



Grandparenting

Talking It Out: A Tool for Establishing Good Communication Between Parents and Grandparents

The following tool is designed to help you and your adult child work together to promote your grandchildren's healthy development. This tool can be especially helpful for families where grandparents are providing regular child care for their grandchild(ren).

Asking Your Adult Child to Talk

It may seem a little gimmicky to suggest using this tool with your child. However, establishing effective communication will greatly benefit your grandchild (and ultimately you and your adult child as well.) If you think this process will be useful, simply share with your child how much you love the chance to see your grandchild growing and changing every day and that you think it would be a good idea for each of you to share your experiences caring for her—what you are each learning about her, and how you can support each other in the process.

Using This Tool

Make a copy for both yourself and your adult child. Each of you should complete Part One separately, then meet to share your responses and to complete Part Two together. Discussing your responses will help you see one another's perspective. From there, you can discuss how to support your grandchild's strengths and needs.

You can also use this tool as a "conversation starter" with your adult child. Print out a copy and simply talk through the questions. It is important that each of you takes a turn to talk while the other person listens without interrupting.

Working Together to Support _____ (child's name)

Part One: Your Thoughts and Feelings

- If I had to describe _____ in 10 words, they would include: _____
(child's name)

- What I like most about _____ is: _____
(child's name)

- What I find most challenging about _____ is _____
(child's name)

because _____

- The kinds of activities _____ enjoys most are _____
(child's name)

I think this is because _____,
(child's name)

- What upsets _____ most is _____
(child's name)

I think this is because _____

- To comfort _____,
(child's name)



Relationship between Grandparent and Parent

- **For grandparent:** Challenges I have in working with my child and his/her partner around taking care of my grandchild are:

_____.

- Challenges I think my child and his/her partner might have with me are:

_____.

- **For parent:** Challenges I have in working with my parent around taking care of my child are:

_____.

- Challenges I think my parent might have with me are:

_____.

Part Two: Using What You Know to Support _____.

(For grandparents and parents to complete together)

(child's name)

- We think _____'s greatest strengths are: _____
(child's name)

_____.

- We think _____ needs help with: _____
(child's name)

_____.

- These are our goals for _____: (For example, to help her develop better self-control.)
(child's name)

_____.

- These are ways we can each help _____ reach these goals:
(child's name)

(For example, discussing together what kind of limits we want to set and how to enforce them consistently.)

_____.

- Here are the challenges we face in working well together and how can we overcome them to support _____:
(child's name)

_____.