



Meth in Montana

Methamphetamine (meth) use is on the rise throughout the United States today. Meth was once predominantly found in Western states, however, in recent years the popularity of meth has reached across all areas of America - rural and urban. Montana has seen a dramatic increase in meth production and use in the past decade and this increase can in part be attributed to the rural nature of the state. Methamphetamine is highly addictive and a very difficult drug to stop using once addicted

Methamphetamine in Montana

Montana is currently among the top eight states for methamphetamine abuse in the nation and this dangerous drug is creating a statewide epidemic of substance abuse and social problems in Montana according to the Montana Department of Justice. In recent years, record numbers of meth labs have been seized, however, the meth problem is not under control.

Montana families can be torn apart by meth. Children whose parents use or manufacture meth are often removed from the home and placed in foster care. Grandparents and other relatives are called upon to care for these children. Parents whose children use meth frequently end up deeply in debt or bankrupt trying to assist their children who need legal assistance and treatment for their dependency. The drug costs society more than money—it also impacts the well-being of Montana families.

What is in Methamphetamine?

Household cleaners contain most of the chemicals necessary to produce methamphetamine. Some of the common products used to manufacture meth include: rubbing alcohol, brake cleaner, drain cleaner, iodine, battery acid, fertilizers, lye, cat litter, and cold medicines containing Pseudoephedrine or Ephedrine. The chemicals used to make meth are toxic, and when combined, some of them can be highly explosive.

What is MSU Extension doing to educate about meth?

MSU Extension has created a Community Tool Kit for Meth and is working with the Office of Public Instruction to develop middle and high school lesson plans for teachers on the dangers of meth. A copy of the MSU meth information card is attached to this newsletter. For more information on methamphetamine, contact your local County Extension Agent.

A video has been produced by Montana Public Television portraying the meth epidemic in Montana. A copy of this video can be checked out by calling MSU Extension Family and Human Development at (406) 994-5099.

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June Motivation

"..look at that word *blame*. It's just a coincidence that the last two letters spell the word *me*. But that coincidence is worth thinking about.

Other people or unfortunate circumstances may have caused you to feel pain, but only *you* control whether you *allow that pain to go on*.

If you want those feelings to go away, you have to say:
"It's up to *me*."
—Arthur Freeman

Managing the Stress of Caregiving



If you give care for a grandchild, chances are good that you also feel stressed at times. Perhaps you feel guilty because you think you aren't doing enough, and you're frustrated that you can't do more. Can't remember the last time you slept through the night without a call from your grandchild? Can't bear to see what's happening to your own child?

You are not alone. Studies show that experiencing stress is not just unpleasant – it can negatively affect your health, well-being, and ability to provide care. When you are caring for others, taking care of yourself and your needs is like doing regular maintenance on your car. It is critical to staying in shape over time.

Managing your stress will improve your physical and mental health to benefit yourself, your elderly loved ones, and others who depend on you.

For more information on stress visit the MSU Extension website at <http://www.montana.edu/publications/>. You can download MontGuides such as: *Dealing with Anger in Relationships*, *Fifty Stress Busting Ideas for Your Well-Being*, *Understanding Grief*, and *Handling Challenging Times*.

Take Care of Your Health

- Eat nutritious meals. Don't give in to stress-driven urges for sweets or drink too much alcohol.
- Get enough sleep. If you are kept up at night, try a nap during the day to make up some sleep.
- Exercise regularly, even if it means finding someone else to provide care while you walk or go to exercise class.
- Get regular medical checkups. If you have any symptoms of depression (extreme sadness, trouble concentrating, apathy, hopelessness, thoughts about death), see a doctor right away. Depression is an illness that can, and should, be treated.



There are many MontGuides on nutrition and eating healthy. For a complete list or to obtain copies, visit your local County Extension Agent.



Involve Others

Make a list of jobs you need help with. They could include household chores, home repair or maintenance, driving, paying bills, finding information on services you need. Maybe it's simply giving you a break by staying with your grandchild(ren) while you get away for awhile. If friends or family members offer to help—take them up on it. If no one has offered you help, reach out and ask for it..

Maintain Social Contacts

Isolation increases stress. Having fun, laughing, and focusing on something besides your problems helps you keep your emotional balance.



Continued...



Get Help From Community Services and Organizations

- Respite care can give you some time off.
- Speak to a trusted clergy member, counselor, or therapist to discuss the challenges you are facing.
- Contact the Montana GRG Project at (406) 994-3395 for a copy of our Montana Services Guide for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. This guide lists services available to grandparents throughout the state.

Talk About It

Research suggests that keeping your feelings bottled up can harm your immune system and lead to illness. Talk to friends and family about your feelings. Share experiences with coworkers in similar situations. See a professional counselor. Join a caregiver support group to share emotions and experiences, seek and give advice, and exchange practical information.



Deal Constructively with Negative Feelings

When feeling resentful, think about how to change things. Recognize the anger-guilt-anger cycle, and stop it immediately by forgiving yourself for being angry. Then distance yourself from the situation, figure out what caused the anger, and decide how you can respond more constructively the next time. Hold a family meeting to resolve conflicts with relatives. And recognize your accomplishments as a caregiver instead of dwelling on your shortcomings.

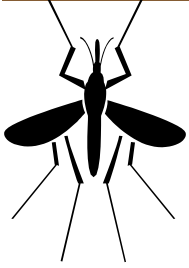


Providing care for a loved one can be stressful, but there are ways to reduce the stress. By maintaining a healthy routine, watching your diet, enlisting help from others and exploring community services that support caregivers, you can ensure that you are providing the best care possible – for your loved ones and yourself.

MSU Extension has a variety of MontGuides on topics that are important to grandparents raising grandchildren. Many of these articles are available on the internet, and all are available by visiting your local County Extension Agent. You can also request publications by mail for a small fee. Visit <http://www.montana.edu/publications/> or call your County Extension Agent, the local number will be found in the government section of your phone book.

Adapted from www.aarp.org

Get Rid of Annoying Mosquitoes



To anyone who likes sitting out in the evening or having a cook out, but may be bothered by mosquitoes!

So you don't like those pesky mosquitoes, especially now that they have the potential to carry the West Nile Virus? Here's a tip that was given at a recent gardening forum. Put some water in a white dinner plate and add a couple drops of Lemon Fresh Joy dish detergent. Set the dish on your porch, patio, or other outdoor area.

Not sure what attracts them, the lemon smell, the white plate color, or what, but mosquitoes flock to it, and drop dead shortly after drinking the Lemon Fresh Joy water mixture, and usually within about 10 feet of the plate. It works just super!

This may seem simple, but it may help control mosquitoes around your home, especially in the South and elsewhere where the West Nile virus is reaching epidemic proportions in mosquitoes, birds, and humans.

Contributed by Jeannette Mattfeldt, Support Group Leader in Helena, MT.

For more information on the West Nile Virus, visit <http://www.montana.edu/commserv/csnews/nwview.php?article=808>

Children's Books About Family Relationships: Books Grandparents Can Use With Their Grandchildren

It can be difficult to talk to children in a way that helps them understand their family situation. Listed below are books that may help children understand and relate to you as a grandparent caregiver.

***Can You Do This, Old Badger?* by Eve Bunting. Ages 4-8.**

“Although Old Badger cannot do some things as easily as he used to, he can still teach Little Badger about catching fish, eating worms, and staying safe and happy.”

***Dinosaur Divorce: A Guide for Changing Families*, by Lauren Krasney Brown and Marc Brown. Ages 5-12.**

“Dinosaur characters depict the range of experiences and feelings encountered by children whose parents divorce.”

***Love Is A Family*, by Roma Downey. Ages 4-8.**

“Lily worries that she'll be the only kid in her class who brings just one person to Family Fun Night, but she discovers there are many kinds of families, including grandparents raising grandchildren.”

***Robert Lives with His Grandparents*, by Martha Whitmore Hickman. K-9.**

***Today I Feel Silly and Other Moods That Make My Day*, by Jamie Lee Curtis. Ages 4-7.**

***What Grandmas Do Best and What Grandpas Do Best*, by Laura Joffe Numeroff. Ages 2-5.**

***When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death*, by Laurie Krasney Brown and Marc Brown. Ages 5-10.**

Information on the previous books was contributed in the following article:

Brickmayer, J., Cohen, J., Doran Jensen, I., & Altman Variano, D. (2005). Supporting grandparents raising grandchildren. *Young Children*, May, pp. 100-104.

Grandparent Support Groups Across Montana

Billings:

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

The support group will be meeting the first Monday of the month. 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 per semester for an hour and a half. Child care is provided.

Judy Morrill

Bozeman Senior Center
807 N. Tracy
Bozeman, MT 59715
586-2421

This group meets once a month at the Bozeman Senior Center for coffee and informal discussions.

Browning:

Connie Bremner
Eagle Shield Center
PO Box 76
Browning, MT 59417

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

Butte:

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

This support group meets every other Tuesday at 6:00 pm and childcare is provided by Americorps volunteers.

Great Falls:

Geri Laubnetz
Partnership Project
1101 7th Ave So.
Great Falls, MT 59403

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

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

Merrylee Vukonich
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.

Kalispell:

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

This group meets once a month, usually on the 3rd Friday and usually evening 7-9 pm. They have had a variety of speakers on Grief & Loss, Legal Issues, and Healthy Discipline.

Missoula:

Kathy Revello, MSU Extension
Missoula County Agent
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:

Ardis Oelkers
MSU Extension
Culbertson, MT 59218
787-5312

This support group is just starting up, contact Ardis for more information.

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. In March, Tribal Court will be giving another training session on child custody laws to grandparents in the support group. If you would like more information about the support group or this training session, please contact Evelyn Gopher.



GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN PROJECT

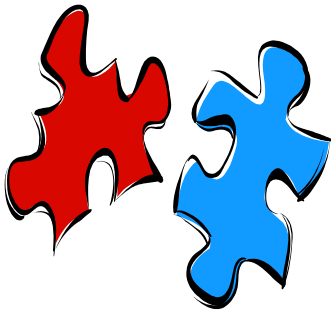
316 Herrick Hall
Bozeman, MT 59715

Phone: (406) 994-3395
Fax: (406) 994-2013
Email: aconway@montana.edu

We're on the Web!

[http://www.montana.edu/
wwwhd/grg/index.htm](http://www.montana.edu/wwwhd/grg/index.htm)

Recipe for Family Puzzle



Age Group: Grandparent caregivers and grandchildren

What do you need: Poster board, markers, scissors, magazines, glue, snacks, music

What to do: Design a puzzle on a large sheet of poster board in pencil (number of pieces should equal the number in the family). Label the back of the pieces with a family member name. Cut the pieces of the puzzle out and give each member of the family someone else's puzzle piece.

Using the magazines to find things that remind you of that person. Words, pictures, ads, quotes, comics, etc can all be used. The purpose is to make each piece individual, and then fit the pieces together in the puzzle which represents the family.

Display the puzzle somewhere for others to look at.

Optional ideas: Puzzle pieces can be kept by members and they can create their own piece of the puzzle. Puzzle can be done in one day or over a few days. If done over a period of time, individuals can use other items or look online for different items to put on the piece. Examples: poems, quotes, stories, fabric, ribbon, flowers, etc... make it creative.

