This document contains a brief bibliography of peer-reviewed literature, with abstracts, on grandparenting. It is one of 12 bibliographies on aging prepared by the National Agricultural Library for its "Pathfinders" series of publications. Topics covered by the other bibliographies include aging parents, adult children, dementia and Alzheimer's disease in the elderly (written for educators), dementia and Alzheimer's disease in the elderly (written for consumers), family caregiving, family support networks, humor in later life, intergenerational relationships, living arrangements in later life, pets and the elderly, and sibling relationships in adulthood. This bibliography on grandparenting contains citations for 22 books and articles for researchers and educators, and 4 books and articles for consumers. It concludes with a list of organizations that readers may contact for further assistance. (NB)
GRANDPARENTING

PREPARED BY BILLIE H. FRAZIER, Ph.D., CFLE**

This PATHFINDER has been prepared to help researchers, educators and consumers increase their understanding of the significance and role of grandparenting in today's society.

RESEARCHER/EDUCATOR


Longitudinal data on the role of grandmothers during the divorce process of their children are reported. Most women provide major assistance, but younger grandmothers are more actively involved. Paternal grandmothers show the greatest decline in assistance over time. Grandmothers prefer to provide social and recreational supports on a voluntary basis and avoid assuming parental functions.


Age and sex differences in grandparenting satisfaction and in perceived grandparenting responsibilities were investigated. Results indicate that relatively young grandparents express greater responsibility to offer childrearing advice, regardless of grandchildren's ages. Grandfathers endorsed relatively high levels of responsibility for grandchildren's care and for offering childrearing advice, regardless of number of grandchildren or of grandchildren's ages. Grandmothers expressed relatively high levels of satisfaction with grandparenting, regardless of grandchildren's ages.

This PATHFINDER lists significant resources that are judged to be accurate, readable and available. Opinions expressed in the publication do not reflect views of the United States Department of Agriculture.

This study explores the meaning and significance of becoming a grandparent. Sections include why grandparenthood has been a neglected area of research, the process of becoming a grandparent, the meaning and significance of being a grandparent, and problems involved in studying grandparenthood.


Meaning associated with grandparenthood comes from outside the boundaries of the original nuclear family through alliances initiated and produced by offspring. Ages of both parenting and grandparenting are important variables affecting transition. From a systems perspective, the grandparent-grandchild bond is initially mediated by parents. With time, the bond becomes more direct.


This article cites evidence that grandparents serve important stabilizing functions in the wider family system and provide a wide range of support to children and grandchildren in times of crisis. Grandparents bolster their children in the parent role through encouragement and emotional support.


This book contains a study, "Young Children's Perceptions of Grandmother" in which the author recommends viewing grandparenthood as a part of a group process which involves interaction between three or four generations. Professionals and family members can foster the development of a network of supportive bonds to increase enjoyment between generations and to strengthen family life in general.

A study of the grandparent/grandchild relationship relative to the older adult, the middle generation, and the grandchild is reported. The role of grandparents as a potential family resource is discussed, and implications for family life programming are suggested.


This is a collection of articles by sociologists and other researchers who have made important contributions to the knowledge base on grandparenting. Four themes are dominant throughout the book: (1) grandparenthood as a symbolic role; (2) diversity in grandparental experiences; (3) divorce and grandparental relationships and, (4) the "new social contract" which divests grandparents of strong ties with their families. Several articles refer to the importance of grandparents and their role as family watchdog/gatekeeper. Some even say the "decline" of American families is due to lack of effective grandparenting.


This document describes grandparenthood in terms of five dimensions: (1) centrality, (2) valued elder, (3) immortality through clan, (4) reinvolvement with personal past, and (5) indulgence. Grandparenthood stimulates the process of life review, which in turn, facilitates psychosocial integration.


This report of a pilot project describes the role and activities of grandparents in a lower income New York City Hispanic community. Three parts of the study include a comparison of Hispanic and Caucasian grandparents, an exploration of models from gerontological and grandparenthood literature, and a discussion of the therapeutic potential of grandparenting activities.

A congressional hearing of the United States Senate in the ninety-eighth congress is documented. The idea that a uniform state act be developed and adopted which provides grandparents with adequate rights to petition state courts for privileges to visit their grandchildren following dissolution of the marriage of the grandchildren's parents.


Increasing interest is being directed toward the role of grandparents and their influence on children's development and welfare. The authors provide a review of the literature and resources which may be used by family life educators and counselors to help grandparents enhance relationships with their grandchildren. The symbolic, indirect, and direct influences of grandparents and the impact of grandparental influence on children are discussed.


This presentation was given at a conference entitled, "The Synagogue Confronts the Jewish Family of the 21st Century". It includes small group discussion questions that were used. Topics include what it means to be a grandparent, and a couple of different characterizations of grandparenting styles.


Research findings presented at the reported conference emphasize that increased longevity has made grandparenting a mass experience with implications for an aging Jewish community. Summaries of individual presentations help sensitize the American Jewish community to the vital importance of the intergenerational connection that can lead to the establishment of a communal network for sharing ideas and programs that will benefit grandparents, parents and grandchildren.

Most grandparents who are interviewed about the meaning and significance of great-grandparenthood find the role to be significant and emotionally fulfilling. It provides a sense of personal and family renewal, diversion, and a mark of longevity. Two styles of great-grandparenthood are identified, remote and close. The experiences of great-grandparenthood are quite similar to grandparenthood.


Content analysis of a sample of 110 Grandparents' Day cards is reported. A physical portrayal of grandparents seems to be avoided. Instead, cards project grandparents as benign, non-powerful figures. Joyous themes and superlatives are typically used. Cards do not tend to express personal commitment.


Two leading sociologists examine the role of grandparents in contemporary American society. Major themes woven throughout the book include the desire by grandparents for "a place in the family and a life apart," and the "norm of noninterference."


The anthropological study examines whether great-grandmotherhood is a kinship role with new content or whether the role of grandmother serves as a model. Results indicate that subjects model their behavior on their earlier role of grandmother, but advanced age and lack of geographic proximity restrict their ability to carry it out in the same way. Great-grandmothers feel removed from the fourth generation. The women think of themselves first as mothers and grandmothers, and second as great-grandmothers.

An investigation of grandmothers' interaction with grandchildren, pre-and post-marital breakdown, is reported. The study reveals that contact between grandmothers and their grandchildren increases following divorce. Participating in commercial recreation, providing babysitting, teaching family history and tradition increases as well. Personal advice given to grandchildren also increases following the disruption of the child's marriage. With rising rates of marriage breakdown, answers to the questions raised in this study take on special meaning.


Young adult college students describe their relationship with either their stepgrandparent or grandparent. Between-group comparisons are made regarding the: amount of contact; satisfaction and importance of contact; social and personal roles; expected behaviors; family strengths; and parental influence.


This article describes how recent demographic change has affected the prevalence, timing, and sequencing of the transition to grandparenthood on a societal level. It reviews the literature on entry into grandparenthood and identifies the unexplored issues related to the personal and interpersonal significance of the transition.


The role of grandparent is considered from a clinical perspective. Data support the literature which indicates that grandparenting styles are idiosyncratic and that the grandparent role is valued according to how the personal needs of grandparents are fulfilled.
CONSUNISR


The author of this book is the founder of an organization for grandparent' rights. The nature of the grandparent-grandchild relationship is examined. Special attention is given to special problems that can arise between parents and grandparents. A course of action in resolving conflicts is suggested.


This idea book for family sharing includes hundreds of projects and activities to delight both grandparents and grandchildren. It reinforces the importance of grandparents in the growth and happiness of children and young people.


The book is divided into three sections: (1) Becoming A Grandparent, (2) Ages and stages, and (3) Special Aspects of Grandparenting. The appendix includes guides on toys and play equipment, children's books and records, and books on parenting for grandparents.


Results of a reader poll are presented. The author states the results indicate that the topic of grandparenting needs more attention in the magazine. A pledge is made to provide additional coverage in future editions.
CONTACT FOR ASSISTANCE

County Cooperative Extension Service (under county government in telephone book)

Family science, aging, human development, education or psychology department at a state college or university

County adult education departments

Local library

Foster Grandparent Program
1100 Vermont Avenue, NW
Room 6100
Washington, D.C. 20525
(202) 634-9355

National Council on the Aging, Inc.
600 Maryland Avenue, SW
West Wing 100
Washington, D.C. 20024
(202) 479-1200

American Association of Retired Persons
1909 K. Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20024
(202) 479-1200
This PATHFINDER resulted from the author's research at the National Agricultural Library while on sabbatical leave from The University of Maryland during the summer and fall of 1989. Using database searches of AGRICOLA, Psycinfo, Social Scisearch, ERIC, Family Resources and Dissertation Abstracts International, relevant references were reviewed and annotated. It is authored by:

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