



# Influencing Your Grandchildren

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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I just returned from a week of being with my eighteen and fourteen-year-old grandsons while their parents were on a golfing trip in Montana. My calendar indicated that I would be away "for influencing purposes". You see I can't change the boys and really don't want to do that because they are fine young men, but I really did hope that I could expand their horizons a little.

Their mother always states that she likes the fact I do things with them that they would otherwise miss in life and it does take them away from those all-consuming computers for a little while.

Both of the boy's work in the produce department of a grocery store so I thought they might enjoy visiting a Hutterite Colony to learn about what happens to all the groceries that the Colony purchases. We had an excellent tour by the minister's wife who explained how the women share responsibilities for making three meals every day for one hundred and sixteen people. We viewed the kitchens, dining halls and production areas where they do their butchering and canning as well as the huge organic garden. Alexander and Andrew learned about communal living where money, work, values, and faith are shared. Of course, we left with excellent homemade pies, buns, and raspberry jam for our own supper!

On the way home, we stopped at a bargain shop and purchased four large puzzles and once they were near completion bought foam mounting boards so we could glue the ones that we never wanted to attempt again because of their complexity. We had lots of time to talk as we worked, and I shared stories about our family that they hadn't previously heard. Some of Alexander's friends came over one evening and quickly slid into chairs around the table to join in the fun. Every time a piece was put in place there was a mini celebration and in between we visited about their dreams, plans and ideas.

I purchased tickets for the boys' first live play - a Noel Coward set in the 1930s. They didn't know what to expect! Three hours is a long time to sit on wooden church pews in the theatre that once was a church, but it was really fun to watch the expressions on their faces as the British farce became more and more complex as it reached its climax.

We visited 1950s soda shops in two different communities and talked about how different life was "back then". They were shocked to hear that the small soda pop which is now \$2.50 was only 4 cents in the small community where I lived as a child. By the end of our second hamburger and fries meal, my youngest grandson was singing the words to "Lollipop" as it had been played quite frequently by other diners who were enjoying the jukebox. We bought a CD of 50s music to play on the drive home.

The boys say that I cook differently than their mother who is a gourmet chef. My meals consisted of mostly oven-baked family recipes such as Hungarian goulash, baked potatoes, and chicken hurry. I sent old-fashioned stew and homemade desserts to work with them and they returned all smiles stating, "Our boss loves you". They had shared this lunch with her.

It was a busy few days and we were all tired by the time that their parents returned. I had been missing my own bed and I'm sure that they were eager to return to their world of

technology. The best moment of the week, however, was when these two six-foot teens gave me big hugs and said, "Thanks for the fun, Grandma".

I didn't change them. I just did a little "influencing".