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From the Backseat to Co-Trustee

Ways Children and Parents Can Navigate Aging Together

If you're a parent, you know how much raising children involves teaching them, from counting numbers to their ABCs or how to drive. But, as we all age, that guidance doesn't stop.

Older adults can offer young people so many valuable things, like advice, knowledge, and stories of their experiences. And for the people who are parents or grandparents, passing these invaluable skills and lessons on is part of the job. We all want to protect our younger family members from making the same mistakes we did or from missing out on some of the best aspects of life we've discovered along the way.

But eventually, these younger family members you've spent so many years passing on wisdom and advice to may have to step up and take care of you, too. We receive many calls from these children — now adults — asking how they can help their loved ones who have started to suffer from cognitive decline. They want to know how they can help return the favor and guide their older loved ones.

Children can help guide and protect their parents by being appointed as someone who can make health care decisions for them through the Healthcare Power of Attorney. If a parent names their son or daughter in this document, they give their children the power to make decisions for them if they cannot answer for themselves. This appointment also includes HIPAA authorization, so hospitals and care facilities can share any health information or updates with your child so they can make the best decision possible on your behalf. And as always, you can always share your wishes with your children utilizing the Healthcare Power of Attorney, so your child can protect you in a way you would choose.

The second and one of the most powerful ways children can help their parents is by legally becoming a co-trustee in their parent's trust. Typically, children are named "backup Trustees" when the trust was created, but this role leaves them powerless to help their parents now without additional documents. An analogy we like to use is that this backup role is like riding in the backseat of a car, unable to see the road and make decisions. But by making a child a co-trustee, you're moving them into the passenger seat. You're still the driver in control, but if you need help, they're there to grab the wheel.

And at Frank & Kraft, we understand that even if your children are in the passenger's seat with you, the desire to support or guide them doesn't go away. That's why when you create a trust with us, we include a workbook called the "My Legacy Workbook." Inside this booklet is a blank family tree, questions about where you were born and grew up and sections to leave advice about love, marriage, parenting, and any other messages you want left behind to help your children. By filling out this workbook, you'll capture your wisdom and life story to pass on to your children and the innumerable generations to come.

So, whether you're a child looking for ways to return the favor and support your older parents or a parent themselves ready to move their adult children into the passenger's seat, we're here to help. Call our experienced team at 317-684-1100 to schedule an appointment.

-Paul Kraft

Choosing the Right Moment

The Perfect Time to Claim Social Security

Most of us pay into Social Security our entire working lives, but how much we each benefit from this mandatory investment depends on when we start claiming benefits. Whether you start claiming Social Security at age 62, 70, or somewhere in between is a highly personal decision. But everyone should consider several factors before deciding when to start receiving their checks.

The earliest age someone can start claiming Social Security benefits is 62. Many people don't want to work longer than they have to, so immediately cashing in might seem like a great idea. But there is a catch: People who collect Social Security at 62 receive reduced benefits. According to CNBC, someone who turns 62 in 2023 and begins claiming benefits will receive a 30% lower monthly benefit than if they wait until 67 — and the reduction is permanent.

The full retirement age is 67 for most people still waiting to claim, at which point they can receive 100% of the benefits they've earned. But there's an incentive to wait even longer. Benefits increase by roughly 8% for each additional year you wait until age 70. CNBC further calculates that someone who doesn't begin receiving benefits until 70 will receive 76% higher benefits than someone who takes them at age 62.

If you only look at the amount of your monthly benefit, it's clear that waiting until 70 is ideal. But you should consider other factors. For example, some people have minimal savings that will not allow them to make ends meet. But if they're laid off or pushed into early retirement, claiming Social Security might be the only option, despite the downside.

Everyone considering claiming Social Security should also evaluate their health. Someone in good health with a reasonable chance of living a long life will generally benefit from waiting. However, someone in poor health at age 62 may want to receive benefits while they still can. (Even then, experts remind you to weigh the impact of survivor benefits.)

Before claiming Social Security payments, discuss your long-term plans and goals with your family. Additionally, discussing the matter with your financial advisor is extremely wise. They can evaluate your circumstances and guide you through your options.

A Workshop of Wonders

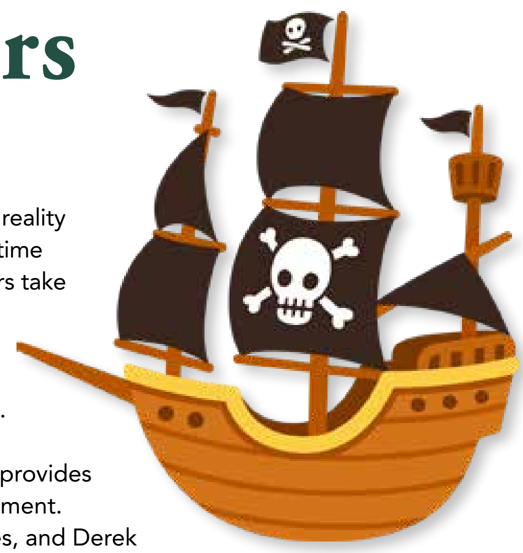
Making Kids' Dreams Come True

What do you get when you combine goofball builders, a grumpy boss, and kids with wacky ideas? In Netflix's 2022 reality show "Making Fun," experts actually create high-concept, nonsense inventions that children dreamed up! The result is a playful and educational show that's perfect for all ages.

"Making Fun" follows Jimmy DiResta, a master builder, and his misfit band of "makers" as they bring children's imaginative creations to life. The team members know their way around a workshop and use wood, metal, foam, fabric, and more to create mechanical wonders that ultimately serve no purpose other than to make kids' dreams come true.

The first of eight episodes in the series follows the crew as they build a dinosaur that spits out tacos. In others, the builders create a pirate ship pizza cannon and a device to fling cat poop. (Remember, these were kids' ideas!) Throughout the episode, viewers watch as designs are conceptualized and brought to life even as hiccups are addressed along the way.

It's not all fun, though; this show is also surprisingly educational. The builders explain why they use specific materials, the basics of how the machines in the shop work, and how experts make common items. Unlike most reality shows, there is no time crunch. The builders take as long as they like to build something that makes them proud.



Jimmy's crew also provides plenty of entertainment. Graz tells bad jokes, and Derek is capable but clueless. Jackman, the engineer, provides technical know-how. And you can count on Canadian Pat to work wonders with a lathe while being very strange. The group regularly mocks each other, and the editors frequently add funny songs or graphics to the scenes.

"Making Fun" involves some potty humor and censored swear words, and not all parents appreciate Jimmy's gruff (though likely scripted) demeanor with the kids. The show is generally appropriate for children ages 8 and up, but it's also fun for older kids and adults. Gather around the TV for a laugh and a new sense of what's possible with the right tools.

ROASTED SWEET POTATO ARUGULA SALAD

Inspired by Nutriciously.com

Ingredients

- 3 medium sweet potatoes, cubed
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 3 small radishes, thinly sliced
- 2 cups arugula, thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 cups cooked lima beans, drained and rinsed
- Balsamic salad dressing of choice

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a bowl, toss sweet potato cubes with smoked paprika, turmeric, cumin, cinnamon, salt, and pepper. Transfer to prepared baking sheet and arrange in a single layer.
3. Roast for 25–30 minutes until sweet potatoes are nicely browned and fork-tender.
4. In a large salad bowl, combine onion, bell pepper, radishes, arugula, and lima beans.
5. Toss the salad with dressing, then top with roasted sweet potatoes.

TAKE A ***BREAK***

N	X	H	Y	B	R	E	D	I	B	E	E	E	W	C
H	O	R	S	E	O	N	N	L	I	Z	Y	Z	L	D
B	N	D	E	T	A	I	O	Z	R	I	R	D	S	S
N	L	M	N	T	M	S	R	Z	I	L	H	J	V	D
G	P	I	U	E	S	B	V	H	N	I	S	B	A	L
S	N	R	G	O	C	U	N	A	S	T	I	S	P	Y
U	E	I	M	H	V	K	O	Y	N	R	F	H	T	T
L	X	O	L	Z	T	F	S	K	S	E	I	N	F	J
D	P	G	M	D	A	S	J	I	N	F	G	W	M	U
I	L	H	G	O	E	D	A	R	A	P	O	J	O	O
W	K	A	K	W	Z	E	A	B	R	L	T	D	T	O
N	C	E	R	U	R	F	S	M	E	M	J	E	H	H
V	A	S	O	E	L	E	I	Y	T	R	Y	B	E	C
T	Z	H	K	A	M	B	M	R	E	A	Z	Z	R	Y
X	M	E	D	Q	A	E	B	E	V	J	S	V	C	Q

Blossom
Derby
Emerald
Fertilize
Gemini
Horse
Lightsaber
Mother
Nature
Parade
Seedling
Veterans

COMFORT IN AN EMERGENCY

Why You Need a Power of Attorney

Estate planning is about much more than determining what will happen to your assets after you pass away. It's also crucial to plan for medical emergencies. In fact, designating financial and health care powers of attorney (POA) should be an essential component of any estate plan.

A POA gives someone the legal right to act on your behalf. These documents also outline the specific type of decisions the designated agent can undertake and sometimes detail a single event. For example, if you become incapacitated, designating financial power of attorney will allow someone you choose to handle your finances on your behalf, while a health care power of attorney grants someone the right to make decisions about your medical treatment.

Before designating an agent, consider whom you trust with your money and health. Some people might select the same family member to be their financial and health care agents, but others could choose separate individuals. Each situation is different, and you know what's best for you. While a relative who cares deeply about your well-being may be an ideal health care agent, this person might make a terrible financial agent if they can't balance a checkbook.

Each state has methods for determining who will make decisions for an incapacitated person when they do not have a predesignated power of attorney. But the process is less than ideal. Having to hash out who should be your representative can cause strife within your family when they need each other the most. Further, an incapacitated person no longer has the ability or right to determine who will take on these crucial responsibilities and make monumental decisions about their care, finances, and life.

Creating power of attorney documents while you are of sound mind gives you some measure of control over your future. Fortunately, many POA designations will never take effect, but if the worst happens, you'll be better off having a power of attorney in place.

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INSIDE *THIS ISSUE*

Aretha Franklin Didn't 'Respect' Estate Planning

How Her Handwritten Wills Caused Strife

The world lost a legend when the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin, died in 2018. And in their grief, her family got an enormous headache. Unlike many, Franklin did plan for her eventual death — but her DIY approach to the matter proved disastrous. Her four conflicting, handwritten wills cost the estate millions, pitted relatives against each other, and exposed family secrets.

Franklin didn't trust others to handle her money and personal affairs. She'd even demand upfront cash for her performances and stash it under her piano onstage. So, it may not have surprised her family that she decided to handle her estate plan herself. While they initially thought she died intestate (without a will), conflicting documents emerged.

Franklin's niece and estate executor Sabrina found three handwritten wills while cleaning the singer's home. Two were dated 2010 and locked in a cabinet. The third, dated 2014, had been written in a spiral notebook, and Sabrina found it under the Queen of Soul's couch cushions. The wills split her assets differently — but crucially, none of the three were signed. A fourth unsigned will, dated 2018, emerged in 2021.

The documents proved Franklin knew the value of estate planning, but she never completed the legal requirements, and the fallout has been enormous. Her oldest son has disabilities, and Franklin missed the opportunity to establish a special needs trust. Further, while Franklin kept her oldest son's father a secret her entire life, she revealed his identity in one of her wills — perhaps not realizing it would be made public. Meanwhile, Franklin's four sons have fought each other in court, and the estate racked up a $7.8 million tax bill.

A trial, initially scheduled for August 2020, was delayed due to the pandemic. However, the estate resolved the IRS debt in June 2022. Despite their earlier battle, her sons requested their mother's remaining assets be split equally, but it is unclear whether a judge has approved their request.

A comprehensive estate plan could have shielded Franklin's substantial intellectual property, reduced the estate's tax burden, and properly cared for her family. This cautionary tale should remind you to do more than "say a little prayer" to protect your assets after death.