**Child-Rearing and Home Life in Kentucky Resource Guide**

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**Introduction:**

This resource guide is designed to provide you with tools to help people engage with the past and connect with others. There are images to share with your clients, oral history interviews with Kentuckians that can be played and shared, and articles about home life in Kentucky.

**Images:**

-Encourage your audience members to look through the images included in the kit and to share any memories they have about raising children, growing up, or family life.

Some conversation prompts can include:

* What do you want to say about what is going in this picture?
* What do you think is happening in this picture?
* Please share about your favorite childhood experiences.
* Tell us about your children. How many children did you have? Did you all live in town or out in the country? Did your children play sports? What were your children’s hobbies?
* Did your children eat lunch at school, or did you pack a lunch for them? If you packed a lunch, what did you usually give your children?
* Did your family have a routine in the evening (homework, dishes, bathtime) or on Sundays? What was that routine?
* What radio or TV shows did you all watch as a family?
* What did you do when your children misbehaved?
* What chores did your children have?
* Did your children share a room or a bed?
* How often did your children see their grandparents?
* What did your family do stay in touch with extended family members? Family reunions, get-togethers. How often would you see extended family members?

**Keywords:**

Use the words below to spark conversation about topic. For example, did your children get an allowance? What bedtime routine did your family have? What was the after-school routine, homework routine like?

Allowance

Bedtime

Bottles

Bottle warmers

Burp cloth

Chores

Curfew

Diapers

Dinner

Lunch

Homework/Schoolwork

Manners

Potty-training

Sports/Extracurricular activities

Teething

Weaning

**Books to share:**

*Iron wash kettles and peddling wagons : tales from the good old days in southwest Kentucky, a treasury of 20th century memories* Edited by Todd Blair and Karen Garvey. (2015). Hickory, North Carolina : Hometown Memories, LLC.

**Oral history interview:**

-Share clips from the following oral history interview, which is available from the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries. After playing clips or the entire interview, encourage your audience members to share their own memories. Use the keywords and phrases listed above to help generate conversation too.

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Interview with Carol McKinney, November 16, 2017

City Stories Oral History Project: Adairville

Interview Accession 2018oh011\_city006

https://kentuckyoralhistory.org/ark:/16417/xt786688kk65

Begin the interview at the 41:29 second mark.

**Articles:**

Share one or more of the articles below, and ask your group questions about them. You can read the articles to your audience members or have them take turns reading the articles you select. You may want to just select portions of the articles to share with your group too.

Questions or prompts:

* What do you find interesting about what the article discusses?
* Which story do you like best? Why?

**Article 1:**

Down the Lane: Those were the good old days

January 24, 2019 | Winchester Sun, The (KY)

Winchester Sun | Section: Features

It is so much fun for me to get with people who grew up around the same time as I did and reminisce about how life was "back then."

I do not know why, but this past month I have had the opportunity to do so a little bit more than usual.

In one conversation with my neighbor, we brought up a subject that got us reminiscing.

When you are a child and going through certain things, you often think yours is the only family who does things the way it does.

As I have grown older, I realized how wrong I was.

One topic was how our families doctored us.

For example, we did not go to the doctor unless we had been severely cut, were extremely ill or the old time home remedies were not curing you. It had to be something major to warrant the trip to the doctor.

We laughed as we thought of looking like an Indian with war paint from being painted red with mercurochrome or iodine painted on us for our scrapes and cuts.

We agreed we never see mercurochrome on the shelves of stores now. It may still be in some stores but not like it used to be because "back then," you could not miss it.

It did not take me or my siblings long to fear alcohol being poured on our cuts. Many times when I saw my mom bring out the alcohol bottle I started crying, "No, Mommy, no!"

She thought alcohol killed every germ and could cure your ailments.

My daddy's cure for everything was liniment. It not only cured the animals, but gargling with liniment water could cure a sore throat. It also was his cure for many other aches and pains.

Peroxide was gargled full strength for sore throats also. This was used if we were out of liniment, I'm sure.

Vicks salve was used by a lot of families for severe coughs, either rubbed on the chest or left on the chest with a rag tied around the neck.

Some families put salve on the feet and wrapped them up so you could sleep without coughing at night. This still works today in many homes.

If there was a deep wound from a cut, no pre-cut gauze pads were found in my home. It was an old ripped T-shirt wrapped around the wound and tied with a rag.

We did have tape most of the time, but when we were out of tape, a thin strip of rag was tied around the wound.

I remember one of my brothers sliced his foot open with an axe. While he was chopping wood, he missed the wood but his foot got the brunt of the axe swing.

I still remember my mom doctoring his foot up the way I just described.

Money was hardly ever spent on bandages at my house. For one thing, a box would probably have been used up in a week with us five kids.

One thing I remember in my home was a yellow salve my mom bought from a Watkins door-to-door salesman. Somehow, he always found us down the lane.

My mother was a definite Watkins fan. She not only bought the salve, but I remember some delicious butterscotch and pumpkin pies he would baked from the powdered mixes they sold. They were easier than doing the pies from scratch and were so good.

Watkins products were good products and I was told they are still around.

Then we got to talking about going to school and our clothes. We spoke of how happy we were to get hand me downs so we would have something different to wear to school.

At one time, my sister and I could put all our school clothes on one pole hung in our room. I guess that is why I feel the need to have so many clothes now.

When an outfit wore out, it was thrown into a rag bag to be used for dusting, cleaning or other uses.

A zipper was saved, buttons were cut off clothes and sometimes thread from certain hems was saved.

Often, these rags were used in quilt making. I remember my mom even made a blue jean quilt one year for my brother's bed.

We discussed how there was almost always a button box or button jar in every home back then. If a button was lost, I remember my mom going through her button tin and picking out a button that matched and sewing it on.

Some other ladies talked about how our school clothes were always hung up and our work clothes put on when we came in from school.

We always wore our clothes at least twice before they were to be put in the laundry. Some said it was three times.

We all talked about our chores and we all felt that is what is wrong with our young people today: They are not taught to work at home.

I can remember the generation before me doing the same thing when they gathered. The things we took for granted, like electricity, they had done without.

I remember them talking about getting their first refrigerators and gas stoves. Most of them had cooked only on wood stoves for their meals most of their lives.

Even though we always had a gas cooking stove, we also had a wood cook stove my mother used a lot when she cooked for Christmas dinners. I guess she had it taken out when I was around 10 years old because she wanted to have a formal dining room.

I remember the older ladies speaking of going in horse-drawn carriages and wagons to visit family members or going to town and heating bricks to help keep them warm on long trips into town. I remember getting shivers thinking how cold they had to have been when they arrived somewhere.

They also said heated bricks were put in their beds to keep their feet warm at night. I wondered why my parents never thought of this for my feet.

So many of them speaking about their dresses made out of flour sacks or feed bags. They told me the feed bags were usually flowered with different colors like pink, blue or yellow and made really pretty dresses.

I have a picture of me in a dress made out of a feed sack bag.

They also spoke about keeping their food cold by hanging it down in a well or in an ice house.

I do still remember in the summer how my Daddy would go buy block ice to make ice cream and cool watermelon from an ice house near Pilot View.

Our talks turned to food and it seems the main meal for families during the week was soup beans, potatoes and corn bread during the winter. In the summer, green beans took the place of soup beans.

During the summer, the garden food was always canned and put up for long winter days.

I found out many families did like my family, and on the weekend, we had hot dogs and chips on Friday nights and hamburgers on Saturday nights.

Sunday after church, we had the big meal for the week. For my family, it meant a roast, city ham, fried chicken or chicken and dumplings.

When a hog or cow was killed, we ate good until it was eaten up then we were back to the regular meal time fare of soup beans, potatoes and corn bread.

Church was never missed and that meant Sunday morning and Sunday night attendance. Church was, for most kids, the only social life they had outside of school.

At my home we were allowed to go home with someone if invited or have someone at our home if we wanted.

It has made me wonder what our children's and grandchildrens' generations will talk about with one another when they are our age.

I just hope they look back with good memories.

I wonder about the times in your life you thought could have been better "back then."

How many wish you could go back just one more time to be with your families?

Maybe you will realize now, how good you really had it "back then."

Sue Staton is a Clark County native who grew up in the Kiddville area. She is a wife, mother and grandmother who is active in her church, First United Methodist Church, and her homemakers group, Towne and Country Homemakers.

**Article 2:**

Generational gap evident at past mealtimes

October 16, 2019 | Gleaner, The (Henderson, KY)

Author: Becky Greenwell; Columnist | Page: A4 | Section: Opinion

They weren't supposed to grow up at different times. But they did.

Before I had children I imagined them as growing up the same age, doing the same things, experiencing the same adventures and life's events together.

I didn't imagine there would be generation gaps between the oldest and youngest. Who would have thought that in a span of eight years there would be differences?

With child number one there were the mixed feelings of excitement and the nervousness of stepping into the unknown. Everyone learned together until we felt like experts at child rearing so we believed a second child would be a breeze.

My doctor told me that if I wanted my children to enjoy each other to have them two years apart. If I wanted to enjoy my children to have them four years apart.

We decided we wanted our children to grow up together, enjoy each other, be that age I imagined they would always be, and our family would be complete while we were still young enough to keep up with them.

By the time child Nos.2 and 3 came along within the two-year span as planned things were moving along smoothly. We had our routines with school, homework and sports. They were all close enough in age that we enjoyed the same movies, while in different leagues of baseball the fields were near enough to each other that we could participate in all their games, and rivalry among them was rare.

When child No.4 came into the picture she widened the span between her and the youngest to four years. I never thought that would make such a difference.

I enjoyed her. Her brothers did, too, until the newness wore off. Then she wasn't fun anymore.

Our routines changed. Our freedom of getting up and going had to be weighed with whether or not it was an outing a baby could attend.

As she grew and her interests and activities took us down other paths with dance recital and gymnastics and eventually girls' softball and soccer, our schedules really became hectic.

The boys were turning into teenagers and preteens, they also added soccer and basketball, homework multiplied and going from school, to practice, to homework, games and bedtime it became a time when sit-down meals were literally lost in the rush.

Fast food or a meal thrown on the table eaten in a "slam, bam, thank-you ma'am" rush was our new routine.

Eventually the kids grew up, life settled down, and the rush, rush of childhood days became a memory.

One day, while she still lived at home, I realized my daughter was always making an appeal for big sit-down Sunday meals and game nights with her brothers all there. I asked her why she was so adamant about these days and she said she wanted to have some of those meals her brothers always talked about.

The kind when they were little and everybody sat around the table with lots of food and everyone laughing and talking at once. She said the boys were always talking about those memories. Disappointedly, she said by the time she got big enough to enjoy them we never had any. We ate on the run, or someone was always missing. We very seldom had everybody at the table at the same time.

I never thought about that gap before. I still imagined my family as being the same age, doing the same things at the same time. They weren't supposed to grow up at different times. But they did.

Now we try to get everybody together more often, but it's a little more difficult with busy schedules of their own and being separated by so many miles in several different directions.

On the days when we have everyone around the table enjoying a big sit down meal with a fast action game night is the kind of night she wanted to experience growing up.

These times are now our special memories being made.

They weren't supposed to grow up at different times. But they did.

**Article 3:**

‘We share sugars, not boogers’ ... and other gems from the front lines of child-rearing

Commonwealth-Journal, The (Somerset, KY) - July 24, 2021

Author/Byline: KIM THOMAS Community Columnist

Section: Columns

Back when I was single, I kept on my phone this list called Songs I Am Surprised There's a Line Dance For. It was an inside joke with myself. I blame its length on how much I loved live music, because I'm sure it had nothing to do with how very long I was single.

Single life gave way to mom life, and my old song list gave way to this list of Things I Can't Believe I Say to Tiny Humans. I've had it since about the 30th time I told my baby daughters to "STOP DRINKING YOUR BATHWATER." Those babies are 6 and 7 now, and we've moved on to entire conversations I'm stunned to have with my children. I swear when I was little I wasn't as smart-mouthed … or as smart.

You can see their growth from babies to big kids in the list. Check it out:

"Don't wipe that on Mommy. We share sugars, not boogers."

"Stop telling your sister you ate her baby."

"You just put that dust pan in my MOUTH."

"Boogers are not glue. For the last time, boogers are NOT glue."

"Oh, sissy, the word is BOOGER, not BURGER. But I can see how you'd get those confused."

"Well. I guess there's a pterodactyl on the bathroom door."

"Let your sister in that mud puddle. There's plenty of mud for two little girls to share."

"No, you MAY NOT use my hair to wipe your nose. Thanks for asking."

"You're right. You SHOULD tell Grandpa not to eat butterflies."

"Don't put Play Doh in that doll!"

"Don't feed PlayDoh to that dog!"

"What's wrong with YOUR NOSE? IS THAT BLOOD?? Wait. Did you put PLAY DOH in your nose? Oh. Don't pick your nose with Play Doh on your fingers. That's not gonna end well, Sissy."

"I know you are not about to drink that ketchup. Please put a french fry in it so other people won't think I'm a bad mommy who lets her kid eat a plate of ketchup for lunch."

(Six months later, different girl) "I know you are not about to stick that straw in the ketchup. Don't you do it."

"No, you can't see what my boogers look like. But I promise they're just like yours. That's how boogers work."

Dr. Luma, 3, approaching the dog with a sparkly medicine dropper:

"C'mon, Nommers. Put your tongue out."

Nommers delivers a slurpy dog tongue from the doctor's chin to cheek. The doctor topples over backward.

Mommy: "Well, you told him to put his tongue out."

Mommy: "It's not a debate, kid. You have to wear clothes. Go put on a shirt!"

Ruby, 4, shaking her fist: "You win this time, Mommy, but I will be back!"

Mommy: "Great. Be wearing a shirt when you come."

Princess Luma, 4, giving her dad some tips on COOKING: "... That's how we do it in my kingdom. I've got 17 kids and 17 hammers."

Daddy Jason: "That could be a country song."

Mommy, suspiciously: "Ruby, what —"

Ruby, 5, preemptively: "I'm DEF'NILLY not hiding something from you!"

Mommy: "You need to sleep in your own bed. You are a big girl, Sissy."

Ruby, 5: "Mommy, I am NOT a big girl. All this time I been pwetending."

Mommy: "Ok, but don't get any bright ideas."

Luma, 5, under her breath: "I already GOT bright ideas."

Luma, 5, sighing: "Ruby steals all my friends with her cuteness."

Mommy: "YOU steal all MY friends with YOUR cuteness."

Mommy: "Luma, what are you doing?"

Luma, 6, stops, turns, stares: "Um … my lawyer's lawyer needs to talk to you."

Mommy: "What did you ask Santa to bring you?"

Luma, still 6: "Well, I ASKED for makeup made in America but Santa said I'm too pretty for makeup. I'm not sure if that means I can't have makeup, or if there just isn't any makeup that's not made in China."

Me, staring at a cotton swab in horror, then putting two and two together and coming up with:

"Luma, is my ear bleeding or did you get into Mommy's Q-tips for a Valentine's project involving red paint?"

Luma: "Um … You'd better put your finger in your ear and doublecheck."

Mommy: "You have to wear the mask, Sissy. They won't let you in without it."

Luma, 7, grumbling: "I want to punch coronavirus in the FACE."

Mommy, looking at a drawing: "Is this a volcano or a dress? And I love this girl dancing."

Ruby, 6: "That's not a girl. That's an ice cream cone."

Mommy: "Oh, I thought the cherry was her head."

Ruby: "It's not."

I leave you with this gem, from when Ruby had just turned 4.

She refused to get out of the car because — drum roll — she was picking her nose. I grabbed a cloth and snatched a booger off her finger. Goaltending, y'all.

She threw the biggest tantrum she'd thrown since the day she turned 2 and didn't get her egg roll fast enough at the Panda. "That was the PERFECT booger!!" She screamed and screamed. She launched an exhaustive search of the minivan for this elusive, pristine booger.

She was tossing toys this way and jackets that way and hollering, "Give me my booger back! I want my booger!"

I was laughing so hard it was one of those ugly-face, full-teeth, breath-stealing spasms that is sure to offend the instigator. It did. Ruby came running toward me screaming "I will hit you! I am going to BITE YOU!" And she was so cute and so tiny and her little fists were ferocious and it was all so funny I literally had to sit down, at which point she hit me, bit me and pulled my hair while I was helpless with giggles.

Later, after a timeout and a beefy cry, she curled up in my lap, said she was sorry, then asked me sweetly, as though her tantrum was the whole and only problem:

"Mommy, can I have my booger back now?"