

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.

MEMBERS

- AARP
- The Boyhood Initiative of MO
- Cardinal Ritter Senior Services
- Children's Home Society of MO
- Jennings School District
- Legal Services of Eastern Missouri
- Let's Start Caregivers Group, St. Vincent de Paul Church
- Mid-East Area Agency on Aging (MEAAA)
- Missouri Department of Social Services, Children's Division
- Parents as Teachers
- St. Louis Area Agency on Aging (SLAAA), Department of Human Services
- University of Missouri Extension

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/
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KinCare Connections

A newsletter for grandparents and other relatives in a parenting role

Kitchen Energy Hints

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Our refrigerator is the most expensive electrical appliance we have. A brand new 19 cubic foot unit will cost between .53 and .57 cents per day to operate. If we round down to .50 cents per day the result is \$15.00 per month.

The refrigerator should be kept in the coolest part of the kitchen.

Only open the refrigerator door when necessary. Each time we open the door the unit must remove the warm air we allow to get in.

The temperature in the refrigerator should be kept between 36 and 40 degrees. This is classified as the safe zone, the temperature where food storage is safest.

The freezer compartment should be kept between zero and 10 degrees below zero.

Keep the freezer as full as possible. The more there is in the freezer the less energy is required and the more efficiently the unit will operate. You

can always fill plastic containers with water, allow it to freeze and use the ice at a later time.

Mark items in the freezer with date of purchase, what the item is and the weight. This practice will reduce the amount of time spent standing with the freezer door open using excess energy.

Vacuum the area under the refrigerator. Unplug the refrigerator before vacuuming. Remove the access panel at the bottom front of the refrigerator and clean the condenser coils. Grease and dust build up in this area result in less efficient operation of the unit and therefore higher utility cost.

Some people think you should not put hot foods directly into the refrigerator. This is not actually true. Today's refrigerators are designed to cool foods quickly and safely. The key is to divide really hot foods among several small, shallow containers so it will cool quickly in the refrigerator. Also, do not pack the refrigerator too full with food. Give cold air room to circulate.

Energy Assistance is available for low income families. For more information, contact:

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Everyone Benefits from Family Meals

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One of the best pieces of advice we can offer families these days is to make sure you eat together as a family most nights of the week. Eating together as a family provides a variety of positive benefits for all family members.

Parents want the very best for their children. Parents who regularly eat with their children can rest assured that they will help their children develop lifelong healthful eating habits.

According to the American Dietetic Association's fact sheet Making the Most of Family Mealtime, children who regularly eat meals with their family eat more fruits and vegetables and less fried food, saturated fat, and soda than children who do not. They also have higher intake of calcium, iron, fiber and vitamins. All of these nutrients are important for the growth and development of children.



A University of Illinois study of 7-11 year old children found that children who did well in school and on achievement tests regularly ate meals with their families. A study conducted at Harvard's Graduate School of Education found that young children who

regularly participated in family meals had increased vocabulary. Increased vocabulary helps with reading skills.

The members of the family that often miss meals are the members that reap some of the most profound benefits. The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found that teens who eat dinner with their parents six or seven times per week are less likely to smoke cigarettes or marijuana and less likely to consume alcohol. They are also less likely to have sex, get into fights and have thoughts of suicide. A study at the University of Minnesota found that girls who participate regularly in family meals have less disordered eating habits.

How do you make family meals happen with the busy lifestyle of your family? One important thing to do is plan ahead for family meals. Cook extra food on the weekend or when you get a little bit of extra time. Make an extra casserole and freeze it for a quick meal later. Try to do some of the meal tasks ahead of time. You can cut up fruits or vegetables in the morning or the night before to save that step later. You can also cook pasta or taco meat ahead of time and then warm quickly later.

Remember that meals don't have to be complicated. Keep it simple! Some quick to fix ideas from USDA's Nibbles For Health include adding canned or frozen vegetables to tomato or chicken soup for a quick main dish. Mix chopped lean ham or

deli meat and cooked vegetables to macaroni and cheese. Or, serve chili over a baked potato or rice as a main course. Remember to involve your children in the preparation process. Children who help prepare the meal are much more likely to consume it.

For more information see: <http://missourifamilies.org/features/nutritionarticles/nut198.htm>.

Mealtime Conversation Starters

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1. If you could have a super power, what would it be? Why?
2. What is the nicest thing you did for someone today? Or What is the nicest thing someone did for you today?
3. What is your favorite place in the world? Why?
4. If you were ruler of the world for a day, what three things would you do?
5. Is there somebody you know who could use some help? Is there a way you could help them?
6. How do you know when you're grown up?
7. What would you like to invent?
8. What makes a family?
9. If you could be any animal in the world for a day, which animal would it be? Why?
10. How do you think the belly button got its name?

Taken from: <http://www.school-wellness.org/> and <http://www.poweroffamilymeals.com/>

Teenagers - 10 Facts to Help You

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Why are teenagers so turned off by rules, authority and discipline?

Why do Generation Y kids expect things without wanting to “pay their dues”?

To answer these questions you have to look at the world from their vantage point. Think of all the instant communication resources they have always at their disposal. Generation Y has spent years perfecting their instant everything skills.

Here are some facts about the Instant Everything generation that parents, teachers and managers should know about these bright, inquisitive and challenging young people.

Ten Facts About the Instant Everything Generation

1. I like the Internet, cell phones, personal Web pages, etc., because they are attractive, exciting, action-oriented, multi-dimensional and FAST.
2. I will use instant communications, speed, flexibility and rapid decision making to make the most of each day.
3. On the Internet I can research anything and challenge the status quo on everything.

4. I can develop my new ideas and have them validated immediately.
5. I get bored easily.
6. I'm in control. On the Internet I can decide what I want to look at, who I will communicate with and at what time of day or night the activity will take place.
7. I can instantly explore exciting new places, things and ideas without ever leaving my computer.
8. On the Internet I can learn from the brightest minds in the world without lectures, training sessions and classrooms.
9. I can share my ideas with others instantly.
10. I like change and flexibility.

In essence adults are competing with the Internet and instant communications for teenager's attention, and it's not a fair competition. Simply put, their world moves faster and in more directions than most adults' world.

Our challenge is to mentor them without lectures; inspire them and show them how to turn their goals into action; and help them learn “the ropes” but know they will use those ropes differently than we did. Teenagers want a two-way mentoring situation. They want to learn from you and they want to show you how to look at some things from a different vantage point.

This Instant Everything generation will change our world in some exciting ways. Rapid and revolutionary change will become the standard as more and more of these young people take their rightful place in the world. Hold on! This is going to be exciting!



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St. Louis County Extension Center
121 S. Meramec, Suite 501
St. Louis, MO 63105

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ParentLink

Raising your grandchildren? Do you have parenting questions?

Call: 1-800-552-8522 En Español 1-888-460-0008
or visit: grandfamilies.missouri.edu

Parents and professionals can call ParentLink's toll-free WarmLine to access 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*. *Kincare Connections* is available in print or on the web. **To subscribe**, contact Elizabeth Reinsch, Human Development Specialist, 121 S. Meramec, Suite 501, St. Louis, MO 63105, Ph: (314) 615-7605, Email: reinsche@missouri.edu

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St. Louis Metro Area Support Groups

St. Louis City

Carver House Grandparents Group
Contact: Brenda Manon 314-652-8485

Cry Out Youth Ministries
Contact: Selena Arms, 314-868-1560

Grandparents as Parents Program
Contact: Darnell Fowler, 314-754-4483

Grandparent's Circle, Parenting a Second Time Around
Contact: Williestean Fulks, 314-383-0836

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)
Contact: Cynthia Stevenson-Johnson, 314-241-2342

Parents and Grandparents of Drug Abusers (PAGODA)
Contact: Eddie Mae Binion, 314-432-0109

Proud Grandparents
Contact: Kathleen Mc Aleenan, 314-961-8000 ext. 302

St. Louis, Jefferson & Washington Counties

Blankets of Hope, St. Louis City/County
Contact: Miss Hair, 314-872-4155

Children's Home Society of Missouri
Contact: Sarah B. Boeker, 314-968-2350 ext. 235

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,
South St. Louis County & Jefferson County**
Contact: Alvin Huther, 636-296-0768

**Kimble Cares Relatives As Parents Program &
The Boyhood Initiative of Missouri**
Contact: Huey Hawkins, Jr., 314-882-6840 or
Ericka Webb 314-882-6830

KYDZ LaCASA Learning Center
Contact: Harriet Ball-Stanburri, 314-443-4842

University of MO Extension, Washington County
Contact: Maudie Kelly, 573-438-2671

Villas of Grace Senior Living Center
Contact: Trymiah Miller, 314-363-5422