

# Caregiver of Children News –

## 5/2022



**Frequently Asked Questions from Grandparents -** <https://grg.colostate.edu/parenting-issues.php#10>

### **My grandchildren are constantly arguing and getting into sibling battles!**

#### **Why are they fighting so much and what can I do?**

Siblings quarrel for four general reasons: basic needs, attention, company, and power. Determining which of these four reasons is contributing to your grandchildren quarrelling will help in determining what you can do.

Basic needs fights come about because at least one of the children is tired, hungry, thirsty, or bored. In these situations, taking a quick break, eating a quick snack, getting a drink, or spending a few minutes playing can do wonders to curb the arguments.

Attention fights come about because at least one of the children wants your attention. If you feel this is going on in your house, reprogram your children by showing them that only positive behavior will be rewarded. Do this by ignoring small conflicts and remaining calm during all conflicts. You can also do this by making sure to reward positive behavior! 15-20 minutes of one-on-one attention with a child per day dramatically reduces negative behavior such as wining and bickering.

Company quarrels arise because some children are not skilled at getting others to play with them. These children struggle with how to get their siblings to engage with them but know that starting a fight with them is a quick way to pull them in. In these situations, teach your grandchildren some basic skills such as teaching them how to ask, "Will you play with me?" You can help too by providing activities that appeal to multiple age groups. Also teaching compromise and sharing skills will prove helpful.

Power struggles arise because of competition among siblings. Children know when their sibling can do something they cannot and can have a very difficult time dealing with competitive or insecure feelings. You can help by encouraging personal goals for each of your grandchildren and by not comparing them to one another. You can also teach them win-win deals and how to talk about their frustrations and arguments by each speaking from their feelings versus blaming each other.

Additional information can be found in the publication, "Getting Along: Sibling Fights."

[www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1651.pdf](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1651.pdf)

### **I am a grandparent who is raising a teenager. I feel like times are too different from when I was a teenager until now and I do not understand my teen. Help!**

Don't worry; you don't need to completely alter your parenting style once your grandchildren reach adolescence. A style that is warm yet firm works just as well for teens as it does with younger children. It is important to begin to expand limits as your grandchildren come into teenage years. Give teens more choices and let your grandchildren know that you are there to listen and answer their questions. Give them this message both by what you say to them and what you do around them. Try to be as open-minded as possible and really listen when they talk. It is important to discuss difficult topics such as puberty, body changes, sex, drugs, and alcohol. A popular misconception is that all teenagers disagree with their parents, however, most teenagers actually agree with their parents on topics such as religion, education, and values. Teenagers often carry family values through adolescence and into adulthood. It is important for your adolescent to have accurate information about sex, drugs, and drinking. Give them accurate information about laws surrounding these issues. These discussions can also be a time for you to impart your own values or wisdom; however, it is important that these discussions do not turn into arguments. When adolescents do not feel comfortable going to parents to talk about things like sex, drugs, and drinking, they often turn to peers who give them incorrect information.

Additional information on this topic can be found in the publication "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: The Teenage Years" [www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/chfd/CHFD-E-59-09.pdf](http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/chfd/CHFD-E-59-09.pdf)



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## **My grandson is being bullied. What do I do?**

Bullying is a topic that has changed rapidly over the past few decades. Bullying used to be viewed as "kids will be kids" and "it's a part of growing up- let them work it out." However, many schools now see bullying as a serious issue and have zero tolerance policies towards it. Many schools also have anti-bullying programs. Because times have changed on this issue, the way we support our children through this issue must also change. The first step is to know the difference between bullying and normal conflict and help your grandson know the difference. The difference between bullying and conflict is power. In conflict, usually both parties hold equal power and while they are having a conflict, the intent is not to hurt one another. In conflict situations, the two parties often play together and both try to solve the problem. In a bullying situation, the perpetrator exerts control over a victim. The bully tries to physically or emotionally intimidate or injure the victim, and these incidents happen repeatedly. The two never play together and never try to solve the problem. The bully enjoys taking power from the victim and the victim is scared. The book, *Bully-Proofing Your Child: A Parents Guide*, by Carla Garrity, Mitchell Baris, and William Porter recommends six strategies for helping your child deal with a bully:

1. Get help: Help your grandchild identify adults and kids who can help.
2. Assert yourself: Help your grandchild know when to and not to stand up to a bully. If there is a chance the victim may be physically injured, do not use this strategy.
3. Use humor: When a child turns a difficult situation into a funny one, the bully is caught off guard. Make sure to tell your grandchildren that they should give a quick comeback versus "put-down" the bully as this will only escalate the situation.
4. Avoid the bully: Every child needs to know when and how to walk away.
5. Self talk: Coaching your grandson to say positive statements to himself when a bully teases or taunts to counter the negativity of the bully.
6. Own it: Coach your child to agree with the put-down to lighten up the situation and laugh at himself. This strategy works well when a child is teased about things like clothing, hairstyle, or a bike they ride to school. This strategy does not work if the teasing revolves around an identity, such as ethnicity, disability, or religion.

## **My 5-year-old grandchild has lived with me for about a year now after a stressful family life with his biological parents. He is about to start school. Do you have suggestions for how I can help him deal with another transition?**

There are many things you can do as a parent to ease any child's transition into going to school. First of all help your grandchild learn social skills by introducing him to other children his age. Some good places to find other children are through church, at the park, in the neighborhood, or at the mall. Also, "playing school" with your grandchild may give him a chance to act out his feelings about the upcoming transition. Make sure to talk to your grandson about what school is and what will be happening.

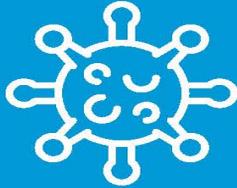
Talk about what a day at school might be like and tell him what to expect. If you know any older children who have already had their first day of school (and it has been a positive experience) ask them in front of your grandson what their first day of school was like. If his school provides opportunities to visit before hand and/or meet his teacher, this will help him start to form some ideas about school in his mind. Make this day of touring his new school a special one!

Once school starts, keep talking to your grandson about how it is going, what he is learning and be an open listener for him to express any feelings he is having.

Additional information can be found in the publication "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Helping Your Preschooler Be Ready for School." [www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/chfd/CHFD-E-59-10.pdf](http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/chfd/CHFD-E-59-10.pdf)



# Stop The Spread



1

## Wear A Mask

Keep the covering on your face while out in public.



2

## Stay 6 Feet Apart

Keep space between yourself and everyone...everyone.



3

## Wash Your Hands

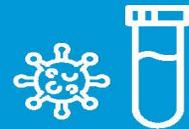
Scrub hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds.



4

## Get Tested

Even if you have no symptoms, testing helps stop the spread.



[www.ct.gov/coronavirus](http://www.ct.gov/coronavirus)



We hope you find the March edition of our Caregiver of Children newsletter informative.

Senior Resources currently produces a monthly caregiver of children newsletter. We are looking for feedback on any ideas you may have for future editions.

Please contact Sally Huck with any ideas/suggestions or if you wish to be removed from our mailing list.

Sally Huck: [SHuck@seniorresourcesec.org](mailto:SHuck@seniorresourcesec.org) or 860 887-3561 x 126.

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