



Kinship Connection

November/December 2011



Holiday Tips for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

<http://www.extension.org/pages/18791/holiday-tips-for-grandparents-raising-grandchildren>

For most people the holidays are happy times, but for many grandparents raising grandchildren, these special days can bring on strong feelings of sadness, anger, loss, or guilt related to the family situation. The following are tips for helping your family manage holiday stress:

- Talk to a support group member, a friend, or counselor to help you work through your feelings.
- Keep holidays simple. Avoid the temptation to compensate for the losses grandchildren have endured.



- Keep realistic expectations in planning. The holiday does not need to be perfect in order for your grandchild to feel loved. You *CAN* feel good knowing that you are able to support, protect, provide for, and love your grandchildren.

- Include the child's parent when appropriate. Whether or not children have regular or infrequent visits with their parents, maintaining contact is important. It helps your child feel loved and connected. Even if a parent is in a long term drug treatment or in prison, your child can have a holiday visit. Many children imagine the worst about their parents, and seeing them healthy and safe can be a relief.



- Review your visitation rules with the child's parent. Rules may include no visiting if the parent shows up drunk or high. It is tempting to let rules slide on special occasions, but if you stick to them, you'll have a more pleasant visit and create a good family memory.

- Anticipate problem situations. Parents who can't take care of their children often feel guilty and ashamed. They may make promises they can't keep, try to provide gifts they can't afford, or fail to show up for a scheduled visit. They might pick fights with family members to cover their feelings of shame and sadness. They might get drunk before a visit because they're nervous or feeling bad and don't know how else to cope.

- Plan a relaxed visit in a location you feel comfortable with that is within the rules of any court ordered visitation. If possible, plan low key activities for the parent and child to do together (for example, cooking or making decorations). Tell the parent what the child has been doing lately, some of his favorite foods, TV shows, activities, etc. Encourage the parent to bring a small gift for each child. A handmade card or something from a dollar store can be a child's most cherished gift when it is given by their parent.



- Talk to children in advance about the visits.

Ask them what activities they would like to do. Help them be realistic about what to expect. If you think the parent may not show up, or if you expect trouble, talk about that with the child. You might say something like, "Your mom is excited about the visit and I want you two to have a great time, but we know that sometimes in the past, she hasn't always been able to make it to visits. Why don't we plan something to do just in case your mom isn't able to make it?"



- Expect your child to have mixed feelings at times during the holidays - excitement, nervousness, sadness, and anger. They may show these feelings by acting out or becoming withdrawn. Help them put words to their feelings. You can't shield your child from life experiences, but you can be there for them. Be accepting and help them work through their negative feelings.
- Take care of yourself. Pay attention to your own feelings and needs during this time. To help your grandchildren, you need to take care of yourself.

Reference:

Adapted from *Holiday Tips for Grandparent Caregivers* by Kim Sumner-Mayer, Kinship Children of Alcoholics Foundation, an affiliate of Phoenix House. *Keeping In Touch*, Issue VII, Winter 2002, Brooklyn Grandparents' Coalition newsletter: www.coaf.org/family/holiday%20tips%20for%20grandparents%20kim.pdf.

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Relative Caregivers Support/Education Group

Help Us Help You!

Bring ideas to provide topics for discussions that will be informational as well as beneficial to you and your families.

First Tuesday of each month

November 1st, 2011

December 6th, 2011

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Refreshments will be available

Parents Place

**1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI
262-549-5575**

Free Childcare - Call Parents Place to reserve your spot!

Please RSVP To Janis or Libby

Janis Ramos 262-896-8069

Libby Sinclair 262-548-7277

Christmas Clearing Council is Open for the Season!

The holidays are a time for family and friends and gatherings. For many people, the holidays can also be a financially stressful time. Let Christmas Clearing Council help you be part of a season of giving and hope.



Christmas Clearing Council is a nonprofit group that offers assistance and support to thousands of Waukesha County families in need during the holiday season. In 2010, over 2,400 children received holiday gifts, clothing, and books thanks to their efforts.

Eligible families in need are referred by their caseworker of participating agencies, and then each child is "matched" to a community sponsor. Sponsors are individuals, businesses, churches, and other community organizations. Sponsors provide each child with gifts valuing \$60, which represent each child's wants and needs. Sponsors deliver all gifts directly to each family before Christmas. Older children receive gift cards. This year, all school aged children will receive a gift certificate for shoes.

Children without a sponsor are invited to participate in the Toy Shop - a one day event for registered families to select new items and toys for their children. Toys at the Toy Shop are donated by the community through toy drives or donations.

Families interested in applying should speak to their child's caseworker at social services or school. All families must complete applications, which their caseworker needs to sign and forward to Christmas Clearing Council. All applications are due by Wednesday, November 23rd, but the sooner the applications are in, the more likely a child is to receive a sponsor.

For more information on Christmas Clearing Council, please contact their office at 262-549-6635.

Adolescent Emergence(y)!

A 6 week class for parents navigating the sometimes stormy teen years

This class will incorporate the **Surviving Your Adolescents** video course with group work focused on helping parents strengthen their ability to find new solutions to the challenges of raising adolescent children in today's complex world.

During this class you will receive support and feedback while learning:

- What normal adolescent behavior is
- How to manage teenage risk-taking
- What problems require your "letting go"
- How to encourage healthy boundaries between all family components (including yourself!)
- How to focus on what is working so you can enjoy more of it
- Specific techniques that will help you navigate and overcome the "communication breakdowns" typical of this transitional age

Mondays
November 7 - December 12, 2011
6:30—8:00 PM
The Women's Center
505 N. East Avenue, Waukesha

This class is FREE.

Free childcare is available for children 12 and under.

Registration for classes and childcare is required.

Call (262) 547-4600 for more details, directions and/or to register.

What Do You Really Know About Thanksgiving? From grandparents.com

The Pilgrims first landed at what we now call:

- Plymouth, Mass.
- Provincetown, Mass.
- Providence, R.I.

Why did the Pilgrims come to North America?

- To escape religious persecution
- In search of a better life
- To spread Christianity to Native Americans

Before it carried the Pilgrims to America, the *Mayflower* was:

- A battleship
- A passenger ferry
- A wine vessel

The Pilgrims typically wore:

- Black and white outfits
- Mostly leather
- Linen and wool clothes

True or False: The Pilgrims' feast was the first Thanksgiving in what is now the United States.

- True
- False

The Native American group that helped the English colonists in 1621 was the:

- Wampanoag
- Narragansett
- Patuxet

Only one of these statements about the 1621 Thanksgiving is true. Which one?

- The celebration lasted three days.
- More Pilgrims than Native Americans took part in the feast.
- Pilgrims and Native Americans sat at one table for the feast.

Which was most likely on the menu for the Pilgrims' celebration?

- Turkey and cranberry sauce
- Venison and mashed potatoes
- Wild fowl and pumpkin

The modern Thanksgiving Day holiday was created by:

- Thomas Jefferson
- Abraham Lincoln
- Theodore Roosevelt

What causes people to feel sleepy after a big Thanksgiving meal?

- Tryptophan
- Carbohydrates
- Sugar

How to Make a Home Fire Escape Plan From NFPA

<http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/fpw11/fpw2011escapeplan.pdf>

- Draw a map of your home. Show all doors and windows.
- Visit each room. Find two ways out.
- All windows and doors should open easily. You should be able to use them to get outside.
- Make sure your home has smoke alarms. Push the test button to make sure each alarm is working.
- Pick a meeting place outside. It should be in front of your home. Everyone will meet at the meeting place.
- Make sure your house or building number can be seen from the street.
- Talk about your plan with everyone in your home.
- Learn the emergency phone number for your fire department.
- Practice your home fire escape drill!

Santa's Reindeer Puppet <http://crafts.kaboose.com>

What you'll need:

- Brown paper lunch bag
- Medium black pom-pom
- White craft glue
- Construction paper: black, white and tan/ brown
- 4 jingle bells
- Scissors
- Red plastic milk jug lid
- Glue stick
- Gold paint pen



How to make it:

1. Use white glue to attach the black pom-pom to the flap of the bag.
2. Glue googly eyes onto the front of the front of the bag above the pom pom nose, or cut your own pattern.
3. Cut a strip of black paper with width of the paper bag, about one inch wide. Cut a small piece of black paper for the nametag hanger. Glue the small strip to the center of the larger strip so that it is hanging down.
4. Use gold paint pen to write "Comet" on the red plastic lid. Glue the lid to the bag, overlapping the small black strip (hanger)
5. Use a generous amount of white craft glue to attach 4 jingle bells to the black strip (collar).
6. Trace child's hands onto brown/tan paper and cut out. Use glue stick to attach the hands to the back of the bag as the antlers.

Tips:

1. To make this puppet into Rudolph, use a red pom-pom and write "Rudy" on the plastic lid.
2. Instead of hand print antlers, you can simply cut simple antlers from brown paper.
3. You can use large wiggle eyes instead of our pattern if you prefer.

Snowman Puppet <http://crafts.kaboose.com>

<http://crafts.kaboose.com>

What you'll need:

- CD or DVD
- Construction paper: white, black, red, orange
- 1.5" wide strip of light blue felt
- 1 craft or popsicle stick
- Black paint or marker
- Pink crayon
- White craft glue
- Scissors



How to make it:

1. Fold a sheet of white construction paper in half like a greeting card.
2. Cover one side of the CD with white craft glue.
3. Lay the CD, glue side down on one half of the white construction paper.
4. Cover the other side of the CD with white craft glue and press the open half of the white construction paper down onto the CD.
5. Gently rub the construction paper covered CD with your hands to be sure all the glue sticks.
6. Use scissors to cut around the CD, leaving a white construction paper circle.
7. Cut a long triangle from the orange construction paper. You can round off the thick end of the triangle if you like to make it appear more like a carrot. Glue the thick end of the triangle to the center of the CD, the pointed end will hang over the edge.
8. Glue the craft stick to the back of the CD to use as your handle. This also works double duty as the neck.
9. Fringe the ends of the blue felt strip by cutting thin strips with a pair of scissors. Wrap the "scarf" around the craft stick neck and glue in place.
10. Cut a simple hat from the black construction paper and glue the top of the CD.
11. Cut a red construction paper hat band and glue in place on the hat.
12. Use the handle end of a paintbrush dipped in black paint to dot on eyes and mouth. You can use a black marker instead if you prefer. Let the paint dry completely.
13. Add pink for the cheek with a pink crayon.

Gingerbread Cookie Faces <http://crafts.kaboose.com>

<http://crafts.kaboose.com>

What you'll need:

- Your favorite gingerbread cookies
- Candies for decoration such as gumdrops, nonpareils, sprinkles, decorator icing, M&M's, Skittles, etc

How to make it:

1. Make cookie dough and use large round cookie cutters or a drinking cup to create circles. Bake as directed and allow to cool off completely.
2. Place different types of decorations into small bowls. We used Dots candy, spiced gumdrops, nonpareils, Skittles candies, and white tube decorator frosting.
3. Use decorator frosting to draw on rick rack.
4. To "glue" on eyes, cheeks and nose, dot some decorator frosting onto the cookie, then gently press the decoration on top of it.
5. Cut gumdrops in half, use the top half for eyes and bottom half for cheeks.
6. To make colorful hair, cover top of cookie with decorator icing them dip into nonpareils or sprinkles

Tips:

- If you would like softer cookies, do not roll the dough as thin and bake for a few minutes less.
- If you have several children participating, be sure to set out enough bowls of decorations and place them within reach.
- This is a perfect photo opportunity! Be sure to have your camera ready when the children begin to decorate.



Calendar of Important Dates/Events

November 1, 2011	Relative Caregivers Support/ Education Group
November 6, 2011	Daylight Savings Time Ends
November 11, 2011	Veteran's Day
November 17, 2011	ROKs 6th Annual Art Show
November 23, 2011	Christmas Clearing Council applications due
November 24, 2011	Thanksgiving Day - Waukesha County Closed
November 25, 2011	Day after Thanksgiving - Waukesha County Closed
December 6, 2011	Relative Caregivers Support/ Education Group
December 7, 2011	Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
December 20, 2011	Hanukkah begins
December 22, 2011	First Day of Winter
December 23, 2011	Waukesha County Closed
December 25, 2011	Christmas Day
December 26, 2011	Waukesha County Closed
December 26, 2011	Kwanzaa begins
December 30, 2011	Waukesha County Closed
December 31, 2011	New Year's Eve
January 1, 2012	New Year's Day
January 2, 2012	Waukesha County Closed



The Native American group that helped the English colonists in 1621 was the: **Wampanoag**.

The Wampanoag were living in the area when the Pilgrims arrived and sought a military alliance with the European newcomers against their frequent foes, the Narragansett. The Patuxet were part of the Wampanoag Confederacy.

Only one of these statements about the 1621 Thanksgiving is true. Which one? The celebration lasted three days.

After surviving their first harvest, the Pilgrims celebrated, probably in October. About 90 Wampanoag came to the feast, which lasted three days. The Pilgrims hadn't made much furniture as yet; they would have eaten on any available flat surface.

Which was most likely on the menu for the Pilgrims' celebration? Wild fowl and pumpkin.

The settlers were familiar with turkey, but the one written account of their feast doesn't mention it as being on the menu. Neither cranberry sauce nor mashed potatoes had been introduced yet; they also didn't have popcorn.

The modern Thanksgiving Day holiday was created by: Abraham Lincoln.

Other presidents had issued proclamations urging Americans to observe days of thanksgiving but it wasn't continuously observed until Lincoln issued his Thanksgiving Day Proclamation on October 3, 1863. Thanksgiving became a federal holiday in 1941.

What causes people to feel sleepy after a big Thanksgiving meal? Carbohydrates.

Turkey contains tryptophan, an amino acid that is a natural sedative, but so do many other foods. It's the high volume of fats and carbohydrates people eat on Thanksgiving that makes them feel like taking a nap after dinner.

Answers to What Do You Really Know About Thanksgiving? From grandparents.com

The Pilgrims first landed at what we now call: Provincetown, Mass.

The Pilgrims didn't make their first landing at Plymouth Rock. They landed at Provincetown harbor on November 11, 1620. In December, they decided to spend their first winter at Plymouth.



Why did the Pilgrims come to North America? In search of a better life.

The Pilgrims weren't really pilgrims. Pilgrims are people who travel to a place they consider sacred for religious reasons. Many of the people on the *Mayflower* were devout, but they left home mostly to pursue economic opportunities.

Before it carried the Pilgrims to America, the *Mayflower* was: a wine vessel.

Before its historic voyage to North America - the ship was actually bound for Virginia, but didn't make it - the *Mayflower* transported wine, cognac, and vinegar from France and Spain to England.

The Pilgrims typically wore: linen and wool clothes.

The Pilgrims are often depicted wearing black and white, but most wore black and white only on Sundays, and formal occasions. Otherwise, they wore linen, wool, and some leather clothing whose various bright colors faded in the sun and rain.

True or False: The Pilgrims' 1621 feast was the first Thanksgiving in what is now the United States. False

There are many documented accounts of thanksgiving festivals in what is now the United States before the 1621 celebration. One describes a 1565 thanksgiving feast between Spanish explorers and the Timucua Indians in today's Saint Augustine, Fla.

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also have a dream; not only plan, but also believe."

~Anatole France



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