



## **Influence: Parenting and Grandparenting**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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We had three graduations in our family this year, so spring was busy!

Andrew turned eighteen in May and graduated from grade twelve in June. I was surprised to watch all the goings-on to prepare him for the ceremonies and celebrations. His brother gave him a suit to wear. His father took him shopping for a belt and shoes. His mother ordered the corsage for his escort and, an hour before we were to leave, was ironing his shirt so it would be freshly pressed.

Thinking that this might be an opportunity to provide a little practical direction, I suggested that I could teach Andrew how to iron the shirt for himself. With a big smile he said "It's okay, Grandma. She likes to do this for me". I thought I would take it one step further and asked, "What is going to happen if you are living on your own and don't know how to iron a shirt?" He gave me a look that hinted I just didn't understand life and uttered a very simple answer "YouTube"!

Things are very different now from the days when I was raised or even since I was raising my children. They can get information, instructions, and an unlimited supply of ideas from around the world in seconds. But there are some things that they cannot get without family influence.

Andrew was headed out to pick up the corsage and I offered to go with him. He seemed surprised that I was interested in accompanying him, but I knew that even a few minutes of driving would give me an opportunity to talk about things that I hoped he would consider. We talked about the fact that he is now of legal age and therefore would need to make decisions that he didn't face weeks before - like long-term career planning, pensions, and health care. He asked good questions and I had a chance to talk about how some types of investments would reduce his Income Taxes requirements.

When we left one store, Andrew turned to me and said, "You are such a nice lady". I asked how he came to that conclusion he stated, "You made that business owner's day". He had noticed that I had merely taken a couple of minutes to visit with the man about his culture and store. When we left the next store, Andrew said "You almost had that guy crying". I had asked the clerk about whether he and his grandmother had ever shopped together and was told that his grandma had died when he was an infant. Thankfully, I was able to put the mood back on a positive foot by asking if he had any kind aunts!

Well, when we returned to the house, Andrew excitedly told his mother that we had a good conversation about RSVPs. Close. It was RSPs, Andrew!

Over the years I have come to the conclusion that there are only two things that we as parents and grandparents can do that will significantly help the next generations. We can pray for them and we can be a good example for them.

Giving them money without wisdom is useless. Providing them with advice that we don't model is hypocritical. Taking on their responsibilities instead of letting them do things themselves will prevent them from maturing.

Our role is unique. We make a difference when we provide practical and spiritual support.  
For everything else, there is YouTube!