

# Grandparenting

Encouragement, experiences, sharing your family history, and sharing traditions are all part of the grandparenting experience.

Enjoy some of these suggestions and activities *with your grandchildren!*

## Encouragement

- Prepare envelopes in advance and send a letter or card weekly or monthly. Your grandchild will look forward to stopping at the mailbox to see what has arrived.
- Use a phone app to send cards.
  - **Ink Cards:** [apple.co/3ortSH5](http://apple.co/3ortSH5)
  - **Handwrytten:** [handwrytten.com](http://handwrytten.com)
- Use E-cards to send greetings:
  - **Blue Mountain:** [bluemountain.com](http://bluemountain.com)
  - **Paperless Post:** [paperlesspost.com](http://paperlesspost.com)
  - **American Greetings:** [americangreetings.com](http://americangreetings.com)
  - **Grandparent + Grandchild Pen Pal Kit:** [bit.ly/3z3zo80](http://bit.ly/3z3zo80)



# Experiences

- Get tickets for local adventures at Adventureland, Blank Park Zoo, Living History Farms, The Science Center, Urban Air, Sky Zone, Perfect Games, The Playground for Kids, roller skating, Des Moines Community Playhouse.
- Have a board game night.
- Go to a special movie.
- Have a sleepover.
- Grab a special family recipe and teach them how to make it.
- Attend sporting events together.
- Go hiking, go on a picnic, visit the park, or take a nature walk.
- Visit a restaurant of their choice (lunch or dinner date).
- Book an Airbnb or hotel overnight.
- Create a coupon for an experience of their choice.
- Have your grandchildren plan and prepare (includes grocery shopping) a fancy dinner complete with the good china, crystal goblets, the good silverware, tablecloth etc.
- Bake together. (Yes, even let them break the eggs!)
- Host a fancy tea party and invite guests. Include dressing up, painting nails, etc.
- Do craft projects - painting wooden keepsakes, tie-dyeing t-shirts, popsicle projects, play dough creations, origami, etc.
- Attend a “Grand Camp” together.
- Do an activity that keeps your hands busy (puzzles, Legos) as it seems the grandkids may be more willing to talk when you are side by side rather than face to face.
- Teach your grandchildren a new hobby (knitting, sewing, woodworking, sculpting, gardening, musical instrument, etc.).
- Tell your child about what makes America great.
- Go for wagon-ride walks.
- Plan a grandparent trip together celebrating a birth milestone.
- Create a Grandparents Library for special reading time.
- Volunteer in your grandchild’s school classroom or as a field trip helper.



## Family History

- **Life Notes – A Letter Writing Kit** (Amazon)
- **Storyworth Book:** [welcome.storyworth.com](http://welcome.storyworth.com)
- **Letters to My Grandchild – Write Now, Read Later, Treasure Forever** (Amazon)
- **Grandmother’s Journal – Keepsakes for My Grandchild** (Amazon)
- Create your own personal journal.
- Tell your grandchildren about any relatives who had military experiences.
- Create a photo album capturing shared moments from the past.



## Tradition

- Give your grandchild a special nickname.
  - Have pizza with them the first Thursday of every month or host Sunday lunch.
  - Pick them up after school for Friday Funday.
  - Make their favorite dessert when they come to visit or have their favorite candy hidden in the pantry.
  - Host Grandparent Camp one week each summer. Your grandchildren will love it and so will their parents!
  - Make a prize closet in your home and each time they come for a visit hide a prize for them to find.
  - Make a Christmas ornament each year and invite them to help put them on your tree the following year.
  - Dedicate a song to them.
  - Give them a section of your garden box that is just theirs. Let them help you plant and harvest. Teach them the lesson of sowing and reaping.
- Each year, put all your photos from the year into a book for them.
  - Have special plates and cups that are just for them when they visit.
  - Take them out for lunch on their birthday, or for children whose birthdays are during the school year, bring them their favorite lunch and surprise them at school!
  - Volunteer somewhere meaningful to you both.
  - Use conversation starters at the dinner table (google “Little Talk” on Amazon).
  - Share an old family tradition from your parents or grandparents.
  - Go through old pictures and share interesting stories about relatives they have never met.
  - Continue established traditions.

