

# The GRG :

*A Newsletter for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*



## *Montana State University Extension Service: Family and Human Development*

### **Eating Disorders: Signs to Recognize**

Eating disorders are on the rise in America today for a variety of reasons. Teenagers are especially vulnerable to eating disorders as they are more prone to issues with self-image and fitting in. Eating disorders begin early and the average age is 17, but kids can develop them as early as 12 years of age. Today, eating disorders affect more than seven million American women each year, and this number continues to rise. Here are some tips to keep in mind when it comes to your child and their eating habits:

Parents and grandparents can do a lot to prevent eating disorders from occurring in their children. You can begin with examining attitudes about your own body and by fostering a healthy, positive body image in their children. There are many steps you can take to help your grandchildren learn to live a healthy lifestyle.

Puberty will influence how children perceive their bodies, as the parent, be ready to step in and talk to your grandchild if their behavior becomes unhealthy. Teach young girls that it is natural for their bodies to change during adolescence, and that weight gain is normal during puberty. The media plays a large role in how boys and girls think they should look. The images we see on the TV are unrealistic for most, and unhealthy as well. Components of a healthy lifestyle include eating right, taking care of one's body, and being active. If all three ways to stay healthy are encouraged and followed, you can begin to create a healthy person.

Parents and grandparents can model healthy attitudes about their own bodies. If children see parents unhappy with their body, they may begin to notice their own bodies and take on the negative perceptions. The more positive and satisfied you are with yourself, the more this will be role modeled for your children.

Don't nag them about eating habits, they may hide them from you in order to make the nagging stop. Encourage healthy eating, provide healthy foods. Pay attention to how and what your children eat without being invasive. Don't compare your child to others and don't be judgmental about other people's weight.

There are many things you should know about eating disorders and how they can affect individuals on a physical, mental and emotional level. The most important concept to keep in mind is that eating disorders will not just go away without treatment. Eating disorders are mental illnesses, and treatment involves several interventions inclusive of psychological treatment, nutritional counseling, family therapy and possibly antidepressant medications.

#### "Warning Signs for Eating Disorders

- Change of weight not related to a medical condition
- Development of abnormal eating habits
- Intense preoccupation with weight and body image
- Compulsive or excessive exercising
- Purging by self-induced vomiting, laxative use, excessive exercise
- Feelings of isolation, depression or irritability"

For more information on eating disorders or nutrition, please visit the MSU website at [http://www.montana.edu/wwwpb/home/home\\_idx.html#nutrition](http://www.montana.edu/wwwpb/home/home_idx.html#nutrition). There are many articles such as: Vitamin and Herbs: Are They Safe? Are You "Driven to Drink" by Conflicting Reports About Alcohol? Low Carbohydrate Diet Makes You "Eat" Your Own Muscle Do You Know Someone Who is Getting "Too Thin"? If Diets Don't Work, What Does? Look for featured articles in the next newsletters on Healthy Eating and What is Disordered Eating?

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## Training Session for Support Group Facilitators to Be Held In Butte and Glasgow

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Project will be holding two training sessions for those interested in starting up support groups in their local communities this fall. The first session will be held in Butte on September 8th and 9th and the second in Glasgow on September 30th and October 1st.

The two day training sessions will focus on the basics of starting a support group and will incorporate information sessions from the Office of Public Assistance, Montana Legal Services as well as a session on handling conflict.

Grandparents are raising grandchildren all across the state of Montana, and one of the initiatives of the GRG project is to help bring support groups to different areas of the state in order to help grandparents who are facing this special challenge get the support and information they need. Support groups can be started by anyone who has the time and desire to start making connections in their community. At this time support group leaders in other communities are grandparents, community leaders, extension agents, and people who work with other community agencies. If you would like to learn more about being a support group leader, please contact our office at the number listed below.

*“Support groups can be started by anyone who has the time and desire to start making connections in their community”*

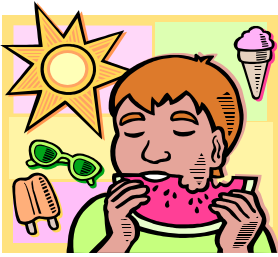
Cost for each training session is \$60 and covers the Parenting the Second Time Around curriculum, snack breaks and lunch on the second day of the session. There are limited scholarships available. If you would like to attend either training session, please fill out and return the registration form insert along with your payment to the address on the form.

Please contact Annie Conway at (406) 994-3395 for more information, or e-mail at [aconway@montana.edu](mailto:aconway@montana.edu) if you have any questions about the training session or registration.

## Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Groups

<p><b>Billings:</b> Bernie Mason P.O. Box 35021 Billings, MT 59107 256-2828</p>	<p><b>Browning:</b> Connie Bremner Eagle Shield Center PO Box 76 Browning, MT 59417</p>	<p><b>Helena:</b> Jeannette B. Mattfeldt 562 Broadway Helena, MT 59601</p>
<p><b>Bozeman:</b> Jeannine Sonnier Parent Liaison 2435 Annie St. Bozeman, MT 59718 587-3840</p>	<p><b>Charlo:</b> Jeri Paulk 110 West Main St. Suite 5 Polson, MT 59860 675-3242</p>	<p><b>Kalispell:</b> Melody Dumph The Nurturing Center, Inc. 146 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. W. Kalispell, MT 59901 756-1414</p>
<p>Judy Morrill Bozeman Senior Center 807 N. Tracy Bozeman, MT 59715 586-2421</p>	<p><b>Great Falls:</b> Claire Del Guerra 1807 Third St. NW Great Falls, MT 59404-1922 454-6980</p>	<p><b>Missoula:</b> Amy Westereng Families First Parenting Prog. 815 E. Front St. Suite 3 Missoula, MT 59802</p>

## Activity Idea to Help Kids Learn About Veggies



A common question among parents is how to get children to eat food that is good for them. Today, as fast food chains are growing all around us, it is often easier to pick up something you know they will eat from a drive through, but often the meals that are quick are not well balanced meals.

Kids hesitate to try new things when they are very young, especially the things that are healthy for them like fruits and vegetables. So how do you get them to try different veggies and to learn to enjoy them? Lynn Fredericks, author of *Cooking Time is Family Time*, has an idea that may help kids become interested enough in vegetables to try them out.

1. Take the kids to the market with you, and ask them to pick out the vegetables in one of each of the following categories:

- **Root** (carrots, radishes, turnips, beets etc.)
- **Stem** (celery, asparagus, chard, watercress, rhubarb etc.)
- **Leaves** (lettuce, spinach, mustard greens, collards)
- **Flower** (broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini flowers)
- **Fruit** (tomato, bell peppers, eggplant, zucchini etc.)
- **Seed** (beans, peas, lentils, sprouts)

2. Take the foods home and arrange them in order as above, to illustrate the life cycle of a seed and discuss. For example, a seed is planted, grows roots (some of which you eat like a carrot), grows a stem (some of which you eat like rhubarb) and so forth.

3. Now cut a few pieces of each sample. Ask the kids to explore them with their four senses: sight, touch, smell and taste.

4. Have them rate their preferences in descending order.

5. Now have them select their top two favorites to prepare in one of the following very simple preparations:

- Salad
- Ravioli filling
- Soup

The important thing to remember is that the more often you serve different foods, the more familiar kids become with the foods, and the better chance they have of trying and enjoying them. It is also important to remember that if they see you enjoying something, they are more likely to try it as well.

*Cooking Time is Family Time*, can be ordered on line at Amazon.com for \$2.95 and up for used or new copies.

[www.ivillage.com](http://www.ivillage.com)

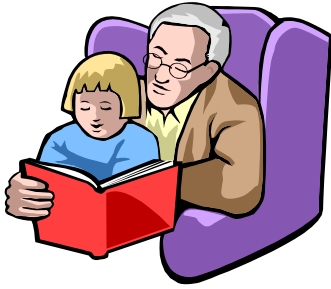


## Highlighted Montguide: Family Mealtime

“Families who eat meals together tend to eat healthier foods, talk to one another and share family traditions. This MontGuide includes some benefits of family mealtimes plus easy ways to get started and get organized—even if your schedules are tough to coordinate.”

<http://www.montana.edu/wwwpb/pubs/mt200403.html>

## Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Needed!



MSU Extension Family and Human Development is currently seeking grandparents who are raising grandchildren (GRG) in Montana to be a part of a study to examine how parenting a second time around affects grandparents and how to best provide support.

To participate, you will be asked to fill out two surveys about your experiences as a grandparent. After four months you will be asked to participate in an interview which will cover some additional questions about your grand-parenting experience.

MSU is seeking any grandparent who helps raise a grandchild across the state of Montana. We need to have grandparents who are attending support groups as well as those who are not in a support group.

Grandparents will receive a \$20 stipend as a thank you for your time and participation in this study.

If you would like to be a part of the GRG study, or if you have questions, please contact Annie Conway at (406) 994-3395, via e-mail at: [aconway@montana.edu](mailto:aconway@montana.edu), or send a letter to the address on the back of this newsletter.

## Come See a Bobcat Football Game for Free!

The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Project has collaborated with MSU Athletics and the Bobcat Ticket Office to provide you with the chance to see the Bobcats in action this fall!

If you are looking for a fun way to spend a Saturday in Montana, what better way than to take them out to a sporting event such as a football game.

Grandparents and their grandchildren can attend the South Dakota State University game on October 23rd for free. A limited number of tickets are available for this game, and if you would like more information, or would like to reserve your tickets, please contact Annie at (406) 994-3395.



If there are other sporting events that you are interested in attending, please let Annie know, and we can try to get tickets for other games or events.

## The Transition from Elementary School to Middle School: How You Can Help Your Grandchild



The transition from elementary school to middle school can be difficult for children for a variety of reasons such as: childhood friends attending a different middle school, moving about between classes instead of staying with one class for the whole year, adapting to different teaching styles, increased expectations and higher standards for classes, a larger school, new friends, fitting in, peer pressure, not to mention the onset of puberty. While most of us wouldn't re-live middle school if we were paid, your grandchildren are heading into one of the biggest changes on a social level thus far.

Now is the time where your children will start to distance themselves from you, and you may be hard pressed to get hugs and kisses goodbye, especially in front of their friends. Communication may become more difficult than it has been, and so now is the time that you need to stay involved no matter how challenging or frustrating it may be. Here are some tips for you to keep in mind as your child makes the transition to middle school.

Continue to provide structure and rules for your child. If you haven't done so, now may be the time to let them have a say in some of the house or family rules. Involving them will help them feel as though they have some control as well as ownership of the rules. When rules are broken, you can talk to them about how it was a family decision, and if rules need to be changed, they can be re-negotiated amongst the family.

Keep the communication lines open. Take time when your child comes home to ask them open ended questions about their day. Take an interest in their friends and get to know them. Children learn a great deal from those they associate with, and you can learn a lot about their habits and interests by talking to their friends. If you are nervous about what they do when they are away from home at a friends house, encourage them to invite their friends over to your house for dinners, spending the night, etc. Often there is one "cool" house to hang out at, where kids like to gather and feel comfortable.

Provide opportunities for your child to become more responsible. If they do not already have household chores, work with them to find out what they would like to be responsible for, or let them be responsible for something that would help you out.

Keep up on what is going on at the school. Request copies of the school calendar, school policies, etc. If you are the guardian, make sure that you are receiving the report cards each quarter, or that you are getting copies from the child's parents. Open house nights are a good way to meet the teachers as well as familiarize yourself with the school and what your child does each day.

Continue to do things as a family. Start some new traditions with your family, but keep the old as well. Family dinners every night, or on a specific night are a good way to catch up and talk. If you are up for it, you could pick a night where your child's friends can come over and eat with your family. Take time in the evenings or weekends to relax or to go on adventures or day trips.

The most important thing you can do during this changing time, is to communicate with your child. They are experiencing new things at a fast pace, and while they may want to talk to someone, they may not think you are the right person. Let them know you are there for them, and that they can talk to you about anything. If they sense that you are sincere, you will learn more about them and what they are up to.



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The Montana State University Extension Service is an ADA/EO/AA/Veteran's Preference Employer and educational outreach provider.

## Recipe Idea: Easy Chicken Enchiladas

### Ingredients

10 flour tortilla shells  
1 can cream of chicken soup or cream of mushroom (Healthy choice can be used)  
1 small can, chopped green chiles  
3-4 boneless skinless chicken breasts  
1 9 oz carton of sour cream (light can be used)  
1 can olives (size depends on how well you like olives)  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Grated cheddar cheese, or a combination of your preference

### Directions:

- ◆ Preheat oven to 325 degrees
- ◆ Boil chicken until it is cooked through. Wait for chicken to cool, then tear apart with your hands and place in a large mixing bowl.
- ◆ Add: soup, chilies, sour cream, olives, salt and pepper. Mix until blended
- ◆ Take tortilla and fill with mixture, add a little cheese to inside of tortilla. Wrap and place in a 9x13 baking dish. Continue with all tortillas.
- ◆ Top enchiladas with cheese and olives.
- ◆ Place in oven and bake for 25-30 minutes or until cheese bubbles.

