



Grandparents Corner

March 2018

Helpful Tips for New Caregivers

The needs of children can seem overwhelming, especially if you are unexpectedly thrust into the role of being their primary caregiver. First, focus on the basic needs, such as finding a safe place for the child to sleep; providing them with food, clothing and any medication they might need; and getting the right kind of equipment, such as a stroller, car seat and crib. If the child is older, gather as much information as you can about their school and other activities they may be involved in.

What documents do I need? Make a binder or folder where you keep all of these important papers so that you can easily find them when you need them. You should have:

- Birth certificates, death certificates (if your grandchild's parent is deceased), marriage records or divorce decrees for their parents.
- Social Security cards (or at least the numbers) for the children.
- Medical and dental records.
- Power of Attorney, custody, guardianship, adoption or other legal papers.
- Consent forms signed by parents for medical care and education.
- School papers, such as report cards, evaluations, registration, etc.
- Proof of your grandchild's income and assets (child support payments, trust fund, etc.).
- Proof of your income and assets (if you apply for public benefits, you'll need these).
- Citizenship papers for you or for your grandchildren.
- Military papers for you or their parents.

Who do I need to talk to? Talk with the key people in your grandchildren's lives, such as teachers, pediatricians, school social workers, and any lawyers or child welfare professionals who have been involved with your grandchild. These are some questions you may want to ask:

- What do I need to know about my grandchild's care and support?
- Do you have any resource materials to help me raise my grandchild?
- Do you have any classes or online training that will help me?
- What services do you offer for my grandchild?
- Is there any money to help me with the unplanned expenses of raising my grandchild?
- What are the schedules I need to know about (for health care, school work, legal deadlines)?
- Who else should I talk to who can help me and/or my grandchild?

What phone numbers I do I need?

- Emergency numbers (911, poison control, etc.).
- Grandparent support groups and resource centers.
- Family members and friends who can help.
- School, child care or preschool.
- Doctors
- Dentist
- Counselors, social workers, therapists.
- Babysitters or respite care.
- Before/After school programs.
- Youth activity programs (YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, Scouts, mentoring programs, etc.).
- Community organizations such as community centers and faith-based organizations.
- Children's services or child welfare office.
- Area Agency on Aging

Source: AARP www.aarp.org

QUICK QUIZ

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Whether you are a paid caregiver, a family caregiver, or a patient, HIPAA rules affect you. Read the issue and answer True or False to the questions below to test your knowledge.

1. *Health care providers can leave detailed messages on voice mail, cell phones, or home phones without asking the patient's permission. T F*
2. *HIPAA refers to a federal law. T F*
3. *HIPAA includes privacy and confidentiality of medical information. T F*
4. *HIPAA only protects the privacy of children. T F*
5. *Privacy rules apply to the spoken and written word, as well as to computerized records.
T F*
6. *Information and records can be withheld if the health care provider cannot verify the identity of the person requesting the information or their legal right to that information. T F*
7. *Privacy rules include the provision for individuals to request a copy of their records. T F*
8. *Health care providers can be fined for breaches of the HIPAA law. T F*
9. *As a caregiver, it is always best to discuss the wishes of the one in your care regarding his or her preferences for sharing of health information. T F*
10. *As a family member, you would automatically have rights to another family member's health information. T F*

KEY: 1. F 2. T 3. T 4. F 5. T 6. T 7. T 8. T 9. T 10. F