

Planning Overview

This is a general planning guide for a Grandparents Day event. Additional information and explanations are found in the “Everything You Need to Plan Your Own Event” section of the Grandparents Day Activity Kit which is part of the *Something to Remember Me By* Legacy Project (www.somethingtoremembermeby.org).

Your event can be simple and informal, or more elaborate. Don't feel obligated to implement all of the suggestions below. Choose just those that are appropriate for your particular situation. For each item you decide to implement, you'll need to choose someone who will be responsible for the item, outline what they need to do, and set deadlines.

Planning well ahead is important to your event's success. Choose a model (including event date) and a coordinator before the school year begins. Then include the event in your school calendar, newsletters, etc. so that everyone knows the event is coming. If you're compiling a mailing list, get the names by sending a letter to parents a couple of months in advance. Send out the actual invitations to grandparents 3-4 weeks ahead, and then compile a list of attendees.

- 1. Model** – Choose the event date; name of day; format; participation; frequency; expense coverage.
- 2. Coordinator** – Choose a school administrator, teacher, parent, or grandparent.
- 3. Committee** – One person per category: mailing list & invitations; RSVPs; day schedule; assembly; teacher activity ideas; food; decorations & displays; fundraising; volunteer outreach; publicity; registration; follow-up.
- 4. Mailing List & Invitations** – Parents should be involved in choosing who to invite; consider approaching a local seniors center.
- 5. RSVPs** – Compile complete list of attendees; let teachers know who's coming; try for one grandparent/grandfriend per child.
- 6. Day Schedule** – Develop a program for the day.
 - Plan an assembly (bringing everyone together is a nice way to start the event, followed by a school tour)
 - Emphasize classroom time, with teachers choosing activities (see activity ideas in the Grandparents Day Activity Kit)
 - Send memos to teachers informing them about the entire program
 - Arrange for escorts (grandparents will not know where to go)
 - Use photographers (take photos of people and activities; consider “grandparent/grandchild portraits”)
 - Arrange for grandparent interviewers (student reporters can collect quotes from grandparents throughout the day)
- 7. Food** – Offering refreshments can add to the event's success.
 - Snacks (e.g. baking can be supplied by parents) OR
 - Full meal (usually lunch, sometimes a brunch or breakfast)
 - Coffee, tea, juice, etc.
 - Supplies (e.g. cups, plates, napkins, etc.)
 - Arrangement for chairs, tables, etc.
 - Set-up crew, food servers, and clean-up crew
- 8. Decorations & Displays** – Give grandparents something to look at and children a chance to shine.
 - Student schoolwork and art in halls
 - Assembly area (decorate with artwork, streamers, balloons, etc.)
 - Table decorations (e.g. placemats, flowers)
 - Set-up crew and clean-up crew
- 9. Fundraising** – A school full of grandparents is an opportunity!
 - Use *Something to Remember Me By* (discounts available; call 1-800-772-7765)
 - Arrange a book or craft fair
 - Run a raffle
 - Make a video of the event and sell it to grandparents afterward
- 10. Volunteer Outreach** – Use the event to build long-term involvement.
 - Identify your school's needs and create volunteer job descriptions
 - Circulate information flyers
 - Prominently display volunteer opportunities during the event
 - Have volunteer forms available (follow up after the event)
 - Start a Grandparent/Grandfriend Organization (GO)
 - Institute an annual Volunteer Grandparent/Grandfriend of the Year Award
- 11. Publicity** – Let your community know about your intergenerational initiative, be proud of what you're doing!
 - School calendar and newsletter(s)
 - School website
 - Special take-home flyer
 - Posters in local stores
 - Invite local school board officials and politicians
 - News release to local TV, radio, and newspapers
- 12. Registration** – Start the day off smoothly.
 - Plan parking and/or transportation
 - Signage (welcome, registration, washrooms, etc.)
 - Registration table (refreshments/displays should also be available)
 - Attendee list
 - Take-home kit for grandparents/grandfriends (e.g. nametag, event program, volunteer form, tip sheet, evaluation form, school map, memento)
 - Plenty of escorts (with big, bright nametags)
- 13. Enjoy the Day!**
- 14. After the Event** – Build on what you've started.
 - Thank you notes (grandparents like to feel appreciated)
 - School website (include photos, summary, quotes, stories, etc.)
 - Event scrapbook (a historical document for your school)
 - Review evaluation forms and make notes for next year's event
 - Follow up volunteer contacts