





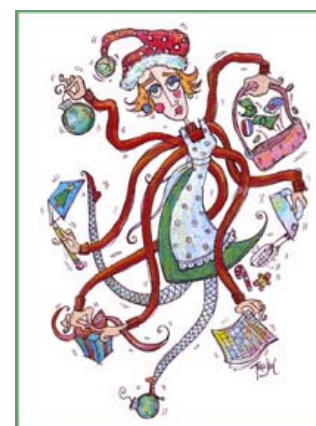


Holiday Stress Management

During the holidays we can be bombarded with expectations and demands from the media, family, and ourselves. Holidays can stress out even the best multi-tasker. With cooking, shopping for gifts, sending out cards, putting up decorations, and organizing parties on top of all the other daily tasks one attends to, it is not surprising that many people report feeling stressed out.

The holidays can be a difficult time emotionally, physically, and financially, causing people to be stressed, depressed, anxious, and over-tired. This holiday season, with some good stress-management, you can avoid "holiday burnout". When you feel yourself start to get overwhelmed, keep the four P's in mind:

-  Perspective
-  Preconceived ideas
-  Planning
-  Permission



Holidays can stress out the best multi-tasker.

Holidays continued on pg. 2

What Do These Famous People Have in Common?

Lucille Ball, Pierce Brosnan, Oprah Winfrey, Willie Nelson, Naomi Campbell, Isaac Newton, Al Pacino, Tammy Wynette, Gregory Peck, Samuel L. Jackson, Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, & Morgan Freeman.

Answer on page 3.

Inside this issue:

Holiday Stress	2
Financial Aid for College-Bound Grandchildren	4
Step Forward for Grandfamilies: Affordable Hous-	4
	4
Montana GRG Support Groups	5
Homemade Wrapping Paper	6

"One hundred years from now, it will not matter what my bank account was, how big my house was, or what kind of car I drove. But the world may be a little better, because I was important in the life of a child."

-Forest Witcraft



Join us next summer at the first

Montana Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Conference

Great Falls: June 10th, 2006
Billings: June 17th, 2006

Holidays cont. from pg. 1

Perspective: Remember the holidays are only a small portion of the year and will be over soon. Don't try to define your whole year or functionality of your family based on this one season. You are not alone in your feelings. Many people experience anxiety, stress, and depression at this time if year.

Preconceived ideas: Shove those *shoulds* right out of your mind. Try to ignore the messages from the media and society about what you should be feeling, or how your family should be getting along, or how many presents you should buy. It may be difficult, but it can be very liberating. Consider forming new holiday traditions.



Holidays can leave you stressed and tired.

Planning: Think before over-committing yourself

to parties, baking, and other obligations. Decide how much "holiday cheer" you can handle. You may choose to attend a couple of parties or none at all. If you already have a lot to do, delegate out some duties to other family members or friends. You don't need to be a super hero and do it all yourself. Remembering a little word can help to lighten your load, "no".

Define for yourself what the holidays mean to you and your family.

Permission: Allow yourself to feel as you do and make the choices you need. If you are stressed and tired, give yourself a break. Try not to judge or compare yourself to anyone else. You have a right to make the holidays pleasant for YOU.

The four P's can be a useful stress management tool for the holidays and anytime of the year. For more stress management techniques go to www.about.com or check out our Mont-guides through our website at www.montana.edu/wwwhd/grg/index.htm.

In our continuing effort to support explore the issues and challenges of grandparents raising grandchildren in Montana, we are asking anyone with questions, concerns, or ideas to please contact us at grg@montana.edu or by calling 994-3395. Also, if you have any comments or questions about the newsletter please feel free to let us know.

Answer: They were all raised by their grandparents!

Financial Aid for College-Bound Grandchildren

Are your grandchildren getting ready to fill out college applications? If so, it is a good idea to start thinking about financial aide. Many college students, or their parents, file for Free Assistance for Federal Student Aide (FAFSA). FAFSA is a government program to provide loans, grants and work study opportunities for college students. A financial aid award is determined by each school based on your eligibility and the cost of attendance for the program in which the student is enrolled



The FAFSA application requires the financial informa-

tion about the parents' incomes, or the student's if they are considered independent from their parents.

The financial aid reward is accompanied by the Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is the amount of money the college student or their families are expected to provide each semester for living expenses. During the semester many students use Work Study or other jobs outside of the university to supplement their incomes.

Grandfamilies may find it difficult to come up with their EFC due to their limited incomes. Therefore it may be in the best interest of the family for the

student to file for independent status. In order to do this, the student needs to contact the Financial Aid Office of their prospective university and ask about filing a Petition for Independent Status. Independent status can be granted for students whose parents are deceased or otherwise unable to provide for their children. This must be done before filing for financial aid to get the proper financial aid reward. The financial aid office can assist you in filing for independent status as well as filing for financial aid. It is recommended to file FAFSA forms by the February prior to enrollement.

For more information about financial aid, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov or call your university's financial aid office.

A Step Forward for Grandfamilies: Affordable Housing

On October 14th, grandfamilies in New York celebrated the opening of low-income housing .

The newly constructed GrandParent Family Apartments are offering 50 affordable homes and providing critical social services to grandparent-led families earning less than \$17,000 per year. There is no other facility like it in the state, and there are only a handful of similar projects nationwide.

The project was developed and is being managed by two highly respected New York nonprofits, Presbyterian Senior Services (PSS) and

the West Side Federation For Senior and Supportive Housing (WSFSSH). With this project, they have built homes and community space that cater to low-income adults over 62 years of age, as well as to teens and young children.

This building and program grew out of PSS' work in the community with grandparents and the unique challenges they faced raising their grandchildren.

While there is not yet a program such as this in Mon-

tana, it serves as an excellent example of where grandparents who are raising their grandchildren are headed.

Additionally, the passage of the Living Equitably: Grandparents Aiding Children and Youth Act (LEGACY) in 2003 has laid the groundwork for such programs. It allows the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to create programs addressing the housing needs of grandfamilies.

For information about LEGACY go to <http://www.house.gov/capuano/news/>

Strong social supports contribute to the empowerment of grandfather caregivers.

Grandparent Support Groups Across Montana

Billings:

Bernie Mason
P.O. Box 35021
Billings, MT 59107
256-2828

The support group is on hiatus; call if you are interested. There is an educational portion of the meeting and a time to share and discuss special concerns.

Bozeman:

Jeannine Sonnier
Parent Liaison
2435 Annie St.
Bozeman, MT 59718
587-3840

This support group meets once a week for 1.5 hours. Childcare is provided.

Browning:

Carrie Jackson
Eagle Shield Center
P.O. Box 76
Browning, MT 59417
338-7257

This support group is located on the Blackfeet Reservation. The Native American Elder Family Caregiver Support Program offers group meetings once a month, usually on Tuesday 10:00 to 12:00. They also have their meal at Eagle Shield Center; after the meeting the grandparents enjoy a free lunch.

Butte:

Jeff Jensen
Butte 4C's
101 E. Broadway
Butte, MT 59701
723-4019
800-794-4061
www.butte4-cs.org
Support Group pending.

Colstrip:

Jennifer Anderson
P.O. Box 65
Forsyth, MT 59327
346-7320

New support group starting.

Dillon:

Jeff Jensen
723-4019
800-794-4061
Support group pending

Great Falls:

Geri Laubnetz
Partnership Project
1101 7th Ave So.
Great Falls, MT 59403
268-6762
Claire Delguerra
Cascade Extension
454-6980

The support group meets from 11:30-1 PM one Tuesday per month. Lunch is served, and grandparents share experiences, and have a brief educational, sharing session based on grandparent needs.

Helena:

Jeannette B. Mattfeldt
562 Broadway
Helena, MT 59601
442-8207

This group meets the 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:30 in the State AARP office. This group provides educational, social, and informal meetings. They also try to incorporate a speaker once a month. This group is also open to anyone helping raise someone else's children.

Joliet

Sharon Baldwin
MSU Extension Agent
Carbon County
PO Box 230
Joliet, MT 59041
962-3522

This support group is new and just starting up in Carbon County.

Lewistown:

Denise Seilstadt
712 W. Main
Lewistown, MT 59457
New support group starting.

Kalispell:

Melody Domph
The Nurturing Center, Inc.
146 3rd Ave. W.
Kalispell, MT 59901
756-1414

This group is on hiatus; call if you are interested. They have had a variety of speakers on Grief & Loss, Legal Issues, and Healthy Discipline.

Missoula:

Kathy Revello, MSU Extension
Missoula County Agent
256-4208
Amy Westereng
Families First Parenting Program
815 E. Front St. Suite 3
Missoula, MT 59802

This support group meets the second Tuesday of each month, October-June, 6:30 – 8 pm. It is co-sponsored by MSU Extension.

Poplar and Wolf Point:

Ardis Oelkers
MSU Extension
Culbertson, MT 59218
787-5312

This support group is just starting up, call for more information. New members are welcome.

Rocky Boy Reservation:

Evelyn Gopher
Rocky Boy Elementary School
Box Elder, MT
395-4474 ext 229

The support group meets at 4:45 pm 1-2 times per month. If you would like more information about the support group or this training session, please call.

**GRANDPARENTS RAISING
GRANDCHILDREN PROJECT**

316 Herrick Hall
Bozeman, MT 59715

Phone: (406) 994-3395
Fax: (406) 994-2013

Email: grg@montana.edu

*Project Director: Sandy Bailey
Newsletter Editor: Fonda Porterfield
Program Coordinators:
Shayna Lemke & Fonda Porterfield*

We're on the web!

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwhd/grg/index.htm>



Personalize Gifts with Homemade Wrapping Paper

The holidays are a great time for family activities and creating some new holiday traditions. Designing original wrapping paper is a fun (and somewhat messy), crafty project that family members of all ages can enjoy.

First you need to start with some plain paper. Butcher paper works great or you can go to your local newspaper and purchase the ends of rolls. They sell them by the pound and less than ten dollars can buy you enough paper to keep your grandchildren occupied all year. Since the paper is in a roll you can easily unroll it on the kitchen table or on the floor and let your creative juices flow.

Decorate the paper with crayons, watercolors, markers, stamps from a craft store, sponges, homemade potato stamps, stickers, or glitter glue pens. You could also glue scraps of used Christmas paper, cards, tissue paper, or what ever festive papers you have around the house.

Creating a homemade gift or wrapping one in homemade paper puts a personal touch on your gifts and can instill a sense of accomplishment in your grandkids.



Kids can personalize gifts by making their own wrapping paper.