

# HomeFront. PROJECT *KIDS*

Teach, Empower and Enjoy Your Children.

## A.R.T. - Children's Needs Come First

### Do Something Grand and Celebrate Your Grandparents

**Note:** Grandparents Day is formally celebrated the first Sunday after Labor Day (September). But this activity can be done at any time. If circumstances are such that there is not a living grandparent, consider this activity by engaging another extended family member(s) (aunts/uncles, etc.)

#### **WATCH:**

#### ***Looking for Yesterday***

By Allison J

#### **WATCH:**

#### ***How to Babysit a Grandma***

By Jean Reagan



Call your grandparents. Ask them:

What are the two most important things you would want me to know that will help me in my life (in addition to the fact that you love me)?

Commit their advice to memory. You can practice or review it throughout the week. Record the two pieces of advice in a journal or write them on a piece of paper and place the paper somewhere you might see it often.

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Further discussion for older children:

Grandparents are very important people in your life. They can support you, teach you, and share your life. Grandparents can be a force for good in your life. (Review some research facts on the following pages.) Turns out that not only do your grandparents love and need you, you love and need them!

Optional Activity:

Consider watching a movie about Grandparents. Go [here](#) for some suggestions. Caution! Be sure to vet movies for appropriate content.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- *Why do you think there is such a strong connection between most grandparents and their grandchildren?*
- *What are some things that make that bond not occur and how can that lack of connection be avoided?*

#### RESEARCH – KNOWING ABOUT OUR FAMILY HISTORY

- "Thinking about one's genetic origin (i.e. ancestors) provides people with a positive psychological resource that increases their intellectual performance." There was no difference shown between thinking of positive family stories or negative family stories.,

Fischer, Peter & SauerAnne & Vogrincic, Claudia & Weisweiler, Silke. (2011). The ancestor effect: Thinking about our genetic origin enhances intellectual performance. *European Journal of Social Psychology*. 41. 11 - 16. 10.1002/ejsp.778.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227729592\\_The\\_ancestor\\_effect\\_Thinking\\_about\\_our\\_genetic\\_origin\\_enhances\\_intellectual\\_performance](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227729592_The_ancestor_effect_Thinking_about_our_genetic_origin_enhances_intellectual_performance)



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- Knowing your family's history produced "health benefits across the lifespan."  
"Knowing one's family stories creates meaning that goes beyond the individual to provide a sense of self, through time, and in relation to family... [and] provides a larger context for understanding and dealing with life's experience(s) and challenges... contribut[ing] to resilience at all stages of life." Driessnack M. "Who Are You From?": The Importance of Family Stories, *Journal of Family Nursing*, 2017;23(4):434-449. doi:10.1177/1074840717735510
- When a child can answer questions about their immediate family history, the higher their self-esteem, the more positive their views and the stronger their individual sense of control over their circumstances. Understanding your family's history and narrative was a high predictor of some of life's most affirming character traits. When children know "where they come from" they have increased resilience and are better able to respond to life's challenges; showing showed "higher levels of emotional well-being, and also higher levels of identity achievement." Marshall Duke, et al., "Do You Know..." The power of family history in adolescent identity and well-being, Emory University, *Journal of Family Life*, 2010.
- Using family narratives can be a tool for effective parenting. Family narrative is "the way through which children and adolescents connect across generations to create self-identity... by anchoring oneself in family history, one develops a sense of place and security that may facilitate self-confidence and self-competence." Family stories help families pass on values, experiences, traditions and important life lessons to the next generations. Maurya, Rakesh. (2016). Use of Family Narratives as a Tool of Effective Parenting. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*. 3. 2348-5396. 10.25215/0302.090.
- The opposite of addiction is not sobriety, it is connection. Connecting with members of our family past and present by learning their history fills an innate need in each one of us. Bruce Alexander, "The Globalization of Addiction: A Study in Poverty of Spirit," Oxford University Press, 2008. Johann Hari, "Everything You Think You Know about Addiction is Wrong, TED Talk, [https://www.ted.com/talks/johann\\_hari\\_everything\\_you\\_think\\_you\\_know\\_about\\_addiction\\_is\\_wrong#t-202527](https://www.ted.com/talks/johann_hari_everything_you_think_you_know_about_addiction_is_wrong#t-202527)

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- "To know who your ancestors are is the same as knowing the road that leads you home." In Kazakhstan, the citizens are asked to know their ancestors going back seven generations [zhety ata]. Knowing your shezhyre [family tree], "embodies the lore that surround[s] every social event." It is the "cultural medium through which [Kazakhs] express their values, construct and communicate their perceptions of social organization, and maintain local politics." Saulesh Yessenova (2005) "Knowing the Road That Leads You Home: Family, Genealogy, and Migration in Post-Socialist Kazakhstan" The Journal of Guangxi University for Nationalities, Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition, China, 27/7: 40-48.  
<https://edspace.american.edu/silkroadjournal/wp-content/uploads/sites/984/2017/09/%E2%80%98Knowing-the-Road-That-Leads-You-Home%E2%80%99-Family-Genealogy-and-Migration-in-Post-Socialist-Kazakhstan.pdf>
- Ancient Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) philosophy states that every individual is accountable to seven generations or seven circles. Starting from the left is your great grandparents, then your grandparents, then parents, with the individual comprising the middle circle. Continuing on, the fifth circle is your children, then grandchildren, then great-grandchildren – seven generations. It's the ability to think about 75-100 years in the past and 75 to 100 years into the future and to see them all as connected and a part of you. It is your past and your future, and you act with responsibility toward them all. <https://www.pbs.org/warrior/content/timeline/opendoor/roleOfChief.html>
- Grandparents have a positive influence on their grandchildren that is distinct from parent-child relationships. When grandparents stayed connected and involved with their grandkids, the children in both single parent and two-parent families "were kinder to others outside their immediate family and friends -- and, in some cases, smarter." Jeremy B. Yorgason, et al., "Nonresidential Grandparents' Emotion and Financial Involvement in Relation to Early Adolescent Grandchild Outcomes," Journal of Research on Adolescence, Vol. 21, 3, (September 2011): 552-558.
- A study from Oxford University showed that teenagers whose grandparents were actively involved in their lives were happier. They had fewer emotional and behavior problems and got along with their peers better. "Close relationships between grandparents and grandchildren buffer the effects of adverse life events." University of Oxford. "Grandma And Grandpa Are Good For Children." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 7 June 2008, [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/06/080605091358.html](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/06/080605091358.html)

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- Extended family can have a positive impact on children's educational attainment. "In addition to siblings resembling each other, first cousins also resemble each other with regard to how much education they complete." Aunts, uncles, and grandparents help children to be more resilient, by compensating for resources that may be lacking in their immediate family. Jæger, M. M. (2012). The Extended Family and Children's Educational Success. American Sociological Review, 77(6), 903-922. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122412464040>

