Grandparents are very important to children. They give lots of love and are a precious link with family, culture and the past.

**Grandparents are special**

It is natural for children or ‘grannies’ to spend time with grandparents.

Grandparents can give children:

- love and a place where they feel safe and secure
- a sense of belonging to family, culture and community.

**Grandparents can:**

- play, talk and have fun with children
- talk about family and culture, and tell stories from the past
- listen to children’s worries – tell them you love them
- show children how to do things – cooking, art, craft, gardening, home chores
- take children out and about and to cultural events.

Grandparents help ‘grannies’ to build identity as an Aboriginal person.

Grandparents and children build special bonds that last a lifetime.
What children need

> your kindness and patience
> someone to understand their feelings
> regular routines such as mealtimes and bedtimes
> encouragement to learn – share books, stories, songs. Ask about their school work
> to know what the rules are in your home – what is OK and not OK
> to be shielded from adult problems.

Remember it’s OK to say ‘No’ to children when you need to.

When children live with grandparents

Some children stay with grandparents overnight, during school holidays or for a short time to give parents a break. Sometimes children live with grandparents for a long time. This can happen suddenly. Grandparents usually say ‘Yes’ no matter what. It can mean:

> a full house
> lots to do
> less time for you
> extra cost
> impact on your physical and mental health.

Children can feel:

> happy and excited
> unhappy, worried, angry or confused – they just want their mum or dad.
Getting along with your adult children

It’s best for grandchildren if you get along with their parents. This can be hard if there is conflict. When you talk with your adult children:

> listen and talk things through
> try not to criticise or take over
> ask how you can help
> suggest services that might be useful.

As much as you can:

> put grandchildren’s needs first
> don’t take sides
> give people time to work things out.

If your adult children don’t take your advice – you might have to accept they do things differently!

Help for grandparents

> Ask Centrelink about support you might be entitled to if ‘grannies’ are living with you.
> Make sure you get concessions on things like gas, electricity, rates, transport.
> Find out about services in your area such as child care or respite.
> If children need help at school, talk with their teachers.
> Contact your local Aboriginal health service – they can help you find what you need.
> Join a women’s or men’s group and share ideas with others.
Services

Aboriginal health services
Adelaide
Nunkuwarrin Yunti, Adelaide:  
Phone 8406 1600
Wonggangga Turtpandi Primary Health Care Centre,  
Port Adelaide:  
Phone 8240 9611
Maringga Turtpandi, Hillcrest:  
Phone 7425 8900
Southern Adelaide Local Health Network,  
Aboriginal Primary Health Services:  
Noarlunga Phone 8384 9577,  
Clovelly Park Phone 8179 5900
Muna Paiendi Health Service, Elizabeth:  
Phone 8182 9206
Country centres
Pangula Mannamurna Health Service, Mount Gambier:  
Phone 8724 7270
Ceduna/Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service:  
Phone 8626 2600
Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service:  
Phone 8683 0162
Southern Fleurieu Health Service, Aboriginal Health Service,  
Victor Harbor:  
Phone 8552 0600
Pika Wiya Community Health Centre, Port Augusta:  
Phone 8642 9999
Riverland Community Health Service, Barmera Hospital:  
Phone 8588 0420
Nunyara Wellbeing Centre, Whyalla:  
Phone 8649 9900
Murray Bridge Aboriginal Primary Health Care Unit:  
Phone 8535 8800
Port Pirie Regional Health Service, Aboriginal Health Team:  
Phone 8638 1100
Umoona Tjutagku Health Service, Coober Pedy:  
Phone 8672 5255
Tullawon Health Service Inc, Yalata:  
Phone 8625 6237
Nganampa Health Council, Alice Springs:  
Phone 8952 5300

Helplines
Parent Helpline: Phone 1300 364 100  
For advice on child health and parenting
Poisons Information Line: Phone 13 11 26, 24 hours
Beyond Blue: Phone 1300 224 636, 24 hours  
Speak to a mental health professional about how you feel no matter how big or small the problem  
www.beyondblue.org.au
Lifeline: Phone 13 11 14, 24 hours  
Crisis support and suicide prevention  
www.lifeline.org.au
Child Abuse Report Line: Phone 13 14 78, 24 hours  
If you are worried a child is being abused or neglected.  
You can ask to speak to an Aboriginal worker if available
Aboriginal Domestic Violence and Aboriginal Family  
Violence Gateway Service: Phone 1800 800 098, 24 hours  
Contact the Gateway Service to talk with someone about your situation. They can tell you about services in your area, including emergency accommodation  
www.gatewayservices.org.au

For grandparents
Centrelink Grandparents Advisers: Phone 1800 245 965  
Information on payments and services available
Grandparents for Grandchildren SA: Phone 8212 1937  
Support and information for grandparents  
www.gfgsa.com.au
SA Government:  

Health and parenting
Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS):  
Phone 1300 733 606, 9am–4.30pm, Mon to Fri for an appointment. You can be linked with an Aboriginal staff member  
www.cyh.com
Healthdirect: Phone 1300 022 222, 24 hours  
To speak to a nurse  
www.healthdirect.gov.au
SA Dental Service: Phone 8222 8222  
8.30am–4.30pm, Mon to Fri  
Information on dental services for children and adults
Parenting SA: For more Parent Easy Guides  
www.parenting.sa.gov.au
Raising Children Network: For parenting information  
www.raisingchildren.net.au
Kidsafe SA: Phone 8161 6318  
Information on safety, including car seats  
www.kidsafesa.com.au

Parenting SA
A partnership between the Department for Education and Child Development and the Women's and Children's Health Network.
Phone (08) 8303 1660 • www.parenting.sa.gov.au
Important: This information is not intended to replace advice from a qualified practitioner.
Banner artwork by Dreamtime Public Relations.