

40 WAYS TO CREATE A **GRANDPARENT LEGACY** THAT WILL REBOUND TO ETERNITY

1. Time and connection is all that is often necessary. Create time where you and the grandchild are together and doing things together. Parental warmth is the key to successful faith transmission.
2. Hobbies and interests - create a hobby that you can involve your grandchildren in. Model trains, wood turning, cooking, sewing, fishing - the list is endless and so are the memories created.
3. Rituals, routines and rhythms. Let your grandchild in on these, going to church, morning/evening devotions, prayer and bible study etc. Let them see your habits but also involve them in these.
4. Pick up your grandchildren and take them to church with you. Especially if the parents don't attend regularly.
5. Read the Bible together even if it is just via internet.
6. Service activities - let your grandchild serve with you as you serve - soup kitchens, community centres, meals on wheels etc.
7. Special events and celebrations. Make the effort to show up for these or at least send something to make these events special, e.g., birthdays, holidays, school events etc.
8. Build something together. Go-carts, sheds, aviaries and dollhouses. Do them together with your grandchild.
9. Read stories - take time to read the stories of Kings and Queens, dungeons and dragons, paradise lost and regained. Children love stories and stories give our children the weapons they need to defeat the dragons. C.S Lewis is always a favourite.
10. Tell your story. Children love to hear the stories of your life and that of your ancestors. This passes on the family story but also creates identity, security and resilience.
11. Take your grandchildren on an excursion or a trip. These memory events provide solid anchor points for our grandchildren.
12. Make meal times special. Actually, turning off technology and sharing a home cooked meal around the table is something that many children do not get enough of, yet the values passed on, stories told and the memories created are awesome.
13. Get out in nature. The protective factors of just being 'lost in the bush together' is enormous and the sense of awe and wonder is a shared experience that will leave an indelible mark on your grandchild.
14. Show up regularly - sometimes family relationships can be strained. Keep showing up, contacting, sending gifts etc. to your grandchild.
15. Take some time to write your God story out so that your children and children's children can know it and have a copy of it.
16. Set up grandparent/grandchild dates where it is just you and the child going out together to a cafe/restaurant or similar.
17. Go visit a museum together to help your grandchild get a sense of what it was like when you grew up.
18. Use school holidays to take the grandchildren on short trips. Trains, planes and ferries are all awesome adventures for grandchildren.
19. Instant messaging and video conferencing is awesome for grandchildren who live a distance away. E.g., play online games, read stories, do hobbies together etc.
20. Snail mail - grand children love getting letters, cards and parcels sent to them. It is a rarity these days and is something they really appreciate.
21. Audio and video recordings of you reading a book or a few of your favourite children's books and sending them with the books to your grandchildren is fun.

22. Grow a garden together (flowers or veg) and enjoy the time spent as well as the produce.
23. Have an open-door policy. Let your grandchildren know that they are welcome at your place any time.
24. Visit your grandchild's school and church. They will enjoy showing you off.
25. Let your children know that you welcome pick up and drop offs and baby-sitting. This brings relief and security to most busy parents.
26. Send your child a box of chocolate kisses. Ask them to give your grandchild a 'kiss' from you each day.
27. Once a year be sure to have a picture taken with each grandchild. Frame it and send it to them with a note expressing how much you appreciate them.
28. Set up a nana and grandpa wall in your house and make sure that there is a picture of each child and grandchild on it.
29. Pray for and with your grandchildren. Being a prayer warrior is a privilege and the fact that the grandchild knows that you are in their ball court is awesome.
30. Send a jar with the exact number of M&M's until your next visit or when some special event is occurring. Have them eat one each day.
31. Get a copy of or research your family tree or fill it out together with your grandchild's help.
32. Begin a life's lesson book. Each week write down some of the lessons you learned. When it is full, send it to your grandchild.
33. Pick a day where you will both do random acts of kindness for the day. At the end of the day call each other and debrief.
34. Make your grandchildren a crocheted or patchwork quilt.
35. Write little notes on cards that you can leave all over your grandchild's place after you have gone.
36. Play board games together. Chess and draughts are classics. Send your children gift cards to a bookstore to buy their favourite books.
37. Have a lollipop jar at your house that the kids know they can raid when they visit.
38. Set up a secret bank account for your grandchildren so that you can create a nest egg for their first car purchase or something similar.
39. Go the extra mile to be in their picture. Children and grandchildren grow up so quickly. Go ahead, spoil them. It is your divine right.
40. Grandparents who spend significant time with their grandchildren are making a significant investment in the future. This is an investment that will put your grandchildren in a good place for this life but is also an investment that will rebound down to eternity.

FINAL WORDS OF WISDOM - Remember no grandchild/grandparent is perfect; and no relationship will be perfect. There will always be in-law and out-law problems. What you as a grandparent need to do is to be the God-like figure to your family. Love greatly, forgive graciously, always maintain a non-judgemental attitude and always strive to go the extra mile to be in your family's picture. Never give up striving for the right relationship with your children and grandchildren. God is not calling for perfect grandparents, he is calling for grandparents who love God, who make mistakes and are forgiven, who model the Kingdom values of love, justice, grace, mercy and forgiveness. This modelling is far more powerful than any sermon, book or video. Go ahead be real, be you! Your family and grandchildren will thank you for it!