

Child Health Care

Because of your new parenting responsibilities, you may need to keep records of immunization, illnesses and exams for your grandchildren. Keeping up-to-date records helps you keep track of important information. Take your grandchildren's records with you to each health care appointment.

Immunizations

The following is a list of recommended childhood immunizations. Check with your health care provider for an immunization schedule and about what is right for your grandchildren.

- Polio (IPV)
- Diphtheria (DtaP, Td)
- Tetanus (Td)
- Pertussis (StaP, Td)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib)
- Hepatitis B (HBV)
- Chicken Pox (VZV)

Lead Poisoning

Lead poisoning can occur by exposure to old, chipping, peeling house paint and can cause a slowing of physical and mental growth. Contact your health care provider to find out if your grandchildren are at risk.

Vision

All children should have their vision tested before they enter school and as your physician recommends. Some warning signs that your grandchildren's vision needs to be checked are squinting, headaches, difficulty in school, blurry or double vision, and eyes turning inward or outward.

Hearing

All children should have their hearing tested between ages three and four years. Warning signs that your grandchildren may have a hearing problem include slow language or speech development, abnormal sounding speech, regression backwards in speech and language development and difficulty in school.

Dental & Oral Health

Check with your dentist to determine the best time for an initial dental checkup for your grandchildren. After your grandchildren have several teeth, begin gently brushing their teeth with a soft toothbrush and a small amount of toothpaste.



Nutrition

Check with your health care provider for proper nutrition guidelines for your grandchildren. Your grandchildren's ages, general health and past circumstances will help your health care provider determine what is best for your grandchildren.

Adapted from KidSource Online at www.kidsource.com

Finding Quality Child Care

Because of your new parenting responsibilities, you may need to find child care for your grandchildren.

When looking to find child care, check to see if the daycare facility:

- Is state licensed or is a state-registered ministry
- Bright, pleasant and in good repair
- Clean, neat and smells good
- Large enough for the number of children
- Safe both indoors and outdoors
- Child-sized furnishings
- Plenty of activities appropriate for your grandchildren
- Clear rules of behavior for children that are followed
- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Established rules for safety
- Additional accreditation
- Experienced and trained staff who use positive disciplinary techniques
- Have appropriate staff to child ratio
- Use background checks for staff/volunteers

When looking for child care, check to see if the staff:

- Like children
- Treats children with respect
- Responds quickly to signs of distress from individual children
- Gives individual attention
- Listens to children and parents

When looking for child care, check to see if you are comfortable with the:

- Setting
- Fees
- Hours
- Staff
- Overall mood of the children attending the day care setting

The day care provider is responsible for:

- Meeting your grandchildren's needs
- Following positive and consistent discipline methods
- Communicating successes of and concerns about your grandchildren
- Notifying you as soon as your grandchildren become ill or have an accident
- Keeping sensitive information about your grandchildren confidential

You are responsible for letting the provider know up to date information on your grandchildren, including emergency contact numbers, days your grandchildren are sick or will be on vacation and who has approval to pick up your grandchildren.

Adapted from Build Bright Beginnings, Seek and Demand Quality Child Care; Johnson County Child Care Resource and Referral; Choosing Center Based Child Care.

Should you need more information about this or other parenting concerns, please visit www.pcain.org or call **1-800-CHILDREN** (1.800.244.5373)

Helping Your Grandchildren Handle Stress

Because of your new parenting responsibilities, you may have noticed your grandchildren having difficulty coping with stress in their lives. It is important to remember that you cannot remove stress from your grandchildren's lives, but you can help them handle it in a positive way. Coping strategies that children learn now will help them when they are adults.

The following activities can help your grandchildren cope with their stress:

Drawing - Children often express how they are feeling by drawing pictures. Ask your grandchildren to explain what they have drawn or the story their picture tells. Listen without judging the quality of accuracy of the drawing. Use the time to talk about the content of the drawing and the feelings your grandchildren have about the people, places and events in their drawings.

Puppet Making- Use markers, cotton balls, yarn and whatever else you have around the house to make puppets. Then let your grandchildren tell you stories from the puppet's point of view. Your grandchildren will let you know what has upset them through their stories and puppet plays.

Games & Books - Games and books are a great way to engage grandchildren in conversation. Children like to have your undivided attention when they are talking to you. Playing and listening to what is on your grandchildren's minds. When your grandchildren are talking, stop playing or reading and listen to them.

Exercise - One of the best ways for people of all ages cope with stress is exercise. Go for a walk or to the playground with your grandchildren. This is a great way to release stress and teach your grandchildren a healthy way to cope. Always contact a physical before beginning any exercise program.



How to Help Your Grandchildren with School

Because of your new parenting responsibilities, you will be involved with your grandchildren's school. School is where children learn academic subjects, but they also learn how to get along with others, to solve problems, and work as a team member. School can offer your grandchildren a support system of friends, teachers, coaches and counselors. It is important for you to know about your grandchildren's grades, extra-curricular activities and school friends. You also need to know your grandchildren's successes and challenges with school.

To stay involved in your grandchildren's school life, try these tips:

- Review homework assignments with your grandchildren. If they do not do their homework, ask their teacher how to approach the situation.
- Get to know your grandchildren's school friends and their families.
- Meet as many of your grandchildren's teachers as possible and keep communication open.
- Talk with teachers and school counselors about school and community programs that may benefit your grandchildren.
- Support your grandchildren's interests in extra-curricular activities.
- Attend meetings of parent-teacher organizations and school boards to stay informed.
- Attend your grandchildren's school events.
- If you are available, volunteer at your grandchildren's school.



If you have concerns about your grandchildren's progress at school, contact a trusted teacher or counselor and discuss your concerns.

Resources for Second Time Around Parents

Being a parent the second time around is a tough job. **Prevent Child Abuse Indiana** believes that we all want to use the best means possible to rear and nurture children. With a few skills and tips, all of us can build stronger family relationships.

Because of your new parenting responsibilities, you may need more information about your role and your responsibilities. The following list may be helpful to you.

American Association for Retired Persons Grandparent Information Center – Provides information for grandparents about raising grandchildren. 601 East Street NW, Washington, DC 20049; 202-434-2296

The National Coalition of Grandparents – Works for legislation and policy changes in support of grandparents, step-grandparents and kinship caregivers to assure that their efforts are recognized and supported by the courts, government agencies and legislative bodies. 317 Larkin Street Madison, WI 53705; 608-238-8751

Relatives as Parents Program – Encourages and promotes the creation and expansion of services for grandparents and other relatives who have taken on the responsibility or surrogate parenting. The Brookdale Foundation Group, 950 Third Avenue, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10022; 212-308-7355; www.brookdalefoundation.org

Generations Unlimited – Provides training, technical assistance and resource sharing to support intergenerational programs. 440 First Street NW, Suite 210, Washington, DC 20001-2085; 202-662-4283; www.gu.org

Prevent Child Abuse America – Provides informational and educational materials on preventing child abuse in all its forms. 228 South Wabash Avenue, 10th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604; 312-663-3520; www.preventchildabuse.org

Financial & Legal Resources

Because of your new parenting responsibilities, you may need financial and legal resources that you have not needed before. Contact the following for further information:

Financial Resources

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Indiana – provides free and low-cost financial counseling along with free and low-cost financial counseling and free money management seminars that are offered monthly. For more information call (317) 266-1300 or 888-711-7227; 615 North Alabama, Indpls, 46204 or visit <http://www.creditrecordrepair.com/credit/IN.html> for a listing of other credit counseling services in Indiana.

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Services offers a series of low-cost courses on women's financial planning in cooperation with the American Association of Retired Persons. Scholarships are available. For more information contact the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Services at 888-EXT-INFO or 888-398-4636.

Legal Resources

The American Bar Association offers several types of legal services. Lawyers may be available to you free of charge if you can show that you are unable to afford legal services or you meet federal poverty guidelines. The American Bar Association also offers a program for people of modest means by providing services for individuals who cannot afford traditional legal representation.

A directory of county programs for Indiana may be obtained free from the American Bar Association at: 750 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611; 312-988-5000; www.info@abanet.org

Adapted from Consumer Law Center

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Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

