those of interest to them.

30 Minutes Warm-up Activity

Bring to the workshop the following list of topics (these are listed below), printed in large clear letters on a large sheet of paper. Post it in front of the group where everyone can see it clearly.

As participants enter, greet them by name and if the group is small, introduce them individually to the special guest (the legal expert). If the group is large, wait until all are present, introduce the guest and ask each participant to introduce him or herself. Caution the group that this session is intended to provide general information. It will not be possible to deal in-depth with individual personal issues, nor should the information provided be interpreted as legal advice. Remind participants that they should regard information shared by group members as confidential - not to be discussed with others outside the workshop.

Explain to the group that the visiting legal expert will give a brief overview. When he or she has spoken for 15-20 minutes, post the list of issues you have made in front of the group. Each participant will have three "votes" that he/she can use to indicate the three items of greatest interest to him or her. Read the underlined headings aloud, pausing to allow participants who wish to use one of their three "votes" to raise a hand. Register the votes by putting a check mark next to the topic selected. Remind the group that each person gets only three votes! (Usually this strategy allows you to see at a glance the issues of greatest interest to a particular group. Occasionally there is a spread and each item may receive one or two votes. (If that happens ask the legal expert to revisit and speak more fully about each item and assure participants that you will provide printed resources with additional information.)

LIST OF LEGAL TOPICS

Note: Good information about many of these issues is summarized in the article by Gerard Wallace "*Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren; A New Family Paradigm.*"

Caregiving Arrangements

- Informal Care
- Guardianship
- Full / Joint Custody
- Kinship Foster Care
- Adoption

Child Support and Financial Assistance

- TANF (Family Assistance)
- Foster Care Payments
- Subsidized adoption and guardianship
- Tax credits

Health and Medical Care

- Immunizations
- Medical decisions

School and Education*

- Residency enrollment requirements
- Making educational decisions

Future Care of My Grandchild

- Health & Life Insurance
- Wills, Health Care Decisions, Powers of Attorney and Standby Guardians
- Day Care, Residential or Rehabilitative Care

Legal rights of Grandparents

- The right to retain a relationship with grandchildren
- The right to visitation

When do you need a lawyer?

- When you can afford to pay
- When you cannot afford to pay

Adults and children with disabilities

Domestic Violence

Mediation

* You can FAX a request for information about residency requirements to The Center for Law and Education, Dept PU 1375 Conn-Ave #510, Washington, DC (FAX number (202) 462-7687)

80 Minutes

Ask the legal expert to speak first about the topics with the highest number of votes. Be prepared to distribute handouts appropriate to each topic to participants who are interested. It is not necessary or useful to give all the participants all the handouts. Try to encourage them to be selective.

Your role as facilitator is to keep the discussion moving and to help the legal expert present information in a way that can be easily understood by the group. It may be helpful to provide pencils and paper so participants can take notes. If complicated personal issues arise suggest that individuals see you or the legal expert at the end of the workshop - emphasizing again that the purpose of this session is to provide general information and to identify helpful resources within the local community and elsewhere.

It will be important to have lists of local resources (Legal Aid, Mental Health, Children & Family Services, etc) available at this meeting.

10 Minutes **Summary**

At the end of the discussion ask participants to join you in thanking the legal expert guest. Remind the group that laws pertaining to grandparents/grandchildren are changing rapidly and that they may be able to influence some of the changes. Review with them the names and addresses of local, state and federal officials who may be able to help them – or might be influenced by them. Write names and addresses for the group to see and copy.



WORKSHOP 5

*Protecting and Planning for
Your Grandchild's Future*

PARENTING
The Second Time Around

Enabling Nonparent Caregivers to Perform the Task of Childrearing

Legal Status

Performance Needs

		A	B	C	D	E
		Recognition	Authority	Security	Financial Assistance	Resources
1	Informal Custody	I	?	I	I	I
2	Legal Custody	?	?	?	I	I
3	Legal Guardian	A	A	?	I	I
4	Foster Care	?	I	I	A	?
5	Adoption	A	A	A	I	?

A = Adequate

I = Inadequate

? = May or May Not Be Adequate

See Handout 5-1, Page 2 for clarification of performance needs in the grid above.

- A1. Legal definitions and phrases differ, may not include all non-parent caregivers, particularly caregivers who live with parents or if parents are in community. Grandparents and/or other relatives may have more recognition than non-relatives.
- A2, A3. Custody and guardianship may be similar in practice but differ in statutory powers.
- A4. Opportunity to be a foster parent may not be offered to kin.
- A5. Adoption provides full parental authority; very little chance of reversal by natural parents.
- B1. May have school & medical authority, school enrollment, probably can name standby guardian.
- B2. May have school & medical authority, school enrollment, can name standby guardian.
- B3. School, medical, enrollment authority; can name standby guardian, may have marriage and adoption authority.
- B4. State retains power to make decisions for child.
- B5. Same authority as biological parent.
- C1. Little or no protection from parent reclaiming child.
- C2. Parents must go to court to reclaim custody, but courts favor parental reunification over best interests of child.
- C3. Same as C2.
- C4. Custody remains with state.
- C5. Parent can visit or communicate with child, if agreement for "open adoption." May not be legally enforceable.
- D1. TANF "child only" grant is insufficient. D2, D3. Same as D1.
- D4. Foster care rates may be available via subsidized adoption or subsidized guardian.
- D5. Could lose "child only" grant. Subject to work rules.
- E1. Need respite, legal services, transportation, support groups, parent training, counseling, etc.
- E2, E3, E4, E5. Same as E1.

Visitation Rights: How to Cope, What to Consider

Legal visitation is not a form of custody, but it is an important issue when the custody of a child changes. Even grandparents who have raised a child for years can lose total access to that child if the parents reappear or regain custody. One Ohio grandmother provided day care for her married daughter for 50 hours a week for four years; after a family argument, the parents refused her even occasional visitation. In situations like these, many grandparents turn to the law for help.

Nearly every state has some kind of grandparent visitation statute. These do not give grandparents the legal right to visit the child, but to petition for visitation. The court reserves the right to refuse petitions based on the merits of the case.

► *Who May Petition.*

Most states only allow grandparents to petition for visitation, however some extend the privilege to great grandparents, siblings, and other relatives.

► *When You May Petition.*

The majority of states limit the right to petition to specific circumstances, such as divorce or death of a parent. However, some states include other circumstances, such as incarceration of a parent; juvenile delinquency; abuse, neglect, or abandonment of the child, and when custody has been given to a third party or the child has been placed in foster care.

If a child is removed from the parents by child protective services, and is not placed with you, the court may consider whether it is in his best interests to have visits with you. Many factors can influence this decision, including your prior relationship with the child and whether such visits might interfere with parental reunification.

► *Know the Law.*

Visitation laws vary. Find out the rules in your state. *New York permits grandparents to petition for visitation even if both parents have denied visitation.

► *Consider Alternatives to Legal Action.*

Litigation is expensive, time-consuming, and can damage already fragile family relationships. Once a lawsuit starts, people cling to their own side of the story and stop listening. Furthermore, while the situation may change, court decisions are inflexible. Try to stay out of court. Would family counseling address the parents unwillingness to allow visitation? Is mediation a possibility?

► *Take Heart.*

Although the law once gave complete weight to the rights of the parents, public opinion concerning the rights and well being of the child has influenced the courts. Increasingly, courts are realizing that a child's well-being involves a stable relationship with grandparents.

If a parent wants to visit but a visit could be dangerous, the judge may order "supervised visitation." This means that the visit may take place only in a safe setting with some one watching. For example, a person who works for a court, or for the community clinic might be there.

If you do not want your grandchild's parent or parents to visit the child you must be a legal guardian. You can then apply for a temporary injunction, which is supposed to keep the parent away for up to one year.

If a parent is in jail, he or she may be able to arrange regular phone contact with the child, and if possible, regular visitation.

Parents' rights to private visitation or even supervised visitation while their children are in the care and custody of a third party may not be addressed in practice. "No-contact" orders, injunctions, and personal protective orders often restrict contact, direct or indirect, with children where adults have displayed a history of inappropriate behavior or where relationships are severely strained. Interracial adoptions, gay parents rights and gay grandparent rights, and the rights of incarcerated parents are also contemporary issues.

From *Second Chances: A Resource for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren* (Sept/Oct. 1999)
MVP Health Plus and Catholic Charities, 100 Slingerlands Rd., Albany, NY 12202

Finding Help with Expenses and Practical Needs

Raising children is expensive. No matter how much you love your grandchildren, you have to be practical. Before your grandchildren came to live with you, you probably had a budget which met your needs (or, at least, almost did). Now it may be strained to the breaking point. This handout looks at government programs which may help you to provide for your grandchildren, including:

- ▶ **Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).** This program provides eligible families with a modest monthly check. In some states, it may also help with daycare and/or emergency needs.
- ▶ **Medicaid.** This is a type of government sponsored medical insurance which pays for the medical care of eligible children.
- ▶ **Child Health Insurance Program.** Every state now has a Federally Funded Program offering discounted health insurance coverage for children of working families.
1-877-KIDSNOW
- ▶ **Food Stamps.** This program helps low-income families buy food.
- ▶ **The Earned Income Tax Credit (EIC).** This tax credit can provide a yearly payment by check to eligible families with an adult wage earner, children in the household, and low income.
- ▶ **Child and Dependent Care Credit.** Working families can get some or all of their Federal Taxes if they have paid for child care. * New York's Child Care Credit is even more valuable.
- ▶ **Child Tax Credit.** Another Credit for raising dependent children.
- ▶ **Supplemental Security Income (SSI).** This program provides cash assistance for children and adults with disabilities. 1-800-772-1213.
- ▶ **Special Needs Adoption Subsidies.** These subsidies, designed to encourage adoptions, provide continuing cash assistance.

The information here is as of September 1995, and could change. For current rules, ask at the office of the program you're interested in.

Supplemental Security Income

If you have a grandchild with severe special needs, you may have lots of extra expenses due to your grandchild's disability, such as increased cost for childcare, time you lose from work, therapy programs not covered by Medicaid, and transportation to needed services.

You may want to look into Supplemental Security Income (SSI or SSD) for any grandchild with severe special needs. The SSI program provides a monthly check to assist low-income blind or disabled children and adults. SSI can pay up to \$531 (in New York State), or more in some states, on behalf of a disabled child or adult. Although not a large sum, that's more in most states than an entire family would receive from TANF (Family Assistance in NY State). If you are raising more than one grandchild, you may be able to get SSI for any grandchild who is disabled, and TANF for any child who is not.

People eligible for SSI (like those eligible for TANF) also get Medicaid coverage. You may, however, have to complete a separate application for the Medicaid.

Qualifying for SSI. There are detailed rules about who qualifies for SSI. The general rule is that, to qualify, a child must have a physical or mental disability that results in marked and severe functional limitations, so that the child cannot do the everyday things that other children the same age do. Both medical and other evidence (such as reports from teachers and therapists) are considered.

The Social Security Administration, which runs the SSI program, has a list of many physical and mental health problems, with descriptions for different age children of what would be severe enough to qualify. If your grandchild has a disability (or combination of disabilities) not on the list, you would have to show, in order for the child to qualify:

- ▶ That the condition is as severe as a listed condition; AND
- ▶ That the condition keeps the child from being able to do the things that other children the same age can do.

Your grandchild must also be low income, but your income is not counted. There is a rule, though, that could mean a lower SSI check because you help pay your grandchild's bills. To avoid this, insist on what's called a "fair share calculation," showing that the SSI check will be used to pay for your grandchild's "fair share" of family expenses.

You can apply for SSI at your local Social Security Administration office. To find it, you can call 1-800-772-1213.

If your grandchild has severe special needs, he or she may have a right to receive SSI

Save time when applying for any type of benefits by calling first and getting a list of all the information and papers you'll need. Ask how long you may have to wait, so you can schedule your time.

Planning For The Child's Lifelong Security

If you adopt a child in your care, you become that child's parent. Like any parent, you hope to live to raise your child to adulthood, but must plan ahead in case of your incapacity or death.

In planning for your *incapacity*, your plans should include:

► *Durable Power of Attorney.*

This legal document sets out who can make decisions regarding your financial affairs and other matters if you become incapacitated. Incapacity means that you cannot understand what is going on around you because of a stroke, an accident, mental illness, or some other cause. In some states you can delegate your ability to make decisions for a child to another person.

► *Health Care Proxy.*

This document names the person who you wish to have make decisions regarding your personal health care if you are incapacitated.

► *Living Will.*

This document describes your choices regarding life support and other medical interventions when you are incapacitated and in a irreversible vegetative state, i.e., there is no hope of recovery to a meaningful life.

In planning for your *incapacity or death*, your plans should include:

► *Standby Guardian.*

Many states permit certain caregivers to name a successor (a standby) who becomes a child's guardian under certain conditions. These conditions may include: chronic illness, progressively fatal illness, debilitation, incapacity, and death. A standby guardian can be appointed beforehand or designated in writing similar to a will.*

**New York State permits parents, guardians, legal custodians, and certain primary caregivers who cannot locate the natural parents to petition for the appointment of a standby guardian or to designate a standby guardian in a writing similar to a will. In either instance, the standby must confirm their appointment by appearance in court after the condition that starts their guardianship has occurred.*

In planning for your *death*, your plans should include:

▶ *A Will.*

A will is a legal document that sets out what you want to have happen after your death. Your will can and should state a person or couple to be the guardian of your child -someone you trust, who has agreed to take on that responsibility. It's wise to name an alternate guardian, too, in case the first person is unable to serve. A will also states who should inherit any money and property you have. Money intended for your child should go only "in trust" to the person who acts as guardian, not to that person directly. You will need a lawyer to discuss the will with you, write it up, and put it in the proper legal form.

▶ *Life Insurance.*

Unless you have enough money and property to provide for your child if you die unexpectedly, you'll need life insurance. You can buy life insurance from an insurance agent, and you'll pay a set amount each month or year. In return, the policy will pay a much larger sum if you die unexpectedly. You do not need life insurance on the child's life (except, if you wish, in a very small amount to pay funeral expenses).

If you have not adopted, it will be harder to provide for the child in case of your death. You can make a will, but probably cannot name a guardian for the child in the will. (In states that do not have a standby guardianship statute, check with your lawyer to see if your state will allow you to name a new guardian in case of your death.) You can, however, get life insurance and make the child the beneficiary.

Reaching Agreements

Does getting a court order make you think of loud, nasty, courtroom battles? That's a common fear, but usually doesn't happen. In most cases, the grandparents and the parents find a way to agree instead. That probably will happen in your family, too, even if it seems now like you'll never agree. The reason is that few people -including troubled parents -- really want to go to court. Once people calm down and talk to a lawyer, they realize they could lose big in court. If they're caring, they also realize that court fights hurt children. It's better to work out a plan that will provide for the children in a loving way. Two ways to do this include:

► *Negotiation.*

Your lawyer can talk to the lawyers who work for each of the parents, or you can all sit down together with the lawyers to work out a plan.

► *Mediation.*

After you talk with your lawyer, you and the parents can sit down together, without your lawyers -- but with a person trained to help people work out agreements.

Either route can work, if it feels right for you. If you're interested in mediation, ask your lawyer if there are free services through your local court. Talk to your lawyer before you mediate and before you sign anything. This will help you to make a safe and secure agreement.

► *If a parent is missing.*

You may be worried that, because one of the parents is missing, this will hold up an agreement or court order. In most cases, there's no problem. Ask your lawyer early about rules in your state for notice to a missing parent, and the delay, if any, should be brief.

If You Must Go To Court

Sometimes families just can't agree, and a judge must decide. If you really believe that something is needed for a child's security (like you getting custody or adopting) and the parents won't agree, you may have to go to court. No one likes going to court, but it's not the end of the world. You can make the best of it if you:

▶ *Talk to your lawyer first.*

Ask what's likely to happen so you'll have fewer surprises. Court may appoint attorney for adult child.

▶ *Come prepared.*

Practice explaining your concerns to your lawyer or a friend. Bring along some brief notes with dates and main points if you think it will help.

▶ *Be fair.*

You don't need to praise the parents, but don't be afraid to say something good if it's true. The judge will take your concerns more seriously if it is clear you're not speaking in anger or exaggerating.

It's hard for judges to make the best decision based only on what people say in the courtroom. For this reason, the judge may ask someone to visit and talk with you in your home, and also to meet with the parents. Of course, you'll feel nervous -everyone does. But there's no need to worry too much. If you care enough to go to court, it's because you know the children need the stability and care you can give them. Speak frankly and fairly, and your caring will show. The judge may want to talk to the children.

The judge, after gathering enough information, will make a decision. Your lawyer should make sure that all important points – such as visitation, child support, and safety—are covered in the court order.

Finding Help Selecting a Lawyer

An experienced lawyer can advise you about the consequences of the different types of legal custody and help you determine what type would be best for your particular situation. If your grandchild needs cash benefits or medical coverage from the government, a lawyer can help with this, too.

You should shop around for a lawyer who meets all of your needs. Select a lawyer who has worked with cases similar to yours, one who listens, shows respect, and can most effectively represent the best interests of you and the child. It is important to have at least one session with a prospective lawyer before you decide who to hire.

If you are faced with any of the legal concerns mentioned here but are not able to hire an attorney, then you might try the following:

- ▶ ***Call your Local Legal Services or Legal Aid Society.*** These government-sponsored law offices help low-income persons with common legal problems. Look in the government pages of your phone book.
- ▶ ***Call your local Bar Association*** to see if there are any private lawyers who will work for free ("pro bono"), particularly if a case will help more than just one family, or if you are trying to change an unfair law or challenge an unfair state policy.
- ▶ ***Law School Clinics*** - If there is a law school near you, see if they have a clinic that represents grandparents in child welfare and custody cases. A law student will work with you, supervised by an experienced lawyer. To find out what programs exist, call the law school dean's office.

Source: University of Kentucky, County Extension Agents for Home Economics,
<http://www.cas.psu.edu/docs/coext/generations/grand3.html>

Legal Issues for Grandchildren with Special Needs

Laws that Govern Services to Children with Disabilities

There are many federal and state laws that address access to and provision of services (educational, therapeutic, vocational and otherwise). The three most important are:

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

This is an education law for children from birth through age 21. It provides guidelines for the provision of special education and related services at public expense as written in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) so your grandchild receives the most appropriate education. Your grandchild must be educated, to the extent possible, with non-disabled children using appropriate supplementary aids and services.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 is a civil rights act which also applies to children and adults with disabilities who have been denied appropriate services. Section 504 may help a child receive appropriate services if he did not qualify under IDEA. Contact your school district's CPSE/CSE Coordinator to see if she also heads the Section 504 Committee, and ask for a meeting to determine if your grandchild can get the services he needs this way.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Enacted in 1990, ADA bars discrimination for people with disabilities in employment (in private industry employing more than 15 individuals), housing, medical treatment, entertainment, public accommodations, and private nonsectarian schools.

From these federal laws, state laws and procedural documents have been created. Grandparents may contact your local SETRC or VESID offices or the New York State Education Department/Special Education Policy Unit (518-473-2878) for copies of relevant state laws and policies. Ask for:

- ▶ *Part 200 of the Education Commissioner's Rules and Regulations for the Education of Children with Disabilities
- ▶ *NYS Due Process Rights for Parents of Children with Disabilities
- ▶ Guidelines for School Districts regarding the rights of students under Section 504
- ▶ Guidelines on Implementation of the Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- ▶ *Guidelines for Services to Students with Limited English Proficiency and Special Education Needs (Part 154)



Suggested Reading

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6 volumes on different legal topics (English or Spanish).

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Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren; A New Family Paradigm Featured in *Elder Law Attorney*, a publication of the Elder Law Section of the New York State Bar Association, Summer 2000.

Amicus Curiae Brief to the U. S. Supreme Court in the grandparent visitation case, *Troxel v. Granville*.

Regular feature articles in the *Brookdale Senior Rights Report* and the NYSBA *Elder Law Attorney*.

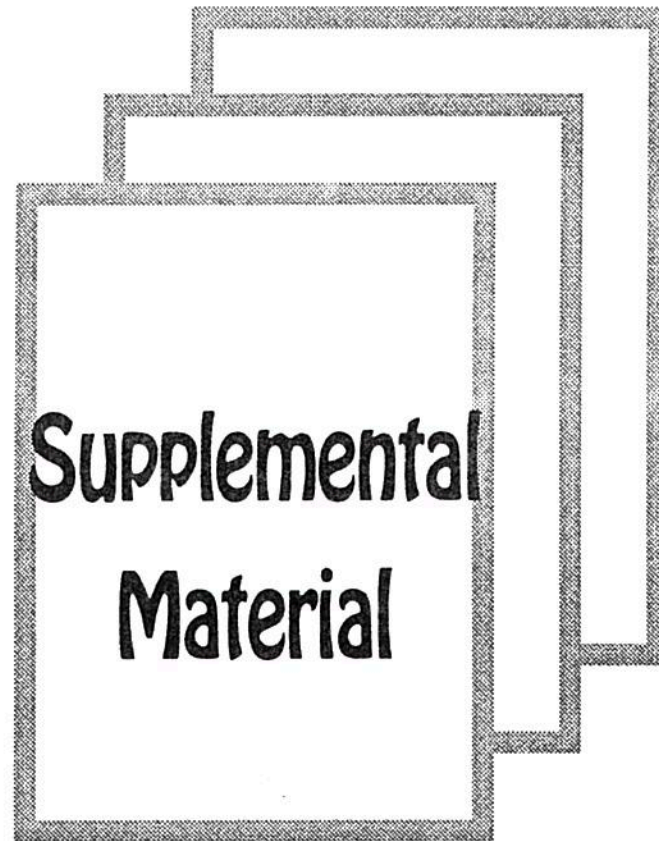
Journal of Gerontology- Social Work. Vol. 34 No. 3, 2001

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By
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Brookdale Center On Aging
Hunter College

published in the

NEW YORK STATE BAR ELDER LAW SECTION'S

ELDER LAW ATTORNEY (Summer 2000)

INTRODUCTION

The dramatic decrease in two parent families, combined with the equally dramatic increase in the numbers of older persons, many of whom are living healthier and longer lives and the accompanying changes in family composition, will affect the future practice of elder law in many ways. The reconfiguration of family life will place an increasing number of grandparents and other aging relatives in the role of primary and secondary caregivers for children, and issues related to their care and control of children will emphasize the interplay of family and elder law. With many grandparents, great grandparents and other older relatives already their clients, elder law practitioners must become familiar with the legal issues that many of their clients are facing in their newly configured intergenerational families. Practitioners should also know about the resources available for such clients. This Article will present the legal issues faced by grandparent and other non-parent primary caregivers of children, an overview of the visitation case currently before the U.S. Supreme Court, a summary of bills recently introduced in the New York State Legislature, and a listing of resources.

I. LEGAL ISSUES FOR NON-PARENT PRIMARY CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN

Older Americans are assuming primary responsibility for raising children whose parents are unavailable to care for them because of divorce, death, incarceration, substance abuse, disability, AIDS, or other circumstances. Although some non-parent caregivers provide full-time care to children for short periods, many provide this care for children over extended periods of time. Legal issues for these elder caregivers for children include their legal relationship with the children (custody, foster care, guardianship, adoption), maintenance of that relationship over time, authority to make educational, medical and other kinds of decisions for the children, financial and other

assistance, and planning for care of the children after their own incapacity or death.

Many non-parent primary caregivers of children are grandparents.¹ Nationally, these grandparents have sole responsibility for more than four million children. The average age of such grandparents is fifty-five, with many being in their sixties and seventies. Virtually all caregiving grandparents provide care to their grandchildren against great odds. Often they must cope with decreased physical endurance, increased isolation from their peers and loss of expected leisure time in their retirement years while experiencing the loss and support of their own children (the grandchildren's parents). Additional stress is caused by uncertainty about the future of their grandchildren either because the grandchildren's parents may return to claim them or because their own aging may mean they will be unable to continue caring for the children over the long term. Finally, the lack of financial resources to care for an expanded household often weighs heavily on the shoulders of grandparent caregivers who often live on fixed incomes.

Although grandparents raising grandchildren are acting as parents, state and federal law provide greater deference to parents based on their fundamental right to raise their children as they see fit. Natural or adoptive parents are secure in the knowledge that they cannot be deprived of their children without clear and convincing evidence of their unfitness as parents,² but grandparents have no such protection when serving as parents. Parents have the necessary legal authority for the successful rearing of children but grandparents do not. Parents are provided with financial and other forms of assistance such as social security benefits for surviving children, intestacy laws to ensure passage of their wealth to their children, foster care payments to persons who take care of needy children, adoption subsidies for foster parents who choose to adopt, and income tax credits to adoptive parents for the cost of private placement adoptions. Few forms of legal and financial

assistance are provided to grandparents who are primary caregivers for children.

Whether caregivers are raising children informally or under court-ordered arrangements, they need legal recognition of their standing, authority to act as substitute parents, and security concerning their relationship with the children. In addition, access to public benefits where appropriate, financial assistance, housing, and other resources is critical. Many of these concerns can be addressed only through legislation and urgently require the attention of lawmakers to change laws and social policies that do not serve the needs of grandparent caregivers. States have yet to adapt their laws and social policies to the realities of the modern family.

I. A. Uncertainties about the Legal Status of Grandparent Caregivers

Generally, three kinds of legal status are available for grandparent caregivers: (1) informal caregiving without a court ordered legal arrangement (sometimes called informal or physical custody); (2) court ordered legal custody or guardianship of the person and/or property; and (3) foster care (kinship or non-relative) under the supervision of the state which retains legal custody of the child. Grandparents who adopt the children for whom they are caring assume the rights and responsibilities of natural parents.

I. A. 1. Informal Caregiver Authority

Without adequately understanding the advantages and disadvantages of each option, caregivers often choose to keep the caregiving arrangement informal because custody, guardianship, kinship foster care, and adoption require unwanted court (or state) intervention that is considered to be antagonistic to fragile family relationships.³ Grandparents with legal custody and guardianship usually do not have much difficulty in making educational and medical decisions for the children in their care.⁴ On the other hand, most informal grandparent caregivers who have only vague legal

recognition are raising children without the educational and medical decision making authority necessary for the successful and stable rearing of children

Diverse statutory descriptive phrases make it difficult to paint a clear picture of the authority of informal caregivers' in New York. For example, the informal relationship is variously described as:

- "Person in parental relation to a child"⁵
- "Person who has assumed the charge and care of the child"⁶
- "Person or persons having the actual custody of such minor or minors"⁷
- "Person having custody of the infant"⁸
- "Person with whom he [an infant] resides"⁹
- Anyone who has a child "chiefly dependent upon him for support and maintenance."¹⁰

Both the Education and Public Health laws provide limited statutory authority for "persons in parental relationship" who are defined as parents, guardians, step-parents and "custodians" (who are any person caring for children because the parents are deceased, mentally ill, incarcerated, have been committed to an institution, or have abandoned or deserted the children). Since frequently one or both parents still live in the community but are incapable of providing care, many informal caregivers do not fall within the definition of "custodian" and are limited in their abilities to make ordinary school and medical decisions for the children. In addition, the Education Law provides that persons in parental relationship have authority and responsibility for most educational needs,¹¹ but the Public Health Law states that they can consent only to immunizations.¹²

One possible solution to this problem would be to provide a simple mechanism by which the parents of the child could delegate their educational and medical decision making authority to

caregivers. Such a mechanism does not exist in New York State at this time.¹³ Although the New York statutory general power of attorney permits, among other things, the delegation of powers related to “personal relationships and affairs”,¹⁴ granting this power to an agent provides only sufficient authority for financial decision making, but not for educational and health care decision making. In many other states, such delegations are already possible. Washington, D.C., California, Minnesota, Delaware and a number of other states have specific legislation covering parental authorizations to informal caregivers.¹⁵ Close to twenty states have adopted the Uniform Probate Code parental power of attorney.¹⁶ Almost all delegations under these statutes are for limited periods of time, ranging from six months to two years, and tend to be renewable by the substitute caregivers. In New York, unfortunately, the lack of statutory authorization of parental delegations remains a limitation on the ability of parents to delegate or transfer their authority.

Additionally, even if children are living with persons in parental relationship, they need to fulfill other criteria in order to qualify for free tuition.¹⁷ School districts often demand proof of legal custody or guardianship as a requirement for school admission or as documentation of residency. Court orders, however, are not required under the Education Law. Instead, students must prove by an examination of the totality of the circumstances that they are permanent residents of the school district, intending to remain permanently in that district.¹⁸ Under most circumstances, grandparent caregivers should not have to go to court to get children accepted (tuition free) for public school in the districts where they reside.

I. A. 2. Legal Custody versus Guardianship

The choice between legal custody and guardianship also lacks certainty. Some county family courts prefer to award legal custody, while others award guardianship of the person to all

non-parents (or only to non-blood relatives). When there is a choice, the decision is invariably based on wrong information. In terms of their practicality, legal custody and guardianship at first appear to be interchangeable.¹⁹ Both are capable of providing sufficient health, educational, and financial authority. However, practical distinctions exist. For instance, numerous laws referring to "parent or guardian"²⁰ do not include legal custodian, and without guardianship, private health insurance providers often refuse to cover dependent children. Unlike guardianship, where the guardian may or may not have actual physical control of the child, legal custody invariably means the actual care, maintenance, supervision and control of the minor. In contrast, other statutes place legal custodians alongside parents and guardians,²¹ and some statutes also add informal custodians to these three.²²

One advantage of guardianship for a grandparent is nevertheless worth mentioning. The Surrogate's Court Procedure Act provides that parents *and guardians* can petition either family court or surrogate's court for the appointment of a standby guardian.²³ They can also designate a standby in a writing similar to a will that states that the designation is effective upon the parent's or guardian's debilitation, incapacity, or death. For aging grandparents who are guardians, not legal custodians, the ability to appoint or designate a standby guardian can provide added security for their grandchildren's futures. Unfortunately, the statute is not always readily available to grandparents because many family courts prefer legal custody to guardianship proceedings.

I. A. 3. Kinship Foster Care

For kinship foster parents, the state retains custody of all children living with foster parents. Kinship foster parents are subject to regulation by the local child welfare agency and federal and state guidelines. They also are vulnerable to removal of children from their homes because they are not the parents of the children. And while until recently, the regulations regarding certification of

kinship foster parents have been more lenient than those for non-kin foster parents, implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)²⁴ may necessitate one set of rules for both kin and non-kin foster parents.

ASFA has placed added pressure on child welfare systems to quicken the pace of adoption. To meet this goal, states are increasingly providing permanency alternatives for kinship foster parents. These alternatives, commonly called subsidized guardianship, usually continue a stipend, based solely on the needs of the children, to replace the foster care support previously available to the family.²⁵ Missouri now offers a stipend to all grandparent caregivers including non-foster parents.²⁶ Subsidized guardianship is not available in New York.²⁷

I. B. 1. Maintaining Custodial Relationships

Unlike parents, third-party custodians (both formal and informal) do not have a fundamental constitutional interest in the permanency of their relationship with the children. Regardless of the nature of the legal relationship between the grandparents and the children, the grandparents' interests are subordinate to the interests of the parents. If the caregivers do not have court orders, parents can simply demand the return of the children and, if necessary, obtain assistance from law enforcement. In such instances, the grandparents' only recourse is to seek an *ex parte* custody order to delay the return of the children to their parents. If the caregivers have court orders, then the parent's demand must start with a court petition. Either situation results in a "third party custody dispute".

In third party custody disputes, New York State courts require an initial finding of "extraordinary circumstances" before the court can consider the usurpation of parents' rights. Once extraordinary circumstances have been found, the court evaluates the "best interest of the child" to determine custody. "Extraordinary circumstances" include parental unfitness, persistent neglect or

abandonment. In *Bennett v. Jeffreys*,²⁸ the New York Court of Appeals added "an unfortunate or involuntary extended disruption of custody" to the list of extraordinary circumstances.²⁹ In *Bennett*, a teenage mother had relinquished her newborn to a family friend under pressure from her mother. After seven years, she sought custody of the child. The Court decided that the length of time in the care of the third party constituted an extraordinary circumstance and that it was in the child's best interest to remain in the only home she had ever known. This additional "extraordinary circumstance" requires a finding of both an uninterested parent and a prolonged stay with a non-parent.³⁰ The questions that haunt custodial grandparent caregivers are what will courts consider an "uninterested" parent and what length of stay with the grandparent will be required to warrant a finding of extraordinary circumstances.³¹

A number of states other than New York consider that after a certain length of time in the care of someone other than the parent, only the best interest of the child should be considered when deciding a custody dispute. Two states, Indiana and Kentucky, protect the security of grandparent caregivers and their grandchildren by deeming the grandparents to be "de facto custodians". When a child has been in the care of a grandparent or other caregiver for a certain amount of time, that caregiver has equal status with a parent in a custody dispute.³² Guardians are also subject to custody challenges by parents.³³

I. B. 2. Notification of Non-custodial Grandparents

A source of insecurity for non-custodial grandparents is that they have almost no rights to notification of custody, guardianship or adoption proceedings involving their grandchildren and may find, after the fact, that the children are in the legal control of others. A few states, like Florida,³⁴ provide for notification of adoption proceedings to grandparents if they have been primary

caregivers for a certain period of time in the past. Once grandparents do find out about the legal custody, guardianship, or adoption of grandchildren, they can still petition for visitation under the grandparent visitation statute.³⁵

II. LIMITATIONS ON PUBLIC BENEFITS

Public benefit programs use broad definitions of caregivers, but these definitions are not uniform, and sometimes can leave out certain relatives, as well as grandparent caregivers.

II. A. Financial and Other Assistance

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) provides that "an allowance may be granted to the aid of such child who has been deprived of parental support or care by reason of the death, continued absence from the home, or physical or mental incapacity of a parent, and who is living with a person related to him by blood, marriage, or adoption eligible to receive aid to dependent children on his behalf pursuant to the federal social security act, the provisions of this chapter and regulations of the department."³⁶ TANF grants may be based on the resources of both indigent caregivers and children, or of indigent children alone. Because both parents have a duty to support their children and their income is deemed available to their children, grandparents who adopt the children (and who are ineligible for public assistance because they have excessive income) will lose TANF grants based only on the income of the child.³⁷

Regulations for the Food Stamp Program use the "household concept" for eligibility and benefit determinations.³⁸ Unlike TANF, children's applications cannot be separated from the application of their caregivers. Together they are considered as one household unit because children necessarily eat with the persons with whom they are residing.

The Child Health Plus Program, which provides health insurance to low income families for

children that do not qualify for Medicaid, uses a broader definition of caregiver, permitting any person upon whom a child is dependent to apply for the program, but the caregiver's income is counted in determining whether any premium must be paid.³⁹

Other types of assistance use other definitions. Some categories are underinclusive, not including full-time caregivers who are great-grandparents, step-grandparents, and aunts and uncles. The Internal Revenue Service grants an Earned Income Credit for a dependent child to an adult who has a "qualifying child," that is, a child who is: (1) a son, daughter, adopted child, grandchild, or stepchild; (2) under age 19, or under age 24 and a student, or any age and disabled; and (3) lived with the caregiver for more than one-half of the year. The Earned Income Credit is also available for any "foster" child, defined as any "child you cared for as your own child" for the entire year.⁴⁰

Under the Social Security Program, children are ineligible for benefits based on earnings of their grandparent caregivers unless they are living full-time with their grandparents when the application for retirement benefits is made *and* the natural parents are dead or disabled, or the children are adopted, or considered to be adopted under the doctrine of equitable adoption. These limited circumstances omit many of the common grandparent or relative caregiver situations.⁴¹

II. B. Housing for Multi-Generational Families

Housing for aging caregivers of young children also poses many legal problems. Multi-generational housing has yet to become a policy priority. In New York City, senior housing units subsidized by the federal Housing and Urban Development Corporation are generally too small for families, and although the New York City Housing Authority has forty-two buildings with senior housing, children are excluded. Grandparents in subsidized senior housing lose eligibility when children move in or the increase in their family size creates ineligibility.⁴²

Efforts to provide special housing for grandparent caregivers are at the startup phase. In Manhattan, Presbyterian Senior Services is developing a sixty-five unit apartment building at 163rd Street and Prospect Avenue specifically for grandparents raising grandchildren. This project is modeled on the successful Granfamilies House in Boston,⁴³ where extensive in-house services are offered along with apartment units tailored for elderly caregivers. The Buffalo municipal housing authority also is developing a plan to build housing for grandparent-headed families. For grandparents who live in “Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities” (NORC’s), defined as housing in which seniors have aged in place and where over 50% of the seniors have below median income, services are now being developed which could include targeted services for seniors raising children.⁴⁴

III. TROXEL V. GRANVILLE: A CASE FOR GRANDPARENT VISITATION RIGHTS

On June 5th, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in *Troxel v. Granville*⁴⁵ that the State of Washington’s visitation statute was unconstitutional. Many media accounts portrayed this decision as a denial of visitation rights to all grandparents. Contrary to the claim of victory by parents’ rights organizations, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and the Brookdale Center on Aging’s Grandparent Caregiver Law Center among others, noted that the decision did not substantially diminish grandparents’ rights. Clearly, the decision in *Troxel v. Granville* does not amount to a clear cut victory for either side. Parents retained their protected liberty interests (although arguably not as strongly protected as before *Troxel*), and grandparents did not gain a right to visitation but retained their privilege to seek visitation (although subject to some judicial deference to parental denial of visitation).

Under review was the decision of the Washington State Supreme Court⁴⁶ which found its

visitation statute unconstitutional because of its broad scope and failure to mandate a finding of harm to a child that would justify state interference. The Washington State visitation statute permitted “any person” to petition a superior court for visitation at “any time”.⁴⁷ It contained no limiting conditions or threshold tests, and permitted judges to base their decision solely on the best interests of the child without consideration of the parent’s wishes. At stake was a petition for visitation by the paternal grandparents for increased visitation with their deceased son's two daughters, who live with their mother Tommie Granville and their adoptive father.

III. A. Conflicting interests in third party visitation

In the arguments leading up to the Supreme Court’s decision, numerous conflicting interests and standards were put forth. Differences in the definition of family and the rights of parents, children, and relatives were argued alongside differing views of what constituted state interference, what justified state interference, and whether the best interest test sufficiently protected the parties’, the child’s, and the state’s interests.

The controversy evoked strong opinions from the public. *Troxel v. Granville* drew a great deal of media attention to the role that grandparents play in the lives of their grandchildren. The legal issues often involve visitation rights when the child’s family changes through death, divorce or remarriage.⁴⁸ Needless to say, when grandparents must seek visitation through the courts, discord and acrimony are rampant in family relations, and parents already feel under attack.

But unlike other states, Washington State’s visitation statute was not just about grandparents, parents, and grandchildren. The U. S. Supreme Court noted that Washington State’s grant of permission to “any person” to petition for visitation with children was “breathtakingly broad” and

that visitation could be ordered if found to be in the child's best interest without deference to the parents' authority.⁴⁹ Other states limit the privilege of seeking visitation to grandparents under certain circumstances, such as visitation sought by the grandparent after the death of the child's parent. These visitation rights are sometimes considered to derive from the right of the deceased parent. In addition, many state statutes permit grandparents to seek visitation when one of the living parents of the child opposes visitation. Only a few states permit a visitation proceeding when both parents oppose visitation.

In many states, grandparents must also show that they had a relationship with their grandchildren, or were prevented by the child's parents from having a relationship with their grandchildren, in order to seek visitation.⁵⁰ Other states limit the right to seek visitation to grandparents who were full-time (primary) caregivers. Once the requirements for standing to seek visitation are satisfied, however, all states use the best interest of the child standard to decide visitation rights. Some statutes explicitly require deference to parental decisions, and judges commonly apply a rebuttable presumption that parents act in their child's best interest.⁵¹

In this case, the Troxel's, parents of the deceased father, had sought increased visitation with their son's out-of-wedlock children who live with their remarried mother. The mother, Tommie Granville, had agreed to the grandparents visiting their grandchildren once a month, but the Troxel's wanted more. Unfortunately, not only was the statute unrepresentative of other state statutes, but the issues were further complicated by the grandparents' request for additional visitation.

The potential stakes were so high that over twenty *amicii curiae* filed briefs by the end of November 1999. If the Court's decision had found the Washington State statutes unconstitutional

on broader grounds, visitation between tens of thousands of grandparents and grandchildren could have ended.

III. B. Which standard of review?

In reaching its decision, the U. S. Supreme Court rejected at least two standards of review. Until this decision, the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment had generally been considered to include protection of parental autonomy as a fundamental liberty interest. In order to justify state intrusion, states must have a compelling reason, such as the prevention of substantial harm to children. The Washington Supreme Court had followed this standard and declared that the U. S. Supreme Court's earlier decisions clearly indicated that to comply with the U. S. Constitution's guarantee of privacy, non-parent visitation statutes must require proof that the absence of visitation will harm the child.⁵² The Washington Supreme Court decided that the loss of contact between grandparents and grandchildren did not rise to the level of harm contemplated by the past rulings of the United States Supreme Court. The Washington Court also found the statutes at issue overly broad, both in the class of persons who could petition and in the lack of any threshold conditions.

The Washington Supreme Court's dissent asserted that parents' rights are not absolute and that the level of interference with those rights concerning visitation did not rise to the level of a compelling state interest. According to the Washington dissent, the U.S. Supreme Court cases cited by the majority combined family autonomy with another fundamental interest.⁵³ Since no other fundamental interest of the parents needed protection, harm was the wrong standard, and in its absence, the best interest test was a sufficient safeguard of the children's and parents' interests.

In addition, the Washington Supreme Court decided that because the statute failed to contain

a requirement that the court must find harm to the child before ordering visitation, the statutes *on their faces* violated the U. S. Constitution. During oral arguments on January 12th, both Chief Justice Rehnquist and Justice Scalia referred to the facial challenge, but the remarks of the Justices left unclear whether they would base their decision on the facial challenge. Neither the harm standard nor the facial challenge eventually provided the basis for the Supreme Court's decision.

Faced with uncertainty regarding the standard and scope of review, the briefs of the parties and the *amicii* covered a wide range of arguments, some focusing on what constitutes harm, interference, and even family, and others addressing whether the best interest test adequately protects the interests of all of the parties. Briefs also considered the nature of the interests of parents, grandparents, children, and states. Both parties in oral argument spent considerable energies debating whether the best interest standard sufficiently protected the parent's interests.

III. C. For the parent, Tommie Granville

The Coalition for the Restoration of Parental Rights argued that neither precedent nor justification exists for granting grandparents the right to impose their will on parents, and that the coerced removal of children from the parent's custody is a greater interference than those interferences which the Court previously found unjustifiable. Furthermore, they argued that the visitation proceeding itself is a cause of substantial harm to children.

The Domestic Violence Project et al also asserted that the threshold of parental unfitness had not been crossed and that, absent such a finding, "intrusions" into parental authority are not "acceptable". To permit state legislatures to define fundamental constitutional rights would create different fundamental rights in different states.

The National Association of Counsel for Children focused on the Washington State statutes'

failure to provide threshold tests that would inhibit standing by any person under any circumstances. The Association saw this as placing an impermissible burden on parents. However, the Association asked that the Court defer judgment on children's rights, because this case is the wrong vehicle for a sweeping decision.

The Christian Legal Society and the National Association of Evangelicals conceded that narrowly drawn grandparent visitation statutes could serve a compelling state interest. They argued, however, that the Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process Clause protects the autonomy of the family, providing "fundamental rights" that warrant strict scrutiny, not a "sliding scale". This right is doubly protected in this instance because it is combined with another fundamental right, free speech, inasmuch as parents must be free to communicate their values, a form of "expressive communication" protected by the First Amendment.

III. D. For the grandparents, the Troxel's

The National Conference of State Legislatures, Council of State Governments, National Association of Counties, U. S. Conference of Mayors, et al argued that the Washington Supreme Court applied the wrong standard and that the Supreme Court's precedents actually did not require strict scrutiny. "Absent infringement of some other constitutional right, State action which implicates the parental liberty interest in bringing up children must be sustained if it has a reasonable relation to some purpose within the competency of the State." (citing *Wisconsin v. Yoder*).

Grandparents United for Children's Rights, Inc. proposed that children had the right to "liberty and protection in maintaining relationships with their grandparents" and that the best interest standard protected this right.

The *AARP* brief, joined by *Generations United*, pointed to the far-reaching consequences of

the Court's decision and argued that the fragmentation of family life necessitated extraordinary efforts to provide children with stability. Furthermore, the AARP argued that states had not awarded grandparents any rights, but the opportunity to provide a benefit to children. The AARP also found the intrusion not a "substantial infringement of parents' rights".

Finally, *the Grandparent Caregiver Law Center of the Brookdale Center on Aging at Hunter College* argued that visitation statutes were inherently concerned with the harm caused to children by the forcible cessation of contact with persons who had established loving relationships with them and that the state interest in preventing this harm justified an inquiry into the best interest of the child.

III. E. Oral arguments

In January's oral arguments, the Justices, six of whom are grandparents, focused their questions on the need for finding a harm to be prevented and whether the best interest test adequately protects parental interests. Justice O'Connor opened with an inquiry about harm to the child. But the attorneys for both parties continued to center their arguments on the best interest test. The grandparent's attorney argued that harm was not the touchstone of the case because intrusion on the family was minor, that the liberty interest had adequate protection, and that the best interest standard provided the best outcome. The Justices appeared skeptical of these assertions. The parent's attorney argued that deference to parental child-rearing should make the subjective intention of the parent (to act in the child's best interests) the measure of what is in the child's best interests. Justice Scalia expressed incredulity at the use of a subjective standard.

When the U. S. Supreme Court finally rendered its decision. The Court attempted to incorporate much of the arguments put forth by both sides, and the ruling appears more important for

what is implied than asserted.

III. F. The Supreme Court's decision

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor authored the plurality opinion which was joined by Chief Justice Rehnquist and Justices Ginsburg, and Breyer. Justices Souter and Thomas wrote separate concurrences; and Justices Scalia, Stevens, and Kennedy authored separate dissents.

Commentators originally thought the U. S. Supreme Court had accepted review because a conflict regarding the constitutionality of visitation statutes had arisen. The Supreme Court of Washington State had agreed with Florida, Kentucky and Tennessee in finding their visitation statutes unconstitutional.⁵⁴ Other states had reached the opposite conclusion.⁵⁵ In states that declared their visitation statute unconstitutional, reasoning was centered on the need for states to find harm to the child.

Instead of resolving the issue, the plurality declared that the constitutionality of visitation cases should be decided on a case by case basis - - not by examining the statute *per se*, but by examining the particular application of the statute to a particular case. This declaration amounts to a victory for grandparents because no state statute automatically becomes unconstitutional.

Nevertheless, the language of the opinion contained statements extremely favorable to parental rights. Justice O'Connor wrote: "[S]o long as a parent adequately cares for his or her children (*i.e.* is fit), there will normally be no reason for the State to inject itself into the private realm of the family to further question the ability of that parent to make the best decisions concerning the rearing of that parent's children." This would appear to settle the question in favor of the parent, Tommie Granvile whose fitness was not in question, except that in her next sentence, Justice O'Connor declared that in this case intervention is permissible. Justice

O'Connor found the application of the statute unconstitutional because the trial judge "gave no special weight at all to Granville's determination of her daughters' best interests." This strongly suggests that so long as courts apply a presumption that a parent's denial of visitation is in the child's best interest, fit parents receive adequate protection from unwarranted state interference. Thus, judicial decisions that contain explicit explanations of why the presumption has been rebutted should be constitutional.⁵⁶

The Court apparently chose not to limit all state interference with families to instances where parents were unfit. The plurality opinion circumvented the necessity for proof of parental unfitness, and two dissenters clearly did not limit state interference to unfit parents. Justice Kennedy's dissent recognized that there could arise cases "in which a third party, by acting in a caregiving role over a significant period of time, has developed a relationship with a child which is not necessarily subject to absolute parental veto." Justice Stevens considered that the trial judge had given sufficient deference to the parent's denial of visitation. He also asserted that there may be instances where a child's interest deserves protection even if it is not directly related to a potential harm to the child.

Six justices wrote *dicta* that conceivably could permit state statutes to increase the class of persons who may seek visitation to include persons who assume parental duties. The plurality mentioned favorably the possibility that grandparents and other relatives who have undertaken "duties of a parental nature" might seek visitation. Justices Kennedy and Stevens suggested that grandparents and persons who acted as caregivers may seek visitation.

The Court appeared to search for a way to balance the interests of parents and those who had substantial relationships with children. The plurality noted that the "cost" of permission to

seek visitation was the burden placed on parent-child relationships. Other opinions admitted that under a number of circumstances state intervention is permissible so long as the causes for interference sufficiently outweigh the reasons for the parent's denial of visitation. In effect, the Court left open a wide avenue for grandparents and other relatives to pursue visitation.

While the plurality opinion noted that the "breathtakingly broad" statute permitted "any person" – "at any time" to seek visitation, the four Justices did not base their ruling on the statute's broadness, although their comments make it likely that statutes this broad would be found unconstitutional.

Interpretation of the Court's decision is assisted by recognizing what the Court chose not to do. The plurality chose not to address the need for a finding of harm, but rather validated the use of a rebuttable presumption as a sufficient safeguard of parental interest. Justice Souter affirmed the facial unconstitutionality because he saw the class of persons who could seek visitation as too broad. He too chose not to address the harm issue. While Justices Kennedy and Stevens addressed this issue, they rejected the harm standard as too confining and not an accurate reflection of the Supreme Court's previous rulings. Justice Scalia not only did not address the harm standard, but he did not comment on any test, because he would leave visitation statutes squarely in the hands of state legislatures. He declared that parental interests were not mentioned in the Constitution and thus are not a proper subject for the Supreme Court's review. Although Justice Thomas did not expressly refer to the harm standard, he alone opined that strict scrutiny was the proper standard of review, and therefore implicitly limited state interference to situations where there is a potential for harm to the child. The reasoning of the case appears to quiet the debate over the harm standard while tacitly avoiding a direct renunciation of it.

While the Supreme Court's ruling leaves much that can be implied and little that is easily confirmed, it clearly safeguards state grandparent visitation statutes from constitutional challenges. Grandparents are not in danger of losing their visitation privileges.

In New York, to have standing to seek visitation, courts have interpreted the grandparent visitation statute to demand a showing by grandparents that they have a relationship with their grandchild or have been prevented by the parents from establishing such a relationship.⁵⁷ This threshold test provides initial protection to fit parents from unreasonable petitions for visitation. Because New York's courts have coupled this threshold test with a strong reluctance to order visitation that is destructive to the parent-child relationship, the statute, as usually applied, offers little opportunity for a constitutional challenge. New York's grandparents will continue to be able to seek visitation, and they will continue to have an uphill battle to convince courts that their petition should be granted.

IV. LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES IN NEW YORK STATE

Prior to the 1990's, New York was active in its pursuit of assistance for non-parent caregivers. In 1966, the State enacted the first grandparent visitation statute. In 1975, the State Legislature enlarged the conditions for seeking visitation and permitted grandparents to petition in the face of the united resistance of intact nuclear families; *i.e.*, both natural parents. A year later, the N.Y. Court of Appeals recognized that under certain extraordinary circumstances non-parents could be awarded custody. In the late 1980's, the state enacted one of the first standby guardian statutes and was one of the first states to offer foster care payments to relatives.

For the past few years, a number of bills pertaining to non-parent caregivers have languished before the State Legislature. Some of these bills contain elements of a complete

continuum – recognition, authority, security, financial and resource assistance, but until late March this year, comprehensive packaging had yet to emerge. The following is a summary of recent legislative initiatives in New York State related to grandparents and other non-parent caregivers.

A07052/S6000 (Parental Authorization of Caregivers) would provide for a written instrument similar to a power of attorney that would permit parents to sign over responsibility for school enrollment, attendance and activities, and medical decision making, to any persons of their choice who are primary caregivers of their children. The parents would choose what authority to transfer and could revoke their authorizations at will. Any authorized caregiver possessing such a properly notarized instrument would have the authority to make most of the necessary day-to-day decisions for children in their care. Both educational and medical providers would be released from liability for their reliance on this authorization. This Bill could lessen the number of unnecessary family court petitions for custody or guardianship, because school districts and medical providers could no longer ask for court orders before accepting a primary caregiver's authority.

S2976 (Concurrent Kinship Adoption) and **A4829 (Kinship Guardianship)** create new legal relationships for kinship foster parents and their charges. Both Bills predate the federal 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) which placed increased emphasis on permanency planning for children in foster care, but which exempted kinship foster parents from that mandate. ASFA left kinship foster parents in a legal limbo, in need of alternative permanency plans.

“Concurrent Kinship Adoption” hybridizes adoption law and legal custody, enabling

kin to adopt without terminating parental rights. Instead, concurrent custodial rights would be shared by both sets of parents with primary custody awarded to the new kinship adoptive parents. Kinship adoption may enable caregivers to qualify for the federal adoption subsidy .

“**Kinship Guardians**” would be ineligible for the federal adoption subsidy. In order for kinship guardians to qualify for federally subsidized guardianship, New York must seek a waiver from the federal government.⁵⁸ This Bill, like concurrent kinship adoption, permits parents to maintain visitation with children.

S1970/A3328 (Grandparent Resource Centers) would establish centers in each of the fifty-nine local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). These centers would help link grandparents with relevant service delivery systems in the local community. They would be modeled on New York City’s successful Grandparent Resource Center, part of the Department for the Aging. These resource centers could offer: a hotline for information and referral, technical assistance and training for support groups, publications, educational seminars, and conferences.

S1621/A2795 (great-grandparents) and **S1531/A603 (step-grandparents)** would add great-grandparents and step-grandparents (in addition to grandparents) as persons authorized by Domestic Relations Law § 72 to petition either the supreme courts or family courts for visitation with children. Both Bills deal with the reality of our fragmented families. In the past, these Bills have passed one of the houses. However, no movement on these two Bills may be possible, until the Supreme Court of the United States renders its decision on grandparent visitation sometime this June.

A2542 would extend the list of persons who can seek visitation to include any relative within the third degree of consanguinity. Like grandparent visitation, the constitutionality of this

measure will be affected by the pending U. S. Supreme Court case.

S4058/A1888 would allow grandparents who have the written permission of their grandchildren's parents or persons having legal custody to participate in school parent associations or parent-teacher associations in New York City.

S4887/A5038 would require that authorized adoption agencies provide to the court a signed statement from the adoptive parents, acknowledging that the natural grandparents could retain visitation rights after the adoption of their grandchildren.

S3394 would create a commission to study the need for an increase in compensation for law guardians and assigned counsels. Increased compensation is backed by Chief Judge Judith Kay who made it part of her recommendations to the Committee to Promote Public Trust and Confidence in the Legal System. Oftentimes, grandparents feel that their role as caregivers is not understood. For law guardians and assigned counsels in family courts, the compensation increase would strengthen their ability to adequately represent families.

A120/S255 would raise the maximum age of male persons in need of supervision to eighteen. Family courts would have jurisdiction to supervise both males and females until they reached this age. Boys, between sixteen and eighteen, who were runaways or difficult to control, would now come under the jurisdiction of family courts, and caregivers would have court assistance in controlling them.

A10429, the "Grandparents Guardianship Act", would solve numerous problems that grandparent caregivers confront in family courts, the foster care system and public assistance. The Bill would: create a specific legal status, called grandparent guardianship, apart from legal custody or guardianship, with safeguards against unwarranted reunification and loss of visitation

(by defining the period of time in a grandparents' care that warrants a presumption that it is in a child's best interest to remain in their care). Also provided are a stipend, equal to seventy-five percent of the foster care rate, for grandparent guardians, and assigned counsel to grandparent guardians in legal custody, guardianship, adoption, and visitation proceedings. When child welfare personnel approach grandparents to take over the care and custody of children, this Bill requires written acknowledgment from grandparents that they do not want to seek to become kinship foster parents. This acknowledgement would insure that caregivers had the chance to become kinship foster parents.⁵⁹ The Bill also adds provisions for the creation of grandparent resource centers in each county office for the aging.

This bill combines provisions from the most recent legislation around the country with other comprehensive solutions to many of the legal problems grandparent caregivers are facing. Based on the principle that just as parents are the natural guardians of their children, so too are grandparents their natural substitute guardians, the Bill affirms that grandparents are doing the job that the state would have to do, but for their sacrifice. While there are still other issues, like respite⁶⁰ and child care, the proposed Grandparent Guardianship Act would offer great relief to overburdened elderly caregivers and reflects many of the solutions recommended by the Grandparent Caregiver Law Center.

V. RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVING GRANDPARENTS

Assistance for grandparent caregivers include support groups, referral services, and newsletters. The following is a short review of some of the programs now available in New York State.

* The State Office for the Aging (SOFA) offers technical assistance to county area

offices on aging in setting up grandparent support groups and also publishes a statewide newsletter, called "Kincare Connection".

* Cornell Cooperative Extensions, Catholic Charities, the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, and the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies all offer assistance.

* Grandparent organizations, like Grandparents Reaching Out on Long Island and Miracle Makers in Brooklyn, provide both support groups, some respite services, and legal referrals.

* The New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) has a very successful Grandparent Resource Center. The Center helps to set up support groups, publishes reference materials, including a resource guide, and provides a help-line.

* The Brooklyn Grandparents Coalition publishes its own newsletter (many organizations are doing this) and has an extensive array of activities and services for grandparents.

* Family Services of Westchester created a county reference guide that other counties now use as a template for their own guides.

* The Brookdale Foundation offers limited financial support for agencies interested in developing programs for caregiving grandparents.

VI. ABOUT THE GRANDPARENT CAREGIVER LAW CENTER

The Grandparent Caregiver Law Center (GCLC) of the Brookdale Center on Aging of Hunter College, CUNY, is a not-for-profit program, funded with support from the Interest on Lawyer Account (IOLA) Fund of New York State and private foundations. The program is unique in the United States because it combines research and policy analysis with hands-on

assistance to grandparent caregivers and to professionals who help address the grandparents' real-world problems. Although there are growing numbers of support groups for grandparents, often initiated by social service agencies, which focus on grandparent caregivers, no other existing organization has this particular combination of legal and practical problem-solving expertise.

The GCLC, a member of the multi-agency Kinicare Taskforce of New York City, is the major source for legal information on issues related to grandparents in New York State. The Center offers assistance to non-attorney advocates, public schools, religious institutions, the aging services network, the child welfare system, legislators and other government officials, legal professionals, and individual grandparents concerning their rights and authority in the absence of the children's parents. The Center has contributed to successful outcomes of family disputes for countless numbers of grandparents, improving the well-being and future prospects for the children involved.

The Center publishes a series of booklets for grandparents in English and Spanish, and has written professional articles and county reference guides for grandparents in New York State. The materials are subject to ongoing legal and editorial review to insure that they remain up to date. In addition, a monograph written by the current director, Gerard Wallace, "*The Dilemma of Kinship Care: Grandparents as Guardians, Custodians and Caregivers - Options for Reform*", has been published by the Government Law Center at Albany Law School. Most recently the Center's Director submitted an *amicus curiae* brief to the Supreme Court of the United States in support of the rights of grandparents to request visitation with their grandchildren. The brief was featured in the monthly "Supreme Court Debates", published by

the Congressional Digest.

¹ While grandparents naturally have a special relationship with their grandchildren, many others, both relatives and non-relatives, are providing care. In this Article, reference is usually made to grandparent caregivers; however, the legal issues, other than visitation, are fairly similar for grandparents and other non-parental caregivers.

² *Santosky v. Kramer*, 455 U.S. 745 (1982), *on remand*, 89 A.D.2d 738, 453 N.Y.S.2d 942 (3d Dep't 1982).

³ Renee S. Woodworth, *You Are Not Alone... You Are One in a Million*, 75 Child Welfare League of America Journal of Policy, Practice, and Program 619, 631 (Sept./Oct. 1996).

⁴ While guardianship and legal custody offer legal recognition, they too present uncertainties about decision making authority. For example, legal custody implies the ability to make medical decisions, but there is no statutory basis for this authority. See, N.Y. Public Health Law § 2504. Also, both legal custody and guardianship are temporary and could be barriers to school admission and relocation of residence. See, *Matter of Linton*, 12/18/98 New York Law Journal 38 (col. 3). In foster care, legal custody remains with the state which must authorize educational and medical decisions.

⁵ This phrase is used in both the Education Law and the Public Health Law. The Public Health Law omits step-parents. Both definitions omit legal custodians and full time informal caregivers of children whose parents are present in the community. N. Y. Educ. Law § 3212 and N.Y. Public Health Law § 2164.

⁶ N.Y. Pub. Health Law § 442.

⁷ N.Y. Ben. Ord. Law § 2.

⁸ N.Y. Art & Cult. Aff. Law §§ 35.03(2)(c), 35.05.

⁹ N.Y. Civ. Prac. L. & R. § 309(a).

¹⁰ N.Y. Ins. Law § 4305(c)(1); See also §§ 3216 (a)(3), 4235(f)(1), 4304(d)(1).

¹¹ N.Y. Educ. Law § 3212(2). See also: N.Y. Educ. Law § 4111 (Indian child truant returned to person in parental relation; schooling record, issuance, person in parental relation); N.Y. Educ. Law § 3222 (school records); N.Y. Educ. Law § 4402 (Committee on Special Education can deal with person in parental relationship); N.Y. Educ. Law § 4107 (person in parental relation to an Indian child can be held criminally responsible for attendance), N.Y. Educ. Law § 4106 (duties of person in parental relation to Indian Children). See also, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), 34 U.S.C. §. 300.20(a). But, parents and guardians retain exclusive powers for some school situations. Only parents and guardians can consent to school drug testing, N. Y. Educ. Law § 912-a; receive tuition reimbursement, N.Y. Educ. Law § 562; consent for employment certificate, N.Y. Educ. Law § 3217, N.Y. Educ. Law § 2119 and farm work permits, N.Y. Educ. Law § 3226; and in attendance conflicts with religion of parent or guardian, can be absent from education, N.Y. Educ. Law § 3204.

¹² N.Y. Public Health Law § 2164.

¹³ The arrangements that parents and grandparents have created without state involvement exist apart from lawful custody as it is defined in the Domestic Relations Law. However, they are a form of "custody" and in

practice family courts recognize the person who has informal custody and provide notice to "a party having care, custody, and control", N.Y. Dom. Law § 71 and "any person who has physical custody", N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 75-c. *But see*, N.Y. Civ. Prac. L. & R. § 1201. Regarding the authority of informal caregivers, statutes offer only limited powers. Statutes permit the delegation of parental authority for transfers of "care and custody" to the local social service department, N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law § 384-a(1), and for certain recreational activities, N.Y. Envtl. Conser. Law §§ 1-0920, 1-0715.

¹⁴ N.Y. Gen. Oblig. Law § 5-1502I, "Personal Relationships and Affairs" provides that the agent may be appointed: "to do any other act or acts, which the principal can do through an agency, for the welfare of the spouse, children, or dependents of the principal or for the preservation and maintenance of the other personal relationships of the principal to parents, relatives, friends and organizations." While it can be argued that this authority includes education and medical, in practice it has been used exclusively for financial needs. This subdivision specifically refers to real and personal property. N.Y. Gen. Oblig. Law § 5-1502I(14).

¹⁵ *See, e.g.*, D. C. Code Ann. § 16-4901.

¹⁶ UPC § 5-102.

¹⁷ Free tuition requires residence in the school district. N.Y. Educ. Law § 3202.

¹⁸ 34 Educ. Dept. Rep. 551, 603; 35 Educ. Dept. Rep. 61; *Matter of Moncrieffe*, 121 Misc. 2d 395. (Surr. Ct. Nassau Co. 1983).

¹⁹ In 1996, the Government Law Center (GLC) at Albany Law School mailed surveys to family courts, surrogate's courts, and law guardians asking what were the practical distinctions between legal custody and guardianship of the person. The answers were often contradictory. Some respondents considered the two interchangeable or stated that the differences were obscure. *See* responses to the GLC questionnaire concerning the practical distinction between legal custody and guardianship, published in Appendix A of the report by Gerard Wallace and Megan Miner, "The Dilemma of Kinship Care: "Grandparents as Guardians, Custodians, and Caregivers – Options for Reform", Albany Law School Government Law Center, April 1998). *See also*, Sandra B. Edlitz, "Guardianship and Custody: Is There a Distinction?", *New York Law Journal* (March 21, 2000).

²⁰ *See, e.g.*, N.Y. Al. Bev. Law § 65-c (2)(b)(Only a parent or guardian can give alcoholic beverages to a person under the age of twenty-one); N.Y. Al. Bev. Law § 99-f (Only a parent(s) or lawful guardian(s) can petition the liquor authority to obtain a special permit allowing any person under the age of eighteen to perform as an entertainer in an establishment licensed to sell alcoholic beverages); N.Y. Civ. R. Law § 509 (Only a parent or guardian can provide written consent for the use of a minor's portrait or picture for advertising purposes); N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 15 (Only a parent or guardian may consent to the marriage of a minor, unless to the minor's knowledge neither parent nor guardian is living, then the written consent of the "person under whose care or government the minor or minors may be before a license shall be issued"); N.Y. Ment. Hyg. Law § 9.90 (Only a parent or guardian or the mental hygiene legal service may consent to the transfer of a mentally ill minor); N.Y. Pub. Health Law § 1399-ff (only a parent or guardian can make a complaint regarding sale of tobacco products to their child); N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law § 384 (1)(d) (Adoption); N.Y. Veh. & Tr. Law § 2410 (Only a parent or guardian can allow an unattended child under sixteen to operate an ATV upon their property); N.Y. Ins. Law § 321(c) (Only a parent or guardian can consent to release of medical information.); N.Y. Pub. Health Law § 2442 (Only a parent or guardian or a "person legally empowered to act on behalf of the human subject" may consent in writing to human research upon a minor); N.Y. Pub. Health Law § 2961 (18) and § 2967 (Only a parent [who has custody of the minor] or a legal guardian can consent to orders not to resuscitate). N.Y. Gen. Oblg. Law § 3-112 (Only a parent,

guardian, local social services department, or foster parent is liable for property damages caused by a minor). In addition, the authority of non-parent legal custodians to make medical decisions is not routinely included in custody orders and no statutory authority permits them to do so.

²¹ See, e.g., N.Y. Civ. Prac. L. & R. § 1201 (an infant can appear by representation in court only by his parent(s) guardian, or legal custodian).

²² See, e.g., N. Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 15(2)) (Parents or guardians can consent to marriage); N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 15 ("[I]f there is no parent or guardian of the minor or minors living to their knowledge, then the town or city clerk shall require the written consent to the marriage of the person under whose care or government the minor or minors may be before a license shall be issued."); N.Y. Art & Cult. Affr. Law § 35.05 (Only a "parent or parents having custody, or other person having custody of the infant" may acquiesce to court approval of a contractual obligation binding an infant, or to obtain or consent to the employment or exhibition of such minor as a model); N.Y. Civ. Prac. L. & R. § 309(a) (A parent or guardian or "any other person with whom he reside" may be the recipient of personal service upon an infant); N.Y. Educ. Law § 3212 (Only a person in parental relation to a child can take charge of a child's education). See also N.Y. Pub Health Law § 2164 (a similar definition of a person in parental relation to a child provides that such a person can consent to immunization).

²³ N.Y. Surr. Ct. Proc. Act § 1726.

²⁴ U. S. Pub. Law 105-89, enacted in November of 1997, lessened efforts to reunify children with parents convicted of certain felonies, mandated criminal record checks of all foster and adoptive parents and any one else who is residing in their homes, and compelled states to initiate termination of parental rights proceedings whenever a child was in the care and custody of the state for at least fifteen of the past twenty-two months.

²⁵ See, e.g., Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code §§ 11360-11370.

²⁶ Mo. Rev. Stat. § 208.029.

²⁷ There are two bills that could provide for subsidies before the New York Legislature. See this article, Part V. Legislative Initiatives in New York State. The only mechanism in New York for softening the family disunity caused by relative adoption is N. Y. Soc. Serv. Law 383-c, which permits surrendering parents to condition their surrender on the agreement of the adoptive (foster) parents for continued contact between the natural parent(s) and the child(ren). Such agreements, unlike private placement adoption agreements, are legally enforceable.

²⁸ *Bennett v. Jeffreys*, 40 N.Y.2d 543 (1976).

²⁹ *Id.* at 550.

³⁰ Carol A. Creaky, CONTINUITY OF RESIDENCE AS FACTOR IN CONTEST BETWEEN PARENT AND NONPARENT FOR CUSTODY OF CHILD WHO HAS BEEN WITH NONPARENT-MODERN STATUS, 15 A.L.R. 5th 692, citing *Bannister v. Bannister*, 81 App. Div. 2d 91 (1981 2d Dep't). Courts will often couple the time period with the fact that the child has a psychological bond with the third party or would be harmed by removal, but the extended disruption is the foundation for a finding of extraordinary circumstances.

³¹ Indigent grandparent caregivers with informal custody also are not assured of assigned counsel. Family courts usually do not provide counsel unless indigent grandparents have court orders. See, Family Ct. Act § 262.

Courts usually will not find a prolonged disruption of custody when the parent remains in the grandparent's home, despite the assumption of parental duties by the grandparent.

³² See, Indiana H.B. 1445 (1999) and Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 403.270.

³³ *Matter of Linton*, 12/18/98, New York Law Journal, 38, (col.3).

³⁴ Fla. Stat. § 63.0425.

³⁵ N.Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 72.

³⁶ N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law § 349(B)(1).

³⁷ N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law § 349(C).

³⁸ Code of Rules and Regulations of the State of New York. Ch. II, Regulations of the Dept. of Social Services, Part 387, Food Stamps Program, § 387.1(w).

³⁹ For information, contact the Children's Defense League, 212-697-2323.

⁴⁰ I.R.S. Schedule EIC (Form 1040A) instruction booklet, at 2, 42. Note the expansive definition of "foster child."

⁴¹ In deciding who has been equitably adopted, the Social Security Administration will include a child who is adopted by a surviving spouse after the death of a worker, and will accept any child deemed to be equitably adopted under state law. U.S.C. § 216. In New York, equitable adoption is possible in limited situations where the natural and adoptive parent(s) had reached an agreement before the death of the adoptive parents. *Rodriguez v. Morris*, 136 Misc.2d 103 (Surr. Ct., Suffolk Ct. 1987).

⁴² Naomi Karp, "Legal Problems of Grandparents and Other Kinship Caregivers", *GENERATIONS*, Journal of the American Society on Aging, Vol. XX, No. 1 (Spring, 1996).

⁴³ Boston Aging Concerns Young & Old United, Inc. (BAC-YOU) and the Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development developed the project using an old YMCA building.

⁴⁴ For more information, contact the Department for the Aging, Senior Housing, at 212-442-0917.

⁴⁵ *Troxel v. Granville*, 530 U. S. ___ (2000). Supreme Court Docket # 99-138.

⁴⁶ *In re Smith*, 137 Wash. 2d 1 (1998).

⁴⁷ Former Revised Code of Washington § 26.10.160(3).

⁴⁸ Approximately one in ten grandparents have been primary caregivers for children. After the children are returned to their parents, those parents sometimes cease contact with the grandparents. Grandparents may then be forced to seek visitation in the courts to maintain contact with the grandchildren for whom they previously cared.

⁴⁹ Statutes in Hawaii, Massachusetts, Virginia, and Connecticut have laws permitting judges to grant visitation or custody to persons unrelated to children. For example, see Conn. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 46b-59. Courts in

Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts have granted some visitation to non-natural parents.

⁵⁰ N. Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 72 permits grandparents to seek visitation whenever "equity" would see fit. Courts have interpreted "equity" to give standing to grandparents who have had a relationship with their grandchildren or been thwarted by the parents from having such a relationship, despite the opposition of both natural parents.

⁵¹ Stephen Elmo Averett, Grandparent Visitation Right Statutes, Brigham Young University Journal of Public Law (1999).

⁵² Citing *Meyer v. Nebraska*, 262 U.S. 390 (1923); *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, 268 U.S. 510 (1925); and *Prince v. Massachusetts*, 321 U.S. 158 (1944).

⁵³ For example, parental autonomy and religious freedom, *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, 406 U.S. 204 (1972).

⁵⁴ Violated U. S. Constitution, *Brooks v. Parkerson*, 265 Ga. 189 (1995); violated state constitutions, *Hawk v. Hawk*, 855 S.W.2d 573 (Tenn.1993) and *Beagle v. Beagle*, 678 So.2d 1271 (Fla.1996).

⁵⁵ Over a dozen states have found statutes constitutional. See, e.g., *King v. King*, 828 S.W.2d 630 (Ky. 1992) (cert. denied). See also, Kathryn Katz, "Mandated Visitation with Grandparents in Intact Families: The Need for Reform", *Aging Matters*, Government Law Center at Albany Law School (Winter, 1998).

⁵⁶ The Supreme Court cited the grandparents attempt to increase visitation as an aggravating circumstance which combined with the trial judge's failure to apply the traditional rebuttable presumption favoring parental decisions resulted in the visitation order being unconstitutional.

⁵⁷ *Emmanuel S. v. Joseph E.*, 78 N.Y.2d 178 (1991). See also, Practice Commentaries by Alan D. Scheinkman, N. Y. Dom. Rel. Law § 72 (McKinney, 1999).

⁵⁸ The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has a five year waiver program for funds available through Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Eight states and the District of Columbia have received waivers.

⁵⁹ Many county child welfare agencies, despite the preference for kinship foster care in N.Y. Fam. Ct. Act § 1017(1) and N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law § 384-a(1-a), attempt to avoid offering kinship foster to grandparents. See also, State of New York Office of the State Comptroller, Division of Management Audit, Department of Social Services Kinship Foster Care Report, 95-106 (Nov. 22, 1996) and AFSA.

⁶⁰ The National Family Caregiver Support Program, part of the current proposed renewal of the Older Americans Act, provides funds for caregivers' respite. A percentage of this is earmarked for elderly relatives who are raising children. U. S. Sen. 707; H.R. 1341.



PARENTING
The Second Time Around

WORKSHOP 6

*Standing up for
Grandparents/Grandchildrens
Rights*

WORKSHOP 6

Standing Up For Grandparents and Grandchildren Rights: Advocacy

Objectives:

- ❖ To establish a working definition of advocacy and to discuss the characteristics of an effective advocate
- ❖ To examine effective ways for grandparents to advocate for their grandchildren in order to obtain appropriate health, social, and educational services

Materials needed:

- ▶ Supplies for bubbles (or buy bubbles)
 - 1 quart warm water
 - 8 tablespoons liquid dish soap (Joy or Ajax works best)
 - 2 tablespoons corn syrup or glycerin (optional)
 - Stir ingredients. Pour small amount into a shallow pan.
 - For "Bubble blowers" try straws, 6 pack rings, paper cups without bottoms, twisted pipe cleaners.
- ▶ Overhead projector (optional)
- ▶ Copies of handouts for each participant
 - Handout 6-1 *"Negotiating Systems: How Do I Get Them To Work For Me?"*
 - Handout 6-2 *"Practice Examples"*
 - Handout 6-3 *"Finding Help"*
- ▶ One copy of the book *What Grandmas Do Best* by Laura Numeroff published by Simon & Schuster, 2000.
- ▶ Copies of supplemental materials for each participant

Supplemental Material 6-1	Becoming an Advocate for your Grandchild
Supplemental Material 6-2	The ABC's of Being Involved in a Grandchild's Education
Supplemental Material 6-3	Checklist for Helping Your Child with Homework
Supplemental Material 6-4	Tips for a Parent-Teacher Conference
Supplemental Material 6-5	Learning Disabilities
Supplemental Material 6-6	Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
Supplemental Material 6-7	How a Bill Becomes Law & How You Can Influence the Process

15 Minutes **Becoming an advocate for your grandchild.**

Distribute Handout 6-1: "Negotiating Systems: How Do I Get Them to Work for Me?" to each participant. The facilitator should be familiar with the participants by this point, and should be able to take them on a "talking tour" of each point in the Handout. During this "tour" points of particular interest to individuals should be discussed. Remind the group that you can "catch more bees with honey than with vinegar." Being an effective advocate does not necessarily mean being rude, unpleasant or angry.

45 minutes **Small group practice**

Distribute copies of Handout 6-2 to each person. Divide participants into small groups or, if the group is small, into pairs. Assign one of the "Practice Examples" to each small group or pair and ask them to follow the directions at the top of the Handout. At the end of ten minutes ask each pair or small group to report back to the entire group.

25 Minutes **Practicing Advocacy for Our Own Grandchildren**

Ask participants to describe situations in which they might have to be advocates for their own grandchildren. Encourage them to refer to the Handouts as they determine what actions they might take and where they might find help in the community. Be prepared with extra copies of some of the sheets from the section "*Supplemental Material*" in case individual grandparents might find specific information useful.

For those grandparents who are prepared to go beyond advocacy for their own grandchildren to advocacy for others, distribute Supplemental Material 6-7 "*How a Bill Becomes Law and How You Can Influence the Process.*"

10 Minutes **Saying Goodbye**

As this is the final workshop in the series save a few minutes at the end in order to tell participants that you admire them and respect the important work that they do as grandparents. Remind them that in spite of the heartache and hard work of caring for children the rewards are many. If time permits read *What Grandmas Do Best* and *What Grandpas Do Best* by Laura Numeroff (both stories are very short and are in the same book) or another short book that reflects the joys of being a grandparent.



WORKSHOP 6

*Standing up for
Grandparents/Grandchildrens
Rights*

PARENTING
The Second Time Around

Confident
Organized
Persistent
Energetic



Negotiation Systems: How do I get them to work for me? **Be Confident!**

You and your family have the *right* to use these services (make sure you qualify):

- ▶ Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TANF)
- ▶ Medicaid
- ▶ Food Stamps
- ▶ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- ▶ Earned Income Tax Credit
- ▶ Public School Education for Your Grandchild
- ▶ Access to the Legal System

If you know what you need, say so!

If you're not sure, find out and *then* say so!

Be Organized!

► *Do Your Homework*

Get as much information as you can.

FIND OUT:

What does this agency provide?

How does this agency work?

How do I apply for services?

Who is in charge of what I need to know or to get?

What information and documents do I need to have ready when I call or go in for an appointment?

Ask for an "organizational chart." This is a diagram that helps explain how the agency and its departments work, who is supposed to do what, and who you should go to if you're not getting satisfaction.

Get it in writing! If someone won't give it to you in writing, ask to speak to a supervisor.

Use the telephone book, especially the blue "government" pages. See if you can get a list of important phone numbers (from the school, the Mayor's office, or a local agency that is helping you).

Keep important papers in a folder. If you have more than one grandchild, set up a folder for each one. You can write important information on the cover of each folder (your grandchild's Social Security number; date of birth; school address, phone number, principal and teacher's names; health care information, etc.)

Be Organized!

► *Be On Time and Be Prepared*

Know ahead of time exactly where you have to be and when, and be there!

*If you're not completely comfortable speaking English, bring someone who can translate for you.**

If the system is very confusing for you, or if you could use some help, bring a friend or someone else who knows the system. She can help you ask the right questions and get the right information.

Be prepared to sit. If you have to bring your grandchildren with you, bring snacks and books/toys for them and for you.

Have all documents/materials ready and available.

Make an "agenda" ahead of time. Write down all your questions and what you want to find out. Include all your questions and concerns in the agenda and then write down all the answers. Check off each item as you go, to make sure you ask them all.

Bring a pen and paper to take notes.

*Government agencies are required to provide interpreters for those who need them.

Confident
Organized
Persistent
Energetic



Be Organized!

► *Let Your Fingers do the Walking*

Make a list of important names and phone numbers and keep it handy (in your notebook, wallet and by the phone)

Try making phone calls and get as much information as you can before you visit the office/agency. This will save you time, because you'll be better prepared when you do see someone.

Write down all your questions and concerns ahead of time so that you don't forget anything during a meeting or phone call. Review the list right before you talk to the person.

Be Organized!

► Document It!

Keep records of your telephone calls (including when you get constant busy signals, when no one answers and when you leave a message and no one returns your calls).

Take notes during meetings (or use a tape recorder if you have one). Don't be afraid to ask people to repeat things if you don't understand, or if you don't get a chance to write it all down.

Take notes when you talk to someone on the telephone, just like when you meet with someone.

Write down (or tape record) any information you think you may need later. Don't rely on your memory. You have a lot to think about, and it's impossible to keep all that information in your head!

When you meet with someone, ask for a business card. Or ask the person to write down his or her name, title, agency, address and telephone and fax numbers.

Make sure you get the names, titles, agency names, addresses, and phone numbers of everyone who is in a meeting with you. You never know whom you may want to call later.

Write down your thoughts and questions as you go along during meetings or phone calls. That way, when it's your turn to talk, you won't forget anything you want to say or ask!

Write down file/case numbers, the names and phone numbers of workers and supervisors, etc.

When you finish a conversation (on the phone or in person) – review your notes right away and confirm with the person what she or he will do next and what you will do next. Do this before you hang up the phone or leave the office – it reminds the worker (and you) what has to be done.

Keep extra copies of documents/records you need (such as your grandchild's birth certificate, Social Security numbers, etc.)

Be Persistent!

- ▶ *If what you've found doesn't suit your needs, keep looking.* It's out there somewhere!
- ▶ *Don't just accept answers that don't make sense to you.* Check again with someone else and do some more poking around!
- ▶ *Don't be afraid to move "up the ladder"* if you think you're not getting what you need. Try working with a "front line" person, but if you get nowhere, speak to the supervisor, and then the person who supervises the supervisor!
- ▶ *If the person you spoke to can't help you, find out why.* And then find someone who can!
- ▶ *Find out who can help you with what* – make sure you ask the right people the right questions.
- ▶ *Try calling people early in the morning* (between 7 and 9) and late in the afternoon (after 5). People who work long hours (including supervisors) often answer their own phones at these times.
- ▶ *Don't be afraid to contact the "big wigs" if you're not making progress.* The higher up you go, the more sensitive people are to trying to solve problems quickly and quietly. Make sure you tried to work through the "proper channels" first, though. And make sure you can document this, to show you tried other solutions first.
- ▶ *Ask questions* – of your friends, neighbors, workers, anyone who might have some helpful information. You don't have to take everyone's advice, but remember that "Everyone knows something that can be helpful!"
- ▶ *Try to find people who have already been through the same system.* If they've been successful, they can share their tips with you. Talk to people while you're waiting in line or sitting in offices waiting to see a worker.
- ▶ *If you're not satisfied with the person you're dealing with,* try calling back or returning to the office at a different time - maybe you'll be helped by a different person! This really works with "hot lines" and information lines - someone else may pick up the phone the next time!
- ▶ *Don't give up!* Keep trying!

Confident
Organized
Persistent
Energetic



Be Energetic!

- ▶ Be full of energy when you thank someone for helping you, or for trying to help you. And use that same energy when you have to tell people they need to try a little harder!
- ▶ Educate them! Sometimes you know more than the people who are supposed to be helping you. Teach them what they need to know to help you - they can use it to help others, too.
- ▶ “There's more than one way to skin a cat!” Be creative! If you're not getting anywhere one way, think of other ways to do it. Ask people for suggestions. Ask people in your group what they have done in your situation and "brain storm" for new ideas.
- ▶ Take care of yourself! You can't do a good job for anyone else if you're not at your best!

A checklist is helpful both before and during meetings about your grandchild's needs. If you fill in the top half of this list and bring a photocopy with you to a school, social work or health care agency, plus the three documents listed on the next checklist, you will have the basics at your fingertips. Then, while you're at the meeting, if you refer to the bottom half of the list, you'll leave the session with the most or all of the information you wanted to obtain.

Your name _____

Child's name _____

Your street address and zip code _____

Your telephone number _____

Your Social Security Number _____

Your date of birth _____

Your Medicaid number _____

Your public assistance number _____

Your grandchild's doctor's name and telephone number _____

Don't forget to bring your grandchild's

- ▶ Immunization records
- ▶ School records
- ▶ Legal proof of custody or guardianship

During the first phone call or meeting, please write down all information given you.

Also:

- ▶ Names of the people you speak to, their titles and telephone numbers
- ▶ Notes on the answers to your questions
- ▶ The date and time of your meeting
- ▶ Meeting place address, with cross streets

Communicate clearly with the service provider. Once you have identified a program that will provide a service, state specifically what you understand the agency will provide:

- ▶ Starting date and time
- ▶ Name, telephone number and title of person providing service
- ▶ Number of hours, days, etc. service will be provided
- ▶ How service will be paid for and at what rate, if any
- ▶ How the service will be monitored

If the program does not seem appropriate, contact local resources for other suggestions.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Purpose of Contact: _____

Person/Title/Agency: _____

Phone Number: () _____ ext. _____ Left Msg. No Ans. Busy

Notes: _____

Documentation Needed: _____

I Need To: _____

This Person Will: _____

Mailing Address / Travel Directions / Next Step: _____



Date: _____ Time: _____ Purpose of Contact: _____

Person/Title/Agency: _____

Phone Number: () _____ ext. _____ Left Msg. No Ans. Busy

Notes: _____

Documentation Needed: _____

I Need To: _____

This Person Will: _____

Mailing Address / Travel Directions / Next Step: _____

Practice Examples

Review each example. Use *“Becoming an advocate for your grandchild”* and *“Negotiating Systems: How Do I get Them to Work for Me?”* to make a plan for the grandparents and children in each example.

1. Mrs. Brown is worried about her three-year-old grand daughter, Jessie, because she is not talking. The last time they saw the doctor six months ago he said “Don't worry. Lots of kids are slow to talk.” On this visit Mrs. Brown plans to say to the doctor “I am still worried about Jessie because she is not talking. I would like you to refer her to a speech therapist.” What is likely to happen? What should Mrs. Brown do next?
2. Nyla is 8 years old. She repeated first grade and is unable to read. Her grandfather believes she needs extra help in school. When he goes to see her teacher he plans to ask what he can do to help Nyla at home. He also plans to ask the teachers if there is tutoring help available for Nyla at school. What do you think will happen?
3. Jesus, aged ten, has been living with his grandparents for two years. He seems to be in constant trouble at school for picking fights, talking out of turn and failing to do his homework. His grandparents believe that he was diagnosed with ADHD when he was in kindergarten, but the only thing his teacher seems to do to control his behavior is to put him in time out. His grandparents have requested a conference with the principal. They plan to ask for help for Jesus at school and for advice about how to help him at home. What do you think will happen?
4. Ever since five-year-old Niki came to live with her grandmother six months ago she has wet the bed three or four times each week. Her grandmother has tried scolding, shaming and punishing her – but that only seems to lead to more bed-wetting. Niki's grandmother decides to ask her minister where she can go for help. What do you think the minister will suggest?
5. Sam's first grade teacher tells his grandmother that Sam needs eyeglasses and orthopedic shoes, but his grandmother cannot afford to buy them. Where can she go for help? What should she say?

Finding Help

AARP Grandparents Info Center

601 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20049
(202) 434-2296

Bronfenbrenner Life Course Center

(mailing address only)
MVR Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
(607) 255-5557

Brookdale Foundation Group

126 East 56th Street
New York, NY 10022-3668
(212) 308-7355
<http://www.brookdalefoundation.org>

Childrens Defense Fund

25 E. St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787
www.childrensdefense.org

Cooperative Extension

Contact local offices across the
United States.

Grandparent Caregiver Law Center

Brookdale Ctr. on Aging of Hunter College
1114 Avenue of the Americas
40th Floor
New York City, NY 10036
(646) 366-1000
<http://www.Brookdale.org>

Grandparent Resource Center

New York City Department for the Aging
2 Lafayette Street, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10007-1392
(212) 442-1094

Generations United

122 C St. NW
Suite 820
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 638-1263

Kinshipcare c/o CWLA

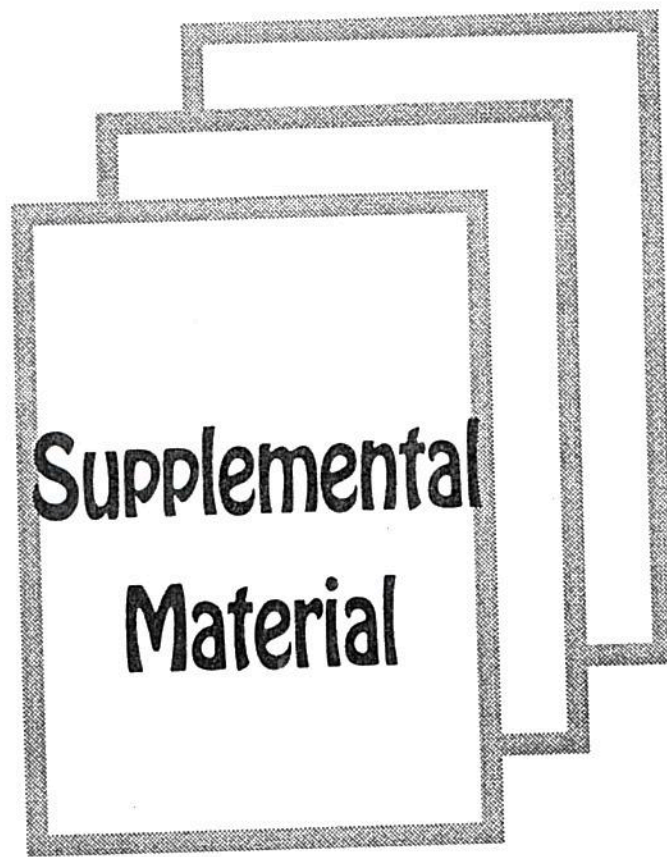
50 F St. NW
6th Floor
Washington, DC 20021
(202) 662-4286

**National Information Center for
Children and Youth with Disabilities
(NICHY)**

P.O. Box 1492 Washington, D. C. 20013
1-800-695-0285 (Voice/TT) and
(202) 884-8200 (Voice/TT)
www.kidsource.com/NICHCY
www.nichcy.org
E-mail: nichcy@aed.org

**State Offices in charge of Services
for the Aging**

www.aoa.gov/regions



WORKSHOP 6

*Standing up for
Grandparents/Grandchildrens
Rights*

PARENTING
The Second Time Around

Becoming an Advocate for Your Grandchild

It is important to see yourself as an "advocate" for your grandchild. As an advocate, your job is to *support*, *defend*, and *promote* your grandchild's best interests and needs.

C Be *clear* about what you want or what your grandchild needs.

H *Hang tough!* It may take time and a lot of effort to get what you and your grandchild need.

A Be *assertive*, and don't allow anyone to "dismiss" you or your concerns.

M *Maintain a file* to record your notes, letters, etc.

P Be *prepared* and knowledgeable about your rights and what is available to you.

I *Involve* yourself in your grandchild's activities and with the people he or she comes in contact with every day.

O Be *optimistic*. Maintain a positive attitude.

N *Negotiate*, if necessary. Work for a solution that everyone can agree on.

The ABC's of Being Involved in a Grandchild's Education

By Denyse A Variano

As difficult as it may seem at times, grandparents can play an active role in making sure that their grandchildren receive the best education possible. Grandparents and relatives who have become a part of children's school lives through notes, conferences, phone calls or volunteering report many benefits for themselves and their children. Because it may have been a long time since they were last involved in a school setting, we share with you some helpful tips to be used by grandparents to make the home-school connection as beneficial and rewarding as possible.

- ▶ ***Remember that you are your grandchild's most important teacher!*** Helping your grandchild understand the importance of their "job as a student" is critical to their school success. Let their teacher(s) know the value you place on a good education through a phone call, note, or parent-teacher conference. Model your values for your grandchild by providing them with a comfortable place and regular time to do school-work. (Of course, most children like to do their homework on the kitchen table just so they can be around you! That's okay too, as long as you can keep it relatively free of distraction.)
- ▶ ***People in your grandchild's school will want to help them succeed.*** Go to the school and talk to the people involved with your grandchild's education - teachers, the principal, guidance counselors, social workers, etc. If at all possible, find a positive way to get to know your child's teacher early in the school year. School staff can best work with your child if they understand the home situation. When teachers and other school staff are aware that you are acting as parent for your grandchild, they can begin to change their language (i.e. bring this home to your parents and/or grandparents), and overall, become more sensitive to the specific needs of your grandchild (i.e. explaining to the class that there are many different types of families, and that is what makes the world so diverse and wonderful!)
- ▶ ***Schools can help children with special needs.*** If your child has special learning needs, school staff needs to know so they can most appropriately place and assist your child within the academic environment. Ask that your grandchild be tested and a meeting set to determine what kind of class and services your grandchild needs to learn well. Let the staff know that you are interested in working as part of the team, as they develop an individualized education plan (IEP) for your special needs child.

People in your child's school may also be able to help you deal with any special emotional or behavioral help your grandchild needs. Many schools have social workers or school psychologists on staff. In addition, numerous support groups now exist within the school environment. Two programs which may be helpful are Rainbows and Banana Splits.

- ▶ ***Become a part of your child's school.*** Take the time to visit your child's school. Many schools invite parent/grandparent participation throughout the school year. At others, you will need to invite yourself! The best approach is to let the teacher/staff know in advance of your visit. When visiting the school, check in at the main office first so they know you are in the building. If you're picking up your child at the end of the day, you can "drop in" to say an informal hello, but be aware that the teacher can be on a tight schedule. The best way to get involved is to make yourself needed! Volunteer work can be done in school or often at home (phone call reminders for a class trip, etc.) Be persistent in making connections with the school; often schools don't know the best ways to use volunteers, so you might have to teach them! Finally, research has let us know that children whose caregivers are involved in their school tend to have better school performance. Being involved is a "win-win" situation for everyone.
- ▶ ***Give your grandchild's school feedback.*** Let the teacher, principal, etc. know when you are pleased or not pleased with something they have done. Be as specific as possible. When giving constructive criticism, try your best to begin with some kind of positive statement. If your requests and suggestions do not elicit the response you had hoped for, don't give up, instead, find another way to describe your idea. Remember, school personnel need praise as much as anyone – let them know the things you like about the school and they will be more open to hearing about what you would like to see change!
- ▶ ***Be clear, confident and persistent.*** Having clear expectations about your grandchild's education is a benefit to everyone in the "partnership" – yourself, the student and the school staff. The first step is making time every day to talk with your child about their school day. Most children need help learning how to organize their work and with basic study skills. Should your grandchild need academic assistance, most schools can provide you with a list of in-school assistance as well as outside tutors. "Warning signs" that your child is having trouble at school may include: resistance in going to school, tardiness, poor grades, limited friendships, and/or negative feedback from teachers. As your grandchild's advocate, it is your right and your responsibility to work with the school to provide the best environment for his or her learning. Early intervention is the key – so try, try, and try again until you and the school come up with a workable solution.

While parenting the second time around can be most challenging, and the thought of being a "class mom" or PTA representative might be more than you can handle, YOU are the critical ingredient in helping your grandchildren achieve school success. Simply by letting your grandchild and teachers know of your commitment to and interest in their education, you will become an invaluable partner in the learning process.

Checklist for Helping Your Child With Homework

1. *Show You Think Education and Homework Are Important.*

- ▶ Do you set a regular time every day for homework?
- ▶ Does your child have the papers, books, pencils, and other things needed to do assignments?
- ▶ Does your child have a fairly quiet place to study with lots of light?
- ▶ Do you set a good example by reading and writing yourself?
- ▶ Do you stay in touch with your child's teachers?

2. *Monitor Assignments.*

- ▶ Do you know what your child's homework assignments are? How long they should take? How the teacher wants you to be involved?
- ▶ Do you see that assignments are started and completed?
- ▶ Do you read the teacher's comments on assignments that are returned?
- ▶ Is TV viewing cutting into your child's homework time?

3. *Provide Guidance.*

- ▶ Do you understand and respect your child's style of learning? Does he work better alone or with someone else? Does he learn best when he can see things, hear them, or handle them?
- ▶ Do you help your child to get organized? Does your child need a calendar or assignment book? A bag for books and a folder for papers?
- ▶ Do you encourage your child to develop good study habits (e.g., scheduling enough time for big assignments; making up practice tests)?
- ▶ Do you talk with your child about homework assignments? Does she understand them?

4. *Talk With Someone at School When Problems Come Up.*

- ▶ Do you meet the teacher early in the year *before* any problems arise?
- ▶ If a problem comes up, do you meet with the teacher?
- ▶ Do you cooperate with the teacher and your child to work out a plan and a schedule to fix homework problems?
- ▶ Do you follow up with the teacher and with your child to make sure the plan is working?

Tips for a Parent-Teacher Conference

According to Mary Hatwood Futrell, president of the National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers' union, only 23 to 25 percent of parents ever visit schools.

A parent-teacher conference is an opportunity for both you and your child's teacher to get a better perspective on your child's educational and emotional growth. It's a time to build bridges. Meet your child's teacher as early in the year as possible, and make the most of these conferences by doing your "homework" in advance.

Here are some tips and a checklist that will help you prepare for meeting your child's teachers.

Before You Go

- ▶ Find out how your child feels about school. Ask about your child's favorite and least favorite subjects.
- ▶ Review your child's test scores.
- ▶ Make a list of your child's special interests and hobbies. This personal information will help the teacher understand your child.
- ▶ Consider telling the teacher about any family problems that might affect your child's behavior and academic performance.

During the Conference

- ▶ If you don't understand an educational term, such as curriculum, phonics, or reading group, don't hesitate to ask for definitions.
- ▶ Ask about homework assignments your child is expected to do.
- ▶ Ask how your child is adjusting socially in the classroom. Does he or she have friends at school? What are the child's social strengths and weaknesses?
- ▶ If your child has problems socially or academically, discuss how to resolve them. Come up with a plan of action that outlines goals for you, your child, and the teacher. Make sure these goals are realistic. Set a time for a follow-up discussion.

After the Meeting

- ▶ Follow up on all suggestions your child's teacher makes.
- ▶ Keep track of your child's progress in school. Regularly review classroom material, homework, and tests.
- ▶ Keep in touch with your child's teacher. Discuss problems or changes in situations that come up during the year. Don't wait for a formal conference to express your concerns.

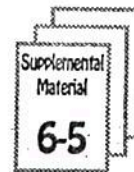
Checklist

Questions I want to ask my child's teacher:

- How is my child doing in all his or her subjects?
- What are my child's strengths? In what subjects does my child need help?
- Does my child express himself or herself well? What can I do to improve his or her verbal skills?
- Does my child express himself or herself artistically? Does he or she enjoy drawing, painting, dance, or music?
- Do I need to meet with any other of my child's teachers?
- How is my child's attention span? Does my child pay attention in class?
- How can I help my child do better? Can I offer more help at home? What specific things can I do?
- Who are my child's friends? Are there children in the class who he or she has difficulty relating to? What happens during free play?

Before you leave, think whether you've covered everything. Ask yourself:

- Are there any special procedures at school that I should know about?
- Have I shared all-important information about my child with the teacher?
- Does my child have special medical needs or other special problems that the teacher should be aware of?



LEARNING DISABILITIES

◆ Definition ◆

The regulations for Public Law (P.L.) 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), formerly P.L. 94-142, the Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA), define a learning disability as a "disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations."

The Federal definition further states that learning disabilities include "such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia." According to the law, learning disabilities do not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; mental retardation; or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. Definitions of learning disabilities also vary among states.

Having a single term to describe this category of children with disabilities reduces some of the confusion, but there are many conflicting theories about what causes learning disabilities and how many there are. The label "learning disabilities" is all-embracing; it describes a syndrome, not a specific child with specific problems. The definition assists in classifying children, not teaching them. Parents and teachers need to concentrate on the individual child. They need to observe both how and how well the child performs, to assess strengths and weaknesses, and develop ways to help each child learn. It is important to remember that there is a high degree of interrelationship and overlapping among the areas of learning. Therefore, children with learning disabilities may exhibit a combination of characteristics.

These problems may mildly, moderately, or severely impair the learning process.

◆ Incidence ◆

Many different estimates of the number of children with learning disabilities have appeared in the literature

(ranging from 1% to 30% of the general population). In 1987, the Interagency Committee on Learning Disabilities concluded that 5% to 10% is a reasonable estimate of the percentage of persons affected by learning disabilities. The U.S. Department of Education (1996) reported that more than 5% of all school-aged children received special education services for learning disabilities and that in the 1994-95 school year over 2.5 million children with learning disabilities were served. Differences in estimates perhaps reflect variations in the definition.

◆ Characteristics ◆

Learning disabilities are characterized by a significant difference in the child's achievement in some areas, as compared to his or her overall intelligence.

Students who have learning disabilities may exhibit a wide range of traits, including problems with reading comprehension, spoken language, writing, or reasoning ability. Hyperactivity, inattention, and perceptual coordination problems may also be associated with learning disabilities. Other traits that may be present include a variety of symptoms, such as uneven and unpredictable test performance, perceptual impairments, motor disorders, and behaviors such as impulsiveness, low tolerance for frustration, and problems in handling day-to-day social interactions and situations.

Learning disabilities may occur in the following academic areas:

1. Spoken language: Delays, disorders, or discrepancies in listening and speaking;
2. Written language: Difficulties with reading, writing, and spelling;
3. Arithmetic: Difficulty in performing arithmetic functions or in comprehending basic concepts;
4. Reasoning: Difficulty in organizing and integrating thoughts; and
5. Organization skills: Difficulty in organizing all facets of learning.

LEARNING DISABILITIES

◇ Educational Implications ◇

Because learning disabilities are manifested in a variety of behavior patterns, the Individual Education Program (IEP) must be designed carefully. A team approach is important for educating the child with a learning disability, beginning with the assessment process and continuing through the development of the IEP. Close collaboration among special class teachers, parents, resource room teachers, regular class teachers, and others will facilitate the overall development of a child with learning disabilities.

Some teachers report that the following strategies have been effective with some students who have learning disabilities:

- Capitalize on the student's strengths;
- Provide high structure and clear expectations;
- Use short sentences and a simple vocabulary;
- Provide opportunities for success in a supportive atmosphere to help build self-esteem;
- Allow flexibility in classroom procedures (e.g., allowing the use of tape recorders for note-taking and test-taking when students have trouble with written language);
- Make use of self-correcting materials, which provide immediate feedback without embarrassment;
- Use computers for drill and practice and teaching word processing;
- Provide positive reinforcement of appropriate social skills at school and home; and
- Recognize that students with learning disabilities can greatly benefit from the gift of time to grow and mature.

◇ Resources ◇

Directory of facilities and services for the learning disabled (16th ed.). (1996). Novato, CA: Academic Therapy. [Telephone: 1-800-422-7249 (outside CA); (415) 883-3314..]

Journal of Learning Disabilities. Available from Pro-Ed, 8700 Shoal Creek Blvd., Austin TX 78758. [Telephone: (512) 451-3246.]

Lab School of Washington. (1993). *Issues of parenting children with learning disabilities* (audiotape series of 12 lectures). Washington, DC: Author. [Telephone: (202) 965-6600.]

Silver, L. (1991). *The misunderstood child: A guide for parents of children with learning disabilities* (2nd ed.): New York, NY: McGraw Hill. (Available from McGraw Hill, 860 Taylor Station Rd., Blacklick, OH 43004. [Telephone: 1-800-262-4729.]

Smith, S. (1995). *No easy answers* (Rev. ed.). New York, NY: Bantam Books. (Available from Bantam, 2451 South Wolf Rd., Des Plaines, IL 60018. [Telephone: 1-800-323-9872.]

◇ Organisations ◇

Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD)
P.O. Box 40303
Overland Park, KS 66204
(913) 492-8755

Division for Learning Disabilities
Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Dr.
Reston, VA 22091-1589
(703) 620-3660
Web Address: <http://www.ccc.sped.org>

Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
(412) 341-1515; (412) 341-8077
Web Address: <http://www.ldanatl.org>

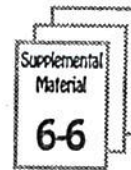
National Center for Learning Disabilities
381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1401
New York, NY 10016
(212) 545-7510; 1(888) 575-7373
Web Address: <http://www.nclcd.org>

Orton Dyslexia Society
Chester Building, Suite 382
8600 LaSalle Road
Baltimore, MD 21286-2044
(410) 296-0232
(800) 222-3123 (Toll Free)
E-Mail: info@ods.org
Web Address: <http://www.ods.org>

FS7, June 1997

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Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

◇ Definition ◇

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) is a neurobiological disorder. Typically children with AD/HD have developmentally inappropriate behavior, including poor attention skills, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. These characteristics arise in early childhood, typically before age 7, are chronic, and last at least 6 months. Children with AD/HD may also experience problems in the areas of social skills and self esteem.

◇ Incidence ◇

AD/HD is estimated to affect between 3-5 % of the school-aged population. Even though the exact cause of AD/HD remains unknown, it is known that AD/HD is a neurobiologically based disorder. Scientific evidence suggests that AD/HD is genetically transmitted and in many cases results from a chemical imbalance or deficiency in certain neurotransmitters, which are chemicals that help the brain regulate behavior.

◇ Characteristics ◇

AD/HD is diagnosed according to certain characteristics described in the fourth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (APA, 1994), known as DSM-IV. A child with AD/HD is often described as having a short attention span and as being distractible. The child will have difficulty with one or all parts of the attention process: focusing (picking something on which to pay attention), sustaining focus (paying attention for as long as is needed), and shifting focus (moving attention from one thing to another).

According to DSM-IV (pp. 83-84),* some symptoms of *inattention* include:

- often fails to give close attention to details, making careless mistakes in schoolwork or other activities
- often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities
- often appears to not be listening when spoken to directly
- often has difficulty following through on instructions; may fail to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties (not due

to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions)

- often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities
- often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (schoolwork and homework)
- often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., toys, school assignments, pencils, books, or tools)
- is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli
- is often forgetful in daily activities.

According to DSM-IV (p. 84),* some symptoms of *hyperactivity* include:

- often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
- often leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected
- often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which this is inappropriate
- often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly
- often is "on the go" or acts as if "driven by a motor"
- often talks excessively.

Impulsiveness with AD/HD appears when children act before thinking. According to DSM-IV (p. 84),* some symptoms of *impulsivity* include:

- often blurts out answers before questions have been completed
- often has difficulty awaiting turn
- often interrupts or intrudes on others (during conversations or games).

From time to time all children will be inattentive, impulsive, and overly active. In the case of AD/HD, *these behaviors are the rule, not the exception.*

◇ Educational Implications ◇

Planning for educational needs begins with an accurate diagnosis. Children suspected of having AD/HD must be appropriately diagnosed by a knowledgeable, well-trained clinician (usually a developmental pediatrician, child psychologist, or pediatric neurologist). Treatment

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Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

plans may include behavioral and educational interventions and sometimes medication. Parents suspecting a problem may seek the services of the local school district or an outside private professional to conduct an evaluation. For children under age five, families may want to contact early childhood programs specialized in serving the needs of youngsters with disabilities. Call the local public school system and ask about services for children with disabilities.

Many children with AD/HD experience great difficulty in school, where attention and impulse and motor control are virtual requirements for success. Children with AD/HD tend to overreact to changes in their environment. Whether at home or in school, children with AD/HD respond best in a structured, predictable environment. Here, rules and expectations are clear and consistent, and consequences are set forth ahead of time and delivered immediately. By establishing structure and routines, parents and teachers can cultivate an environment that encourages the child to control his or her behavior and succeed at learning.

Adaptations which might be helpful (but will not cure AD/HD) include:

- posting daily schedules and assignments
- calling attention to schedule changes
- setting specific times for specific tasks
- designing a quiet work space for use upon request
- providing regularly scheduled and frequent breaks
- using computerized learning activities
- teaching organization and study skills
- supplementing verbal instructions with visual instructions
- modifying test delivery.

Further information regarding helpful strategies can be found in the NICHCY's Briefing Paper *Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder*.

◆ Resources ◆

Alexander-Roberts, C. (1994). *ADHD parenting handbook: Practical advice for parents from parents: Proven techniques for raising hyperactive children without losing your temper*. Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing. (Telephone: 1-800-677-2800.)

Fowler, M. (1994). Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. *NICHCY Briefing Paper*, 1-16. (Available from NICHCY. Telephone: 1-800-695-0285.)

Fowler, M. (1996). *Maybe you know my kid: A parent's guide to identifying, understanding, and helping your child with AD/HD* (3rd ed.). New York: Birch Lane Press. (Telephone: 1-800-447-2665.)

Fowler, M. (1992). *CH.A.D.D. educators manual: An in-depth look at attention deficit disorders from an educational perspective*. Plantation, FL: CH.A.D.D. (Available from Caset Associates. Telephone: 1-800-545-5583.)

Goldstein, S., & Goldstein, M. (1992). *Hyperactivity—Why won't my child pay attention? A complete guide to ADD for parents, teachers, and community agencies*. New York: Wiley. (Telephone: 1-800-225-5945.) ISBN# 0471533076.

Wodrich, D.L. (1994). *Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: What every parent wants to know*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes. (Telephone: 1-800-638-3775.) Stock# 1413.

◆ Organizations ◆

Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA)
P.O. Box 972
Mentor, OH 44601
(216) 350-9595
(800) 487-2282 (Voice mail to request information packet)
E-mail: NATLADDA@aol.com
URL: <http://www.add.org>

CH.A.D.D. (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders)
499 NW 70th Avenue
Suite 101
Plantation, FL 33317
(954) 587-3700
(800) 233-4050 (voice mail to request information packet)
URL: <http://www.chadd.org>

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How a Bill Becomes Law and How You Can Influence the Process

Understanding the process by which policy is shaped into law and knowing how to track the status of pending legislation can greatly help you advocate for children and families. From the moment a bill is written to its final passage, you and the families you know have many opportunities to influence a bill and ultimately change how it will affect your state and community.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

The Bill is Written - Legislators create a working draft of the bill.

The Bill is Introduced - After a bill has been written, it is introduced into the House or Senate. The member who introduces the bill is its "sponsor"

The Bill is Recorded - The bill is recorded and available to the public in the Congressional Record and on Congress' site on the Internet (thomas.loc.gov).

The Bill is Assigned a Number - Bills introduced in the House and Senate are given numbers that are preceded by the initials H.R. and S. (for example, H.R. 1224 and S. 1819), depending on where they are first submitted.

How You Can Influence the Process

Affecting a bill at this stage requires a developed, close relationship with a legislator. If you or your group have built a strong relationship with a legislator, make sure to share your ideas with him or her and offer to help with the drafting process.

Make note of who sponsors each bill, because this can give you clues about the bill's content and who will support it.

Many organizations (such as the Child Welfare League of America, the Children's Defense Fund, and Family Support America) will independently review the bill and offer their opinions on the bill to the public. Make sure to stay abreast of new bills.

You can track any bill's status on Congress' Internet site if you have its corresponding number. If you don't know the number, you can find it using key words.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

The Bill is Sent to Committee - Both houses of Congress have committees with different areas of expertise, such as Finance or Education. Bills are sent to committees with related expertise, which may also send the bills to sub-committees that have a more focused expertise.

The Committee Reports to the House - After the committee process, bills are reported to the House of Representatives or Senate, with any amendments that may have been added.

The Whole House Considers the Bill - At this point, the House may do several things: send bills back to committee; amend bills and send them to the Senate; or send them to the Senate without amendment.

The Senate Considers the Bill - After bills move to the Senate, the Senate may do one of two things: pass the bills as they are or amend them and send them back to the House. Joint committees are formed to resolve any differences that occur when two versions of bills have been passed.

The Bill is Sent to the President - After the House and the Senate accept identical bills, the President has 10 days to do one of two things: veto the bill or sign it into law. If the President does neither within 10 days, the bill becomes law without his or her signature (however, only if Congress is still in session at the end of those 10 days).

How You Can Influence the Process.

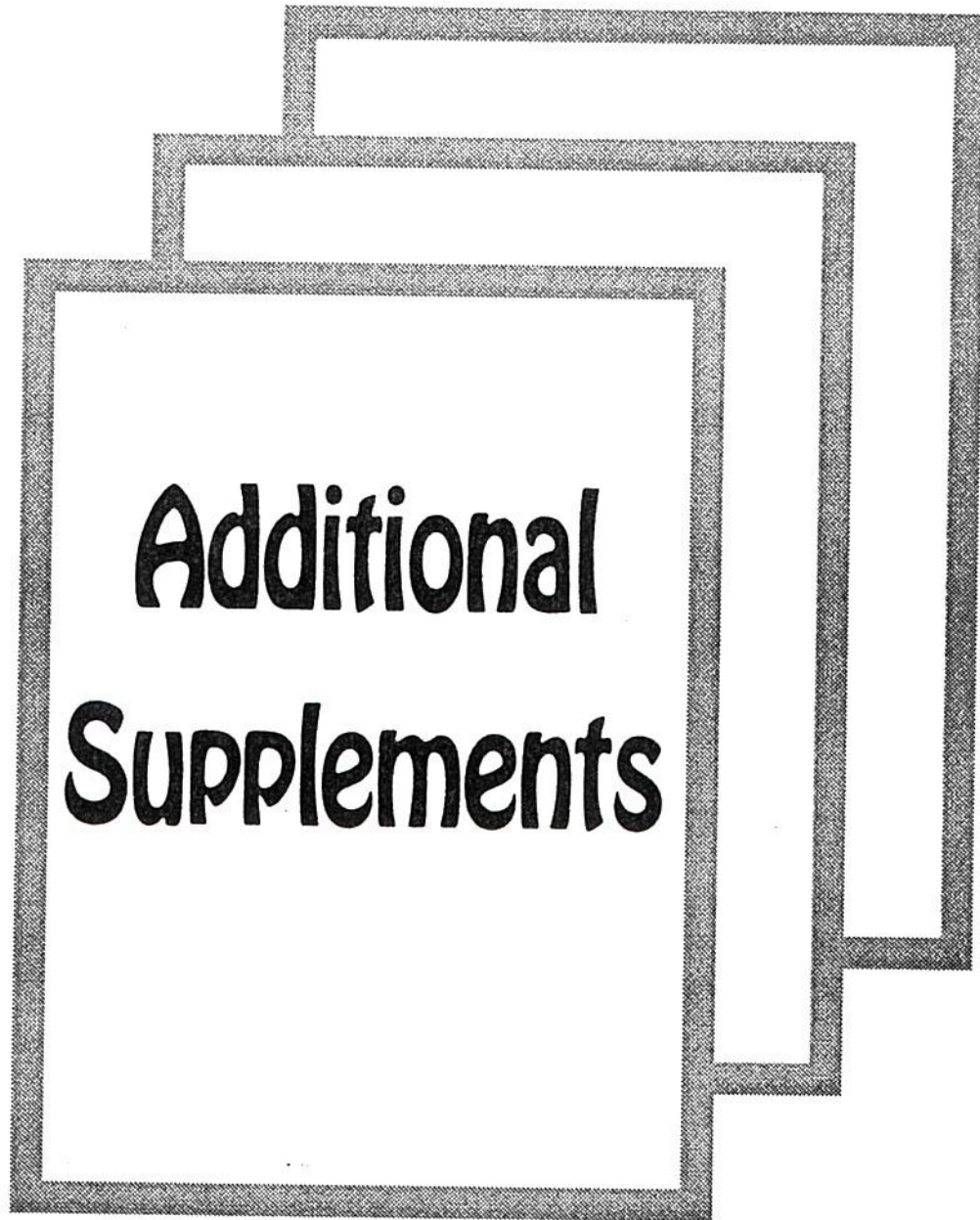
Bills are the most flexible and open to advocacy efforts at this time. Find out which legislators are on each committee through the House (www.house.gov) and Senate (www.senate.gov) Web sites. You can contact committee members and express your thoughts and opinions, regardless of whether or not they are your community's Congressman. Committees may also hold public hearings, where anyone concerned may testify about the bills. You can affect bills at this point by organizing a group to attend and testify at hearings. Information about sub-committee members and public hearing schedules are also posted on the Web sites.

The media is likely to start coverage of bills at this point. This may be a good time to influence media coverage by writing letters to the editor and contacting media representatives with your thoughts and opinions.

You can mount efforts to advocate for any of these actions.

At this point, you can advocate for either action by the Senate.

At this point, you can contact the President to try to influence his or her decision.



**Additional
Supplements**

PARENTING
The Second Time Around

Reaching Agreements

Does getting a court order make you think of loud, nasty, courtroom battles? That's a common fear, but usually doesn't happen. In most cases, the grandparents and the parents find a way to agree instead. That probably will happen in your family, too, even if it seems now like you'll never agree. The reason is that few people -including troubled parents -- really want to go to court. Once people calm down and talk to a lawyer, they realize they could lose big in court. If they're caring, they also realize that court fights hurt children. It's better to work out a plan that will provide for the children in a loving way. Two ways to do this include:

► *Negotiation.*

Your lawyer can talk to the lawyers who work for each of the parents, or you can all sit down together with the lawyers to work out a plan.

► *Mediation.*

After you talk with your lawyer, you and the parents can sit down together, without your lawyers -- but with a person trained to help people work out agreements.

Either route can work, if it feels right for you. If you're interested in mediation, ask your lawyer if there are free services through your local court. Talk to your lawyer before you mediate and before you sign anything. This will help you to make a safe and secure agreement.

► *If a parent is missing.*

You may be worried that, because one of the parents is missing, this will hold up an agreement or court order. In most cases, there's no problem. Ask your lawyer early about rules in your state for notice to a missing parent, and the delay, if any, should be brief.

If You Must Go To Court

Sometimes families just can't agree, and a judge must decide. If you really believe that something is needed for a child's security (like you getting custody or adopting) and the parents won't agree, you may have to go to court. No one likes going to court, but it's not the end of the world. You can make the best of it if you:

► *Talk to your lawyer first.*

Ask what's likely to happen so you'll have fewer surprises. Court may appoint attorney for adult child.

► *Come prepared.*

Practice explaining your concerns to your lawyer or a friend. Bring along some brief notes with dates and main points if you think it will help.

► *Be fair.*

You don't need to praise the parents, but don't be afraid to say something good if it's true. The judge will take your concerns more seriously if it is clear you're not speaking in anger or exaggerating.

It's hard for judges to make the best decision based only on what people say in the courtroom. For this reason, the judge may ask someone to visit and talk with you in your home, and also to meet with the parents. Of course, you'll feel nervous -everyone does. But there's no need to worry too much. If you care enough to go to court, it's because you know the children need the stability and care you can give them. Speak frankly and fairly, and your caring will show. The judge may want to talk to the children.

The judge, after gathering enough information, will make a decision. Your lawyer should make sure that all important points – such as visitation, child support, and safety – are covered in the court order.

Finding Help Selecting a Lawyer

An experienced lawyer can advise you about the consequences of the different types of legal custody and help you determine what type would be best for your particular situation. If your grandchild needs cash benefits or medical coverage from the government, a lawyer can help with this, too.

You should shop around for a lawyer who meets all of your needs. Select a lawyer who has worked with cases similar to yours, one who listens, shows respect, and can most effectively represent the best interests of you and the child. It is important to have at least one session with a prospective lawyer before you decide who to hire.

If you are faced with any of the legal concerns mentioned here but are not able to hire an attorney, then you might try the following:

- ▶ ***Call your Local Legal Services or Legal Aid Society.*** These government-sponsored law offices help low-income persons with common legal problems. Look in the government pages of your phone book.
- ▶ ***Call your local Bar Association*** to see if there are any private lawyers who will work for free ("pro bono"), particularly if a case will help more than just one family, or if you are trying to change an unfair law or challenge an unfair state policy.
- ▶ ***Law School Clinics*** - If there is a law school near you, see if they have a clinic that represents grandparents in child welfare and custody cases. A law student will work with you, supervised by an experienced lawyer. To find out what programs exist, call the law school dean's office.

Source: University of Kentucky, County Extension Agents for Home Economics,
<http://www.cas.psu.edu/docs/coext/generations/grand3.html>

Legal Issues for Grandchildren with Special Needs

Laws that Govern Services to Children with Disabilities

There are many federal and state laws that address access to and provision of services (educational, therapeutic, vocational and otherwise). The three most important are:

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

This is an education law for children from birth through age 21. It provides guidelines for the provision of special education and related services at public expense as written in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) so your grandchild receives the most appropriate education. Your grandchild must be educated, to the extent possible, with non-disabled children using appropriate supplementary aids and services.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 is a civil rights act which also applies to children and adults with disabilities who have been denied appropriate services. Section 504 may help a child receive appropriate services if he did not qualify under IDEA. Contact your school district's CPSE/CSE Coordinator to see if she also heads the Section 504 Committee, and ask for a meeting to determine if your grandchild can get the services he needs this way.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Enacted in 1990, ADA bars discrimination for people with disabilities in employment (in private industry employing more than 15 individuals), housing, medical treatment, entertainment, public accommodations, and private nonsectarian schools.

From these federal laws, state laws and procedural documents have been created. Grandparents may contact your local SETRC or VESID offices or the New York State Education Department/Special Education Policy Unit (518-473-2878) for copies of relevant state laws and policies. Ask for:

- ▶ *Part 200 of the Education Commissioner's Rules and Regulations for the Education of Children with Disabilities
- ▶ *NYS Due Process Rights for Parents of Children with Disabilities
- ▶ Guidelines for School Districts regarding the rights of students under Section 504
- ▶ Guidelines on Implementation of the Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- ▶ *Guidelines for Services to Students with Limited English Proficiency and Special Education Needs (Part 154)



Suggested Reading

HELP for Grandparent Caregivers

6 volumes on different legal topics (English or Spanish).

Order from:

Samuel Sadin Institute on Law
Brookdale Center on Aging of Hunter College
1114 Avenue of the Americas
40th Floor
New York, NY 10036
(646) 366-1000
<http://www.Brookdale.org>

Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren; A New Family Paradigm Featured in *Elder Law Attorney*, a publication of the Elder Law Section of the New York State Bar Association, Summer 2000.

Amicus Curiae Brief to the U. S. Supreme Court in the grandparent visitation case, *Troxel v. Granville*.

Regular feature articles in the *Brookdale Senior Rights Report* and the NYSBA *Elder Law Attorney*.

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Planning for the Future

NYS Developmental Disabilities
Planning Council
155 Washington Avenue, 2nd Floor
Albany, NY 12210
(518) 486-7505

Grandparents Guide to Navigating the Legal System

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
10 G Street, NE, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20002-4215
(800) 966-1935
www.ncpssm.org