



Polk/Burnett Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Newsletter

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Traveling With Grandchildren

With the holiday approaching, this is a time when many grandparents might be traveling with their grandchildren. Before you begin planning a trip with your grandchildren, there are some things you'll want to do.

Pre-Planning

- Know what kinds of things interest your grandchildren.
- Depending on the age of your grandchildren, the length of your trip may vary. For very young children a day trip or overnight trip is plenty. Elementary school-age children can handle a week-long trip. High-schoolers can go for two weeks or more.
- Plan to do activities together which you will both enjoy. If younger grandchildren need a nap, make sure you keep this in mind when planning daily activities.
- Intersperse high levels of physical activity with more relaxing activities. Children need to burn off more energy during the day, so take time out to play.

What to Take?

- Pack several zip-lock bags (or cloth bags) with a variety of small games, books, music, toys and art supplies. These things will keep the children busy during long rides or while waiting at restaurants or airports.
- Bring along snacks. Healthy snacks (carrots, non-sugar cereal, granola bars, raisins) will keep your grandchildren more energetic than sugary or high-fat foods. Also bring along lots of water or juice. A candy bar or ice cream now and then is okay too.
- Have fun! You and your grandchildren will enjoy your trip more if you all have fun and do things that interest everyone. Keep an enthusiastic and open mind during the trip. You'll spend the rest of the year talking about

where to go on your next trip together.

Visiting Museums

- Looking for a fun getaway with your grandchildren? Museums aren't the boring, dusty places they used to be. Many museums now have hands-on exhibits where children can get actively involved in learning. Visiting a museum with your grandchildren can create a memorable experience for all of you.
- Today, there are science centers found in almost every major city, as well as living history exhibits and interactive opportunities for children to paint, use computers, try on clothing, learn to saddle a horse, or sit on an old bicycle. All kinds of museums have created opportunities for children to jump right in and get their hands into the subject.
- Record your shared impressions of the museums. Take pictures, collect brochures, take videos. A follow-up activity can be creating a scrapbook about the visit.

Additional Information:

- Museums of the United States, www.museumca.org/usa/star.html
- The Association of Science Technology Centers, www.tryscience.org/fieldtrips/fieldtrip_home.html
- AARP website, <http://www.aarp.org/confacts/grandparents/visitingmuseum.html>
- Or www.aarp.org/confacts/money/grandtrav.htm

Bookshelf:

"Empowering Grandparents Raising Grandchildren", Carole B. Cox. The manual provides training for grandparents to strengthen their parenting skills to meet the challenges they face, both within their homes and within society.

"Raising Our Children's Children," Deborah Doucette-Dudman (with Jeffrey R. LaCure). The author interweaves her own story of raising a grandchild with other grandparents' stories. The stories raise issues that grandparents in this situation face, such as how to deal with the child's parents. In addition, LaCure, a therapist, comments on specific concerns from his point of view.

"Second Time Around," Joan Callandar, Albert Whitman & Company. The book is written from the point of view of a grandmother raising her grandchild. She provides practical information on the range of issues a grandparent in this situation faces as well as a discussion of her own challenges.

Reviewed by Mary Brintnall-Peterson, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Program Specialist in Aging.

Websites:

<http://www.AARP.org/getans/grandparents.html>

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grandparent>

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grandparent/view.html>

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