

## Going Further

### *@Home*

- **Faith Talk**— Help your grandkids encounter and experience the excitement of learning more about God and His plan for their lives. Select a FREE pre-planned activity and discussion and make faith-building fun. Your influence is invaluable! Available in the Home Point Resource Centers and [www.bellevue.org/homepoint](http://www.bellevue.org/homepoint).
- **Extreme Grandparenting**— Himmel— Understand how to make the most of grandparenting and how to grow the next generation for greatness.
- **Grand Days**— Lawrence & Trujillo— Age-appropriate suggestions for games to play, stories to share, and activities to enjoy together (and to share the Christian faith!).
- **Extending Your Heritage**— Ledbetter— This book includes practical ideas, biblical models, and examples to help you connect with children and youth whose legacies will benefit from your involvement.
- **The Gift of Grandparenting**— Wiggin— From passing on the family to imparting spiritual wisdom, take an active role in creating strong spiritual and emotional family ties.

### *@Church*

- **Life Group**— Adults are invited to connect with others at 8:00, 9:20, and 11:00 a.m. Visit [www.bellevue.org/lifegroups](http://www.bellevue.org/lifegroups) for a current list of classes.
- **Home Point Resource Center**— Find free practical resources and step-by-step guidance tailored to fit your circumstances. Resources are also available at [www.bellevue.org/homepoint](http://www.bellevue.org/homepoint).
- **Individual Plan**— Assess your level of intentionality over the last 90 days in a variety of areas— your walk with the Lord, your home and church life, your relationships, etc. This personal tool will assist you in planning specific next steps.

[bellevue.org/homepoint](http://bellevue.org/homepoint)

## Influencing Grandchildren



HomePoint

Pointers



# Influencing Grandchildren

By Kurt Bruner, The Center for Strong Families

Grandparents in the 21<sup>st</sup> century face a mix of new opportunities and challenges. Extended life expectancy has dramatically changed the length and look of the empty next years. Many grandparents now have greater opportunities for work and travel. Tight-knit family relationships have increasingly given way to family members spread over wide geographic distances. Some grandparents face the challenge of getting time with grandchildren because of divorce. A growing number of grandparents have watched circumstances drive them to take primary responsibility for raising their grandchildren.

In this context, it's become less clear what role grandparents can best play. Are they just a good source of gifts and free babysitting? What's the most important thing a grandparent can do?

## ***Step One: Be there for them***

A grandparent's first priority is to "be there"...one way or another. The *Wall Street Journal* described the active grandparents as having a full slate of work and travel. Stop to remember how much you depended on grandparents when you were younger and know how critical your presence is. For others, "being there" means taking on the challenge posed by miles or strained relationships that might be keeping you from your grandkids. Technology solutions, such as video chatting, have helped some grandparents close the gap.

Being there gives you the opportunity to show the kind of unconditional love that even parents can struggle to maintain on a consistent basis. It gives you a chance to tell the family story— the people, places, and plot twist that have made your family distinct. Being there also allows you to teach things that parents may not have found time for—how to skip a rock, how to build and fly a kite, how to make fudge, and other priceless lessons.

## ***Step Two: Nurture their faith***

Most importantly, being there and making memories with your grandchildren gives you the opportunity to impress your faith on them. Psalm 78 presents a concept of extended spiritual heritage: *"He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands."* Ps. 78:5–7

Nothing you can give as a grandparent is more valuable than your spiritual legacy. Your gifts, time, games, food, and other contributions find their primary value when they are offered in the context of spiritual heritage. So, be very intentional about creating opportunities to nurture faith during the years your grandchildren are receptive to your influence.

### **Recommended Website:**

[www.christiangrandparenting.net](http://www.christiangrandparenting.net)