

The Important Role Grandparents Have As Mentors

By Stephanie James



Today's society puts parents under a lot of pressure to balance multiple facets of life while making it look easy. They're expected to juggle being overworked and underpaid with putting food on the table, supporting expensive extra-curricular activities for their children, and maintaining a home. This leaves little wiggle room for setting aside quality time for the kids. Many parents have an underused resource for fulfilling this purpose, however, in the children's grandparents. Grandparents are excellent candidates to fill in the gaps that inevitably exist in the world of parenting.

Of course, grandparents can provide free childcare for parents who are struggling to make ends meet, but their value is much higher than that. Here are some ways that grandparents can [bridge and enrich generations](#) and provide their grandchildren with a more well-rounded upbringing while also receiving benefits from spending so much time with their grandchildren.

A New Perspective

Grandparents grew up during times when the world was very different than it is today. Even the youngest grandparents remember when there weren't computers or cell phones, and most remember when television reception only offered two or three channels. When they were growing

up, these distractions didn't interfere with [connections between people](#), as they so ironically do today. They learned to be creative with ways to entertain themselves and enjoyed the simple things in life. These are important values that they can pass on to their grandchildren.

As an added bonus, grandparents get to share their stories of childhood, allowing them to reminisce and see awe in the eyes of their grandchildren as they hear about their grandparents' ingenuity in coming up with fun activities.

Undivided Attention

Grandparents aren't burdened by the same pressures their children are. They have free time that they can devote wholeheartedly to their grandchildren when they're with them. This allows them to engage in activities that their grandchildren's parents often don't have time for, such as taking nature walks or teaching them to play chess.

The reciprocal benefit? Grandparents tend to decrease their activity with age, which can have an adverse [effect on sleep and health](#). Participating in activities with their grandchildren, even if it's as simple as a walk around the block, gives them needed exercise to help with overall health.

Family History

Grandparents can provide more detailed information to their grandchildren regarding their ancestors. They are able to bring the people that went before them to life for their grandchildren. This gives them a real sense of where they came from and how their great- and great-great-grandparents lived and the values they represented.

An added benefit here is that grandparents get to exercise their brains to recall distant recollections and know that these memories of their beloved parents and grandparents will live on.

Grandparents are an invaluable resource when it comes to [linking generations](#) and providing new perspectives to their grandchildren as well as other children in the extended family. Hopefully, their importance won't go unnoticed as we make society more aware of the virtues they offer as mentors.