Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

The Rewards and Challenges of Parenting the Second time Around
The challenges and rewards of grandparents raising grandchildren
60,179 grandparents are householders responsible for their grandchildren who live with them. Of these:

- 22,804 (37.9%) do not have parents present.
- 40,818 (67.8%) are under age 60.
- 36,228 (60.2%) are in the workforce.
- 11,615 (19.3%) are in poverty.
- 16,730 (27.8%) have a disability.
- 17,392 (28.9%) are unmarried.
One child in 10 in the US lives with a grandparent. Of those, 4 in 10 are being raised primarily by that grandparent.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Family dynamics are changing rapidly.

Grandparent caregivers are:

- Women: 62%
- Married: 66%
- Age 45-59: 54%
- White: 53%
- Income 1-3 times poverty line: 47%

Long-term commitment:

More than half (54%) of these grandparents report they have been primary caregivers for 3 or more years, and 23% report 1-2 years.

2.9 million US children are being raised by a grandparent.

The steep climb in '07-'08 is largely due to the Recession.
Grandparents raising grandchildren

Tip 1: Acknowledge your feelings

- Stress and worry
- Anger or resentment
- Guilt
- Grief
- Overwhelmed
Tip 2: Take Care of Yourself

- A healthy you means healthy grandchildren.
- Hobbies and relaxation are not luxuries.
- It’s okay to expect your grandchildren to help.
- Find someone you can talk to about what you are experiencing.
- Look for support groups for grandparents raising grandchildren.
- Reach out in your community for childcare help.
Tip 3: Your grandkids will have mixed feelings too

- Your grandkids may resent being separated from their parent and wish to return.
- Your grandkids’ feelings may come out in many ways, including behavior.
- Not matter their behavior, your grandkids need your comfort and support.
- Remember that children often act out in a safe place.
Tip 4: Focus on creating a stable environment

- Establish a routine.
- Encourage their input in their new home.
- Set up clear, age-appropriate house rules and enforce them consistently.
- Make sure that each grandchild has a private space.
- Offer your time and attention.
Tip 5: Encourage open and honest communication

- Plan regular times when you sit and talk to each other.
- Encourage your grandchildren to talk about their feelings, both good and bad.
- Help your grandkids learn to identify their emotions.
- Young children communicate through play.
- It’s okay to say “I don’t know”.

Tip 6: Encourage contact with parents (when possible)

- Don’t put your grandchild in the middle.
- If appropriate, communicate and cooperate with your grandchild’s parent.
- If appropriate, make visits part of your grandchild’s routine.
- Be sensitive to your grandchild’s feelings.
- Help your grandchild deal with disappointment.
How much should you tell young grandchildren?

- Avoid telling the child too much.
- Avoid telling the child too little or nothing at all.
- Never twist the facts or lie to the child.
When you start to feel overwhelmed...

What works for you?
1.
2.
3.

What is your plan?
1.
2.
3.
Love is the greatest gift that one generation can leave to another.
—Richard Garnett