

Family Legacy- Sharing With the Next Generation

*“Two great things you can give your children:
one is roots, the other is wings.”*

-Hodding Carter

Family gatherings at holiday times are a great time to share our roots, our values and special memories. These moments are rare in a busy society. Even when it may not seem obvious, children do listen and are influenced by values, ethics, and behaviors they see and hear. Take advantage of opportunities at this time of year to reflect upon lessons learned from parents and grandparents. Talk about the qualities of your family that have been passed down to other generations. What qualities bind you together?

For young children, tell them about the day they were born- what was your reaction? Did you write them a letter or make a video? What did that moment when you first held them mean to you?

For school age children, are you using a special dish of great grandmother's to serve the mashed potatoes? Is there a special ornament on the tree or decoration that is meaningful to you?

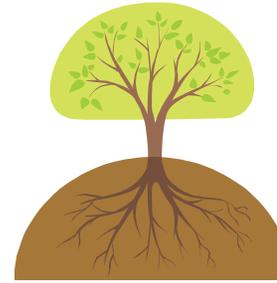
For older children, are there places you could take them that influenced your life -a tree that you loved to play in, an old family farm, your school, or church home?

Ask others what the special accomplishments in their life are. What is the best gift they have been given? What is the most memorable day in their life? What causes or organizations bring meaning to their life? How do they want to be remembered?

These conversation starters will uncover what we value and provide insight into the persons we really are. Sharing how God watches over us on our journey enriches our faith foundations.

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; one generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty act.”

-Psalms 145:3-4



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Creative Ways to Share Your Legacy

From Ancestry.com blog

- Tell interesting (fun) stories about people children know.
- Share an ancestor's story that connects with current events or location.
- Create a time-capsule with a grandchild.
- Write a letter and send it to your child, grandchild, or great grandchild. Opening and reading a real hand-written letter is still something treasured in an "email" world.
- Bring out photos of yourself as a child or younger person.
- Create a poster of your life intertwining with theirs.
- Explain the significance of photos, artwork, furniture, or hand-made items in your home.
- Visit special graves and include a stop for ice cream or something special for the child. Quality time together holds important value that cannot be purchased.
- Dig out the old baseball glove, Boy Scout badges, special recognitions, military medals and other hidden treasures.
- Share about special times or vacations you had with your parents or grandparents.
- Finally, do share family trees and records documenting personal heritage and the families' role in history.

Quality relationships require time together talking about things from the heart. There is always some tidbit of information, a lingering question, an unknown person in a photograph we wish we could ask of that loved one who has already passed. This year focus on the family members that enriches our lives, gives us roots, and encourages us to reach new heights. (And ask those questions before it is too late!)



Provided by Community of Christ Health Ministries Association
816-833-1000 ext 1262 www.HMACofChrist.org

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