



Homework Help

Schools have been in session for several weeks now and your grandchildren may be knee-deep in homework. This can cause stress for everyone. You may be feeling the stress when your grandchild asks for help or when you are prompting them to get started on it. Grandparents may struggle to get their grandchildren to do their homework when they are competing with television, computers, and video games.

Children are more successful in school if the adults in their lives show they value education by getting involved. Routine is as important in studying as it is in parenting. Set up a specific time and place to do homework without distractions. Setting up a routine for doing homework can be a great lesson in time management and organization. You can guide your grandchildren in setting reasonable, achievable goals. Goals can be written on a calendar; when a goal is reached it can be crossed off. This will create a sense of accomplishment in your grandchildren. Goal setting can be especially helpful for larger assignments such as reports. Break up tasks into reasonable, specific, and attainable "chunks". *Homework Continued on page 3.*



Getting involved helps kids succeed in school.

Bullying is NOT Okay!

Bullying and teasing are nothing new to schools. It is commonly known that children can be mean, however, despite the commonality of bullying, it can be very detrimental to the well being of children. Bullying can have long-term effects even after it has stopped. Being bullied can cause stress, anxiety, panic attacks, reduced self-esteem and a general loss of confidence.



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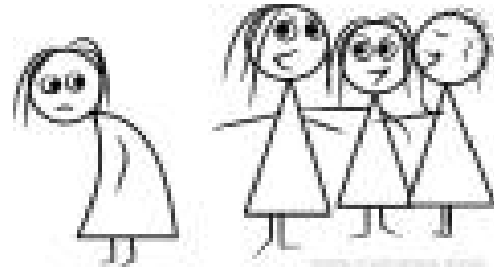
“Level with your child by being honest. Nobody spots a phony quicker than a child.”

Mary MacCracken

Bullying continued from page 1.

Your grandchild may not come right out and tell you they are being bullied. There are many signs your grandchild may display such as:

- Depression
- Frightened to go to school
- Complaining of sickness
- Changes in behavior
- Loss of self-esteem



There are many different ways kids bully that may not be easy for you to detect. You are probably familiar

with physical and verbal bullying, but bullies also use racist and sexual remarks to “pick on” someone. Emotional bullying is especially common among girls. They do this by isolating and excluding others from groups or by spreading rumors. Cyber bullying is a new way to bully through email, instant messaging, Internet chat rooms, and other electronic gadgets.

“Bullying can have lasting effects long after it has stopped.”

What are grandparents to do? A common response is to tell the child to ignore the bully, but first encourage grandchildren to be proactive by standing up for themselves. They should tell the bully in a firm, confident voice to “Stop!” and “Leave me alone!” If this does not work, tell your grandchild to tell an authority figure. Often, when a bully is “found out” they will stop. Do NOT let the bully get away with aggressive behaviors. More than half of bullies in school continue their behaviors and end up in trouble with the law later in life.



Bullying can take many different forms

Adults are often reluctant to get involved for fear of making the situation worse. If your grandchild cannot solve the problem on his or her own, it is time for you to be proactive by:

- Contacting the school and talking to them calmly.
- Educating yourself on the bullying policy at your grandchild’s school.
- Keeping a logbook of events of what the child is going through.
- Giving the school staff a reasonable amount of time to investigate.
- Keeping records of all correspondences with the school.

If a crime has occurred, contact the police. If you do not feel that they have taken you seriously, try reporting it to another officer during another shift. Early intervention can prevent future serious incidents.

There are numerous of resources on the Internet for bullying and what you can do about it. Montana State University Extension has a MontGuide publication on this topic entitled *Children and bullying: A Guide for Parents #200401 HR*. Montguides can be accessed through the MSU Extension webpage or your county’s Extension office.

Homework from page 1.

Grandparents can help grandchildren by figuring out how they learn the best. Start by simply observing your grandchild. Does your grandchild work better alone or with someone? If your grandchild prefers working with a partner, completing assignments with siblings or a classmate may be helpful.

Does your grandchild learn things best when she can see them? Drawing a picture or chart may make concepts clearer to your grandchild. Perhaps your grandchild learns best when s/he can hear them. You can



Create a routine for completing homework.

help by reading the instructions or other material aloud and offer-

ing more explanations. Your grandchild may learn best when s/he

can touch and feel. You can help by using objects like buttons or apple wedges to illustrate math concepts.

Many grandparents are overwhelmed by the subjects and “cyber-research” children must do in modern classrooms. If your grandchildren are having a difficult time getting started, have them ask the school librarian for suggestions. You don’t have to understand the subject matter to help your grandchildren. Praising their progress and helping them use their resources at the library or online can be very supportive actions.

Teaching is a great way to expand students’ learning. Asking your grandchildren to explain their lessons to you could help them deepen their understanding of information.

*Be careful of monetary rewards;
plan a special family activity
instead.*

Of course we want our grandchildren to know when they have done a good job or a good effort, but be careful with monetary rewards. Rewarding can be done through praise and approval. Plan a special family activity instead. By doing so, you reinforce family time and an internal reward system.



Reading a book to your grandchild can lead to teachable moments.

The Internet has many resources for every subject. Look for ideas to strengthen learning in your home. Also, take advantage of those teachable moments when your grandchild’s natural curiosity leads them to ask questions. You can create opportunities for teachable moments by watching educational programs on television, going to the museum, watching the news, reading a book, or just taking a walk with your grandchild.

Teachers are your greatest resource. Keep in touch with them and ask about more tips or guides for developing good study habits.

Medicare Part D

Medicare will be offering a new prescription drug plan starting January 1, 2006. You may qualify under this plan for some extra financial help in paying your monthly premiums, annual deductibles and prescription co-payment under the new program.

You may have already received a letter in the mail; read all the information carefully. Those who qualify for extra help could save an average of \$2,100 per year.

Grandparent caregivers could qualify with higher

incomes because they are supporting family members.

You can apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov or call 1-800-772-1213 (or for the hearing impaired call 1-800-325-0778) for more information.

To learn more about the Medicare prescription drug plans, call 1-800-MEDICARE or visit www.medicare.gov.

For more information see www.aarp.org.

Important dates to remember:

10/1/05: Approved insurers start sending out information about their drug plans.

10/13/05: You can compare Medicare drug plans online at www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-633-4227.

11/15/05: First day to sign up.

1/1/06: First day you can use Medicare drug coverage if you already joined one.

5/15/05: Last day to join a drug plan without penalties, unless you qualify for an exception.

Recent Research: Grandfather Caregivers

Grandparent caregivers are a fast growing population in Montana and across the country. Research on the subject thus far has concentrated primarily on grandmother caregivers. A recent study has been conducted however, exploring the experiences of grandfathers raising grandchildren.

The study was conducted at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work and the Braceland Center for Mental Health and Aging at Hartford Hospital.

The study found many grandfathers have some feelings of powerlessness in their lives. The role transition from grandparent to parent, activities of daily parenting, and the perceived ability to

provide long-term care for the grandchildren were areas in which grandfathers reported feeling powerless. Not surprisingly, grandfather caregivers reported finances as a source of stress.

Some grandfather caregivers reported no feelings of powerlessness. Those who did not report feeling powerless, express that they had a strong support system. They also reported less financial distress and better physical health.

Grandfather caregivers experience more feelings of powerlessness than grandmother caregivers. Grandfathers have a more difficult transition because of gender

roles from being conditioned to get out and go to work. They lack experience with the daily activities of parenting.

This subject has received little research, resulting in a lack of social services and support programs. The findings from this research illustrate the need for better social supports for grandfather caregivers.

For now, grandfather caregivers can try to increase their support network by enlisting the help of other relatives or joining or starting a support group. For more information on starting a support group, contact Sandy Bailey at (406) 994-6745.

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
PO 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**

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Email: fporterfield@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>

Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

This year when you are carving your Jack-O-Lantern, don't throw those seeds away! Roasting them can be a fun activity to do with your grandchildren and yields healthy, tasty results. Pumpkin seeds are high in fiber as well as Vitamins C and E.

Preheat oven to 300° F.

Clean off the big chunks of pulp and strings.

Coat seeds with a couple of tablespoons of melted butter or olive oil mixed with your favorite seasonings such as:

- Salt
- Seasoned salt
- Garlic powder
- Cajun seasoning

Spread in single layer on cookie sheet and bake for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden brown.

Be creative and have fun!



Pumpkin seeds are high in fiber as well as Vitamins C and E.