



Tips for grandparents (this tip sheet can be given to grandparents)

Finding out you are going to be a grandparent can cause great excitement and some nerves. If you are already a grandparent the news may come with thoughts of; how am I going to divide my time, or I wonder what the expectation will be on me, my time, my involvement etc.

When it comes down to it – it is totally up to you what type of grandparent you want to be, however you will always have to fit in with the needs of your child. You may find the following tips helpful:

- » Before going on an exciting shopping spree check in first with your son or daughter with what they need.
- » Things are going to be very different since when you parented due to new research, social media, health and safety – increased access to information, so it might pay to acknowledge that to your child by saying something like, ‘it’s all so different now, not like my day – can you please help me out with what you would like me to do or how you would like me to do it?’
- » There is a fine line between helping and interfering and what one person will find helpful another might see this as interfering. Check in with your son or daughter of where this line is – ask questions like; ‘How long should I stay when I come over, what would you like me to do while I am over, can I help out around the house, how often can I come over so it is helpful not intruding?’
- » Helping your child in a useful way, rather than how you want to help is the key to getting invited over more often.
- » Ideally after the birth (for the first 2 weeks) if both parents are not working and on parental leave, give them some space, only visit when asked. Offer to vacuum or bring food for the freezer. Make them a cup of tea, don’t expect to be waited on when there’s a new baby in the house.
- » Always try and let your son/daughter know that they are doing a great job and they are loving and caring parents. It can be tempting to criticise as things are different now – but just remember that you had to learn at the start too!

For many grandparents TIME is the most valued and memorable gift you can ever give a grandchild. Creating experiences and bonding over picture books and walks in the park in the early days will set up positive future interactions.

If you feel that your child or child’s partner is struggling with the transition into parenthood then there is help available. Try calling Parentline: 1300 30 1300 and they will steer you in the right direction for further help.