



Summer 2009
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GrandNews

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Newsletter of The Consultation Center, 389 Whitney Avenue New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 789-7645 www.theconsultationcenter.org

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ANNOUNCEMENT:

Send us your email address!

Beginning in 2009, GrandNews will be distributed by e-mail in an effort to go "green" and generate less paper combined with our response to the tight economy. In order to continue receiving your own copy of GrandNews, please provide your e-mail address to Jsylvania@theconsultationcenter.org. Otherwise you can access the electronic version of the newsletter and information on our programs at: www.theconsultationcenter.org



Grandmother Gerri Graham and grandson Michael enjoy a game of checkers during a quiet moment at this year's camping weekend.

Camp Hazen Grandfamily Camping Retreat Weekend

Since 2001 Grandparents Raising Grandchildren has sponsored a camping weekend for grandfamilies. Each year the program grows and more grandfamilies participate in a really good time. It is a chance to sit and connect with old friends and to make new ones. Grandparents can for most of the weekend just rest if they so choose. No cooking, all meals are prepared by the staff at Camp Hazen. The food is great. We began our weekend this year exiting the bus to the smell of burgers and hotdogs cooking on the outside grill. The grandchildren are busy from early morning till evening with a variety of activities that include canoeing, swimming, arts and crafts, climbing wall and archery all supervised by an excellent campers staff. In the evening there is a campfire to roast marshmallows and enjoy a simple activity. The relationships that develop carry throughout the year and many families return year after year.



*****TEEN CLUB*****

The Teen Club, made up of teenagers who are currently being raised by a grandparent member of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren has just launched the summer program. The Club is a social activities group that enjoys opportunities for a good time in a safe environment. The first adventure was a trip to the movies with lunch. The Club is under the supervision of Ms. Diane Linda Staton, a member and grandmother raising two granddaughters. The group intends to plan an activity each month. Opportunities to make friends outside of their normal social circle will give teens a chance to talk things over with other teens having the similar life experiences. Sometimes it is helpful to be able to talk to someone outside of your normal social circle that you don't go to school with but who understands your issues. Having a chance to have fun with new friends provides those opportunities for new support systems. For information about joining any member raising a high school student may call Kathleen 789-7645

"I get by with a little help from my friends"

Author: [John Lennon](#)



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BOYS
CLUB

Michael Badger, Jay'son Fraiser, and Michael Graham, members of the newly formed **Young Boys Club** enjoy a moment of game time at a support group meeting. The Club provides social opportunities for member grandson's between the ages of seven and eleven. The boys have enjoyed bowling together and have additional outings planned for the summer months. For information about joining call Kathleen 203-789-7645



Graduation Party



Grandparent Program Coordinator Kathleen Lutz gives her grandson Peter Lutz a big smooch as he accepts his congratulations and gift from Advisory Board President Herman Badger upon his eighth grade graduation. Peter was one of 14 grandchildren whose academic accomplishments were celebrated at the Second Annual Graduation Party at Saint Thomas Church in New Haven. The evening also served to kick off a new “College Culture Program” funded by Annie E. Casey Foundation dedicated to making college a goal for grandchildren. Ms. Chaka McEntire, of Higher Heights Youth Empowerment Programs, Inc. will partner with The Consultation Center on the new cost free project. Grandparents of 11th and 12th graders are encouraged to register as soon as possible.

Congresswomen Rosa DeLauro sent the following letter to the grandparents :

“Dear Friends,


Thank you for the kind invitation to join you this evening. Though I cannot be with you, I wanted to take a moment to congratulate all the children and grandparents being honored this evening. What an inspiration you are!

For those children celebrating a graduation tonight—whether from high school or kindergarten—congratulations! Education is the cornerstone of success. A quality education will give you a strong foundation on which to build your future. So whether you are headed to first grade, beginning your high school studies, or off to college— you are well on your way to making your own mark on our world.

I want to extend a special note of thanks to the grandparents here this evening. I have three grandchildren myself and I know that each of you here tonight could not be more proud of your own. By joining Grand Parents Raising Grandchildren, you have demonstrated your commitment to ensuring that your grandchildren have every opportunity open to them. Your love and guidance has made all the difference in their lives.

I am sorry that I cannot be with you tonight. Congratulations and best wishes. With warmest regards.

Sincerely, ROSA DeLAURO, Member of Congress”



From the desk of KATHLEEN

Grandparents Play Critical Child Rearing Role in Connecticut

Nearly every one of us can think of a fond childhood memory that relates to our grandparents. A special thing they did for us that was comforting and makes us remember the way they made us feel safe. For many Connecticut children grandparents do much more. The estimates of grandparent headed households in our state obtained from the last census, completed nearly ten years ago, put the number of children in direct care of a grandparent at about 40,000 here in Connecticut. Professionals working with families suggest the current number far exceeds that number.

How does this happen? Well, in the current economic crisis sometimes the loss of a job can create the loss of a home. When parents cannot pay the rent and are struggling with financial crisis they turn to their own parents for help. Most of our families pull together in the crisis, sharing the limited resources they have. Children often need to move into the home of their grandparents, sometimes with a parent, sometimes without either parent. At other times parents fall prey to the ugliness of substance abuse. We all know the toll drugs and alcohol take on our families and the impact they have on our children. In other families the mental health issues of a parent can play a part in the breakdown of a child's family. In extreme cases child abuse or neglect are the reasons a child cannot remain in the care of parents.

Where do the children in Connecticut go when they need care and a home? For a small minority the State's foster care system provides the answer. But only those children without a viable family option are placed in a foster family. The majority of children enter the home of a relative, most usually the home of their grandparent. Almost all do so without ever becoming involved with the Child Welfare System. Grandfamilies are created when a grandparent seeks guardianship of a grandchild in one of our State's Probate Courts. Temporary custody is granted to a grandfamily so the child can remain in the extended family. Research tells us that children cared for by their grandparents are doing well. The trauma and loss they experience from the breakdown of their family is significantly diminished because in most cases their lives remain intact otherwise. They often remain in the same community.

How are grandfamilies managing this important role? For the most part they are doing a fantastic job. They continue to nurture and cherish their grandchildren. For many managing the issues of aging and limited income is a daily challenge. Learning to parent in a new age can require some training and support as the rules of child rearing change with the times. Worrying about the child's parents can be stressful and at times heartbreaking. Yet, we can be proud of a generation of Connecticut citizens that rise to the challenge of parenting for the second time around.

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.theconsultationcenter.org

**THE GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN PROGRAM
OFFERS
TWO GROUPS FOR GRANDPARENTS**



Morning Group: “The Coffee Hour”

- Meets the first and third Monday of each month, 10:30-12:00 noon at The Consultation Center, 389 Whitney Ave, New Haven.
- The group is grandparent-driven. Members decide topics & direction.
- Come for open conversation, resource sharing, program development, information about financial help, and advocacy for grandparents.
- No child supervision is available.

Evening Group: “Conversations and Education”

- Meets the third Thursday of each month 6:00-8:00 pm, at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 830 Whitney Ave., New Haven
- Light dinner for grandparents and grandchildren
- Occasional Educational Speaker and Interactive Workshops
- Fun and enriching children’s programming for kids 3 to 12
- Teens who want to help out are welcome.

**For more information, please call Kathleen Lutz
Coordinator of Grandparent Programs, at (203) 789-7645**