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Christmas is a Time for Sharing

-Barbara Laughlin

Old stories passed down through the years
"what grandpa did one Christmas eve"
Had you laughing through your tears.

Christmas is a time - for caring
About your family, neighbors and friends.
Lending a hand to others in need
before the season ends.

Christmas is a time - for giving
Presents that came from your heart.
Watching the children, hearing their laughter
As the packages are torn apart.

Christmas is a time - for peace
When soldiers lay aside their guns.
And raise a glass to peace and good will
To every father and every son.

Christmas is a time - for remembering
Family not with us on Christmas morn.



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Useful News

Helping Your Child Learn Family Rules

-Sandra J. Bailey, Ph.D., CFLE, Family & Human Development Specialist, MSU Extension

Raising grandchildren is a challenging journey, says Sandy Bailey, MSU Extension Family and Human Development Specialist. Thousands of books are available to help parents navigate the journey from infancy to young adulthood. Not so many are available for grandparents. One topic that frequently arises in parenting and raising grandchildren is discipline or behavior management of children. Discipline means “to teach” yet often the term is thought of as synonymous to punishment. This should not be the case. Grandparents and parents often want a specific formula on how to raise and discipline their children, however there is no one way to raise children as they have individual needs, experiences and temperaments.

Dr. Lawrence Steinberg, an expert in child development, particularly adolescent development, published a book, ***The 10 Basic Principles of Good Parenting***, (2004, Simon & Schuster). His information is relevant for grandparents raising grandchildren.

One aspect of parenting that may be forgotten, is that grandparents need to be explicit on the behavior that they desire and the reason for the decisions. Although children learn many family rules and expectations by watching what the parents, grandparents and other siblings do, we need to remember that children cannot read minds. Dr. Lawrence Steinberg states that children may be doing what they think is expected of them, but it is not what you wanted and thus a conflict is created. For example, asking a five-year-old to pick up his room is vague. He may believe that picking up a book and a toy is cleaning the room when you wanted the bed made and all toys and books put away. For young children we need to demonstrate and talk to the child about what it means to pick up his room. Children, especially young children, need several reminders. He may not remember what all is entailed in picking up his room from one week to the next until he develops the concept.

An older child too will not know what her grandparent wants if the task is not specified. Telling a 12-year-old that you want her to read before she goes to bed, may mean reading a book for 20 minutes. The granddaughter may believe she is complying by thumbing through a magazine for 10 minutes. Be clear about what it is the child should do to complete what is requested. *(article continues on next page)*

Do You Need Help This Season With Gifts and Groceries?



Many organizations that assist families during the holidays have an early sign-up period but every community is different so you may want to contact your local office to learn if there is still time to receive gift and food assistance.

Salvation Army: <http://salvationarmyusa.org/usn/christmas-assistance>

Toys for Tots: <http://www.toysfortots.org/donate/toys.aspx>

Montana Food Bank Network: <http://mfbn.org/>

The Angel Tree Network: http://www.csarmy.org/programs_angeltree.asp

Family Service, Inc. (Billings area): <http://famserv.com/>

Hope & the Holidays (Gallatin, Park, Sweetgrass, Madison, Jefferson, and Broadwater counties): <https://www.facebook.com/Hope-the-Holidays-181060238640242/>

Also, your local Chamber of Commerce can tell you about local organizations like schools, churches, and Lions or Kiwanis clubs that may offer services: <http://www.2chambers.com/montana2.htm>.



Useful News

Helping Your Child Learn Family Rules (cont...)

-Sandra J. Bailey, Ph.D., CFLE, Family & Human Development Specialist, MSU Extension

Explaining decisions you make for children is a good parenting strategy. Children learn the reason behind the request and then will be more likely to comply. For young children, a simple explanation usually will suffice. For example, if a four-year-old asks why he needs to pick up his toys, a grandparent can give the reason that someone may trip and fall on them. Children between the ages of six and 11 still need a reasonable answer to why they should comply with the request, but they also need it to be logical. A 10-year-old asking why he must be home from his friend's house on a weekday by 6:00, may be that this is dinner time, which is reasonable, and that having dinner together as a family is important, which is logical.

Preteens and teens need to know that grandparents' requests are reasonable, logical and consistent with what the parents are doing. For example, a grandfather who tells his 13-year-old that he needs to wear his seatbelt every time he is in a car but sees the grandfather not using his seatbelt is getting mixed messages. The child is learning that grandpa's actions are not consistent with what he is saying.

As children enter their teen years, they are developing reasoning skills and they are working to develop their own identity. Grandparents need to listen to their child's thoughts and opinions about requests made of them – such as hair styles and dress. Although the grandparent still has the final decision, listening to the child's viewpoint will allow her to feel valued and respected especially if a compromise can be reached.

Being specific about requests and explaining decisions go a long way in helping a child learn the importance of complying with parental requests. Avoid saying, "Because I said so," as that statement does not provide reason or logic. The message it can send is that the grandparent has more power and the child's feelings and views do not matter. For more information on Dr. Steinberg's principles of good parenting read his book, **The 10 Basic Principles of Good Parenting**.



Stay Up-to-Date on all the Latest GRG Program Information

Check out the GRG website—

this site is regularly updated with new resources and information.

<http://www.montanagrandparents.org/>

Check out the GRG Pinterest board—features lots of pins containing resources, local and national partners, fun family activities, and other regularly updated information.

<https://www.pinterest.com/msuextensionhhd/>

Check out the GRG Facebook page—up-to-the-minute information is posted as well as links and information from our state, regional and national partners.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Montana-Grandparents-Raising-Grandchildren-Project/930862973615169>

Call or email us with questions and information requests.

(406) 994-3395; grg@montana.edu

Sign up to receive this newsletter three times a year.

<http://www.montanagrandparents.org/newsletters.html>



Resources

MontanaPBS Documentary Addresses Concussion Issue

Concussion! Just the word itself can bring up all kinds of scary thoughts and visions of what can happen if your grandchild gets a concussion. New concussion research could be a game changer for you and your grandchild. In case you missed the MontanaPBS broadcast of “**Concussion: Answers in the Blood?**”, it is now available on demand at

<http://watch.montanapbs.org>. The documentary follows the promising new research by two University of Montana scientists who are attempting to provide a blood test for a more definitive diagnosis for concussions and the real experiences of two athletes who have suffered concussions and their road to recovery.

The documentary is rated TV-PG. If you are thinking of maybe watching it with your grandchild, depending on their age you might want to preview it first so you can make the best decision for you and your family. MontanaPBS provides learning materials specifically designed for high school age children which can be found using the instructions below. Even if you don't have grandchildren of high school age you might want to take a look and see if you could possibly adapt these materials to use with them. These materials consist of "lesson" plans and other resources for you including short video clips to use as a basis for discussion and with some of the other learning materials.



You can use the following information to access these materials: If you are a first time user to MontanaPBS Learning Media go to: <http://www.pbslearningmedia.org>. To register, find the orange box on the left of the page and register (at no cost to you). The benefits of registering are mentioned when you register. The video clips and supplemental materials can be accessed on this page under “support materials”.

We hope this documentary and the learning materials benefit you and your grandchildren. If you have questions about the documentary please contact John Twigg, producer of the documentary, at john.twigg@mso.umt.edu. If you have questions about the learning materials please contact Chris Seifert at chris_seifert@montanapbs.org.

Apply for Legal Services Through MLSA

Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) is a law firm that empowers low-income people by providing legal information, advice, and other services free of charge. MLSA works both on individual cases and under a systemic approach to help low-income people escape domestic violence, keep their housing, preserve their public benefits, protect their finances, and more. Additionally, family law clinics and will clinics are held at a few locations around the state.

These services are by application only and are based on income. You can apply for services online at <http://www.mtlsa.org/get-legal-help/apply-legal-services/> or talk to someone on the phone:

If you live in **Gallatin, Flathead, Butte-Silver Bow, Deer Lodge, Granite, Powell, Jefferson, Madison, Beaverhead and Hill counties**, you can call the pro bono assistant directly at (406) 543-8343, ext. 219.

If you live in **any other Montana county**, you will have to call the helpline at (800) 666-6899. Intake staff answers phones during business hours, M-F and will get back to clients within three business days, if not sooner.



Health & Nutrition

Montana Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion Bureau Announce New Resources

Montana DPHHS, Chronic Disease Bureau has been working to develop a guide that highlights all the community programs that are available from each department in the bureau. Out of all this hard work, the Chronic Disease Bureau has created the **Community Health Program Guide**, which lists and describes all the available community health programs; and the interactive **Community Health Program Map**, where you can view the counties and communities that feature the programs. You can access both the program guide and interactive map at: <http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/chronicdisease/CommunityBasedPrograms>.

Some of the public health interventions and community-based programs you may find helpful to you and your family are:

Diabetes Prevention Program

Offers comprehensive group-based education on healthy diet and exercise to help adults at high risk for diabetes adopt healthy lifestyles.

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/Diabetes.aspx>

Diabetes Self-Management Education

Connects people with diabetes to quality diabetes education to enhance engagement with positive self-management and improve quality of life. <http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/Diabetes.aspx>

Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program

A recreational exercise program for adults with arthritis. Includes health education, exercise for any fitness level, and relaxation techniques.

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/arthritis>

Enhanced Fitness

Helps adults with arthritis adopt and maintain an exercise routine in order to improve function and decrease pain. All exercises can be done sitting or standing.

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/arthritis>

Asthma Education

One-on-one asthma self-management tools, education, counseling and support regarding medications and triggers.

<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/Asthma.aspx>

Breast, Cervical, and Colorectal Cancer Screening

Offers mammograms, Pap tests, some diagnostic tests, colonoscopies and high-sensitivity FITs/FOBTs to eligible Montanans. Eligibility is based on age, income, and insurance status.

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/Cancer/CancerScreening.aspx>

Montana: Living Life Well

Helps adults with one or more chronic conditions learn how to take control of their own health.

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/arthritis>

Walk With Ease

Teaches participants how to start and maintain a regular walking routine.

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/arthritis>

Living Well with a Disability Program

A peer support workshop for people with physical disabilities that uses goal setting and adoption of healthy lifestyles to maintain independence and quality of life.

<http://livingandworkingwell.ruralinstitute.umd.edu>

Montana Tobacco Quit Line

Offers free telephone counseling and nicotine replacement therapy, and certain cessation medications at a reduced cost.

<https://montana.quitlogix.org/>

Montana Asthma Home Visiting Program (MAP)

Offers six contacts from a registered nurse in the home and over the phone to address several factors related to a child's uncontrolled asthma.

<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/Asthma.aspx>

Stepping-on Program

Offers a multifaceted fall prevention program that addresses medication, visual impairments, exercise, and the home environment.

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/EMSTS/prevention/falls>

Working Well with a Disability

A workshop that considers health promotion and secondary conditions in the context of employment.

<http://livingandworkingwell.ruralinstitute.umd.edu>



Health & Nutrition

The Importance of Family Mealtime

-Sandra J. Bailey, Ph.D., CFLE, Family & Human Development Specialist, MSU Extension

Do you ever wish that time would slow down for your family so that you could enjoy each other’s company? The idea of gathering the family together in the same place at the same time in the 21st century may seem impossible for many, but it can be done. Try planning family time around a meal. Eating together as a family may not look like Sunday dinners of a generation ago. However, the goal can still be the same. Family mealtime provides an opportunity to spend time with family members and talk with one another. Eating meals together can help families feel closer and provide better nutrition – two ingredients for happy, healthy families.

Family mealtime can happen with any meal – breakfast, lunch, dinner or even a snack! The meal does not need to be fancy, so don’t worry about bringing out the china – paper plates are fine! Research shows that eating a family meal together helps family members make better choices in what they eat. Children learn a broader vocabulary as they listen and talk with other family members. They also learn social skills that they can use in other settings. Family mealtime also sends the message to family members that family time is important! (Read more about Family Mealtime at <http://store.msueextension.org/publications/HomeHealthandFamily/MT200403HR.pdf>.)



Make These Fun Holiday Treats with Your Family!

Ingredients

- Bananas
- Grapes
- Carrot
- Apple
- Bamboo skewers
- Mini chocolate chips
- Pretzel sticks

Snowman On A Stick



Instructions

- You will need three thick slices of bananas, a grape, a sliver of a carrot and a triangular piece of apple for each snowman. (Tip: Use the bamboo skewer to poke a hole in the apple, so it will be easier to assemble.)
- Let your kids slide the fruit onto the skewer. Then use the carrot slivers for the noses, the mini chocolate chips for the eyes and buttons, and use the pretzel sticks for the arms.

-Thanks to Montana BuyEatLive Better for these recipes. Visit them at <http://www.buvealivebetter.org/>

Ingredients

- 4 flavored or plain pita folds or pita breads (about 6 inches in diameter)
- 16 thin pretzel sticks, halved
- 1/2 cup fat-free sour cream
- 1/2 cup guacamole
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic-pepper blend
- 1/4 cup very finely chopped red bell pepper

Pita Tree Appetizers



Instructions

- Cut each pita fold into 8 wedges. Insert pretzel stick half into center of bottom of each wedge to form "tree trunk."
- In small bowl, mix sour cream, guacamole, parsley and garlic-pepper blend. Spread about 1 teaspoon sour cream mixture on each pita wedge.
- Blot bell pepper with paper towel to remove excess moisture. Sprinkle about 1/4 teaspoon bell pepper on each wedge or arrange to form a garland. If desired, cover and refrigerate up to 8 hours before serving.

Grandfamily Support Contacts Across Montana—By County

Blaine County—Harlem & Fort Belknap Indian Reservation
MSU Extension
(406) 353-2656

Big Horn County—Wyola
Kristy Old Coyote
LBHC Extension
(406) 638-3114

Big Horn County—Hardin
Janice Eckman
Hardin Parent Center
(406) 665-4151

Big Horn & Rosebud Counties—Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation
Ryhal Rowland
MSU Extension
(406) 477-6498

Cascade County—Great Falls
Jona McNamee
MSU Extension
(406) 454-6980
Mariellen Ritts
(406) 453-3554

Custer County—Miles City
Don & Vivian Westall
(406) 234-6727

Dawson County—Glendive
Pete Bruno
Family Life Institute
(406) 939-5591

Deer Lodge County—Anaconda
Abbie Phillip
MSU Extension
(406) 563-4036

Fergus County—Lewistown
Denise Seilstad
MSU Extension
(406) 535-3919

Flathead County—Kalispell
The Nurturing Center, Inc.
(406) 756-1414

Gallatin County—Bozeman
MSU Extension Family & Human Development
(406) 994-3395
grg@montana.edu

Glacier County—Browning & Blackfeet Indian Reservation
Carrie Bear Chief-Evans/
Connie Bremner
Eagle Shield Center
(406) 338-7257

Hill County—Havre
Katrin Finch
MSU Extension
(406) 265-5481 x233

Hill County—Rocky Boy Indian Reservation
Mary St. Pierre
Stone Child College & MSU Extension
(406) 395-4875

Lake County—Ronan
Nori Pearce
MSU Extension
(406) 676-4271

Lewis & Clark County—Helena
Jackie Stoeckel
MT Office on Aging
(406) 444-6061

Madison/Jefferson Counties—Whitehall
MSU Extension
(406) 287-3282

Missoula County—Missoula
Kelly Moore
MSU Extension
(406) 258-4206

Ravalli County—Bitterroot Valley
AnnaMarie White
La Paloma Agency
(406) 396-1937

Richland County—Sidney
Johanna Bunn
MSU Extension
(406) 433-1206

Roosevelt County—Culbertson
Ardis Oelkers
MSU Extension
(406) 787-5312

Roosevelt County—Fort Peck Indian Reservation
Carol Bemer
(406) 768-2430

Rosebud County—Forsyth
Jennifer Anderson
MSU Extension
(406) 346-7320

Rosebud County—Lame Deer & Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation
Kay Medicine Bull
Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Cheyenne Nation
(406) 477-6654

Silver Bow County—Butte
Brenda Hergott
Butte 4-C's
(406) 723-4019
1-800-794-4061

Stillwater County—Columbus
Lisa Terry
MSU Extension
(406) 322-8035

Teton County—Choteau
Jane Wolery
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(406) 466-2491

Valley County—Glasgow
Roubie Younkin
MSU Extension
(406) 228-6239

Yellowstone County—Billings
Jackie Rumph
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Montana State University Extension is an ADA/
EO/AA Veteran's Preference Employer and
provider of educational outreach.

Montana Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Project

*Call it a clan, call it a network,
call it a tribe, call it a family.
Whatever you are, whoever you are,
you need one.*
~Jane Howard