

# Stay Connected - with Grandchildren

*Online connection is great to stay connected to family and friends so why not with your grandchildren too. There is scientific evidence to suggest that spending time with grandchildren is good for your health, makes you happy, helps keep you sharp and may extend your lifespan. Not only do grandchildren offer you these opportunities, they also do a lot more than you may realise:*

## **Grandchildren help you stay mentally sharp**

Interacting with your grandchildren is stimulating for your brain. It boosts your memory, your cognitive function. Even answering all of their questions can be beneficial, as it tests your memory.

## **Grandchildren help you maintain your well-being**

Grandchildren can add to your mental health and well-being, they can give you more purpose to life, and are an incentive to be at your best. This includes maintaining a well-balanced lifestyle.

Another way they assist with well-being is that they reduce the risk of loneliness. Loneliness can result in depression, which in turn brings a many additional health risks.

## **Grandchildren can teach you new things**

The learning with your grandchildren doesn't need to be a one-way street. While you are teaching them, be sure that they will teach you a few things in return. This may be something new about technology or give you a different view on life. All being good for your mental health.

## **Grandchildren keep you laughing**

Grandchildren can provide endless amusement! They are clever, often quick witted and have a special view on the world that often lacks a filter. Their sassiness or quirky behaviour can provide many laughs and hours of entertainment. Remember the saying "laughter is the best medicine", it not only feels good but can help lower stress and boost the immune system.

## **Grandchildren keep you active**

Normally that one on one time you have with grandchildren would also benefit you with increased activity, by chasing around after little ones, taking them to the park or on a bike ride; it is all beneficial. Being active with grandchildren is also a great way to create memories with them at the same time.



## **How to connect with your grandchildren.**

There is always the good old landline or mobile phone to call your grandchildren. However, there are a lot more options to talk to your grandchildren now, including face to face video calls on an app on your phone, tablet or computer. The most popular video chat apps to check out are:

- FaceTime
- Facebook Messenger
- Skype
- Zoom
- WhatsApp
- Google Duo

Using one of these apps might seem daunting, but there is plenty of help. Contact a family member or friend to help you set it up and use or visit one of the government websites that can assist:

- Be connected [beconnected.esafety.gov.au/](http://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/)
- eSafety Commissioner – [www.esafety.gov.au/seniors](http://www.esafety.gov.au/seniors)

There are also a lot of online articles and reviews that can help you choose which app to use.

Alternatively just ask your children or grandchildren what they use!

Remember there are still other ways to connect to your grandchildren. You can send them a card or a letter, text message or even an email.

## **More good news**

One study found that grandmothers who spent one day a week looking after their grandchildren were more likely to offset dementia and had a lower risk of developing Alzheimer's.

Initial data from the Institute on Aging at Boston College shows good news for grandchildren too; a strong bond between grandchild-grandparent can offset depressive tendencies for both parties.

So there are a lot of incentives to spend time with your lovely grandchildren!

## References:

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