Greetings,

Grandparents can teach many lessons of thankfulness to their grandchildren each and every day. This can start way before Thanksgiving as your family looks forward to the special day. As a grandparent raising your grandchild, take advantage of the teachable moments with your grandchild to teach them to appreciate this season. Here are just a few suggestions:

⭐ Teach them the history of Thanksgiving and why it is important to you.
⭐ Look at Thanksgiving in the present and how your family celebrates and why.
⭐ Show your child how thankful you are for them and the privilege it is to have them in your life

Many of us are thankful for many things, but we often fail to share those thoughts with the people who need to know. Make it a point this season to identify something or someone each day that you are thankful for and share it with a friend or an important person in your life. I am thankful for grandparents like you who are heroes to your grandchildren in so many ways each and every day of their lives!

See you then,

Christy Strickland

Christy S. Strickland
Extension Agent
Family and Consumer Sciences

CSS/dp

REMINDER

ROBESON COUNTY GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Please join us on Wednesday, November 15, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the O. P. Owens Agriculture Center, Highway 72 West, Lumberton. A sponsored meal will be provided following the meeting. This meeting is sponsored by the Robeson County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and the Family Caregiver Support Program at the Lumber River Council of Government. For more information contact me at the Cooperative Extension Service at 671-3276. Individuals with disabilities and/or special needs interested in this meeting should call so proper arrangements can be made.
HELPING KIDS BOUNCE BACK:
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT KIDS AND STRESS?

Being able to bounce back from stress and crisis is a skill. It is seen in people as hope, drive, and being able to find solutions in many ways. There is not one recipe or set of rules for success. Stress will happen! In today's world, it is important to work against impact of poverty, illness, substance abuse, and violence to build coping skills that can reduce the need for expensive, crisis-level services.

What puts a child at risk?

- Bullying others or not being able to relate with others or talk to others
- Abuse of alcohol and other drugs
- Wanting to be alone all the time, nothing is ever right

What helps children?

- Good skills in making friends, solving problems, and getting along
- Knowing more than one way to solve a problem
- Being able to be independent and make good decisions
- Having a sense of a bright tomorrow - a sense of purpose and future
- At least one coping strategy
- Understanding that problem solving is a way to look at many possible answers
- A sense of self-esteem and will take responsibility for own actions - right or wrong

Common Myths

Coming from a middle class home does mean a child has a good upbringing. Middle class status makes little difference in regards to protective factors; middle class children are not necessarily more protected.

Working mothers affect children's protective factors. Children of working mothers do no better and no worse than children of stay-at-home moms. What matters is the quality of the environment and the interactions therein.

North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service -- http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs

WHAT CAUSES HOLIDAY BLUES?

As the holidays approach and the busy schedules pick up, many of us find that we are not really happy about them and even want to avoid them. Many factors can cause these “holiday blues” -- stress, fatigue, unrealistic expectations, over-commercialization, financial constraints, and the inability to be with one’s family and friends. The demands of shopping, parties, family reunions, and house guests also contribute to feelings of tension. People who do not become depressed may develop other stress responses, such as headaches, excessive drinking, overeating, and difficulty sleeping.

Even more people experience post-holiday letdown after January 1. This can result from disappointments during the preceding months compounded with the excess fatigue and stress. As we approach the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons, here are a few suggestions that might help you recognize the “holiday blues” and cope with them in a healthy manner:
Keep Expectations for the Holiday Season Manageable -- Try to set realistic goals for yourself. Pace yourself. Organize your time. Make a list and prioritize the important activities. Be realistic about what you can and cannot do. Do not put the entire focus on just one day (i.e., Thanksgiving Day). Remember, it is a season of holiday sentiment and activities that can be spread out (time-wise) to lessen stress and increase enjoyment.

Remember That the Holiday Season Does Not Banish Reasons for Feeling Sad or Lonely -- There is room for these feelings to be present, even if the person chooses not to express them.

Leave “Yesteryear” in the Past and Look Toward the Future -- Life brings changes. Each season is different and can be enjoyed in a unique way. Don’t set yourself up in comparing today with the “good ole days.”

Do Something for Someone Else -- Try volunteering some time to help others.

Enjoy Activities That Are Free -- Such as driving around to look at holiday decorations, going window shopping without buying, or making a snow person with children.

Be Aware That Excessive Drinking Will Only Increase Your Feelings of Depression.

Try Something New -- Celebrate the holidays in a new way.

Spend Time With Supportive and Caring People -- Reach out and make new friends or contact someone you have not heard from for awhile.

Save Time for Yourself! -- Recharge your batteries! Let others share responsibility of activities.

STRESS MANAGEMENT IDEAS

Love Yourself -- Be happy with who you are, accept your limitations, forgive yourself, and avoid perfectionism.

Increase Your Level of Spirituality -- Many people find prayer, personal study, and religious involvements are their best and most powerful sources of healing and creating hope.

Exercise Regularly -- 15 - 20 minutes of exercise a day can do wonders to help you manage stress. It's a natural antidepressant.

Eat Right -- Eat regularly, don't skip meals, and watch your diet. Avoid excessive sugar, salt, fat, and caffeine. Eat disease-fighting antioxidant foods.

Get Adequate Rest and Sleep -- Learn to relax, perhaps by using relaxation techniques such as progressive relaxation, meditation, imagery, and deep breathing.

Confide in a Trusted Friend -- Don't carry your burdens all alone; share them with those who care about you.

Give Yourself Permission to Feel What You Are Feeling -- Express your feelings as they arise. Cry if you need to.

Play Soft Background Music -- This provides a soothing backdrop for the day's activities.

Maintain a "Normal" Schedule -- We find comfort in well-known routines. Don't let stress rule your life or your schedule.

Improve/Spruce-up Your Surroundings -- Clean, rearrange, or include a new plant or artwork in your surroundings.

Play and Participate in Leisure Activities -- Play is the active side of leisure and it strengthens psychological health.

Find a Relaxing/Enjoyable Hobby -- This provides a sense of accomplishment and pride in something you have created or a skill you have sharpened.

Improve Communication and Conflict Management Skills -- Many stressful situations are caused, or worsened, by a lack of these skills.

Consider Getting a Pet -- Pets love us no matter what sort of day it has been. Their companionship can be very comforting.

Write a Journal -- Writing is a powerful tool for healing and relieving stress. It's an opportunity to search our souls and formalize our thoughts. "That which cannot be talked about, or written, cannot be overcome."

Be Realistic and Allow Time for Tasks -- Don't try to do too much without allowing adequate time to complete the task(s).
Look for the Lighter Side of Situations — Life is not as serious as we think. Laughter may be the best medicine, but learning to look for the lighter side of a situation can be very helpful.

Treat Others as People Rather than Objects — Live by the Golden Rule rather than treating others as tools, obstacles, or irrelevant.

WATCHING LESS AND MOVING MORE

No one could have predicted the impact that television would have on our society. The viewing options for TV have increased from three network channels to endless options of cable, pay per view, video, and DVD. American's spend an average of four hours each day, inactive, sitting in front of the television. That means hours of inactivity and also hours of exposure to marketing of high fat, high calorie foods. Many of these ads are aimed directly at our children. We know that how much television a child watches is related to their risk of being overweight. Watching less television and encouraging other activities for your family is a step towards better health.

Here are some simple solutions to help you and your family watch less television:

1. Keep the TV in the family space. Do not allow children to watch TV in the privacy of their rooms creating family separateness. Strive for togetherness.
2. Plan on how much TV you or your family are going to watch.
3. Set clear limits and be a good TV role model.
4. Make a list of activities you want to do instead of watching TV.
5. Don't keep the TV playing in the background all the time.
6. Eat together as a family, without the TV on.
7. Watch with your children. Discuss the shows and the advertising.

Dr. Carolyn Dunn is a nutrition specialist and associate professor in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at North Carolina State University.

DATES TO REMEMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Calendar Dates</th>
<th>Other Dates in November</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 2</td>
<td>4          Sadie Hawkins Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>7          Election Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Day Holiday</td>
<td>13         World Kindness Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(No School)</td>
<td>14         Loosen Up, Lighten Up Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 22-24</td>
<td>16         Great American Smoke Out Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
<td>18         National Family Volunteer Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(No School)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>December 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interim Reports to Parents</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 21-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Christmas and New Year Holiday (No School)</td>
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