



Welcome  Baby



July 2010 A Newsletter for "Welcome Baby" and "Parents as Teachers" Families



## Bonding with Grandparents

If you've ever turned to your parents or your partner's parents for help and support with child-rearing, you know how wonderful grandparents can be. Although physical distance and parenting differences can come between grandparents, their children, and their grandchildren, encouraging a close relationship can benefit everyone involved.

### The Benefits of Bonding With Grandparents

Establishing a bond with grandparents can benefit kids in many ways. Grandparents can be great role models and influences, and they can provide a sense of cultural heritage and family history. Grandparents provide their grandkids with love, have their best interests at heart, and can make them feel safe.

Grandparents also encourage a child's healthy development. Overnight trips to Grandma's house, for example, may be less traumatic than sleepovers with peers and can help kids develop independence. Another benefit — grandparents may have lots of time to spend playing and reading to kids. Such dedicated attention

only improves a child's developmental and learning skills.

### Tips for Staying in Touch

In today's world, though, families may be scattered across the country, and jam-packed school and work schedules may interfere with regular time with grandparents. Despite physical distance or busy schedules, you can encourage your kids to develop a closer bond with their grandparents. Try these tips:

- **Visit often.** If your child's grandparents live nearby, make an effort to carve time out of your busy schedule for regular visits. Encourage grandparents to drop by your home, too. Plan regular trips to see out-of-town grandmas and grandpas. Even if visits are infrequent, anticipating and planning the next trip can help your child regard that time as special.
- **Stay in touch with technology.** Use the telephone and email to talk, write, and send pictures and sound files of your kids to grandparents. If they don't own a computer, send videos of the kids in action. Or have a grandparent record a reading of a favorite story and play it for your child at bedtime.
- **Say cheese.** Post snapshots of grandparents in your home and point them out to your kids often. Or keep family pictures in a special photo album and page through it while naming the family members.
- **Sound mail call.** Kids love receiving mail. So send grandparents a box of stationery and postcards and some stamps and ask them to write regularly. Another way to encourage communication is to have your child





write letters every week on the same day — both kids and grandparents will anticipate the regular communication.

•**Pass it on.** Many grandparents have hobbies or special skills

— such as knitting, woodworking, or cooking — that they'd love to pass on to their grandchildren. Provide kids with the time and tools needed to learn these skills from their grandparents.

•**Chart a family tree.** Both younger and older kids enjoy learning about their ancestors and relatives. Encourage grandparents to share stories of their families. You can even provide paper and drawing supplies so they can chart the family tree.

### Safety Away From Home

Whether grandparents live nearby or you're planning to visit, don't forget to make safety a priority.

Grandparents may not be accustomed to having young kids in the house, and the presence of household dangers could mar visits with trips to the emergency room.

Use a household safety checklist and collaborate with the grandparents to childproof the home, ensuring that dangerous items and substances — such as cleaning products, medications, razors, and knives — are out of reach or locked in a cabinet. Consider walking through the home with the grandparents to address any potential safety hazards. They may not realize that small or breakable items pose a choking or safety risk. Taking these precautions ahead of time can free kids and grandparents to make the most of their special time together.

### Taken in part from:

Dowshen, Steven. (2009). *Bonding with Grandparents*. Retrieved on March 2010 from <http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/grandparents.html#>

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### •Provo City Library—

- ☞ “Book Babies” every Friday from 10-10:30 a.m. for infants 0-12 mos.
- ☞ “Mother Goose Time” every Friday from 11-12pm for 1 year olds. Age appropriate songs, stories, and activities for baby and their parents/caregivers.

### •Orem City Library—

- ☞ “Laptime” every Tues, Wed, & Th at 10am in Hogwarts’ Corner. A 20 min. program for babies, toddlers & their caregivers with songs, fingerplays & short stories to introduce our youngest patrons to the world of words.
- ☞ “Storytime” every Tues, Wed, & Th at 10:30am in the Storytelling Wing. A 30 min. program for preschoolers & young school age children with stories, puppets & activities to engage youngsters & highlight the joys of books & storytelling.

