

grannynet – new website to launch first ever Grandparents' Charter

With grandparents now providing some form of childcare service for over 80% of the children in the UK* a new website, grannynet.co.uk, has been launched to stand up for and support these unsung heroes of the childcare system with the creation of the first ever Grandparent's Charter.

The Charter will be formulated from an on-line survey conducted among grandparents and will be tackling some of the bigger issues surrounding the care of their grandchildren, such as...

- ***How many days per week are appropriate for a grandparent to be asked to look after their grandchildren?***
- ***Should parents offer to pay grandparents for looking after their children?***
- ***Should the government incentivise parents who use grandparents as childcare providers?***

From the answers grannynet hopes to get a clear picture of what today's grandparents think is, and is not, acceptable when it comes to childcare. The data collected will be used to produce the grannynet Grandparents' Charter. This will be a set of guidelines for grandparents and parents to refer to when embarking on this new phase in their relationship – that of parent and childcare provider – which will hopefully make it work successfully for both parties.

The site is the brainchild of Verity Gill. Before having her first child, Eveny, Verity was a media analyst having started her career in government intelligence. When looking to return to work Verity, like many other new mums, approached her mother for childcare support.

“It was such a godsend to have my mum to look after Eveny when I was at work and talking to other new mums I realised how many of us relied on our own parents to help out,” comments Verity. “That’s when I got the idea for grannynet. There are so many sites dedicated to helping mums out with child care issues, but no such support for all these thousands of grandparents around the country looking after their grandchildren!”

In June 2007 Verity took web lessons and began to build the site. It has just gone live and she runs it with the help of her mother Lorna.

“Mum’s input into the site is invaluable. Being a grandparent herself she can help me tailor the content to cover the issues her generation want to read about.”

The site provides a meeting place for today’s grandparents, offering information and support to help them gain the most from their new role. Explains Verity: “grannynet covers day to day topics that you would expect on any community-based website, such as health and fitness, education, technology, travel and so on. But I also wanted the site to be more than just a place to shop and gossip – hence our Grandparents’ Charter. We really hope grandparents will log on and tell us what they think about the whole childcare issue. This way we can create some guidelines to help parents and grandparents get the most out of what should be an ideal solution to childcare.”

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To take part in the Grandparents’ Charter visit: www.grannynet.co.uk

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