

Let's Talk: Grandparenting

Presenter – Lynn Borteck, Clinical Counselor

Hi, I'm Lynn. Let's talk about being a grandparent. As a Baby Boomer, I have to confess that it was hard to accept that I was old enough to be a grandma. I mean, I was part of the generation that was never gonna take off their love beads and get into business suits. On the other hand, I have grandchildren, and that makes it all worth it.

Enjoy your grandchildren with guidelines

I heard somebody say that being a grandparent is like skipping your veggies and going right to dessert at every meal, and I really like that. Grandchildren are like having dessert. Delicious. But, there are some general rules and guidelines that grandparents want to follow, in order to make life go smoothly with their children and their grandchildren.

Remember, your child is a parent, too

First, remember they're not your kids. Sure, you're one big happy family now, but you may have to earn your children's trust in taking care of your grandchildren. Think back to when you first left your own kids with other people, and had to build trust, and had to build your own sense of relaxation when you left your kids. Try not to be offended if your kids correct you, or make comments. Try to take it in stride.

Follow the parents' rules

Second, follow the rules your kids set about parenting. Remember when it was only considered safe to put kids on their tummies when they went to sleep in their cribs? Nowadays, the only safe way is to put them on their sides or their backs. Trends change, and parenting advice changes. Your kids will have different rules than you may have. You need to follow their rules out of respect for them, and again, to earn their trust and show that you respect them as parents. Number three, know when to keep quiet. Even if you have PhD in parenting skills, chances are pretty good that your kids are not going to ask for your advice. Why? Because they're new parents. They need to find their own way, just like you found your own way. Trust that they'll do that. You can be prepared to answer questions if they ask your advice, but try to wait until they ask.

Parents learn through experience

And finally, remember to keep having your own life. It can be really tempting to put all your eggs in one basket and be at the beck and call of your children and your grandchildren, and spend a lot of time babysitting. But remember, you need to keep some priorities of your own. It's really important. Your kids may relocate, their priorities may change. It's very important that you keep doing things that make you happy and make you feel good, that keep you connected to your friends and your community. Thanks for talking and enjoy your grandchildren.

Resources For Living

The EAP is administered by Resources For Living, LLC. This material is for informational purposes only. Information is believed to be accurate as of the production date; however, it is subject to change.

©2017 Resources For Living

44.27.343.1-RFL (12/17)