

Do

- Support the parents and their "house rules"
- Clarify misunderstandings with the parents privately
- Listen to and empathise with the parents
- Provide respite (short-term) care
- Set a good example in speech and behaviour
- Tell family stories
- Teach songs, religion, skills, etc
- Take the children for outings

The best gifts we can shower our grandchildren with are the gifts of time and of ourselves.

Don't

- Take over responsibility from the parents
- Be better parents than the parents
- Undermine parental authority
- Send conflicting signals to the children

Three- generation homes work well when:

- the lines of authority and communication are clear, and our individual roles are well-defined;
- we accept, respect and support each other, and
- we resolve any differences we may have with our children between ourselves and do not involve the grandchildren.

Warm and cordial relationships between all members of the family go a long way in enriching family life.

Grandparenting Tips

The information is extracted from Dr Linda Koh's and Dr Dixie Tan's articles published in the Ministry of Community Development's quarterly newsletter entitled "Families Today".

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Another Public Education Project By



MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SPORTS

(Reprinted Oct 2000)



Building Effective Relationships

With

Grown-Up Children

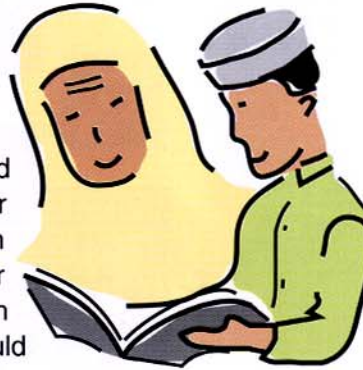
When our children become adults, marry and have their own children, it is important that we continue to build our relationship with them. The relationship is now more than the top-down level; it is a mutual understanding on a horizontal level. This may call for some adjustments and changes on our part. Here are some tips:

Advise, Not Dictate

We should not be running the lives of our adult children. We can offer advice and counsel, but it is definitely not our job to dictate. Our children will appreciate such understanding. In fact, it helps to strengthen their confidence and faith in us as wise and discreet parents. They are then more likely to seek our advice and opinions.

Display A Willingness To Learn

Even though we have a lot of experience, there is always room for learning new ideas and techniques of solving daily problems. Be open to the new things our children want us to try. Try them before you say they are bad. Making an effort to adjust and learn from our grown-up children helps to enrich our relationship with them. Thus we could avoid being called the “stubborn, grouchy old man/ woman”.



Show Appreciation

Telling our children we appreciate what they are doing for us goes a long way towards strengthening our ties with them. We should thank them for the little things they do, such as taking us to the doctor. If we are living with them, we could show our appreciation by offering to babysit their children or lending a hand whenever possible.

Respect Differences In Parenting Methods

Recognise that our children may have a different approach to running their families. Give them credit as managers of their household. They may find our

ways outdated and ineffective for modern day kids. Offer advice only when you see fit or asked.

Our children also develop their own family culture over the years. Since women usually tend to exercise more say in household matters, the family way is nearer the wife's family culture. This is why it is sometimes harder for a daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, than a married daughter and mother, to live together. We should learn to respect our children's households the way we would another person's.

Grandparenting: Do's & Don'ts

One of the joys of old age is being grandparents. The trick to becoming excellent grandparents is to love our grandchildren while respecting our children as their parents. It also helps if we regard the grandchildren not so much as “our grandchildren” but as “our son's/ daughter's children”.

