|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Bulletin Insert: January & February 2012Color Bar**  **What Should You Know about MRSA? What is MRSA?** MRSA is methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus a potentially dangerous type of staph bacteria. It is dangerous because of it’s resistant to certain antibiotics and it is easily transmitted to other persons.  **Where is MRSA?** Although MRSA is more likely to be found in healthcare settings there are many strains of MRSA in the community and they are often the cause of skin and soft tissue infections. In fact community-acquired or community-associated MRSA is the single most frequent pathogen responsible for this type of infection.  **Who is at the most risk for MRSA?** Anyone with an uncovered opening in the skin is at risk if they come into contact with a contaminated item or surface. Individuals with close skin-to-skin contact with others (eg, athletes, children in day care centers or those in crowded surroundings) are at risk.  **How is MRSA spread?**   * Having direct contact with another person’s infection. * Sharing personal items, such as towels, razors or clothes. * Touching surfaces or items containing MRSA.   **What are the signs and symptoms of MRSA?** Most staph infections (including MRSA) appear as a bump or infected area on the skin that is:   * Red * Warm to touch * Swollen * Full of puss or other drainage * Painful * Accompanied by a fever   **What if I suspect a MRSA infection?** Cover the area with a bandage and contact your healthcare provider especially if a fever is present. Do not attempt to drain the infection yourself.  **How are MRSA skin infections treated?** Treatment may include draining the infection and prescribing an antibiotic. If you are given an antibiotic take all of it unless otherwise directed.  **How can I protect my family from MRSA?**   * Know signs and symptoms * Wash hands frequently * Encourage good hygiene * Keep cuts/scrapes clean /covered * Discourage sharing personal items   **For more information call 1-800- CDC-INFO or visit** [**www.cdc.gov/MRSA/.**](http://www.cdc.gov/MRSA/)  *Reference: MRSA Fact Sheet retrieved from at* [*http://img.medscape.com/article/737/932/737932-fig1.pdf on 12/27/11*](http://img.medscape.com/article/737/932/737932-fig1.pdf%20on%2012/27/11)  Color Bar  Top of Form  **Make Small Changes for Big Health Payoffs**  **1. Floss more often.** According to dental specialists flossing is one of the easiest, quickest ways to remove bad bacteria from your mouth that brushing does not remove. Plaque that accumulates eats away the bone that holds teeth in place. Bacteria from teeth can enter the bloodstream and can worsen diabetes and hypertension and lead to other infections.  **2. Make your coffee at home.** This will not only save you money but possibly hundreds of calories. When you brew your java at home, you avoid unhealthy temptations at coffee shops.  **3. Wear a pedometer.** Becoming aware of how much you move can be a motivation to move more. Why not make it a family challenge about movement, not exercise. 2,000 steps equal one mile. Challenge yourself and others to increase your steps every day and boost physical and mental health.  **4. Sleep in your exercise clothes.** This will make it easier to go for a walk or to the gym. Keep your sneakers by the bed. It could be the next step to a healthier you.  **5. Women only - Do your Kegels.** Pelvic-floor strengthening exercises known as Kegels were found to be an effective way to minimize urinary incontinence. Contract these pelvic muscles and hold for about 3 seconds; repeat 10 times. Do these as often as you like, and anywhere you like—no one will know.  **6. Add oat bran to your diet.** Oat bran is a high-fiber food that has the ability to lower cholesterol, lower the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. It is also beneficial for those dealing with diabetes, constipation and excess weight. It can be added to cereal, recipes or used as a topping. Look for more info on it in our March/April insert.  **7. Turn on some classical music at dinner.** Experts say we tend to mimic the pace of the music we’re listening to. To keep from eating too fast—and too much—put on some slow music. A research study that found people who listened to fast music on average ate five bites/minute. Those not listening to music ate four bites/minute; those listening to slow music ate three bites/minute.  *Reference: Jio, S. 10 Small Changes with Big Health Payoffs, retrieved from* [*http://shine.yahoo.com/love-your-body/10-small-changes-with-big-health-payoffs-1888478.html*](http://shine.yahoo.com/love-your-body/10-small-changes-with-big-health-payoffs-1888478.html) *on 6/11/11*  Bottom of Form  spacer **Preparing to Stay Safe in Winter** Although winter comes as no surprise, many of us are not ready. **Prepare your car for winter.**   * Service the radiator and maintain antifreeze level * Check tire tread or replace tires with all-weather or snow tires * Keep gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines. * Use a wintertime formula in your windshield washer.   **Keep a winter emergency kit in the car to include:**   * blankets * food & water * booster cables * flares * tire pump * bag of sand or cat litter (for traction) * compass * maps (GPS) * flashlight * battery-powered radio & extra batteries * first-aid kit * plastic bags (for sanitation)   **Safety rules to follow if you are stranded in your car.**   * Stay with your car unless safety is no more than 100 yards away. * Continue to move arms and legs. * Stay visible: Put bright cloth on the antenna, turn on the inside light (when engine is running), raise the hood when snow stops falling * Run the engine and heater only 10 minutes every hour. * Keep a downwind window open. * Make sure the tailpipe is not blocked.   **Check on family and neighbors** who are especially at risk from cold weather hazards:   * young children * older adults * chronically ill   **If you have pets,** bring them inside. If you cannot bring them inside, provide adequate, warm shelter and unfrozen water to drink.  *Reference: Be prepared to stay safe and healthy in winter retrieved from* [*http://www.cdc.gov/features/winterweather/*](http://www.cdc.gov/features/winterweather/) *on 12/27/ 11*  spacer  **Parish Nurse Scholarships Available in 2012** Because of a generous grant from Hancock County Savings Bank Charitable Foundation Valley Parish Nurse Ministry will offer two scholarships to local registered nurses to receive parish nurse training. Details of how a nurse can apply for this educational opportunity will be available in February. In the meantime please consider the following information.  spacer  **How Could Our Church Benefit from a Parish Nurse? Illness can cause isolation.** Have you ever heard this? "No one called. I thought the church had forgotten me." A parish nurse or her volunteer can break that isolation and help to affirm the church's concern. Measures can readily be taken to reconnect the individual and congregation.  **A parish nurse can encourage and supports the medical regimen** through warm presence and reinforcement of that regimen. Often a prayer, an explanation of the purpose of the suggested remedy and expected results can be critical to patient participation and eventual healing. Personal follow up and counseling can foster better results.  **A parish nurse can connect personal responsibility with gospel motivation** and planned activity. Members are often responsive to the invitation to join others in the Christian community in joint wellness programs. Shouldn’t personal wellness be a significant fruit of the Gospel?  **Some members can profit from joining a support group**. A Christian health ministry can facilitate persons who are bereaved, single parents, the divorced, the overweight and substance abusers to seek help at church or other local locations.  **The parish nurse can initiate activities** in support of healthy lifestyles which are today's key to tomorrow’s health.  **Please prayerfully consider** the potential congregational benefits of a parish nurse ministry to raise the awareness of spiritual, relational, emotional and physical health of your congregation.  *Reference: National Caregivers Library at* [*http://www.caregiverslibrary.org/Default.aspx?tabid=792*](http://www.caregiverslibrary.org/Default.aspx?tabid=792) *on 12/27/ 11*  **Bulletin Insert: March & April 2012Color Bar**  **How Much Sodium is Too Much?** The recommended daily allowance for sodium is around 2.4 grams. Average salt consumption is between 9 to 12 grams/day. Some medical conditions require a 1 or 2 gram sodium restriction.  **Should I decrease my sodium intake?** Salt intake is a critical variable in hypertension potentially leading to heart attacks and stroke. A lower salt intake, in the long-term, could play an important role in the prevention of cardiovascular disease, renal disease and osteoporosis.  **Steps to Reduce Your Salt Intake**   1. **Cut Back on "Instant" Foods.** Flavored rice, pasta and cereal  mixes are often the worst offenders. 2. **Buy Fresh Foods.** Choosing fresh fruits and vegetables over their  frozen or canned equivalents can reduce average daily salt intake  by more than 15 percent. 3. **Put Away the Salt Shaker.** Add less salt to recipes Choose garlic  powder, rosemary, thyme, dill & paprika as healthy salt substitutes. 4. **Choose Lower Salt Convenience Foods.** Low-salt versions of  canned soups and salad dressings can make the biggest difference. Look for crackers, snack bars, cereals and potato chips with low- salt options. Avoid frozen dinners, "lunch in a box” products and  microwavable snacks that are commonly very high in salt. 5. **Rinse Canned or Frozen Foods Before Eating.** Frozen  vegetables can be rinsed using a colander before steaming or  boiling. This simple step can reduce the amount of salt by 25-40%. 6. **Read Nutrition Labels.** The amount of sodium per serving size is  usually listed in mg. 1000 mg equals 1 gram. Labels also tell you  the percentage of the daily value (%DV) of sodium/serving. 7. **Be Aware of Salt or Sodium in Disguise.** Other compounds that  increase the sodium include monosodium glutamate (MSG), baking  powder, baking soda, disodium phosphate, and sodium nitrate or  nitrite. Read the ingredients label. 8. **Ask for the Nutrition Facts When Eating Out.** Use this  information to choose meals that are lower in sodium.   *Reference: Tourountzas.L, Tips for Lowering Your Salt Intake, retrieved from* [*http://bodyandhealth.canada.com/channel\_section\_details.asp?text\_id=5314&channel\_id=2049&relation\_id=37902*](http://bodyandhealth.canada.com/channel_section_details.asp?text_id=5314&channel_id=2049&relation_id=37902) *on 2/28/2012*  Color Bar  Top of Form  **Is Laughter a Good Medicine?** Perhaps you already believe in the connection between the body, mind and spirit. Here are other reasons to believe that laughter has positive health benefits.  **What really happens in the body when you laugh?** Research has shown that laughter increases two hormones. One study found the family of chemicals that elevates mood increases by 27% and human growth hormone (which helps optimize immunity) increases 87%. Another study found that anticipation of laughter reduced the levels of three detrimental stress hormones: cortisol, epinephrine and dopa. When these stress hormones are chronically high the immune system has decreased function.  **Can laughter help diabetes treatment?** A diabetes specialist and an immunologist have examined the effect of "mirthful laughter" on individuals with diabetes. Twenty high-risk patients were followed for a year. Doctors found that mirthful laughter used in combination with a standard diabetes medication raised good [cholesterol](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/9152.php) and lowered inflammation. Those in the “laughter” group were asked to view self-selected humor for 30 minutes in addition to the standard therapy. The other group just used the medication therapy.  **What were the results?** Those in the “laughter” group had increased “good cholesterol” and a 66 % decrease in inflammatory chemicals. Although further studies need to confirm these findings, the authors concluded that mirthful laughter may lower the risk of cardiovascular disease associated with diabetes mellitus and metabolic syndrome.  **Can laughter prevent or lessen disease states?** Certainly lifestyle choices are known to prevent and treat diseases. The positive emotions of hope and optimism are known to assist with recovery while negative emotions and lifestyle choices can increase stress and hasten disease progression.  **Does scripture refer to the healthful effects of laughter?**  [Proverbs 17:22 says, A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+17%3A22&version=ESV).  *Reference:* [http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/146449.php?utm\_ source=Diabetes+Help&utm\_campaign=Training+%232&utm\_medium=email](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/146449.php?utm_%20source=Diabetes+Help&utm_campaign=Training+%232&utm_medium=email) on 2/27/12  Bottom of Form  spacer **May is Blood Pressure Sunday Month** We are excited to announce that **Blood Pressure Sunday is May 6th.** If your church cannot participate on that date **alternate dates are May 13th, May 20th and May 27th.** Any health professional interested in assisting with blood pressure screening or clergy interested in holding screenings in your church can contact Valley Parish Nurse Ministry at 330-382-9440. We will be glad to assist you in finding a volunteer health professional if needed. [Print Blood Pressure Sunday Registration](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/bpregprint.html) [Submit Blood Pressure Sunday Registration Online](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/bpregform.html) [Print Blood Pressure Screening Tool](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/bpscreentoolprint.html) [Submit Blood Pressure Screening Tool Online](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/bpscreentoolform.html)  spacer  **Parish Nurse Scholarships Available in 2012** Because of a generous grant from Hancock County Savings Bank Charitable Foundation Valley Parish Nurse Ministry will offer two scholarships to local registered nurses to receive parish nurse training. Any local registered nurse or RN student graduating this summer can apply. Two recipients will receive a free 16 week online course which will prepare them to serve their church as a “Parish Nurse.” This specialty is recognized by the American Nurse Association (ANA) and is now termed “Faith Community Nursing.” Applicants should submit two references and the completed application form by **April 16, 2012**. The form can be obtained by calling 330-382-9440 or can be [downloaded online](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/ScholarshipApp.pdf). For more information on Faith Community Nursing please visit our website or use the International Parish Nurse Resource Center internet site [www.parishnurses.org.](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/www.parishnurses.org.)  [Printable Application Form](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/ScholarshipApp.pdf)  spacer  **Recycle to Support VPNM**  **Cell PhonesToner CartridgesInkjet Cartridges** Please consider supporting Valley Parish Nurse Ministry by recycling inkjets from home printers and toners from office printers or copiers. Common brands are Apple, Brother, Canon, Dell, Hewlett Packard & Lexmark. All cartridges should have the original manufacturer’s label. Damaged, leaking or previously remanufactured cartridges are not money makers. Cell phones laptops, tablets and digital cameras can also be recycled. If your church would like to have a collection box, [contact us](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/contact.html). Consider having a teen head a collection drive. Call 330-382-9440 when 10 or more are collected. Your support is appreciated.  spacer  **March is National Kidney Month!** This month is a great time to take action to help prevent kidney disease. Maybe you have some questions about kidney disease or just want to learn more about how to keep kidneys healthy.  **Does kidney disease run in families?** Yes and no. Most cases of kidney disease are caused by diabetes or high blood pressure.  If your family has a history of kidney disease, diabetes or high blood pressure you may be at a higher risk. The only common kidney disease that is directly inherited is polycystic kidney disease (PKD).  **How much water should I drink?** You may not need to drink a full eight glasses of water every day to stay healthy, as once thought, but water is still a good choice. Drinks that have caffeine, like soda, coffee or tea can actually make you thirstier. Drinking plenty of water may also help prevent kidney stones and urinary tract infections. If you have kidney disease consult your doctor or a dietitian about how much fluid you should have each day.  **Is alcohol and tobacco bad for my kidneys?** Alcohol affects your liver more than your kidneys, but it can raise your blood pressure. High blood pressure can damage the tiny filters in your kidneys and is the second leading cause of kidney failure. Using tobacco (smoking or chewing) puts you more at risk for high blood pressure, kidney disease and many other health problems.  **What about colas and cranberry juice?** A recent study suggests that drinking two or more cola drinks (either diet or regular) each day may increase your risk for chronic kidney disease.  Non-colas did not seem to increase the risk. Cranberry juice is not used to treat or prevent kidney disease but some evidence suggests that it may help prevent urinary tract infections.  **Does controlling cholesterol help prevent kidney disease?**  Having high cholesterol, especially if you have diabetes, increases risk for kidney disease, heart disease and stroke. High cholesterol can also cause diabetic kidney disease to get worse faster. A healthy diet, exercise and, if needed, medicines can lower your cholesterol.  *Reference: American Kidney Fund retrieved from* [*http://www.kidneyfund.org/kidney-health/common-kidney questions/#Is\_cranberry\_juice\_good\_for\_my\_kidneys?*](http://www.kidneyfund.org/kidney-health/common-kidney-questions/#Is_cranberry_juice_good_for_my_kidneys?)*on 3/5/12*  *Source:* [*www.kidneyfund.org*](http://valleyparishnurseministry.org/www.kidneyfund.org)*. Used with permission of the American Kidney Fund.*   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Bulletin Insert: May & June 2012Color Bar**  **Celebrate Blood Pressure Sunday** Many area churches are celebrating Blood Pressure Sunday in May. Take the time to check yours. Keeping track of your blood pressure makes sense. Commonly asked questions follow.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Category** | **Systolic (mm Hg)** | **Diastolic (mm Hg)** | | Normal | less than 120 | less than 80 | | Prehypertension\*\* | 120-139 | 80-89 | | High: Stage 1 | 140-159 | 90-99 | | High: Stage 2 | greater than or = 160 | greater than or =100 |                 **I have prehypertension.** Should I be concerned? A pre-hypertensive blood pressure reading is between120/80 mmHg and 139/89 mmHg. This means that you are likely to develop hypertension in the future unless you adopt the healthy lifestyle changes.  **Is having hypertension dangerous?** Hypertension increases the risk of heart disease and stroke, which are the first- and third-leading causes of death among Americans. High blood pressure also can result in other conditions, such as congestive heart failure, kidney disease, and blindness. About two-thirds of people over age 65 have high blood pressure  **I’ve never had high blood pressure.** Why should I be concerned? Even if you do not have high blood pressure by age 55 you face a 90 percent chance of developing it during your lifetime. So high blood pressure is a condition that most people will have at some point in their lives.  **Which blood pressure number is important?** Both numbers in a blood pressure reading are important. If you are age 50 or older, systolic pressure (the top number) gives the most accurate diagnosis of high blood pressure. The diastolic (or bottom number) refers to the pressure that is exerted on arteries in between heart beats when the heart is relaxed. The diastolic blood pressure has been and remains, especially important for younger people. The higher the diastolic blood pressure the greater the risk for heart attacks, strokes and kidney failure.  **\***For those not taking medication for high blood pressure and not having a short term illness. These categories are from the National High Blood pressure Program HYPERLINK "http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp" www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp  **\*\***Because blood pressure tends to fluctuate, a diagnosis of prehypertension is based on the average of two or more blood pressure readings taken on separate occasions in a consistent manner.  Reference: retrieved from <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/detect/categ.htm#normal> on 4/30/12  Color Bar  Top of Form  **Hypertension - More Harm Than You Realize**  High blood pressure affects more than 73 million Americans. Hypertension has increased 29% during the last decade and is anticipated to increase by an additional 24% by the year 2025.  Recent estimates indicate that;   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Recent estimates indicate that:** | | | 76% are aware they are hypertensive | 24% are unaware | | 65% are receiving treatment | 35% are not | | 57% receiving treatment are achieving control | | | 43% receiving treatment are not achieving control | |                   **Why is this important?**  High blood pressure increases the risk for heart attack, heart failure, stroke, and kidney disease. For individuals aged 40 to 70 years, each   * 20 points of systolic reading (the first #) or * 10 points of diastolic reading (the second #)   doubles the risk of cardiovascular disease across the entire range from 115/75 to 185/115 mm Hg.  This means a person with a blood pressure of 155/95 has four times a normal risk of heart attack and stroke.  **So what is your role? First, find out if you are hypertensive.**  **If you have hypertension:**  Take an active and responsible role in personal health management. Be appropriately educated.  Develop skills to monitor and control blood pressure. Take a partnership role in treatment. Communicate so that control can be reached.  **The good news:**  Lifestyle changes are effective.  Many medications are effective. Those with controlled blood pressure have significantly lower risk of cardiovascular disease and death.  A health professional cares. Talk to them often!  Reference: Dennison, C. & Hughes, S., 2008, Progress in prevention: raising the bar to lower blood pressure: key steps to improve blood pressure control rates, Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing, 23 (3), 293-294.  Bottom of Form  spacer **Activities for Tween agers (10 through 13 year olds)**  The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous play or physical activity everyday for this age group. Since only a fraction of middle and high schools provide daily physical education classes, pre-teens need lots of opportunities for fitness outside of school hours. It is suggested that these activities should be fun, should use the large muscle groups and should be done with friends or family at least part of the time.  **What are the benefits of regular exercise for pre-teens?**  Benefits include:   * Reduction of anxiety, stress, and depression * Improvement of self-esteem * Boosting academic performance * [Encourages the establishment of lifelong healthy habits](http://familyfitness.about.com/od/healthandsafety/tp/lifestyle_changes.htm)   Finding activities specific to your child's strengths is the key. Options are:   * **Team or organized sports** at school, recreational leagues and in the community. * **Individual pursuits:** Since team play isn't for everyone pre-teens may prefer personal activities such as [running, biking, yoga, horseback-riding, or snowboarding](http://familyfitness.about.com/od/motivation/f/Group-Exercise-Classes.htm). * **Everyday play and movement:** Other physical activities count toward that daily 60-minute goal. That means housework, yardwork, biking to school, dancing, walking the dog, or playing tag with kids in the neighborhood count as activity   **What can parent do to encourage activity?**  Strive to be a role model. Make time for exercise in your daily life. Find family fitness activities to share like tennis or Frisbee golf.  Keep a log for a month to see what areas need improvement.  Support your teen's fitness endeavors. Drive or set up a carpool with other parents. If cost is an issue, talk with the coach or school guidance counselor about scholarships and sources for used gear. Use the local park. [Consider a membership at a YMCA or fitness facility.](http://familyfitness.about.com/od/motivation/a/Find-A-Gym-For-Your-Family.htm)  Celebrate achievements. Let your child know proud you are! Go to games. Display trophies and medals.  Limit screen time—[television, computer, and video games to less than 2 hours a day. Put fitness activities first.](http://familyfitness.about.com/od/gettingkidsmoving/tp/toomuchtv.htm)  Reference: [Holecko, C., Fitness for Teens and Tweens from about.com Guide](http://familyfitness.about.com/bio/Catherine-Holecko-49711.htm), retrieved from [http://familyfitness.about.com/od/teenagers/a/teen\_fitness.htm on 4/30/12](http://familyfitness.about.com/od/teenagers/a/teen_fitness.htm%20on%204/30/12)  spacer  **Making a Difference with Those Who Are Grieving** Often after the funeral, the dinner and a memorial service it is difficult to know how to help those who grieve. Actually, the congregational community has a number of opportunities to make a difference.   1. Continue to spend time with those who are experiencing grief. 2. Listen to the story as many times as the bereaved need to tell it. Listen as  though it were the first. 3. Be honest. Provide accurate, simple information in small increments. 4. Never take away hope. People deal with reality and reframe their hope as  they are ready. 5. Mark your calendar and send a note or call on special occasions like  birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and the anniversary of the death and when special events (like graduation) would have occurred. 6. Don’t box people in. Give them permission to express those feelings.  Don’t tell them what they must do or must not do. 7. Provide spiritual support. Reassure them that God can handle  expressions of anger and questions can help. Be the presence of God  when the bereaved cannot see or feel God. 8. Speak the name of the deceased. Remembering and reminiscing is a  good thing. 9. Realize that people age, grow, change, and enter new life stages as well.  As new stages of their lives begin they will continue to remember the  relationship that was lost. 10. Offer readings on grief to the bereaved, understanding that their ability  to accept them and timing will vary from person to person. 11. Trust your own intuitive awareness. Being there is more important than what you say. Model self care.   Congregations are in a unique position to offer love and nurturing. These acts are naturally a part of the spiritual family experience. More information regarding grief and the congregation’s role is available at <http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/92007.pdf> This entire article can be reproduced for congregational use and contains many useful resources as well.  Harris, H. W, 2003, What is a congregation to do? Grief in family and congregational life Family Ministry 17(2) Retrieved from <http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/92007.pdf>on May 1, 2012. | | |  |   **Bulletin Insert: July & August 2012Color Bar**  **Are You Using Sunscreen Correctly? What should I know about the new sunscreen labels?** The FDA is requiring manufacturers to follow strict guidelines in displaying product information. Misnomers such as “sunblock,” “sweatproof” and “waterproof” are being eliminated from labels.  **Which sunscreens will help to protect me from skin cancer?** Only those with the wording “Broad Spectrum” and Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 15 or higher have been shown if used as directed with other sun protection measures, to reduce the risk of skin cancer and early aging, as well as help prevent sunburn.  **When should I apply or reapply sunscreen?** Apply it 15 to 20 minutes prior to sun exposure. If swimming or sweating, reapply it 40 minutes (water resistant type) or 80 minutes (very water resistant type) or immediately after towel drying and at least every 2 hours. Sunscreen is often ineffective because consumers use too little and do not reapply as indicated. Most subjects only apply 25% of the recommended sunscreen dose. For example, if you are using a SPF of 15 and use 25% of the suggested amount you will only get about a SPF of 4.  **How much should I use?** Children should apply a handful to cover the entire skin surface when wearing a bathing suit. An 8 oz. bottle would only supply a family of four with a half day of protection if used in the correct amount.  **What if I have a blister or small cut?** Do not use sunscreen on damaged or broken skin. Ingredients can penetrate through cuts and abrasions. People with eczema, psoriasis or fresh surgical wounds should use protective clothing instead of sunscreen.  **How should I store sunscreen?** Protected it from excessive heat and direct sun. Do not leave it in the car. Place it in a cooler area while at the beach.  **Learn the Sun AWARE acronym!**  **A**void unprotected exposure. (Seek shade; don’t indoor tan.) **W**ear sun protective clothing. (Use sunglasses; wide brimmed hat.) **A**pply recommended # of broad spectrum sunscreen with ≥ SPF 15.  **R**outinely examine your whole body for skin changes. (Report any.) **E**ducate others about the need to be SunAWARE.  Reference: Maguire-Eisen, M. (2011), Food and drug administration’s final ruling on sunscreens, Journal of the Dermatology Nurses’ Association, 3 (5), p 255-6  Color Bar  Top of Form  **Is Eating Junk Food Linked to Depression?** A large study conducted with 9000 adults suggests that eating too much junk food may increase risk for depression. The participants routinely ate “fast food," such as hamburgers and pizza. Results revealed they were 40% more likely to develop depression than the participants who consumed little to none of these types of food. In addition, it was found that their depression risk rose steadily as more fast food was consumed.  **What about commercial baked goods?** Those participants regularly eating commercially prepared croissants and doughnuts were also at significant risk of developing this disorder.  **What do other studies say?** Many studies point to association between fast food and commercial bakery food consumption to physical diseases, such as obesity or coronary heart disease. Other recent reports indicate that unhealthy diets in both adults and adolescents are associated with an increased risk for mental health problems over time. One study even linked eating unsaturated fatty acids to a significantly increased risk for depression.  **What should I avoid?** Limit trans fatty acid content. Routinely read labels to find this information. Instead increase the consumption of other products such as vegetables, legumes, and fruits.  **Why haven’t I heard this before?** Diet and mental health research is relatively new. It is uncommon for doctors to consider dietary measures in treating mental health concerns.  **So what is the message?** Curb the junk food! Get the facts about “fast food” by asking for nutritional information. Choose these more often:  Granola Bars and Power Bars  Fruits and Vegetables  Frozen Yogurt  Popcorn and Rice Cakes  Reference: Deborah Brauser, D. (2012) Junk food linked to depression, Public Health Nutrition, 15:424-432 retrieved from <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/762655?src=mp&spon=38> on 5/1/12  Bottom of Form  spacer **COSMETICS = UNKNOWN CHEMICALS!!** Have you ever let a little girl play with lipstick? Harmless? Maybe not. Many US manufacturers still have lead in lipstick products. Surely someone is responsible for overseeing the production and sale of safe personal care products! Well actually…no !  There is no requirement for premarket testing of cosmetic ingredients or compounds related to human health and safety. The U.S. Food and drug Administration (FDA) FDA can regulate color additives and monitor products and complaints after the product is on the shelf!!  **Some chemicals of concern:**  **Lead:** is in lipstick. Granted it is in small amounts, but it is a neurotoxin that can cause permanent damage and presents a risk to child-bearing women.  **Phthalates** that are used to soften vinyl products and as agent to stabilize color and scent within cosmetics, are implicated in hormone-disruption, especially in children.  **Toluene**-the odor you smell when you put on nail polish or walk into a nail salon. Even a small amount can cause major health problems.  **Formaldahyde**- a by-product of some compounds in hair products.  The GOOD NEWS is that you can print a handy shopping guide at <http://static.ewg.org/pdf/EWG_cosmeticsguide_2011.pdf> It was developed by the Environmental Working Group.  **A brief history:** When the FOOD AND DRUG ACT was passed in 1906 cosmetics were not covered. In 1939, a new law provided for regulations concerning the purity and branding of a product. It did not, however, address ingredients considered "trade secrets" by the industry. "The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics" was begun in 2004. It was introduced into Congress in 2010, but has yet to be passed. The European Union has been regulating cosmetics for a while now. Potentially hazardous ingredients which are not regulated in the US may still be in the US version of the product, but not the European version.  (see the web site <http://safecosmetics.org> for more information.)  spacer  **How Much Sun is Good for Kids?**  Did you know that approximately 25% of lifetime sun exposure occurs before 18 years of age? Last year the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued guidelines on limiting sun exposure in children and supported legislation to prohibit salon tanning by minors.  Pediatricians are concerned that the public is:   * not aware of the risk of skin cancer due to overexposure to sun and intentional expose to artificial sources of ultraviolet radiation (UVR) * inconsistent with use of sun protection methods * unaware that melanoma rates continue to rise   Some sun exposure is needed for vitamin D production. An adequate amount of vitamin D is necessary for bone health and for various other health conditions.  These are some of the new recommendations:   * Avoid sunburn. When extensive sun exposure is inevitable children should wear fully protective clothing and high SPF sunscreen that also blocks UVA wavelengths. * Infants younger than 6 months should be kept out of direct sunlight and covered with protective clothing and hats. A doctor should be consulted before use of a sunscreen with this age group. * Because outdoor physical activity should be strongly encouraged, this should be promoted in a sun-safe manner. If possible, outdoor activities should be scheduled to limit exposure to peak-intensity midday sun (10 AM to 4 PM). * Parents should discourage the use of any type of intentional tanning. In particular, they should advocate for banning access to tanning parlors for children younger than 18 years.   Laurie Barclay, L. and Vega, C. (2011) AAP Issues guidelines on limiting sun exposure in children, [Medscape](http://www.medscape.org/index/list_968_0) Education Clinical Briefs retrieved from <http://www.medscape.org/viewarticle/738315?src=cmemp> on 5/21/20012. | | |  |   **Bulletin Insert: September & October 2012Color Bar**  **Celebrate Grandparents’ Day – Sept. 9th** Our children need mentors like grandparents and senior adults who will model godly characteristics, demonstrate virtuous living, and Christian faith. Please make this month a special time to encourage them to:  **Model faith.** Look for opportunities to nurture a child’s natural curiosity about God. Talk about the Creator often as you’re on walks and outings. Share a special Bible story with each other. Sing familiar choruses together. Share how God has and is working in their life.  **Model unconditional love** to grandchildren and their parents. No one can ever hear the words “I love you” too much. Say it. Write it. Wrap it. Show it. Give it. Communicate, “I love you!” in every way you can think of not only to your grandchildren but to their parents also.  **Model hope.** Christian grandparents have lived through wars and understand the need for hope. They know putting hope in politics, stock markets, or worldview philosophies is not wise. The only true hope is based on Jesus Christ. Who better than a Christian grandparent to assure children that no matter happens, they can know the author and giver of life.  **Model holy living.** Parents and grandparents have the responsibility to live a life pleasing to God through the strength and power of the Holy Spirit. Share that allowing God to develop a Christ like character is essential.  Plan to celebrate the grandparents in your congregation. Following are some suggestions:   * Invite senior adults to share their walk of faith with a younger Sunday school class. * Have children or teens interview senior adults and write their “story” in a newsletter. * Invite someone to give a testimony on how grandparents have  influenced their life. * Interview some children and get their opinion on “What is a grandma or grandpa?”   “Fortunate is the grandchild who hears of the experience of saving faith from a grandparent who knows Jesus as Savior.”1  Reference and footnote: Keefer, D.K , Celebrate Godly Grandparents, retrieved from  <http://media.premierstudios.com/nazarene/docs/p_godlygrand.pdf> on 8/15/12  Color Bar  Top of Form  **Letting Kids Fail, Is It a Good Idea?** According to psychologist Madeline Levine, "Our current version of success is a failure." She relates that always expecting children to succeed can weigh down kids with serious issues like “stress, exhaustion, depression, anxiety, poor coping skills, and unhealthy reliance on others for support and direction, and a weak sense of self."  Instead she stresses that parents should focus on teaching the following life skills that will help them successfully deal with failures.  **Resourcefulness.** Acknowledge that there are several ways to solve a problem. Let them search for a solution outside of their comfort zone. But be patient -- children have limited resources, and it can take time to figure out what to do.  **Coping skills.** Teaching kids how to self-soothe can help them not to be overwhelmed with a sense of failure. Simple things like taking a walk, stretching or listening music can calm emotions. Choosing a positive way to respond to stress can help clear their mind so that the next step can be determined.  **Enthusiasm.** Don’t push your kids toward your own goals, observe their interests. Support their aspirations.  **Creativity.** Realize that all children are not “A” students. Creative pursuits help them “learn how to think outside of the box, solve problems, and succeed in non-academic settings.” Keep crafts and open-ended activities like reading within reach. Offer positive feedback.  **A strong work ethic.** Encourage effort, persistence, discipline and other factors like integrity, communication and collaboration. Let them observe you working through a difficult project.  **Self-efficacy.** The belief that we all have a measure of control over what we do with our lives -- is crucial to success. Don't solve every problem for them. Doing so prevents kids from trying new things, and learning how to succeed on their own.  Levine says that we should be trying to teach children to be resilient and independent if we really want them to succeed in life.  Alphonse, L, 2012 Are Parents Setting Kids Up for Failure by Pushing Too Hard for Success? Retrieved from <http://shine.yahoo.com/parenting/parents-setting-kids-failure-pushing-too-hard-success-205500908.html> on 8/8/12  Bottom of Form  spacer **Tips For Backpack Users** National School Backpack Awareness Day is the third Wednesday of every September. Most of us have never considered that children can develop serious health problems if backpacks are too heavy or worn improperly.  **Did you know?**   * About 55% of students carry a backpack that is heavier than the recommended guideline of ≤10% of the student’s total body weight. * Middle and high school student as well as university students report back pain associated with backpack usage. * Those who changed how backpacks were loaded and worn reported less pain and strain in their backs, necks, and shoulders. * The height of a backpack should extend from approximately 2 inches below the shoulder blades to waist level or slightly higher. * It is recommended that individuals always wear the backpack on both shoulders so the weight is evenly distributed.   **What are some symptoms associated with heavy school backpacks?**  Common symptoms include aching backs and shoulders, tingling arms, weakened muscles and stooped posture.  **Basic Backpack Guidelines**  **Loading a Pack**   * Load heaviest items closest to the child’s back. * Arrange books/materials so they won’t slide around. * Avoid carrying unnecessary items. * Consider a book bag on wheels if your child’s school allows it.   **Wearing a Pack**   * Use both straps. Using one shoulder strap can cause a child to lean to one side, curving the spine and causing pain or discomfort. * Choose the right size pack with well-padded shoulder straps. * Adjust the shoulder straps so that the pack fits snugly. Loose packs can pull the child backwards and strain muscles. * Wear the waist belt if the backpack has one.   **Need More Information?** Consult an occupational therapy practitioner for an evaluation regarding backpacks, computer use, or other learning-related issues. Talk to your child’s teacher or other health professionals.  Reference: Retrieved from <http://www.aota.org/DocumentVault/Backpack/44388.aspx> and  <http://www.aota.org/DocumentVault/Backpack/44404.aspx> on 8 16/12  spacer  **The Benefits of Grandparenting**  Most grandparents long to be involved in the lives of their grandchildren, and there are a multitude of benefits for families who bring generations together. Although geographical location can make family togetherness difficult it is not impossible.   * Children learn through close intergenerational relationships. These relationships help them realize that they belong to something larger than themselves. It gives them a broader perspective of the world. * Grandparents are generally known for their outpouring of unconditional love, encouragement, and support. Their ability to share wisdom and experiences, teach values and pass on family tradition is priceless. * Children have a way of absorbing from their grandparents a sense of history, identity, heritage, and the vital connection with the past. Their grandparents’ life stories traditionally grow in value as the children become adults.   **Resources for the Grandparenting Experience**  [**The Legacy Journal**](http://www.legacyjournal.org/)This 80-page wire-bound book that grandparents and grandchildren complete together encourages taking time to record the stories of grandpa's courtship of grandma, the history of family traditions and faith journeys. Using it creates tangible eternal memories. Available from the Christian Grandparenting Network.  [**Grand Days: Ideas for Sharing Faith Moments Between Grandparents and Grandkids**](http://www.amazon.com/Grand-Days-Sharing-Grandparents-Grandkids/dp/0764437720) Includes projects, games, wacky ways to have fun, ideas about how to explore the world and cook together. The emphasis is on how grandparent’s personal story plus the child’s story equals God’s story.  [**Extreme Grandparenting: The Ride of Your Life!**](https://www.christiangrandparenting.net/bookstore/product/5-extreme-grandparenting) This book has honesty, humor, stories, and practical experience to motivate and guide you into richer relationships with your children and grandchildren. It’s objective is to help you “reach and relate to grandkids, not only as a mentor and loving family member, but as a spiritual rock during the hard times.” A Focus on the Family resource. Paperback. ISBN: 1589974603 ISBN-13: 9781589974609  [**The Gift of Grandparenting:**](http://family.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=99246&p=1143702&event=ORC) Themes range from passing on family history, imparting godly wisdom to sharing special times and fun activities. The author encourages grandparents to take an active role in helping build spiritually strong families.  [**Grandparents Day of Prayer-36 Days and Counting**](http://www.christiangrandparenting.net/blogs/grandparent-with-a-purpose/594-grandparents-day-of-prayer-36-days-and-counting) The greatest gift you can give your grandchildren is the legacy of a praying grandparent. Only 36 days left until the Grandparents Day of Prayer on September 9, which will be here soon. Have you set aside that date to meet with grandparents in your church or to invite other grandparents into your home to pray for your grandchildren.  spacer  [**Grandparents indeed 'grand' for grandkids** *byTammy Darling*](http://www.lifeway.com/Article/Grandparents-indeed-grand-for-grandkids) This article is courtesy of [ParentLife](http://www.lifeway.com/n/Product-Family/ParentLife-Magazine) magazine  NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — While many of the approximately 50 million grandparents in the United States are playing an increasing role in American families, many more have little contact with their grandchildren. Finding ways to bring the generations together can mean great benefits for both young and old.  Grandparents serve as role models, teachers, nurturers, providers and mentors.  It is physically, spiritually, and emotionally healthy for children to have a close relationship with someone at the opposite end of the age spectrum.  The grandparent-grandchild bond is second in emotional importance only to the bond between parents and children, says Arthur Kornhaber, author of The Grandparent Guide and founder and president of the Foundation for Grandparenting ([www.grandparenting.org](http://www.grandparenting.org)).  "It's the only relationship in which people are crazy about each other simply because they're breathing," Kornhaber says. "Grandparents and grandchildren are hard-wired to connect in ways different from parents and children. They have this adoration and unconditional love and joy in one another's existence."  **Helpful Ideas** Here are some helpful ideas for closing the generation gap:  **Schedule** regular multi-generation get-togethers. Studies show that only one-third of grandparents live near enough to a grandchild to see him once or twice a week. But it is important to make face-to-face contact, even if it is just a few times a year.  **Allow** one-on-one time. Perhaps when grandparents and grandchildren are together they can play a particular board game or go to a favorite restaurant. "The more time a grandparent and grandchild share undivided attention, the more the grandchild can soak up the grandparent relationship in his heart and mind," Kornhaber says.  **Relax.** Do not try to pack too many activities into a visit or force a relationship. Simply allow things to develop naturally.  **Get connected.** With the Internet, grandparents and grandchildren can now play games, tell stories, and do puzzles together in real time, despite the miles between them. With e-mail, they can exchange letters and scan photos.  **Extend visits.** If grandparents are traveling some distance to be with the family for a holiday, parents can encourage them to stay for longer periods of time.  **Share skills.** Grandparents can teach grandchildren skills not readily taught today, such as baking, quilting, or chess. In turn, children can demonstrate their skills at roller-blading, video games, or soccer.  **Go** on vacation together. A multi-generation vacation can help everyone enjoy one another's company in a relaxed setting. Or if Grandma loves amusement parks, go for it!  **Use** school breaks wisely. Many families opt to have children spend a week or more with grandparents during summer or holiday school breaks.  **Be creative.** Grandparents and grandchildren can plant matching gardens and compare their progress. Or take turns composing a joint story and mailing the latest installment back and forth.  **Take** some snapshots. Some of the best memories can be made with a camera. Keep current photos of grandparents prominently displayed. Create a family tree, complete with photographs.  **Video** and audio options: Using video and audiotapes preserves special moments for present and future generations. Ask grandparents to tape themselves reading one of your child's favorite books. Encourage grandparents to share on tape about their journey of faith. Videotape your child at a special event or demonstrating his latest skill and send it to the grandparents.  While child-rearing philosophies have changed over the generations, not all grandparents' ideas are outdated. Grandparents have the perspective of already having raised children. The Scripture often links wisdom with age and experience: "Wisdom is found with the elderly, and understanding comes with long life" (Job 12:12, HCSB). Be willing to listen and realize that all family members have the child's best interests at heart.  Grandparents really are "grand." Regular intergenerational contact reflects a high a value for family togetherness. The connection between generations benefits both the young and the old. Grandchildren will keep grandparents feeling younger, and grandchildren will be wiser because of their grandparents. <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/Grandparents-indeed-grand-for-grandkids>  spacer  [**Grandparenting**](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/life_transitions/grandparenting.aspx) [*by Karen Knudson*](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/life_transitions/grandparenting.aspx) Do you ever feel tongue-tied around young people, completely unable to relate to the teenagers and college students of today? Do you shake your head in despair, shocked by the disrespect and blatant rebellion of so-called Generation Y?  Indeed, popular culture today depicts a troubled relationship between the older and younger members of society. Grandparents often view children as wild and undisciplined while young people see their elders as out of touch and irrelevant. If you have tasted even a little of this intergenerational conflict, take heart, because you can build healthy, mentoring relationships with young people. In fact, teenagers and college kids need you in their lives. But in order to establish good relationships with young people, there are some points to keep in mind.  **Stereotypes** Many stereotypes of teenagers today are grounded in some truth. Contemporary culture indeed breeds disrespect — of history, authority, ideals, the weak, property and others. In addition, many children do tend to be lazy, hedonistic and extremely self-focused, saturated with a "Here we are now, entertain us" mentality.  But young people today are also tremendously honest. They are open about their doubts, sins, passions and dreams. They are also confused, vulnerable and searching desperately for meaning. Having been raised in a society that questions the existence of truth, surrounded by different belief systems competing for their loyalty, kids crave honest guidance, untainted by self-interest and ulterior motives.  Growing up in a cynical culture that assigns human worth based upon physical beauty and rare talent, young people are taught directly and indirectly that they are only valuable if they look a certain way and cultivate friendships with the "right" kind of people. As a result, they tend to be lonely, suspicious, scared and hurting inside.  **Unconditional Love** When dealing with young people, it is essential that you demonstrate unconditional love. Teens today anticipate that their elders will condemn and criticize them — the music they listen to, the clothes and hairstyles they wear — without making an effort to understand.  So many of my peers long for a closer relationship with their parents and grandparents, yet often feel unloved and misunderstood.  If you want to form friendships with today's young people, you may have to take the initiative in demonstrating concern, respect and an interest in them and their passions. Take them seriously and try to understand their perspectives before passing judgment on them. This is not to say you should never offer advice, confront them with sin in their lives or share lessons from your own experience. In fact, most young people crave direction, to guide them in the fragmented pluralism of our society. But the cliché, "People don't care how much you know, unless they know how much you care" has never been more true than when applied to this generation. Unless young people feel confident that your advice is intended for their best interests, they will be skeptical, fearing manipulation.  Once you've laid a foundation of love and respect, it is also important to share the life lessons you have learned. In Titus 2, Paul instructs the older women to teach the younger. This principle of mentoring is demonstrated again in Acts 18, when Aquila and Priscilla take Apollos under their wing and lovingly instruct him in God's truth.  **Share From Your Heart** Having a long history of walking with Christ and having experienced firsthand the bitter betrayal of worldly wisdom, you are well-equipped to share what you have learned to help young people make wise choices. Whether imparting moral truths and practical life skills or simply reminiscing about your own journey, sharing from your heart can help to mold and direct young people in truly significant ways.  Unless young people feel confident that your advice is intended for their best interests, they will be skeptical, fearing manipulation.  Many of you may still be wondering how to personalize those principles, and may be grappling with practical ways to reach out to modern youth. Allow me to share some steps you can take to form mentoring relationships with the teens and college students within your sphere of influence.  The first step in developing such relationships is, obviously, finding some young people to interact with. You can build relationships with your own grandchildren, kids in the neighborhood, youth group members or college students visiting your church. Don't be afraid to initiate the conversation. It may be a little awkward at first, but I promise you, most young people will appreciate your effort.  Ask the highschooler in the pew behind you about her school experiences, hobbies, friends and dreams. Ask the college student on Christmas break about his classes, extra-curricular activities or the issues he's facing at school. As you demonstrate concern and consistent enthusiasm, most young people will respond with warmth and gratitude. Remember: a critical key to communication is the art of listening. Act genuinely interested in what a young person has to say — in other words, resist the temptation to lecture!  **Use Your Imagination** As you develop relationships with young people, invite them into your life. Take a teen out for ice cream or to a baseball game. Invite a college student over for Sunday afternoon lunch. Teach a young girl to garden or bake homemade bread. Show a young boy how to fix cars or work with carpentry. Invite the church youth group to your home for an outdoor barbecue. Teach a Sunday school class or chaperone a field trip. The opportunities are as varied as your own imagination.  Once you have formed close mentoring relationships with some young people, allow them to give back to you. Ask a young person to help you paint a fence, rake leaves or shovel snow. If you've been wanting to learn more about computers, solicit a teen-age computer whiz to teach you the basics of negotiating the Internet. Don't be afraid to learn from young people; rather, look for their strengths and wisdom and affirm them in their abilities.  Make discipleship, whether formal or informal, a pillar in your relationships with youth. Lead a Bible study for young believers; share informally about God's work in your life; and pray for those you're mentoring, because teens today face a host of temptations.  Model a ministry-minded attitude and a Christ-like spirit. And most important, don't underestimate young people. Be open to their opinions on moral and theological issues.  You might be surprised to learn something new!  Finally, be transparent about your own dreams, hopes, doubts and desires; in short, be yourself. By being vulnerable about your own struggles, you can refute the stereotype that all older people are closed-minded and judgmental.  Ministering to a different generation presents a unique set of challenges, but the rewards are worth the effort. Find some young people in need of unconditional acceptance and teach them what it means to follow Christ. Your mentoring may make the difference in whether a young person chooses the path of selfishness and self-interest — or one that reflects the integrity and character of Christ. As you demonstrate concern and consistent enthusiasm, most young people will respond with warmth and gratitude. *© Copyright 2004 by Karen Knudson. Used with permission. All rights reserved.*  Other articles in the series:   1. [Creative Journal Writing With Grandkids](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/life_transitions/grandparenting/creative-journal-writing-with-grandkids.aspx) 2. [Fun Online Communication With Grandkids](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/life_transitions/grandparenting/fun-online-communications-with-grandkids.aspx) 3. [Grandma Camp](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/life_transitions/grandparenting/grandma-camp.aspx) 4. [Grandparenting Across the Miles](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/life_transitions/grandparenting/grandparenting-across-the-miles.aspx) 5. [Long-Distance Grandparenting](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/life_transitions/grandparenting/long-distance-grandparenting.aspx) 6. [Short Getaways With Grandkids](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/life_transitions/grandparenting/short-getaways-with-grandkids.aspx)   Related Sources:   1. [Extreme Grandparenting: The Ride of Your Life! (Paperback)](http://family.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=974609&p=1143702&event=ORC) 2. [The Gift of Grandparenting](http://family.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=99246&p=1143702&event=ORC) [*by Derl G. Keefer*](http://family.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=99246&p=1143702&event=ORC)  When Joshua was 85 years old he was still looking toward the future by driving out the enemy and taking the land God had promised. At that age he had not given up the fight. Twenty-first-century grandparents need to be looking toward the future as well. We are in a spiritual battle for the bodies and souls of our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.   National Grandparents Day originated with Marian McQuade, of Fayette County, West Virginia. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter made a proclamation that National Grandparents Day would be celebrated every year on the first Sunday after Labor Day.  Our world needs grandparents and senior adults who model godly characteristics, demonstrate virtuous living, and mentor those coming after them in the Christian faith.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Bulletin Insert: November & December 2012Color Bar**  **A Child’s Vision and Success in School Did you know?**   1. About 80 percent of learning in a child’s first 12 years comes through the eyes. 2. Nearsightedness often doesn’t develop until at least age 11. 3. One in every four children has a vision problem that can interfere with learning and behavior. 4. 10 percent of preschoolers already have vision deficiencies. 5. Simple vision screenings at school may not catch all types of vision disorders.   **Why are children’s vision needs different?** Even under normal circumstances, a child’s vision can change more frequently than the average adult. Children may not complain and think the way they see is normal. Parents may not easily recognize the signs of poor vision.  **When should children get an eye exam?** Their first eye exam should be between six months of age and one year with an optometrist or ophthalmologist. *Children should again receive an eye exam before entering school then annually.*  **What are some signs and symptoms of vision problems?**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | • Chronic redness in the eye | • Headaches | | • Persistent rubbing | • Bulge in the eye | | • Drooping eyelid | • Squinting | | • Tilting the head | • Cross-eyed look | | • Excessive tear production | • Sensitivity to light | | • Complaints of achy, tired eyes | • Unequal eye movement | | • White, grayish-white or yellow colored matter in the eye | |   Most of us would agree that poor vision can have a lifelong impact. It makes sense to take care of vision needs today to prepare a child for success for years to come.  *Reference: Kids, School and Eye Exams Go Hand in Hand, retrieved from* [*http://www.eyesiteonwellness.com/wellness-library/article/69*](http://www.eyesiteonwellness.com/wellness-library/article/69) *on 9/6/12*  Color Bar  Top of Form  **Will There Be An Empty Chair This Year?** Perhaps there will be an empty chair at the holiday table this year. Beloved parents, grandparents or close friends, those who have died will be missing. Our hearts may be empty as well. You may ask, “How should we celebrate without them? What should we say?” God’s comfort and support is promised to us at this special time. Remembering what made them so special to us can help. Planning how you will address “the empty chair” situation can ease the family member’s sense of grief. **Suggestions follow:**  **Two days before dinner:** 1. Talk with children. Ask them, “How will you feel without  \_\_\_\_\_\_at dinner? What do you miss most about them?” 2. Ask for suggestions about preparing their favorite foods.  **That night before dinner:** 3. Leave a chair empty this year as a physical reminder. Only do this the first year. Soon a "new normal” will surface. 4. Light a candle in a prominent area in remembrance of them.  5. Have favorite pictures of them out and available.  **At dinner:** 6. Even before your opening prayer, encourage conversation about what you miss about them. Favorite stories or childhood memories may cause tears or laughter. Both are good.  7. Perform acts of loving-kindness in their memory. Invite someone to dinner who may otherwise be alone.  8. Consider taking presents "from them" to a mission or a children’s hospital. This keeps their generosity, kindness and “godliness" flowing in the world. Others will feel the holiday  spirit, and so will you!  **Don’t be afraid of planning a festive meal full of memories.**  *Reference: The empty chair around the holiday table. Retrieved from* [*http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Dr.\_Mel\_Glazer*](http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Dr._Mel_Glazer) *on 09/23/12*  Bottom of Form  spacer **Are You Skipping Breakfast? Better Think Twice.** Not only does breakfast provide a nice, peaceful start to the day but may be the “[most important meal of the day.](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/2824987.stm)” Here are some of the results of recent research.   * People who skip breakfast are 4.5 times more likely to be obese than those who take a morning meal. * Breakfast eaters are more likely to have good blood sugar levels and less likely to be hungry later on in the day. * A breakfast that's high in fiber and carbohydrates could help you feel less tired throughout the day. * Those who eat breakfast have better cholesterol levels and better use of insulin. * High-energy foods at breakfast could help to [boost short-term memory, but a high-calorie breakfast seems to hinder concentration.](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/019700709190042K) * People who eat breakfast have an excuse to eat healthy foods like oatmeal, eggs, grapefruit and coffee.   **Oatmeal** - Many studies show oatmeal fosters good cholesterol levels and could help [improve children's memory and attention skills](http://ase.tufts.edu/psychology/spacelab/pubs/MahoneyEtAl.pdf) when compared with ready-to-eat cereals.  **Grapefruit** is high in vitamins C and A, and has also been shown to [boost the beneficial effects of cancer drugs.](http://www.ivillage.com/grapefruit-juice-may-give-boost-cancer-treatment-study/4-a-478748)  **Eating eggs** for breakfast has been linked to [increased feeling of satisfaction](http://www.jacn.org/content/24/6/510.full) and less food consumed later in the day when they were compared with eating bagels.  **Coffee**, in moderation, has been linked to a [whole host of health benefits](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/31/coffee-health-benefits_n_1064577.html), from a decreased risk of depression to a lower risk of some cancers and Type 2 diabetes.  So tell me, what’s your excuse for not eating breakfast?  *Reference: Chan, A., Health Benefits of Breakfast: 7 Reasons Not To Skip Your Morning Meal, Huffington Post retrieved on 10/27/12 at* [*http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/16/health-benefits-breakfast\_n\_1968248.html*](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/16/health-benefits-breakfast_n_1968248.html)  spacer  **Skip the Holiday Weight Gain** Would you like to go from Thanksgiving through New Years without gaining a pound? Try these few tips.  **S** - Stimulate your brain, relieve stress, and lower your appetite by giving your earlobes a quick thirty-second rub before meals. **K** – Keep portions small by using a smaller plate **I** - Indulge in holiday sampling. This allows you to enjoy a more satisfying range of flavors and will fill you up faster. **P** - Plan to eat a small but satisfying meal before you eat a big meal. Apples or yogurt are both good options.  **T** - Take smaller bites of food. Chew 25 to 30 times before swallowing. **H** – Honey in tea or coffee is easier to digest and keeps you satisfied longer than sugar. **E** - Exercise in the morning so that you won’t feel hungry at night.  **W** – Plan a leisurely walk after a meal. This helps to get your digestive juices flowing. **E** - Enjoying happy conversations during meals promotes a satisfied feeling.  **I** - Interrupt yourself. Take a breather from the table. This will help your body digest better and make you feel full sooner. **G** - Get enough rest over the holidays. People tend to make up for a lack of sleep by overeating. Consider Green tea. It decreases your insulin levels which in turn, promotes weight loss. **H** – Have raw fresh fruits and vegetables handy. They stimulate the digestive system, improve absorption and promote proper organ function **T** - Treat yourself to the foods that you love (on holidays) and give up the foods that you don’t need. For example stay away from breads or pasta.  *Reference: Davis, W. (2007) A to Z of Healthy Holiday Habits retrieved from* [*http://www.marieclaire.com/health-fitness/news/holiday-weight-loss-4*](http://www.marieclaire.com/health-fitness/news/holiday-weight-loss-4) *on 10/28/12* | | |  | | |
|  |
|  |