

Grannynet site sets rules for childcaring grandparents

By Katy Morton

Grannynet, the online community for grandparents, created by a mother and daughter team, has introduced a new charter to help set ground rules for people who look after their grandchildren.

The website was co-founded by Verity Gill and her mother Lorna Edwards after they realised there was a lack of information and support for grandparents looking after their grandchildren.

Lorna Edwards, who is now retired, cares for both of her grandchildren, travelling from her home in Suffolk to Essex and East Dulwich, after her daughters struggled with childcare.

Verity said, 'It was really hard finding a nursery place, as East Dulwich is a family-orientated community. I found that sending my child to nursery three days a week would cost a lot more than two days a week.'

She added, 'Mum already looks after my sister's children and offered to look after my daughter when I am working on the website and she is not at nursery.'



Lorna (l) and Verity's charter helps prevent potential conflict

In response to the growing number of grandparents caring for their grandchildren, which Verity believes has primarily been caused by the rise in childcare costs, the mother-daughter team have created the grandparents' charter.

The purpose of the charter is to

enable parents and grandparents to set clear boundaries in regards to childcare, acting as a reference for grandparents to avoid any unnecessary arguments.

Covering everything from who will discipline the child to what food the child will eat and who will provide it, Verity hopes it will

help grandparents and parents to feel more comfortable.

By setting these ground rules themselves, Verity and Lorna were able to agree when Lorna would be required to take care of her granddaughter, as Verity is often at home working on the website.

Looking after her grandchildren has also meant that Lorna now feels more part of the family and can enjoy watching them hit their first milestones.

Verity said, 'Taking care of her grandchildren keeps my mum more active and gives her a routine now that she is retired.'

She added, 'I trust my mum more than anyone, so they have build a strong bond as my daughter sees how much I trust her and she feels more comfortable.'

In the future, the mother-daughter team hope to expand grannynet, as more people become aware of the website and the information and support it provides.

Further information

E-mail Verity Gill: verity@grannynet.co.uk or visit www.grannynet.co.uk