

Gateway Grandparents/Kinship Network is a collaboration of organizations & agencies in the St. Louis Metro Area working to enhance the lives of grandparents and relative caregivers and the children in their care.

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- Mid-East Area Agency on Aging (MEAAA)
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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/
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KinCare Connections

A newsletter for grandparents and other relatives in a parenting role

Making Time for Yourself

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Have ever felt like no one in your family appreciates the time you put into caring for them? Do you wonder where the time goes and wish for more hours to get things done? Does it feel like you have no time for yourself? I believe that most days the majority of us would answer yes to all of these questions.

We all know that there is no way to make the days longer. However, there are ways we can use our time better and actually find more time in the day. Here are some tips for managing your time:

1. **Establish a plan** to help you see all the activities you want to accomplish. Set priorities according to what needs to be completed in a day, week or month. Break these jobs into smaller tasks.
2. **Make a To Do list** by writing down what you intend to finish in a day and prioritize this list. Start with the most important item on the list and complete it before moving on to the next item.
3. **Delegate tasks** to the children and other family members, you do not need to do everything yourself. Understand that your

way of doing things may be different than the way the rest of the family does them. The benefit to you and the other family members is that everyone has a role in helping the family function smoothly.

4. **Learn to say "No"** this allows you to have more control over your life and your time.
5. **Schedule time for fun** for yourself and with your family. If it is on your "To Do" list or calendar, it is more likely to happen.

Let Children Help You

Children can learn at an early age that group living is a cooperative venture and there are many ways they can help out.

When you give children a chance to be useful members of the family, you are boosting their self-esteem and helping them become responsible members of society.

Remember, most children are capable of taking on more responsibility than they are given.

In addition, children learn to be responsible when those who care for them set a good example, expecting them to give as well as receive and showing them how to do things for themselves.

Kids and Emotions

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Jealousy

Children, like all humans, regardless of age have feelings and emotions. As we grow so grows the emotions. We, as parent, relatives acting as parents or grandparents need to help our children learn how to deal with various emotions they will experience throughout life.

Emotional traditions tend to be passed down from generation to generation. This can be seen in family patterns, or how a family deals with or handles emotions. Jealousy is one emotion that can be inherited. It has both negative

and positive aspects. If this emotion is blocked or not released it has the power to keep us in the past. If kept in the past the child will focus only on the 'if only's'. What is needed is to look toward the next time or future.

As adults, we need first to look at ourselves. If our attention is focused on what others are doing or getting, the child will also learn to look at and want what others are doing and getting. If we are born to compare, our income, material things, intelligence, amount of attention from family members, so too will the child learn to compare.

Comparison can be either good or bad. Good if it motivates us to advance and achieve, bad if it ends in unresolved jealousy. Do you believe life happens to you?

Or do you believe you have no control on what happens to you? Children will pick up on either belief which could lead the child to develop jealous tendencies.

We as parents, grandparents, relatives as parents, need to observe these tendencies in ourselves, reflect on them and then take time to discuss this with the children in our care.

Becoming aware is the first step in the transition or change in family patterns that can stop this emotion, Jealousy, from progressing from generation to generation.

Economic Stimulus Payment 2008

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According to the IRS, the only way to receive a rebate from the economic stimulus package is to file a tax return. That includes recipients of Social Security and veterans' benefits who do not normally need to file returns.

The IRS said that some low-income people who are not required to file a tax return will be eligible to receive payments of \$300, or \$600 on joint returns,

if they had at least \$3,000 in qualifying income. Qualifying income includes Social Security benefits, certain Railroad Retirement benefits, certain veterans' benefits and earned income.

But to receive this money they must file a return.

The tax agency is introducing a special version of Form 1040A on its Web site, <http://www.irs.gov/>, with instructions to these special groups on how to fill out the form. For now, taxpayers in this group will have to file a paper copy of Form 1040 or Form 1040A. The IRS is

working to update its systems to accept electronic versions.

Those who have already filed but did not report their qualifying benefits may have to file an amended return in some situations to receive a larger stimulus payment, the IRS said. The stimulus payments will not affect eligibility for federal benefits.

The IRS will begin sending out the payments in May.

Spring Time Activities

Spring is a great time of year to try out new indoor and outdoor activities with your children. The OASIS organization has a variety of projects you can complete from science activities, reading activities, to teaching children about money. Here is one example:

Make Your Own Windmill

Windmills have been used for many years as a source of inexpensive energy. Windmills can take the energy of the wind and change it to energy that moves in another direction, to grind wheat, for example, or to turn turbines that produce electricity. With this activity you and your grandchild can explore how the shape and angle of a windmill's sails affect how easy it is for the sails to turn.

What You Need:

Card stock
Template for sail (* on web site)
Metric ruler
Scissors
Modeling clay
16 oz plastic cup
New pencil with eraser
Push pin
Pen



What To Do:

1. Cut out the sail template*. Trace it onto the card stock and cut it out.
2. Use the pen to make a hole in the bottom of the plastic cup. Put the cup on the table upside down. Push the pencil through the hole so that the eraser sticks up. About 15 cm of the pencil should be sticking up from the cup.
3. Use modeling clay around the pencil (both inside and outside the cup) to make the pencil steady.
4. Push the pin through the center of the sail and into the pencil eraser. Move the sail around on the pin so that it spins easily.
5. Hold the windmill up and walk around rapidly. Watch what happens to the sails.
6. Take about what you could do to the sails to make them spin more easily. Experiment with how the sails spin when you change their shape.
7. If desired, use watercolor markers to make the sails colorful.

For more fun activities, provided by the Oasis Organization log on to their web site:
<http://www.oasisnet.org/learn/grandparenting.htm>



Raising your grandchildren? Do you have parenting questions?

Call: 1-800-552-8522 or visit: www.extension.missouri.edu/parentlink

Parents and professionals can call ParentLink's toll-free WarmLine to access nutrition information, parenting information and receive problem solving support. The WarmLine is available in English and Spanish and answered Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m. by a family support specialist.

Need information? Don't know where to go?

Call a Warm-Line!

Relatives As Parents/Grandparents Information Warm-Line

► **St. Louis area: 314-961-8000, ext. 242**

Answered by: Cardinal Ritter Senior Services

Sponsors: Cardinal Ritter Senior Services
Legal Services of Eastern Missouri



Get answers to questions on custody, guardianship, adoption issues, public benefits, legal services, support with groups and other community services. When you call, be prepared to leave a message and contact number. Within 2 days, you'll receive a follow-up call.

This service is not for emergencies.

Kincare Connections is written and published by Gateway Grandparents/Kinship Network for grandparents and other relatives in a parenting role in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area. Contributing writers are staff members of member organizations of the Network. **Articles may be reprinted for educational purposes. Please credit as follows:** Author, Organization, *Kincare Connections*.

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St. Louis Metro Area Support Groups

More details on the Web:

extension.missouri.edu/ecregion/grandparent/support.shtml

ST. LOUIS CITY

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Grandparents as Parents Program
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Grandparent's Circle, Parenting a Second Time Around
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Keepers of the Flame
Contact: Kathleen Mc Aleenan, 314-961-8000 ext. 302

Let's Start Caregivers Group
(Grandparents raising kids of incarcerated or chemically dependent parents)
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Parents and Grandparents of Drug Abusers (PAGODA)
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Proud Grandparents
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