

TODAY'S FUTURE

To Be A Grandparent

By: Leslie Crandall Extension Educator | The Learning Child

I am fairly new at this grandparenting thing. And it has completely taken me by surprise! I am delighted, thrilled, and absolutely love being a grandparent to my 6 grandchildren. I love watching them grow, learn, and develop! I also love observing that my adult children – the moms and dads – have grown and matured into the loving, capable, and understanding parents that they are.

In becoming a grandparent, it's important to understand that grandparenting isn't the same thing as parenting. It is true that, as grandparents, we get to interact with grandchildren on a level that doesn't require the daily routine and discipline that the parenting roles requires. This results in a close, loving, and playful bond with the 'grands' that can lead to continuity and stability in a child's life, opportunities to learn and play, and provide a feeling of connectedness. Grandparents are important in strengthening the family bonds that are so important to children, parents, and grandparents alike.

So, I have learned that, in order to be a 'good grandparent', I support the parent's role; be helpful when possible, totally enjoy being with my grandchildren, and revel in the pure love and joy that they bring to my life! It's a great time to be a grandparent! What do you enjoy most about being a grandparent?

Go Fish!

Planning a Safe Family Fishing Adventure



Fishing is a popular form of outdoor recreation this time of year. Fishing with your kids can offer benefits to both mental and physical health, while strengthening family connections and teaching life skills. It is important that water safety precautions are in place and children are supervised at all times to ensure everyone has a safe and good time.

Why go fishing? Research suggests that children benefit from the opportunity to play outdoors, where they can explore and enjoy natural environments. Access to green space is associated with improved mental well-being, overall health and cognitive development of children. It promotes attention restoration, memory, competence, supportive social groups, self-discipline, moderates stress, improves behaviors and symptoms of ADHD and was even associated with higher standardized test scores for children.

Physical Activity: According to the 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Advisory Committee Scientific Report, "Opportunities to encourage the adoption of lifetime physical activities (e.g., leisure-time pursuits, noncompetitive sports) should be encouraged among all youth. This could help youth identify activities during childhood that they could enjoy and participate in across the lifespan, including outside of school."

Most think of fishing as a relaxing, leisurely activity, and while true that fishing is considered a light-intensity physical activity, research suggests that even bouts of less-intense movement are beneficial to health. Fishing can be made a more physically active pursuit by wading into the water or repeatedly casting a line, and many fishing spots require some walking, hiking or paddling to access.

What do I need to go fishing? According to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the essentials for fishing are simple: "A stick and string or inexpensive rod and reel, a supply of small hooks and weights and a few bobbers are all that is needed. Even the bait can be simple by using cheap pantry items like corn, lunchmeat or bread. Keep it simple and as you gain experience, experiment with advanced techniques and equipment."

Resources to help: If you are new to fishing, know that it is usually not too difficult to find a friend or family member who would be happy to share their pastime with you. There are also great on-line resources available and here are a few websites to check out. If you are not a Nebraska resident, you may want to obtain additional information that is specific to your state.

- [Fishing Guide from Nebraska Game and Parks \(http://outdoornebraska.gov/aquaticeducation/\)](http://outdoornebraska.gov/aquaticeducation/)
- [Area Guides on Where to Fish, including Family-Friendly Lakes in Nebraska \(http://outdoornebraska.gov/wheretofish/\)](http://outdoornebraska.gov/wheretofish/)
- [Buying a Fishing License \(https://www.fws.gov/fishing/FishingLicense.html\)](https://www.fws.gov/fishing/FishingLicense.html)
- [Nebraska Fishing Rules and Regulations \(http://outdoornebraska.gov/fishing/\)](http://outdoornebraska.gov/fishing/)
- [Fishing in Nebraska Schools \(FINS\) \(http://outdoornebraska.gov/fins/\)](http://outdoornebraska.gov/fins/)
- [Water Safety for Children \(https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html\)](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html)

[The Great Outdoors Holds Great Opportunity for Your Child](#)

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As a child, I remember running around barefoot with my siblings, exploring woods, climbing trees, and building forts. Oh, the memories. I had scrapes, bruises, and even stitches at times, but they were worth it. In addition to the great memories made, did you know there are endless benefits of simply letting your child run outside and play? The next time you're deciding whether to let your child play inside or outside, you might want to consider all the opportunities that come with the great outdoors.

Increased Physical Activity - Although it seems as if your child has endless energy, letting them play outside can help release some bottled up energy. Everything from walking, running, and jumping around, to climbing trees and carrying building supplies for forts, contributes to the development of strength, balance, and coordination. According to the Stateofobesity.org, Nebraska ranks 5th with a 2-4-year-old obesity rate of 16.9%. Yikes! Just think how our rates might decrease if children spent more time outside.

Development of Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills - Developing these skills directly affects the creation of strong, healthy, capable children. Gross motor skills help your child run, walk, and climb. Fine motor skills are used when they pick up sticks or make a nature bracelet with all of their outdoor treasures. Development of these skills requires lots of practice, and outdoor adventures offer just that.



Photo source: The Learning Child

Social Interaction - No matter if your child is playing with siblings, friends, or you, they are gaining social interaction. Being outside with limited toys can push children to expand their imaginations. When combining different imaginations, new ideas and brainstorming skills are created. Teamwork is also strengthened. Whether they are 'playing house' or building something, your child will be working together with others, and learning teamwork young could benefit your child in their future endeavors.

Use of Imagination - I just mentioned that when your child is outside, it can force them to use their imaginations. Children need to experience boredom at times in order to create new levels of play. Once they do, they can see objects in new ways, such as using mud to make cake or pretending a stick is a mixing spoon. Also, when your child has free time, they have time to daydream, and that can lead to some of their most creative ideas.

It is the beginning of summer and that means it's the perfect time for your child to go enjoy all of the benefits that the great outdoors offers!

Serving Up Salsa

For many families, one of the joys of summer is tending a garden. If you have a garden, consider planting basic salsa ingredients: tomatoes, peppers, onions, and cilantro. Even if you do not have the space for a garden, a container garden is a great option. You can start plants in pots inside and move them outside when the weather permits.



Salsa is simple to prepare and can include many different fruits and vegetables depending on what you have on hand or what you are craving. Gardening can teach children about where food comes from. Have them help prepare the foods from the garden and it will increase the chances that they will try different fruits and vegetables. Making salsa is also something that children of all ages can help with. Age appropriate kitchen tasks related to making salsa include:

At 2 years:

- Pick produce out of the garden
- Rinse fruits and vegetables

At 3 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Add ingredients
- Name and count foods

At 4 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Help measure ingredients

At 5 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Cut soft fruits and vegetables with a dull knife

At 6-8 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Wash dishes
- Put away ingredients

At 9-12 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Follow a recipe
- Use small appliances like blenders and mini-choppers

Fresh Salsa

Yield: 14 servings

Ingredients:

- 4 cups chopped fresh tomatoes, washed
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion, washed
- 1 jalapeno, seeded and chopped (optional), washed
- 1 Tablespoon vinegar or lime juice
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon salt, optional

Directions:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. For better flavor, let the ingredients stand in the refrigerator for at least one hour.
3. Refrigerate until ready to eat.
4. Serve with veggies, tortilla chips, quesadillas, or on a salad or baked potato.



Nutrition Information: Calories 13, Total Fat 0g, Saturated Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 3.3mg, Total Carbohydrates 3g, Fiber 0.7g