

Dear W.C.,

1/10/11

I don't know who else to turn to. I am caring for my grandchildren. My daughter began to drink. She was not caring for her children properly so I stepped in to care for them. At one time she was an excellent mom. When her husband left her for another woman she changed. She was deeply hurt by his deception. Since he left he has never visited the children. He has never paid any child support. Unfortunately my daughter fell in with a group of friends that liked to drink every weekend. I would care for my grandchildren every weekend just to make sure they were properly cared for. Now she has run off with a man and not come back. I filed for custody of the kids. I love these kids with all my heart and do not want them to end up in foster care. I will give them the loving care they need. The children should not have to suffer due to their parent's irresponsibility. I am having a hard time financially paying my rent, utilities, food, and other expenses like child care when I go to work. Can you please help us?

Struggling Grandmother

Dear Readers,

I answer many requests for assistance from grandparents raising their grandchildren. I commend them for their devotion. Being a grandfather myself I understand the love you feel for your grandchildren. It is a struggle for most grandparents to raise their grandchildren. The main source of distress for most grandparents is the financial strain. They never thought their own children would put them in this position. Many are fighting for custody of their grandchildren due to drugs, drinking, prison sentences, etc. Some are raising their grandchildren due to the military or severe illness. It is never financially easy to step in regardless of the reason; all the Grandparents know is they must do this. Grandparents love for their grandchildren is another one of our gifts from God.

There are so many elderly barely getting by, living on very, very tight budgets. After rent, which is always paid first due to the intense fear of eviction, very frugal use of utilities, stretching very little food, being unable to buy new clothing, shoes, or household necessities, the budget becomes a monthly struggle for survival. When anything extra is tried to fit in the budget, such as a new medication, eye glasses, illness, doctors visits, then the fear of homelessness weighs heavily on their hearts. Can you imagine adding to the extra expense unexpectedly raising a grandchild? That is when we step in, if the situation is brought to our attention. Some are, but many are not due to pride, lack of knowledge of The Time Is Now to Help, or a neighbor not keeping a watchful eye.

This grandmother knew she had to step in and take over proper care of her young grandchildren. She told me her daughter was out partying until all hours and would arrive to pick up the children drunk. She would get into an argument with her daughter and not allow her to take the children with her. She shuddered at the thought of her young grandchildren in the car with their drunken mother. Her protective instincts told her she needed to protect the children from this kind of upbringing. Sometimes her daughter would arrive at their house

with a strange man in the car and she would worry who this stranger was and if their daughter even knew who she was subjecting her children to.

Finally the grandmother told her daughter to leave the children with her and get her rebellion out of her system. The mother moved without leaving a phone number or address. The grandmother had no idea how hard it would be to get any assistance without custody paperwork filled out. The father of the children had moved and she did not know how to get in touch with him. He was not paying any child support.

When I called the grandmother she cried with relief. I could hear the strain and stress in her voice and truly knew she needed our assistance. I told her I wanted to visit her and went there immediately. When I arrived at the mobile home she rented I noticed there was a car in the driveway covered in snow. It had obviously not moved for some time. I knocked on the door and heard young children inside. A very tired looking woman answered the door. She invited me inside after our introductions. The children were playing with toys on the living room floor and looked to be around three and five years old. They seemed happy and ran to their grandmother's side when they saw a stranger coming into the house. I spoke to them and after the grandmothers approval, gave them both a treat to share. The grandmother explained they did not see men very often. Their father had never come to visit them since the divorce and the only other men they saw had been their mother's brief relationships with unstable men.

The grandmother spoke openly about her daughter's drinking and behavior. The daughter had been a good mother until the separation. She believed her daughter had loved her husband so much the betrayal was too much for her. She did not want to make excuses though and blamed her daughter for not picking herself up and moving on. She and I both agreed the children should have come first. They were sweetly sharing their treats. I could not imagine anything being more important than the wellbeing of the two gifts from God. The grandmother agreed whole heartedly and said that is why she risked losing everything to take them in.

We went over the grandmother's budget. There was some assistance I knew she would be able to apply for and hopefully would receive. Until this assistance began I offered to help with her expenses. The rent was due, and the utilities were overdue. I also asked her about the snow covered car in the driveway. She said the car had stopped running several weeks ago. I set the car up for service and also gave her gas vouchers since she said the car was on empty.

I asked if I could look around. I checked the cupboards and I found very little food. I looked in her small old fridge, also almost completely empty. I went into the second bedroom. There was an old mattress on the floor. The grandmother started to cry saying, "I'm sorry, I could not afford another bed". I know from visiting her she had a profound love for these children. I consoled her and told her I knew she loved the children very, very much and that was the most important thing. I told her we could provide a new bed, but she had provided what the children needed most, her unconditional love. She gave me a big hug and thanked me for

understanding her love for the children. I told her I needed to run out for a little while and would be right back. This is why I called our charity "The Time Is Now to Help." I returned to fill the cupboards and refrigerator with good wholesome food. The five year old was laughing as he excitedly helped to put things away. The grandmother also helped. She began to cry thankful tears. I told her those need to be happy tears. She weakly answered, "Yes, they are." I also set up some new small appliances. The grandmother was in awe of our help. I explained how there are great God loving people, supporting The Time Is Now to Help, making all this possible. Once again she began to cry, trying to understand how a few hours ago she was living in fear of eviction, had little food, and tattered mattresses, to having her life transformed into what God would have us do for our fellow creation in need. I thank everyone for making this possible again and again. God Bless You For Caring & Sharing. I supplied her with information about the food pantry and clothing assistance for the children. They were young and seemed to grow out of their clothes faster than she could provide for them. We also provided gift certificates to enable her to buy winter boots, shoes, and necessities for the children. We provided new beds for both the grandmother and the children.

This assistance made a world of difference for the grandmother. She had been struggling to keep up with everything before this help from The Time Is Now to Help. Now she could work and come home to enjoy a little time with her grandchildren without the worry of eviction or utility disconnection. Together we make our communities a better place to live. Thank you for your Caring and Sharing.

God Bless everyone who participated in the Christmas Wish \$25,000 Matching Grant and God Bless our angels who made the Christmas Wish Grant possible again this second winter season. Every winter we have more requests for desperately needed help than we have Funding available. Thanks to all the Caring and Sharing of our Christmas Wish \$25,000 Matching Grant we will be able to help many of those turning to us in desperation for assistance. We will inform everyone where every penny went to help our fellow creations in the very near future.

Health & Happiness, God Bless Everyone, W.C.

Please Help: Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 70, Pell Lake, WI 53157. The Time Is Now to Help is a federally recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing exactly what every penny of your donation provided for the poverty stricken.

A Very Special Thank You: Michael & Sue Borden, William H. & Lois J. McEssy Foundation, Unilock, Kunes' Country Ford-Lincoln-Mercury, Lake Geneva Economic Development Corporation, Steven & Deidred Trumble, Beach & Associates, Distribution & Transportation Service, Sheryl & Scott Eakin - E2 Services, Bernard Labovitch, Spiegelhoff & Associates, Silver Sneaker Group, Martin O'Brien, James & Susan Mirabella, Jr., Ken & Joyce Pagel, Jim & Jo Cochrane, Catherine Swift, Steve & Betty Thornton, Robert & Llavonne Webster, Sr., Thomas & Debbie Labecki, Pat & Steve Werner, Marvin & Shirley

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Memorials: In memory of a Great School Administrator, a wonderful Man, a Loving Husband & Father Craig Cook. Sue Wendt in loving memory of her parents Carl & Dorothy Mickelsen. Marilyn Desing in memory of her husband's Roger C. Krohn & David Desing, and her son Dale Krohn.

We Desperately Need Cars: Please donate a used car to help our fellow American's get to work and other daily necessities.

Goodsearch for The Time Is Now: Search the web with www.goodsearch.com and help to raise funds for The Time Is Now to Help. Just make www.goodsearch.com your homepage and pick The Time Is Now to Help as your charity.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org