



DR. MADDEN'S FAMILY WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

MADDEN FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC

Grandparents and Chiropractic

Many grandparents have found themselves the primary caregiver for their grandchildren. Whether it's because both their children or their spouses are working so they have offered to provide daycare or unforeseen circumstances have put them in a position of actually raising their grandchildren, it is estimated that over 2.7 million grandparents have this responsibility. Studies have shown that close to 7% of all grandparents provide extensive caregiving for their grandchildren (spend more than 30 hours per week providing primary care).

Benefits for Grandparents

Beyond the obvious benefit of creating a lasting bond with their grandchildren, science has shown that there are health benefits associated with being their caregivers. For example, a study by the National Health Service showed that grandparents who babysat their grandchildren actually live longer than those who don't.

The study looked at over 500 adults over the age of 70 for a span of 20 years. Participants were interviewed and tested in 2-year intervals and asked about the time they spent with their grandkids when the parents weren't present. The participants were split into three separate groups. The research proved that the caregiving grandparents had a 37% chance of living longer when compared to non-caregiving grandparents. Additionally, results suggested that seniors providing help to their adult children had a 57% lower risk of mortality than those who didn't.

Other studies have shown that babysitting grandchildren at least one day a week has enormous positive effects on elderly brain function. Grandparents that watch their grandchildren tend to be more physically active even after the kids have left while also being more social, which is known to keep the brain healthy.

Additional studies, when testing grandmothers who regularly watched one or more grandchildren at least once a week, found that overall memory as well as verbal fluency and recall all tested higher than those elderly women who did not babysit. And still another study found that grandparents who spend too much time alone and away from their family members had a 26% higher death risk than those who were more socially-engaged.

In other words, there are several cognitive and physical health benefits to be found in babysitting or being a caregiver for grandchildren.



MANY PROGRESSIVE GRANDPARENTS RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF REGULAR CHIROPRACTIC CARE FOR THEIR GRANDCHILDREN, NO MATTER THEIR AGE

Benefits for Grandchildren

Just as there are benefits for grandparents, the grandchildren benefits as well. Beyond the importance of having a bond with their grandparents, children that have this close relationship tend to be more emotionally stable as grandparents offer a built-in support system. There are just some things that children will feel more comfortable discussing with a grandparent as opposed to mom or dad.

A study out of the University of Oxford found that children who were close to their grandparents had fewer emotional and behavioral problems, were better able to cope with traumatic life events, and even responded better to bullying at school. Having that close relationship with a grandparent can provide a sense of security that helps them through adverse childhood experiences.

Additional research suggests that this emotional stability may come from having a better understanding of their family dynamic, feeling secure in where they fit into the family and their role. This provides a strong identity which can make children more resilient and feel more in control of their lives, even if the outside world seems out of control.

Another study out of Boston College found a link between close emotional relationships with grandparents and adult grandchildren to lower rates of depression for both. While the grandparent benefits by being exposed to new ideas and feeling less archaic, for lack of a better term, the grandchildren benefit from the wisdom the grandparents have gained through their life experiences. There is a level of mutual love and respect fostered throughout this relationship that allows both sides to value and appreciate the knowledge the other possesses. This may help prevent feelings of irrelevance or worthlessness that are sometimes found at the base of depression.

Patterns of Subluxation

Of course, to actually be a caregiver to grandchildren, grandparents need to be able to keep up with them. Having low back, hip, or joint pain makes that a little harder, which is why most progressive grandparents see a Family Wellness Chiropractor.

Today's grandparents probably didn't see a chiropractor when they were younger. It's only been in the past few decades that parents are beginning to understand the value of chiropractic care for children. So most elderly patients are being diagnosed with chronic postural or spinal degeneration. While postural degeneration can be determined with a physical exam, spinal degenerations are typically only found with an x-ray.

Most severe degenerations are the result of a childhood fall or tumble that remained undiagnosed and untreated. If caught soon enough, that issue may have been able to be addressed before it became a chronic problem. However, now that it's been found, regular Chiropractic Care can make it easier to keep up with active grandchildren.

Pediatric Chiropractic Care

As a regular patient, it's likely that you've come to recognize the value of pediatric chiropractic care when you see more and more children at your Family Wellness Chiropractor, something that you almost certainly didn't even know existed when you or your children were younger.

Similar to how dentistry is preventative care for the teeth, pediatric chiropractic care is preventative care of the spine. More and more parents, recognizing the benefit of their children having a healthy spine and nervous system, make sure their children are seen by a Family Wellness Chiropractor regularly. But what about your grandchildren when the parents are too busy with work during our normal office hours?

What to Expect from an Exam

Depending upon the age of your grandchild, an exam may include a postural exam where your chiropractor will look for a head, shoulder, or hip tilt. Your chiropractor may do a leg check or other routine examination that will reveal if your grandchild has a spinal misalignment.

For younger children, infants especially, your Family Wellness Chiropractor is trained to do gentle examinations that can find areas of edema or tenderness in the spine. These areas of discomfort could be a sign of subluxation that may be corrected with gentle adjustments.

If your grandchild is old enough, your chiropractor may want to do an x-ray to look for any areas of misalignment in the spine or loss of natural curve which can be corrected before they become more chronic concerns.

In Summary

Many progressive grandparents recognize the value of regular chiropractic care for their grandchildren, no matter their age, so much so that they take on not just the time commitment of care but the financial commitment as well, recognizing that a healthy spine now may mean fewer future health issues. So, talk to your Family Wellness Chiropractor today about scheduling an exam for your grandchild.

RESOURCES: DR. CLAUDIA ANRIG @ GENERATIONS

DEAR PATIENT,
DR. MADDEN IS DEDICATED TO PROVIDING YOU WITH THE ABSOLUTE BEST IN FAMILY WELLNESS CARE. SO TAKE A MOMENT TODAY TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR FAMILY WELLNESS CHIROPRACTOR ANY CONCERNS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING YOUR FAMILY'S OVERALL HEALTH AND WELLNESS.

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