

Remember?

Do you remember
When the 24th of May meant wearing white shoes, or going bare foot or planting your garden?

When kids had Sunday clothes and "best" dresses?

When we weren't all on diets or talking about going on one?

When we all didn't have credit cards?

Oh things have changed, but one thing that's changed so much is the grandparent image.

Do you remember when it seemed most grandparents lived with one of their children during their later years? There were the special chairs they sat in, and there was a dignity and grace to their every move? Gramma did the mending, prepared the vegetables and always by her side were all sorts of knitting and crocheting and the hand sewing to finish on the newly made clothes?

Those too, were the days when after the morning work was finished, the women changed into an afternoon dress just in case company dropped in. The afternoon dress in due time became the morning dress and the "good" dress was demoted to the afternoon attire. Now we throw our wash and wear dress into the automatic and by the time we've had our bath it's ready to be worn again.

Gramma and Gramps seemed to always be there to play games or read to the children. They told stories about their childhood, knew all the answers or so it seemed, and were so loving and always had a peppermint or humbug tucked away for a special treat.

We talk a great deal about the change in children, how their life style has changed but not any more than the life style of the grandparents.

The great focus this year, IYC, and what can be done for that most precious member of the family "the child". But let's just look at the role of a generation once removed. That generation who have raised their own children and now can sit back and enjoy their grandchildren.

The greatest change probably is that Gramma and Grampa are on the go as much as the children and grandchildren. So the security of availability is drastically reduced. I'm totally convinced that grandchildren accept this generation gap as a normal happening. The kids we know, are at ease telling about the projects at Brownies or the "show and tell" session in the grade 1 classroom. Their world is so full of excitement, it would never enter their minds that you wouldn't be interested or understand.

One thing for certain, when you are with your grandchildren, it should be a sharing experience. The walk in the woods or park or just down the street should be a time for talking and listening. Take time to understand a child's world.

We realize only too well that the future depends on the care and concern we give our children. We must not lose sight of the child among the many modern apparatuses. They are our hope. They need more attention and care than adults because they are helpless. So it becomes doubly important that we understand the law reform, the rights of children act and where we as adults fit into their world.

We probably all dream of a peaceful and secure future for our children so how do we help achieve all those dreams? What is the responsibility of society and the family for the development of the personality of the child?

Love, affection, understanding are some of the prime requisites given by that senior generation toward the child.

If children are to be effectively reached, the older generation must be made more receptive to changes that will benefit their children. It is therefore necessary to create a proper climate for change, to motivate, to overcome resistance to change.

Grandparents have a role to play, this may be a once in a lifetime opportunity to shape the world of tomorrow by shaping the child of to-day. The future depends on the care and concern we give our children and grandchildren.

Grandparents still have a real world around them, even if time flies and everyone is in a rush, but one thing for certain — the future of our children depends so much on a good family life.

Remember "The work will wait while you show the child the rainbow, but the rainbow won't wait until the work is done."

Margaret Zaeller

