



The Five Best Things You Can Do for Your Grandchild

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Sometimes when grandchildren arrive, you wonder what kind of relationship you will have with them. It is tempting to want to buy them gifts and treats every time you see them but doing so has its flaws. It can be difficult at times to hear that they have made poor choices or behaved badly. You may want to dig right in with the hope that you can help solve the problem, but then become confused about when and how that should happen.

You know that you are not the parent but might not be sure about the boundaries for your role.

Following are five extremely important things that you can do for your grandchild:

1. Give your time - Building any relationship requires time to get to know one another and provide opportunities to develop common interests. During that time, you will be able to teach skills and build memories that will remain clear in the child's mind for his/her entire life.
2. Offer your attention - When you listen to someone, you are giving them a beautiful compliment that communicates the message "You are important". You don't have to spend a lot of money to build a solid bond with the child but, the relationship that results will be like a popular television commercial - priceless!
3. Point out their strengths - Often people are told more about what they have done wrong than what they have done right. This can be discouraging. When you believe that the child is special, notice their strengths and communicate these things to him/her they feel good about themselves and this leads to healthy confidence.
4. Help them with their weaknesses - You need to be careful that you separate the child from the behaviours. S/he, for example is not "bad" but the choice they made might have been "bad". As the grandparent, you could be the person who will help them to turn things around. That means that you can be honest with them about where they need to improve but also be part of the solution.
5. Set an excellent example - You are a role-model for many people but particularly for the younger set. When children see you doing or saying things that are inappropriate, they think that it is acceptable for them to do the same. On the other hand, when they see your good works, they will also imitate you. They are watching you, so you need to make good choices!

There are so many wonderful things about being a grandparent, but I believe that the most important is the influence that you can have on the child. Doing these five things will help you to have a positive and lasting one.