

GRANDPARENT'S GROUP: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

For more information please contact us at: grandparents@pbfalv.org

Thinking exercise: Types of Relationships

Think about the types of relationships that you currently have in your life. Friends? Neighbors? Partner?

How did these relationships change when you became the primary care provider for your grandchild(ren)?

Are there any relationships that you were unable to keep during this transition?

What new relationships have you made?

Which relationships take the most time? The least time? How come?

What does a good relationship include, in your opinion?

What characteristics are important for your relationships to possess?

Writing Exercise: Current Relationships

On a separate sheet of paper, complete the following activity which helps you to evaluate your relationships.

Write down the six descriptions listed to the right.

Then think about the following questions:

What are the differences between your ideal and current descriptions for each person?

What can you do to bring the current relationship closer to the ideal relationship?

Describe the relationship you would like to have with your grandchild(ren).

--Describe your current relationship with your grandchild(ren).

--Describe the relationship you would like to have with your adult child.

--Describe your current relationship with your adult child.

--Describe the relationship you would like to have with your significant other.

--Describe your current relationship with your significant other.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

11/23 & 11/30:

Working with School and Community

12/7 & 12/14:

Money Management and Community Resources

12/21 & 12/28:

Looking to the Future

**Everyone has
relationships.
Some are
good. Some
are okay.
Some need
improvement.**

How to talk to your grandchild about their biological parents:

You may need to protect your grandchild from their parents. You must be truthful, however do so in a kind and age-appropriate way. It is important that if they ask, you tell your grandchildren about their biological parents.

Reminders:

1. Be Honest
2. Provide large pieces of information rather than details
3. Give age-appropriate information
4. Always encourage your grandchild to discuss their feelings.

Tips for Dealing with Your Adult Child:

Monitor positive and effective interactions with them.

Find ways for biological parents to remain parents even though you may be the primary-care provider.

If your adult child is not able to do so, be prepared to decide for yourself what is best for the child.

Beware of manipulative behaviors of the adult child.

Identify specific situation-related ways for you to cope with the adult child and their problems

Be assertive and firm with your adult child, but not controlling or bossy. Set boundaries and clear expectations.

Exercise forgiveness. Give yourself and others permission to make mistakes.

Notes from the Counselors:

This topic has focused on the different relationships in your life, the characteristics of a good relationship, and effective communication. While keeping these principles in mind, take a moment to identify one thing you will do in the next week to improve one of your relationships. Try to make this goal concrete and obtainable in order to increase the chances of being successful! As always, be patient with yourself, change will not happen overnight!

Homework for the week:

Write a letter to your adult child saying what you really need or want to say to them. Do not worry about anything else other than just getting your thoughts and feelings out and onto the paper.

This letter will not be sent or read by anyone else. It is for you only, so really feel free to go deep and let it all out!

Visitation Tips:

Reduce pick up and drop off conflicts. Make these times as easy and stress-free for the children as possible.

Let your grandchildren know that it is okay for them to enjoy being with their parents.

Respect the privacy of your grandchild's relationship with their parents, even though it may be difficult not to pry.

Be careful not to say negative things about your adult child in front of your grandchild(ren).

Try to make your interactions with your adult child as positive as possible

Develop a welcome home ritual, such as having cookies together.

Do not compete for their affection. There is enough love to go around!

Try to get your grandchild to maintain close, warm relationships with relatives on both sides of the family.

Listening Styles:

Non-listening: Not paying attention or ignoring.

Pretend listening: Looks like you are but attention is elsewhere.

Selective listening: Screening for what you want to hear.

Self-focused listening: Listening only from your perspective.

Empathic listening: Listening to the message and truly hearing what the speaker is communicating, while also understanding the message.

What is your style? Which do you think is best?

Response Styles:

- Information giving
- Advice giving or ordering
- Ridiculing or criticizing
- Threatening
- Ignoring
- Labeling or stereotyping
- Moralizing or lecturing
- Questioning
- Changing the topic
- Disagreeing or denying
- Sharing your own experience
- Agreeing or Supporting
- Reflecting or clarifying
- "I" statements

