



# Did You Know...?

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## About the Importance of Grandparenting

*Parents Reaching Out connects with families, schools and communities in New Mexico. We offer information from many reliable sources. We thank the Parent Education Network, a project of Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Inc. for permitting us to share their PEN Notes publications in this information series.*

Whether we share a home with, or live hundreds of miles away from our grandchildren, we can make a difference in how well they do in school.

More and more grandparents are an everyday part of their grandchildren's lives. Some provide daily care for grandchildren while parents are at work. Others share a home with children and grandchildren. Even more than ever before, grandparents are being asked to take on other parent chores—raising their grandchildren. If you see your grandchildren every day, it's even more important for you to be involved with their education.

Grandchildren are the “Apple of their Grandparents' Eye” and so here are five key ways to help our grandchildren do their best in school:

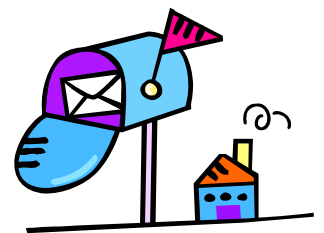


- A. **Ask** grandchildren questions
- P. **Praise** in the right way
- P. **Participate** by getting involved and showing support
- L. **Learn** how to help grandchildren love learning
- E. **Encourage** ideas to show support for their efforts

**Asking** grandchildren interesting questions about school shows your interest in their success in education. Be specific. Ask “What book are you reading?” Keep up to date--on report cards, art projects, geography reports, etc. Ask if there are special school events that you can attend.

Problem solve with grandchildren so they can become problem solvers and make decisions or suggestions on their own. Grandparents can help grandchildren become opinion leaders. Asking questions opens lines for communication. Ask your grandchildren if there are any school subjects that may be troubling them. When they share a problem, take the time to discuss some possible solutions.

*Even if you live next door, grandparents make great pen pals. Ask your grandchildren to write to you and then watch their eyes light up when they get a letter from you in their mailbox!*



**Praising** grandchildren when they do well will raise their self-esteem and help them succeed.

- Praise works best when it's about something specific, i.e., science fair project.
- Praise grandchildren for what they do, not for how they compare to others.
- Praise young children, but only when they deserve the praise.
- Raise family values by discussing why discipline and a strong work ethic are important. Remind them of playing fair, being a good loser and respecting others. Let them overhear you saying good things about them.

**Participating** in your grandchildren's school events and show them education is important.

- Attend open house, plays, music programs and school fairs when possible.
- Share your talents, hobbies, traditions and culture with the class.
- Grandparents should take grandchildren to museums, concerts, plays, historic sites, etc. Broaden their interests by teaching and exposing them to these experiences. Read to them until they can read to you and then spend time listening to them read stories that interest them.



**Learning** together keeps learning alive. Explore new ideas and experiences.

- Urge grandchildren to challenge themselves.
- Learn different children's learning styles and help each child in the best way.
- Make learning relevant. Show them that what they learn in school applies to life.
- Give the gift of learning by selecting gifts that encourage learning. Give children tools needed for learning: supplies, library card, reference materials. Explain that mistakes are part of learning; share examples of when you made mistakes.

**Encouraging** your grandchildren let's them know you have faith in them.

- Talk to them about their plans for the future and the role education plays.
- Show them ways they can do things whenever they say "I can't".
- Spend time together in ways other than watching TV. Give gifts of books or magazine subscriptions that will help them think things through. Show your confidence in them before a big test, performance, or project.

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