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## Montana GRG Project Receives Grant From the Brookdale Foundation

We are excited to announce that the MT GRG Project received a two-year grant from the **Brookdale Foundation**. This funding will allow us to become only the third state in the US, along with Colorado and Hawaii, to offer the **GrandCares** program to families.

The **GrandCares** program is a special adaptation of the evidence-based *Powerful Tools for Caregivers* program that provides strategies and tools to give participants better self-care behaviors, increase communication skills and confidence, reduce guilt, anger and depression, and better utilize community resources. **GrandCares** has been adapted, by Extension faculty at Colorado State University and University of Hawaii-Manoa, to offer these tools to grandparents raising grandchildren and other kinship caregivers. The program consists of six 90-minute sessions, once-a-week for six weeks.



**The first Montana GrandCares program is scheduled for January 12–February 16, 2017 in Bozeman.** More locations will be announced in 2017 and 2018. If you are interested in participating in the Bozeman program or a future program, contact Deb Albin at [deborah.albin@montana.edu](mailto:deborah.albin@montana.edu); (406) 994-5099.

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## Useful News

### Give Yourself the Gift of Self-Care

The holidays can be a time for stress, both good and bad. Increased demands on our time, finances, and attention can cause us to feel run down, both physically and emotionally. This month, take time to practice some self-care so that you will feel relaxed and refreshed and able to enjoy this wonderful season with your family and friends.

#### REVIVE with Positive Self-Talk

*“A man is what he thinks about all day long.” –Ralph Waldo Emerson*

What do you think about all day long? What do you say to yourself? Do you say things such as:

I just can't do...

I could never...

I shouldn't have done...

Negative self-talk is defeating. When you find yourself saying things like that, try challenging it. Identify an example of your negative self-talk and the situation when it is most likely to occur. Be as clear and detailed as possible.

Write this down:

1. My negative statement:
2. I say this to myself when:
3. I will replace the negative thought with this positive statement:
4. Repeat the chosen affirmation whenever the above situation occurs.

#### REJUVENATE with Meditation

*“The more faithfully you listen to the voice within you,  
the better you will hear what is sounding outside.” –Dag Hammarskjöld*

1. Choose a quiet spot where you will not be disturbed; 10-20 minutes should suffice.
2. Sit in a comfortable position.
3. Close your eyes to better concentrate.
4. Relax your body by tightening, then relaxing, each of your major muscles from head to toe. This need not take long, only a minute or two.
5. Be aware of your breathing without trying to change it. Your breathing may get slower as meditation proceeds, because of relaxation and your body's metabolism slowing down. Breathe naturally in and out.
6. If you like, choose a word for focus. This is sometimes called a mantra. It can be any word or words that mean something to you. Many people find that words like “love,” “let go,” and “peace” work well. Others use a phrase from a favorite prayer. Repeat the chosen word or phrase silently with your breathing, on the in- and out-breaths.
7. Don't judge your performance or wonder how you are doing. You will have distracting thoughts which you can let go of by returning to awareness of your breathing and focus. With repetition, awareness will continue to develop and carry over into the rest of your life, inducing a peaceful state of mind.
8. Practice a minimum of once a day for 10-20 minutes. Twice a day is even better. The best times to meditate are often in the early morning, after exercise and a shower but before breakfast, or before dinner. Since meditation is an exercise in concentration, avoid meditating when you are tired or you might fall asleep. However, if you have difficulty falling asleep at night, meditate while lying down to facilitate relaxation and sleep.

Be sure to follow the MT GRG Project on Facebook and get a new “Self-Care Tip of the Week” every Monday!  
<https://www.facebook.com/Montana-Grandparents-Raising-Grandchildren-Project-930862973615169/?ref=hl>



**Useful  
News**

**Revised Discipline MontGuides Now Available**

Effective and compassionate discipline is a job that doesn't take a break for the holidays! With your grandchildren home from school for a couple of weeks, now is great time for a refresher on useful discipline strategies and tools for three different age groups. Although discipline actually means to teach or guide, the term is frequently associated with punishment. **Remember, the goal of discipline is to teach children how to act appropriately with family and friends, in school and in the community.**

**Infants & Toddlers**

Contrary to popular belief, infants cannot be spoiled by picking them up too often. During the first year of life, babies are learning to bond with and trust their parents. When an infant cries she is trying to tell parents that something is wrong. When parents respond to the child's needs, the infant learns that she can trust them to take care of her. Rather than spoiling the infant, both the parent and baby learn a routine that meets the whole family's needs. Establishing structure helps the child learn what to expect, such as when to go to bed.

**Other strategies for this age are:**

- Baby-proofing the house. Rather than continually being on guard and telling an infant "no", parents can baby-proof the house relax.
- Redirecting attention. If the baby is reaching for something that she shouldn't have, say "no" and then direct her towards a toy or something that she can play with.
- Monitoring schedules. Young children tell time by routine not by the clock. Try to keep the child's schedule as consistent as possible. This will help to avoid misbehavior.

**Pre-Schoolers**

Striving for independence while needing reassurance could be the motto of the preschool child. This is the age when children want to do things for themselves, yet they want to know that parents are nearby and supportive; they are curious and want to know how things work. They enjoy mimicking adult actions. They also are good at saying "no" and wanting things to go their way.

**You can guide behavior by:**

- Understanding behavior. Know why your child is misbehaving so you can better handle the problem.
- Communicating expectations. Be consistent and repetitive when talking about rules.
- Supervising activities. Help them safely explore their surroundings so they can gain confidence and independence.
- Simplifying life. Don't give them too many choices or too much stimulation.
- Establishing routine. Help them know what to expect and when.

**School-Aged Children**

Once children reach school-age, you are in the position to start allowing your child to make more choices on her own. This teaches confidence and important life skills. Kids this age need to know that they are capable.

**You can guide behavior by:**

- Setting a good example
- Establishing routines
- Using natural and logical consequences
- Reminding her of important rules
- Being firm and consistent
- Modeling good behavior yourself.

**Strategies to avoid are:**

- Adults should never spank, slap or hit a child. Physical punishment sends the message that violence is acceptable and that larger people are more powerful.
- If "grounding" a child, make sure the limits are realistic and appropriate. Don't be tempted to give into anger or fear and ground your child "for life".

**Download these MontGuides or order FREE paper copies at <http://store.msuetension.org/>**

**Discipline: A Parent's Guide Infants and Toddlers**

<http://store.msuetension.org/publications/HomeHealthandFamily/MT200412HR.pdf>

**Discipline: A Parent's Guide for Pre-Schoolers**

<http://store.msuetension.org/publications/HomeHealthandFamily/MT200413HR.pdf>

**Discipline: A Parent's Guide for School-Aged Children**

<http://store.msuetension.org/publications/HomeHealthandFamily/MT200501HR.pdf>



## Resources & Services

### Montana Agency Spotlight: *Montana Independent Living Project, Inc.*

MILP is a not-for-profit agency that promotes independent living for people with disabilities and is governed by a consumer-controlled Board of Directors whose lives have been personally impacted by a disability. MILP offers many services including:

- **Daily Living Skills:** MILP provides learning opportunities for budgeting, menu/meal planning, meal preparation/cooking, and grocery shopping.
- **Community Resource Acquisition:** Staff assists consumers in researching and applying for community resources such as Medicaid services and waivers, Medicare benefits, food stamps, energy assistance and Meals on Wheels services.
- **Support and Recreational Groups:** MILP sponsors recreational and support group activities as requested.
- **Social Security Assistance:** MILP provides educational assistance and advocacy for all aspects of Social Security, including securing and maintaining benefits, and the application and appeals processes.
- **Information & Referral Services.** Accessibility concerns and resources; ADA access and employment issues, and legal and legislative news and updates; medical, legal, social and individualized information on understanding your disability; alternative resources and availability; financial resource opportunities including assistance with pursuing grants and loans for acquiring necessary assistive and adaptive devices.

#### Helena, MT

825 Great Northern Blvd., Ste. 105  
(406) 442-5755

#### Bozeman, MT

3825 Valley Commons Dr., Ste. 2  
(406) 522-7300

#### Butte, MT

3475 Monroe, Ste. 100  
(406) 782-4834



[Learn more at http://www.milp.us/](http://www.milp.us/)

### The Montana Saves Scavenger Hunt is On!

Montana State University Extension is offering the **Montana Saves Scavenger Hunt** as a part of the America Saves program during 2016-2017. This version of the hunt is specifically designed for students between the ages of 13 and 19 (as of September 1, 2016). Students will learn about the benefits saving and investing, how credit can be a friend for foe, and how to be in control of their money.

Students who complete the **Montana Saves Scavenger Hunt** are eligible for a drawing for one of 17 cash awards of \$100 in each age group during America Saves week February 27 – March 4, 2017. The deadline for completing the hunt is **Wednesday, March 1, 2017**.

This is a great way to learn about finances and make some money while having fun! Materials for teachers, parents, and students are available; contact Deb Albin at [deborah.albin@montana.edu](mailto:deborah.albin@montana.edu); (406) 994-5099 to have the materials sent to you and start \$aving today!





**Resources  
& Services**

**Montana Agency Spotlight:  
Montana Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Council, Inc.**

**What is the Montana Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Council, Inc.?** The MMSFC is an organization that has provided primary and preventive health care services to agricultural workers and their families since 1971.

**What are the MMSFC's services?** Through the Montana Migrant Health Program, the MMSFC provides basic health services to agricultural workers and their families through clinicians, dental hygienists and a behavioral health counselor. Referrals for other health or social needs can be made to doctors and social agencies.

**Who is eligible?** To be eligible you must currently work in some form of agriculture or have a recent history of agricultural work.

**What cost is there to me?** The costs of health services are based on your income. Service will be provided regardless of your ability to pay. The MMSFC cannot assist with hospitalization or emergency room costs. If you anticipate large medical bills we may be able to help you apply for Medicaid or other assistance.

**How can I get services?** Visit the nearest MMSFC clinic office or call to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins welcome! Monday- Friday, 8:00 am-5:00 pm; call toll free, (800) 813-4492

**When are services offered?** Offices in Billings, Dillon, Fairview and Lolo are open year-round to provide walk-in clinical care. There are also several seasonal satellite clinics hosted throughout the state.

**Billings, MT**

3318 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave N, Ste. 200  
(406) 248-3149

**Dillon, MT**

116 N. Washington St.  
(406) 683-5570

**Fairview, MT**

35511 County Rd. 134  
(406) 742-5201

**Lolo, MT**

9801 Valley Grove Dr.  
(406) 273-4633



**Learn more at <http://www.mtmigrantcouncil.org/>**

We would love to **feature your service or resource** in the next MT GRG Project newsletter and on [montanagrandparents.org](http://montanagrandparents.org). Contact Deb Albin at (406) 994-5099; [deborah.albin@montana.edu](mailto:deborah.albin@montana.edu)

Check out all the **state, regional and national resources on our website:**  
<http://www.montanagrandparents.org/GRGsresources.html>

YOU can **support the work of the MT GRG Project** with a tax-deductible donation!  
<http://www.montanagrandparents.org/funders.html>



**Health & Nutrition**

**Fast, Fun & Nutritious Holiday Treats!**

During the holidays it is easy to bake and eat lots of sugary, high-fat goodies. While it is definitely the time of year for these indulgent treats, you can also treat your family to some nutritious treats that are also fun and easy for the whole family to make.

**No-Bake Energy Bites!**

**Ingredients**

- 2 cups old fashioned oatmeal
- 1/2 cup finely shredded coconut
- 1/2 cup Christmas M&M's
- 1/4 cup hemp seeds or ground flax seed
- 1/2 cup peanut or nut butter
- 1/2 cup honey

1. Mix all ingredients in bowl. Scoop out 1 tablespoon at a time. Press and roll into balls.
2. Chill in the fridge or freezer until ready to eat! Store bites in sealed container.
3. If your mixture is very sticky, add more oats or chill mixture in the fridge for 30 minutes and then roll into bites.



**Healthy Gingerbread House!**



**Ingredients**

- Fruits (ex. kiwis, dried cranberries, blackberries, dried apricots, coconut, etc.)
- Graham crackers
- 1 cup canned coconut milk
- 3 tbsp. maple syrup
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- A pinch of salt

1. Place all of your ingredients (except fruit and graham crackers) into a medium to large non-stick saucepan over a medium-high heat. Stir to combine all ingredients and bring caramel to the boil.
2. Keep cooking your caramel until it thickens and darkens, stirring occasionally.
3. Once your caramel has thickened, remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly before serving or storing in a clean container or jar.
4. Now that you have the "house glue" to hold it all together, lay out your decorating foods and let your family get creative!

**Find more recipes and ideas like these on our Pinterest page!**

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

# Grandfamily Support Contacts Across Montana—By County

**Blaine County—Harlem & Fort Belknap Indian Reservation**  
Barbara Skoyen, RN  
(406) 353-3157

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**  
Tammy Phelps  
Family Connections  
(406) 761-6010

Beth Branam  
Opportunities, Inc. Head Start  
(406) 453-5415

MSU Extension  
(406) 454-6980

**Chouteau County—Ft. Benton**  
Janell Barber  
MSU Extension  
(406) 622-3036

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

**Dawson County—Glendive**  
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**  
Cathy Brenneman  
The Nurturing Center, Inc.  
(406) 756-1414

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

Gerre Mailett  
Youth Dynamics  
(406) 548-6606

**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 Boys Indian Reservation**  
Mary St. Pierre  
Stone Child College & MSU Extension  
(406) 395-4875

**Lake County—Ronan & Flathead Indian Reservation**  
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

**Pondera County—Conrad**  
Wendy Wedum  
MSU Extension  
(406) 271-4052

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

Jo Ann Wilson  
(406) 926-1711

**Richland County—Sidney**  
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

**Sanders County—Thompson Falls**  
Juli Thurston  
MSU Extension  
(406) 827-6934

**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  
MSU Extension  
(406) 466-2491

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

**Yellowstone County—Billings**  
Jackie Rumph  
MSU Extension  
(406) 256-2828



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[www.montanagrandparents.org](http://www.montanagrandparents.org)



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*