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## 2020 YOUNG WRITERS CONTEST

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Students in fourth and fifth grades are invited to write 75 to 300-word essays on the topic for a chance to **WIN** some great prizes! In addition, both Winner and Runner-up will have their essay published in the December 2020 issue of Austin Family Magazine!

It's **FREE** to enter! Go to [www.austinfamily.com](http://www.austinfamily.com) for complete rules

### 1st Place, Fourth and Fifth Grades Receives:

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- Essay published in December issue of Austin Family Magazine

### 1st Runner-up, Fourth and Fifth Grades Receives:

- Plaque presented at his/her school
- Essay published in December issue of Austin Family Magazine

## Judges:



### Carmen Oliver

Carmen is the author of a picture book series, founded the Booking Biz, teaches writing at The Writing Barn and The Highlights Foundation, and speaks at schools, conferences and festivals. See our website for more details.



### Bethany Hegedus

Bethany is a children's picture book author, former educator, keynote speaker, workshop leader, and mentor on writing. She is founder and creative director of The Writing Barn and host of Courage to Create podcast. See our website for more details.



## Contest Rules:

- Essays must be 75 to 300-words
- Contest date: August 14 to October 14, 2020
- Essays must be received by 5pm on October 14
- Writers must be in the fourth or fifth grade

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## FILM REVIEW

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**Tenet**

Read online at: [www.austinfamily.com/films](http://www.austinfamily.com/films)

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Catch *Austin Family Magazine* live on "Good Day Austin" every Thursday morning.



Cover girl winner Avery loves to dance and visit with her grandparents. Cover photographed by Jordan-Ashley Photography.

# Celebrating Grandparents

It's September and we're now six months into dealing with the Coronavirus through social distancing and quarantine. If you feel like your edges are fraying, you are not alone. All of our usual rites of passage around the end of summer and the beginning of fall feel like they've disappeared. The normal feeling of Labor Day being the last hurrah of a summer well spent is very different this year.

But September 13 is National Grandparents Day, and we're celebrating that in a big way with this issue of Austin Family! As more and more families are combining resources to weather the pandemic, Alison Bogle explores how grandparents can be vital teachers' aides in online learning. Brenda Schoolfield writes about the importance of documenting family health history by interviewing our elderly relatives, and Jess McLean gives expert caregiving tips for the "sandwich generation" caring for small children and their aging parents at the same time.



## EDITOR'S NOTE

BARB MATIJEVICH

*Barb Matijevich is a mother, writer, and therapist in Austin.*

Now, more than ever, we need a sense of community and normalcy. Here's hoping you're strengthening family bonds and finding some ease in these uncertain times.

*Barb*

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# Play it product recalls **SAFE**

## Activity Toys, Bike Helmets, Super Soakers Recalled



**Manhattan Ball** plastic activity toys are being recalled. The toy has a hard plastic center ball with 12 soft plastic tubes inserted into the center ball and seven silicone teethers threaded on the tubes. "The Manhattan Toy Company" and lot code 325700EL or 325700IL are printed on the center ball.

Consumers should immediately take the

recalled toy away from children and contact Manhattan Toy or return it to any Target store for a full refund.

Manhattan Toy has received six reports of the plastic tubes detaching from the center ball. Two of the six reports included a silicone teether being separated from the toy. The firm also reported one incident of a child mouthing the silicone teether after it came off.

The toys were sold exclusively at Target stores nationwide and online at Target.com from July 2019 through June 2020 for about \$10.



This recall involves **woom bikes USA children's helmets**. The recalled helmets were sold in blue, green, purple, red, and yellow and in size S (small). "Woom" is printed on both sides of the helmets and the size "S" appears on the back of the helmet. Only the small-sized helmets are included in this recall.

Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled helmets and contact Woom bikes USA for instructions on how to receive a full refund. Woom bikes USA is contacting all purchasers directly. No injuries have been reported.

The helmets were sold online at [us.woombikes.com](http://us.woombikes.com) and [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), and through BikeShopGirl in Colorado and The Family Bike Collective in California from December 2018 through July 2019 for about \$70.



Hasbro is recalling the **Super Soaker XP20** (E6286) which is a green and orange hand-held water blaster, and the **XP 30** (E6289) which is an orange and blue hand-held water blaster. "Nerf Super Soaker" and the model number are printed on the sticker on the side of the water blaster.

Consumers should immediately take the recalled toy away from children and contact Hasbro Inc. for instructions on how to return the product and receive a full refund. Consumers will be asked to unscrew the tank from the blaster and return the tank to the manufacturer using a postage prepaid label, for a full refund. No injuries have been reported.

The toys were sold at Target from March 2020 to July 2020 for about \$8 (XP 20) and \$13 (XP 30).

*The US Consumer Products Safety Commission works to protect the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from more than 15,000 types of consumer products.*

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# AROUND

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## Austin Museum Day is September 20, 2020

Explore Austin-area museums — for free! The 23rd Annual Austin Museum Day is a free celebration of art, culture, history, music, nature, and science.

This year's Museum Day will look a little different due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the museums will be open to the public for in-person visits to see exhibits and participate in activities. Some of the museums will be participating in this year's Virtual Museum Day event happening on the event's [Facebook page](#).

During this event there will be a schedule of activities, like craft projects, virtual tours, gallery talks, and more, hosted by different museums around Austin throughout the day. Updated information about each museum and the schedule for the day will be provided closer to the event.



## See Austin's Weirdest Homes –Virtually!

Strange. Kooky. Magical. Peculiar. Funky. Eccentric. Weird. Whatever you call it, on September 5, 2020 from 10am - 6pm see the weirdest homes in Austin.

Now in its seventh year, the Austin Weird Homes Tour is producing a 100% virtual tour. Participants can come along with the Weird Homes Crew and visit these wonderfully weird homes from the comfort and safety of their homes.

Tickets for the tour are \$25 per device or \$45 for an event ticket and a copy of the bestselling coffee table book: [Weird Homes: The People and Places That Keep Austin Strangely Wonderful](#). Ticket purchasers will be emailed an access link one hour before the event, and the homes will be shown on a schedule. Attendees can watch a recording of any home missed for up to two weeks after the event.

A portion of all tickets sales goes directly to LifeWorks and their fight for affordable housing for at-risk teens.

## Austin's Apartment Construction Boom

New data from Yardi Matrix, a supplier of commercial real estate data and research, shows more apartments were completed in Austin during the first six months of 2020 than in any other U.S. city. In the first half of the year, construction of 3,827 apartments was finished within the city of Austin.

Right behind Austin on that list is San Antonio, where 2,871 new apartments hit the market in the first half of this year. Also in the top 20 are Houston, No. 7 with 2,085 apartments; Dallas, No. 8 with 1,869 units; and Farmers Branch, No. 18 with 1,161 units.

The entire Austin metro area is projected to complete 9,342 apartments this year, according to Yardi Matrix. In that category, Austin ranks fifth among U.S. metro areas. Compared with last year, completion of new apartments in the Austin area is expected to rise 9 percent in 2020.



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## Austin High School Gets a Long-Overdue Renovation

Construction has begun on Austin High School, giving the oldest high school in Austin a long-overdue renovation and expansion. The addition will incorporate 22,000 square feet to support their dance and athletic programs. 31,829 square feet of the renovations will be for the special education, athletics, and Delta programs.

Renovations also include adding a glass stair tower on the south side of the building, modernizing new gymnasiums with bleachers, and re-surfacing the track system.

“Having the opportunity to renovate Austin High School and be able to give them the facilities that they need to grow is exciting,” said Srinath Pai Kasturi, Executive Vice President of Cadence McShane Construction. “We are proud to be associated with AISD on the new Eastside Memorial Early College High School and International High School at the Original LC Anderson Campus, which is currently under construction, and now Austin High School.”

Funding was provided through the Austin Independent School District’s 2017 bond proposal to create updated learning spaces for Austin High School.



## Pecan Street Festival

Now in its 43rd year, the Pecan Street Festival (PSF) will hold its second virtual festival on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 19-20, 2020 (Sat. 11am-10pm, Sun. 11am-8pm).

The PSF is the largest and longest-running of Texas’ arts/crafts and music festivals. It draws nearly 300 local and national arts, crafts, and food vendors, approximately 50 musical acts, and a quarter-million attendees during the weekend. The festival is free.

[The Pecan Street Association](#) (PSA), the non-profit behind the festival, gives back to the community via donations to local non-profits and historical education/preservation of Pecan Street (aka Sixth St.).

The festival is planning for a large array of [vendors](#) offering festival-goers pottery, printmaking, pen and acrylic work, paintings of all mediums, hand-blown glass, jewelry, assemblage art, online activities for the kids, and more.

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## AISD Extends Free Produce Boxes

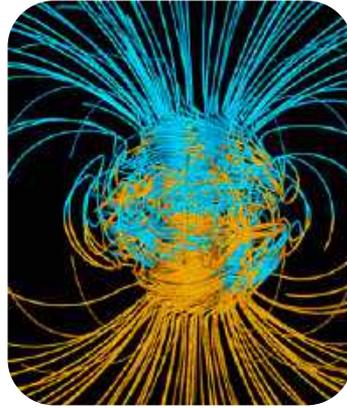
AISD will continue to provide free, local Farm Fresh Boxes from The Common Market Texas through October 7, 2020 at specific AISD curbside meal sites.

The boxes feature locally grown produce, such as peppers, melons, squash, carrots, and other seasonal staples. The Common Market Texas, a mission-driven distributor of sustainable, local farm foods, prepares and delivers the produce boxes to AISD.

"We are thrilled to partner in this new way with Austin ISD," said Margaret Smith, Director at The Common Market Texas. "At The Common Market, we fully recognize the role that high-quality, local food can play in nutrition and overall good health. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are leaning on our mission to serve, and we are proud to be a part of the solution during this challenging time."

Produce boxes are available at no cost to families with children under the age of 19. Children may accept the boxes, or they will be provided to the adults accompanying children or with documentation of the children for whom they are picking meals up.

The free produce box distribution program is made possible through funding from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation. See [www.austinisd.org](http://www.austinisd.org) for more information.



## The University of Texas Revises the Age of Planet Earth

By creating conditions akin to the center of the Earth inside a laboratory chamber, researchers have improved the estimate of the age of the Earth's solid inner core, putting it at 1 billion to 1.3 billion years old.

The results place the core at the younger end of an age spectrum that usually runs from about 1.3 billion to 4.5 billion years, but they also make it a good bit older than a recent estimate of only 565 million years.

What's more, the experiments and accompanying theories help pin down how the core conducts heat, and the energy sources that power the planet's geodynamo — the mechanism that sustains the Earth's magnetic field. The geodynamo keeps compasses pointing north and helps protect life from harmful cosmic rays.

"People are really curious and excited about knowing about the origin of the geodynamo, the strength of the magnetic field, because they all contribute to a planet's habitability," said Jung-Fu Lin, a professor at The University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences who led the research.

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## THE Learning Curve

ALISON BOGLE

*Bogle is an Austin-based freelance writer and mom of three.*

# Grandparents as Teachers

With school districts beginning the school year in remote learning mode, families are figuring out how to make the demanding task of overseeing children's learning at home actually work.

The extra burden can weigh even heavier on single and working parents. The Bureau of Labor and Statistics reported that in 2019, among married couples with children, 64.2 percent of families consisted of dual-working parents. In single-father families, the number of working fathers was 85.2 percent, and in single-mother families, the number was 75.4 percent. Although those numbers will have changed somewhat because of the effects of the pandemic, the majority of families have custodial parents who work.

Enter the superhero of COVID-19 – the grandparent. Families are getting creative about how to make it through the first weeks, maybe months of school and increasingly, these plans include the support of grandparents.

Grandparents have long been appreciated by children for their ability to be patient, generous with their time, and willing to read the same book over and over. Those qualities can make them an ideal candidate to help out with pre-elementary-aged grandchildren, who may now be at home due to preschool and daycare closures. However, as parents know, grandparents' talents, wisdom, and experience mean that they can also be an incredible resource for their school-aged grandchildren as they engage in remote learning.

### **BENEFITS TO FAMILY MEMBERS**

Including grandparents in the remote learning plan has benefits for all participants. Parents are able to focus on work without the frequent interruptions that come with working at home with children. For grandchildren, grandparents can offer undivided help and attention. And, with today's demands on parents, they often do so with more patience.

Grandparents, who may be more isolated due to their increased risk of complications

from the virus, benefit from the socialization that their grandchildren and adult children provide. They experience less loneliness and a decreased potential for depression. Their new role as teacher or helper can also extend a sense of purpose when they aren't able to participate in the activities that normally bring them pleasure. And, the greatest benefit of all, is that involving grandparents in children's remote learning plans offers an opportunity to deepen the grandparent-grandchild relationship.

### **PLAN VARIATIONS**

What the actual plan will look like varies among families, based on individual family needs and health concerns. Some grandparents move into the family home to be physically present. They can check on grandchildren to ensure that they are staying on task, and can serve as a source of encouragement and help for completing schoolwork, allowing parents to focus solely on their work.

Other grandparents choose to be involved virtually if they aren't able to be physically

present or are concerned about the health implications of being around young children, who can be asymptomatic carriers of the virus. One such grandmother watches her grandchild's school Zoom calls over a second video call, and helps facilitate learning that way. She checks in to ensure that her grandson is staying on task, and answers any questions he might have once he switches to the independent work portion of his remote-school day.

An additional scenario involves grandparents helping remotely, but not necessarily with their grandchildren's school schedule. Grandparents are getting creative and are offering remote art classes, book clubs, story times, chess games, and a number of other virtual options to their grandchildren. Parents experience the "supervision" as a relief, and grandparents and grandchildren reap the benefits of time spent "together."

### CONSIDERATIONS WHEN HAVING GRANDPARENTS HELP

- **Prevent burn-out.** If your remote-learning plan includes help from a grandparent, it is important to think about preventing burn-out. Grandparents, as willing as they may be, may not have the stamina to take children on full-time. The demands can be physically and mentally overwhelming, so plan to provide breaks from responsibility for your grandparent.
- **Communication is key.** Talking ahead of time about everyone's expectations, and setting up times to check-in and adjust if necessary, is key to a successful remote learning plan for everyone involved. Ideally, formalize those check-in dates from the beginning and plug them into the calendar to increase accountability. Finally, don't set them too far apart, so that small

concerns don't become big issues before they're discussed.

- **Protect the bond.** If helping your child with school work begins to negatively affect the grandparent relationship, consider a break or an alternative solution, if possible. Sometimes just shortening the amount of work time to allow for a bit of fun activity time can do the trick.

- **Financial considerations.** Finally, consider whether helping your children will have a stressful effect on a grandparent's finances. Will they be purchasing materials or cutting down their own work hours? Are technology costs involved? Some families compensate grandparents for their help to offset those deficits.



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# Caring for Older Parents

## Expert Caregiving Tips for Busy Parents



BY JESS MCLEAN

Have you heard of the “sandwich generation”? If you’re an adult with young children who also provides care for an aging parent, you have found yourself smack dab in the middle of two warm, doughy slices of caring, generationally speaking. Your situation isn’t as unique as you might think, though. In fact, in their study titled *Caregiving in the U.S. 2020*, the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and AARP reported an estimated 53 million adults in the U.S. currently serve as unpaid caregivers to a family member or friend—41.8 million of those care for an adult over 50.

Whether your caregiving journey involves supporting your parents as they age in place, or having your parents live

with you so you can help care for them, here are some practical and actionable tips to make the ride a little easier:

### SEEK OUT LOCAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The network of organizations dedicated to supporting older adults and their caregivers continues to grow. In Austin specifically, you can find helpful resources – from lending libraries for durable medical equipment to caregiver support groups, elder care assistance, and more – at organizations including:

- [AGE of Central Texas](#)
- [Area Agency on Aging](#)
- [Meals on Wheels Central Texas](#)

You can also check out caregiver get-togethers on [Meetup.com](#) or connect online with the local chapter of a non-

profit directly related to your parent’s condition, i.e., Alzheimer’s Association, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, American Cancer Society, etc.

### PRIORITIZE MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

Believe it or not, upwards of 50% of adults with chronic illnesses don’t take their medicine as prescribed, and missed or mixed doses are a leading cause of emergency room visits. Managing medications is no walk in the park. Tongue-tying generic vs. brand names, multiple prescribing physicians, and different colors, shapes, dosages, and frequencies at which meds are taken can all lead to confusion that makes it challenging to stay on top of a strict schedule.

Caregivers can help support their loved one's health and simplify the job of managing medications with a few quick tips:

1. Write and display a detailed list of all of your parent's current medications and include important information like:
  - Name of medication (indicate brand or generic)
  - Dosage/frequency
  - Time meds are taken
  - Prescribing physician
  - Shape and color of pill
  - What is the medicine for?
  - Pharmacy
2. Use resources provided by your loved one's pharmacy to stay on top of refills, including auto-refill and schedule syncing services, as well as, free mobile apps that let you check prescription statuses and refill with a couple taps on your smartphone.
3. Talk to your loved one's doctor about simplifying medication management. Is it possible to safely alter frequencies so that medicine can be taken fewer times during the day? Can one doctor take over prescribing all maintenance medications?
4. Use color-coded pill organizers to sort your parent's pills by day of the week and time of day (you can find pill organizers at any pharmacy or big box store). Then set reminders on commonly used devices, i.e., on your parent's watch, alarm clock, or smartphone.

### PLAN FOR FALL PREVENTION

It's a scary number, but roughly one out of four older adults will experience a fall each year. Of those, 3 million will be treated for injuries ranging from hip fractures to sprains, lacerations, and

more. Your aging parent does not have to be part of this statistic! A handful of easy modifications around your parent's living environment can make all the difference.

- Move common trip hazards like throw rugs with turned up corners, plugs/cables/cords, pet toys, etc.
- Install grab bars in the bath or shower and put down non-slip mats
- Move clutter and large furniture that impede common pathways in the home
- Check lightbulbs in the home and replace dim or dead ones to improve visibility
- Talk to your parent and their doctor about a mobility aid if you are concerned about your parent's balance or ability to safely get around

### JOIN ONLINE CAREGIVING GROUPS

The best advice caregivers can find is the kind that comes from people who have worn those shoes before and learned the many lessons that come with the job. While caregiving can feel isolating and lonely, it's important to remember that you are not alone. Private online caregiving groups give caregivers a safe and welcoming space to share their stories, ask questions, and support one another. [Working Daughter](#), [Caregiver Collective](#), and [Caregivers Hub Support Group](#) are just a few you can find on Facebook.

### MAKE IT A FAMILY AFFAIR

As more and more moms and dads of younger children take on the role of caregiver for an aging parent, the opportunity for powerful and educational intergenerational experiences grows. While your 5-year-old might not understand why Grandma is sick or why she needs help, there are valuable lessons in participating in helping Grandma feel better - in preparing her lunch together, playing games with her, or coloring her a picture.

Caregiving offers an intimate setting where children (young and old) can learn empathy, practice selflessness, show appreciation and encouragement, and experience the type of profound love that comes with caring for another person.

### FIND TIME FOR SELF-CARE

Simultaneously caring for children and aging parents will leave you hard-pressed for "me time." Caregiver burnout is real, however, and you may find yourself unable to provide the care your loved one needs if you run your engine dry. Carve out snippets of time to practice self-care, even if it is just a 15-minute walk alone, a mini yoga session streamed in your bedroom, or simply lighting a candle and listening to calming music.

And don't hesitate to ask for help - set expectations with other family members, neighbors, and friends who offer to help and find tasks that support your needs without giving you the extra work of delegating. For example, ask a sibling who wants to help to be in charge of groceries and placing a grocery delivery for your parent to their home each week.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

According to the Census Bureau, in just 10 years, every living member of the Baby Boomer generation will be over the age of 65. If your parents haven't aged into this bracket yet, chances are they will soon, and with the golden years comes the high likelihood that you will be counted on for some form of caregiving or another. From fall prevention to medication management to connecting with eldercare assistance and support groups - the more tools you slip into your caregiver toolbelt now, the better equipped you will be as your parents get older.

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*Jess McLean is a freelance writer and family caregiving consultant based in Asheville, NC.*



## FAMILY MATTERS

BETTY RICHARDSON

*Richardson, PhD, RN, CS, LPC, LMFT, is an Austin-based psychotherapist.*

# Safe Grandparent Visits

**Q** My mother is 90 years old. She lives 30 minutes away but hasn't seen her grandchildren for weeks. She asks every day when she'll get to see them. I'm worried about her as she seems to be depressed and discouraged. I've tried to keep our children safe at home. I don't want to increase my kids' risk of getting COVID-19 or worry my mother will get sick from visiting with the children.

**A** Depression has particularly affected older people who are some of the most vulnerable to the COVID-19. Why? Many older folks (like your mother) are missing the close relationship they had with their families, especially with grandchildren, before the pandemic.

It is very difficult to weigh the risks of COVID-19 against the mental health of your mother. One of the best moms I know decided to solve this dilemma by fixing a room for her parents and moving them in to blend as extended family. This took more risks than she wanted to take, but it reduced the mother's worry about her own mom and increased the happiness in the family.

Not everyone can move grandparents into their home, though, so what are

the other options? Some mothers are scheduling visits in a park where the kids can run and play while grandparents watch. Of course, you want to find a shady spot in a cooler time in the day. Think of all the comforts you can provide (for example: water, snacks, sunscreen, hats). Another idea is to pick up your mother and take her and one or more of the kids for a ride or to get ice cream.

Let me add a few suggestions from which you can pick and choose those you think will work for you.

1. Send pictures of your kids to your mother (or parents) every day.
2. Have the children draw pictures and write notes to their grandparents. You can suggest a theme and send those you think will make your mother feel better. Themes could include: what I am thankful for today, my hobbies, what I want to learn (another language, an instrument, tap dancing, etc.) and why I like and miss you.
3. Be positive about the future when talking with your mother. If your mother says something negative on the phone, rephrase it to a positive statement. An example: "I'll never get to see my

grandchildren before I die." Choose an alternative like, "I haven't been able to see my grandchildren, but my daughter is coming up with a way for me to see them soon." Ask mom (grandmother) to make a list of things she must do to stay healthy until you can find a way for her to see the grandkids.

4. Has your mother stopped responding to your e-mails? Send short one topic emails that require a yes, or no, or a short answer. Long e-mails may be too much for her to deal with when she is depressed.
5. Ask other family members and friends to send little notes in the mail to your mother.
6. Use technology such as Skype, Facetime, Zoom, and Messenger Kids to have virtual visits regularly.
7. Assess your mother every day as to her level of depression or despair. Consider whether she might benefit from seeing a therapist. (Many therapists are seeing clients remotely during quarantine.)



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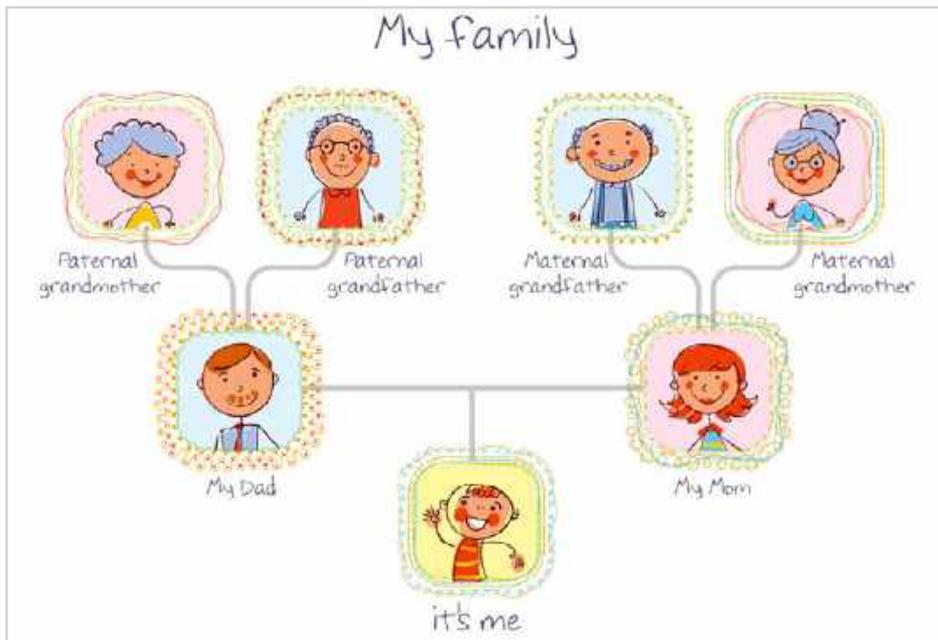
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**LIFELINES**  
BRENDA SCHOOLFIELD

*Schoolfield is a freelance medical writer based in Austin, TX.*

# Grandparents Hold the Key to Family Health Stories

Grandparents have a wealth of information about family's health stories and may be the only resource for stories of deceased family members. "Knowing the health stories of family members can help identify your child's risk of developing certain serious diseases and health conditions," says Dr. Lisa Gaw, pediatrician at Texas Children's Urgent Care Westgate.

## WHY FAMILY HEALTH STORIES ARE IMPORTANT

Family health stories form the basis of your family health history-- a record of diseases and health conditions that have affected your family members. Just as genetic information determines your eye color and how tall you are, inherited genes can increase your risk of some health problems. "Certain types of cancer and heart disease can be inherited through genetic traits," says Dr. Gaw. Other health problems that run in families include high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, asthma, osteoporosis, and depression.

## HOW TO COLLECT FAMILY HEALTH STORIES

Follow these steps to collect family health stories from your grandparents:

1. Tell your grandparents that you are interested in talking about your family's health stories. Explain the importance of knowing what diseases and health conditions have affected family members. This information may help improve the health of family members, both now and in the future. Set a specific date and time for a "family health stories" meeting.
2. Let your grandparents know the type of information you would like to gather. Send them a copy of the Health Story Profile Card (see sidebar). Ask them to think about what chronic conditions or hospitalizations family members have had.
3. Draw a basic family tree of three generations to use as a reference. Include grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, siblings, children, and grandchildren. Some people also include half-brothers, half-sisters, and cousins.
4. Write out any specific questions beforehand. Consider what you already know and what details are missing. For example, you may know that your grandmother's brother died of a heart attack, but you may not know how old he was. You should ask about behavior, lifestyle, and environment that could have affected health.
5. Make a copy of the Health Story Profile Card for each family member. As you talk with your grandparents, use a separate card to collect each person's health story. Use the back of the card to note additional facts.
6. Listen carefully to the information your grandparents provide. If your grandparents are reluctant to share some

details, don't insist. Just gather as much as you can. If some information isn't available, don't guess at it. That could be misleading during evaluation.

### WHAT TO DO AFTER GATHERING FAMILY HEALTH STORIES

After you complete the Health Story Profile Cards, sort them by generation. Then arrange the cards side by side on a flat surface. Using different color highlighters, markers, or crayons, circle diseases and health conditions that occur in more than one family member. For example, if six family members have had a stroke, you would circle "stroke" in pink on each card. The goal is to identify patterns of health conditions or disease that have occurred more than once in your family. Also look for medical conditions that presented earlier than normal, such as a relative who had a heart attack in her 40s.

Talk to your doctor about risks that you have identified. You can't change what's

in your family's medical history, but you can take steps to decrease your own risk of getting a disease. "Past medical history, family history, and surgical history help us understand a person's risk for certain conditions," says Dr. Gaw. "This information aids in diagnosis, assessment, and management of many health conditions."

Your doctor may recommend replacing specific unhealthy behaviors, such as poor nutrition or lack of exercise, with healthier lifestyle choices. Early screening for certain diseases may be used to identify problems and inform a treatment plan.

Share the information with your grandparents and other family members so that everyone can benefit. Keep the Health Story Profile Cards updated when family members are diagnosed with new diseases and health conditions.

Health Story Profile Card	
Family member name:	
Relationship:	
Birth date:	
<i>Check all that apply. *For health and mental health problems, list age when problem started or procedure was performed.</i>	
<b>*Health Problems</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Heart problems _____ <input type="checkbox"/> High cholesterol _____ <input type="checkbox"/> High blood pressure _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Stroke _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Breathing problems _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing loss _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Vision loss _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Osteoporosis _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cancer (type?) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<b>*Mental Health Problems</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Depression _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Substance abuse _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Dementia _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Alzheimer's _____
<b>*Surgical/Diagnostic History</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Catheterization _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Scope _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<b>Learning/Developmental Conditions</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Autism _____ <input type="checkbox"/> ADHD _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Downs syndrome _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Dyslexia _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cerebral palsy _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other genetic condition _____
<b>Reproductive Problems</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Infertility _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Miscarriage _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Stillborn _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Birth defects _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<b>Lifestyle/Environmental Factors</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to chemicals _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Inactive lifestyle _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Poor nutrition _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Work hazards _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Additional details	
<b>If deceased</b> Age at time of death: Cause of death: Date of death:	



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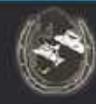
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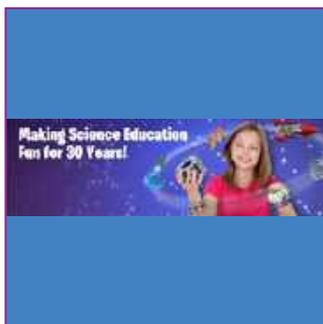
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## asuntos familiares

BETTY RICHARDSON

*Richardson, PhD, RN, CS, LPC, LMFT, es una psicoterapeuta situada en Austin.*

# ¿Visitas seguras a los abuelos?

**P** Mi madre tiene 90 años. Vive a 30 minutos de distancia, pero hace semanas que no ve a sus nietos. Ella pregunta todos los días cuando podrá verlos. Estoy preocupada por ella porque parece estar deprimida y desanimada. He tratado de mantener a nuestros hijos seguros en casa. No quiero aumentar el riesgo de que los niños contraigan COVID-19 o que mi madre se enferme por visitar a los niños.

**R** La depresión ha afectado particularmente a las personas mayores que son algunas de las más vulnerables al coronavirus. ¿Por qué? Muchas personas mayores (como su madre) extrañan la estrecha relación que tenían con sus familias, especialmente con sus nietos, antes de la pandemia.

Es muy difícil balancear los riesgos del COVID-19 con la salud mental de su madre. Una de las mejores madres que conozco decidió resolver este dilema arreglando una habitación para sus padres y mudándolos para juntarse como familia extendida. Esto tomó más riesgos de los que ella deseaba tomar, pero redujo la preocupación de la madre por su propia mamá y aumentó la felicidad en la familia.

Sin embargo, no todo el mundo puede trasladar a los abuelos a su casa, así

que, ¿cuáles son las otras opciones? Algunas madres programan visitas en un parque donde los niños pueden correr y jugar mientras los abuelos miran. Por supuesto, en un lugar con sombra durante el momento más fresco del día. Piense en todas las comodidades que puede proporcionar (por ejemplo: agua, bocado, protector solar, sombreros). Otra idea es recoger a su madre y llevarla a ella y a uno o más de los niños a dar un paseo o a comprar un helado.

Permítame agregar algunas sugerencias entre las que puede elegir aquellas que crea que funcionarán para usted.

1. Envíe fotos de sus hijos a su madre (o a sus padres) todos los días.
2. Pídale a sus niños que hagan dibujos y escriban notas a sus abuelos. Puede sugerir un tema y enviar aquellos que crea que harán que su madre se sienta mejor. Los temas podrían incluir: lo que agradezco hoy, mis pasatiempos, lo que quiero aprender (otro idioma, tocar un instrumento, bailar claqué, etc.) y por qué los quiero y extraño.
3. Sea positiva sobre el futuro cuando hable con su madre. Si su madre dice algo negativo por teléfono modifíquelo con una formación positiva. Un

ejemplo: "Nunca podré ver a mis nietos antes de morir". Elija una alternativa como, "No he podido ver a mis nietos, pero mi hija está buscando una manera para que yo los vea pronto". Pídale a mamá (abuela) que haga una lista de las cosas que debe hacer para mantenerse saludable hasta que pueda encontrar la manera de que vea a los nietos.

4. ¿Ha dejado de responder su madre a sus correos electrónicos? Envíe correos electrónicos breves de un tema que requieran un sí o no o una respuesta breve. Los correos electrónicos largos pueden ser demasiado para ella cuando está deprimida.
5. Pídale a otros familiares y amigos que le envíen pequeñas notas por correo a su madre.
6. Use tecnología como Skype, Facetime, Zoom y Messenger Kids para tener visitas virtuales con regularidad.
7. Evalúe a su madre todos los días en cuanto a su nivel de depresión o desesperación. Considere si podría beneficiarse de ver a un terapeuta. (Muchos terapeutas ven a los clientes de forma remota durante la cuarentena).

# KIDZONE



## Creating a Family Time Capsule in 2020

All families will agree, 2020 has changed everything about our day-to-day existence. This is a year to be remembered, and what better way than a time capsule?

### Suggested items to include:

- Newspaper or printed articles from internet of pandemic
- Family photo, possibly all wearing masks
- Favorite activity as a family which began as a result of shelter-in
- Pictures of how birthdays and/or graduations were celebrated during pandemic
- Pictures or artwork made by kids
- Facts about the current year
- Small toy or trinket, maybe toilet paper roll or face mask
- List of the movies you watched
- A letter written by everyone about what it was like during pandemic
- A note from parents to their children
- What lessons have you learned
- Don't forget to put the date created and date to open

**Time Capsule:** There are different types of containers. For example, a plastic tube with secure lid or for serious time capsulers, stainless steel containers can be purchased online. Or you can use a simple shoebox, or metal box with lid. Be sure to make a label for it!

**When to Open:** Depending on age of your kids, you can open on last child's 18th birthday, wedding day, birth of first grandchild, or pick a date as a family.

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## JUST FOR GRINS

CATE BERRY

*Cate Berry is a children's book author and mother of two based in Austin, TX.*



### Speed Aging

All I want to do is be a grandmother.

I've got my name picked out: Nana. It's not original but it's comfy. I have nineteen bins of children's books ready for reading to littles on my lap.

But it'll be a while before grandmother status. My kid is only twelve.

Most of my pals don't share my longing. My own mother wasn't too keen on ascending the throne. Nor was my mother-in-law. Ageism is layered and rampant. So why am I running towards it instead of away?

I guess it's because my own grandmothers were mold-crack-able. Once, my grandmother flipped a pancake while catching tangerines falling from a broken bowl, then juggled them back up to safety. It confirmed to us that our grandmother was not only breakfast competent, but that she was secretly raised by a clown.

My other grandmother entered every door prize in the state of Texas and won four minivans by the end of her life. Both could shoot a bobcat if cornered. They fed their families completely from their backyard and were just plain interesting.

As I sat there, on day eleven billion of quarantine, I longed for some surprise skill set to reveal itself.

More, I wanted their drive, spark, love of life to get me through. My flame waned. I was a lump. Bored, restless, sad, jumpy, but mostly—bored.

I closed my eyes and channeled my grandmothers.

"Put on your sneakers!" Momo, my maternal grandmother, yelled. "Get out in the yard! Help someone. Clean the stove."

I resisted, turning to my phone.

"Don't dwell!" she shouted as my phone dropped. It landed on the remote controls piled up like kindling. Panicked, I grabbed one, then another, throwing them overhead in a fit of crazy productivity. I tried catching them, but they cascaded down hitting my head like a plastic waterfall.

"Ouch!" I yelled. "I'm trying to juggle. Help me!" I conjured Momo in bright coral lipstick and a stretchy floral top weighed down by her signature gold beads. Her hair towered in precision.

"It's not hard," she said, hands on her hips. "Just do your best."

I wanted to be her. Old. Full of wisdom. Confident. Experienced.

I marched right into my bedroom and took a nap.

I did my very best.

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