

# Australian Intergenerational Families Valuing the Great Outdoors: A Tapestry of Children's Cultural Learning Through Specific Parenting Practices



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## Introduction

Bringing up children has been regarded as one of the most important tasks that adults perform (Abela & Walker, 2014, p. 8).

The ways in which families live their lives and raise their children are heavily influenced by social, cultural, and economic factors (Brooks, 2013; Hoffnung, Hoffnung, Seifert, Buirton Smith, & Hine, 2010). Beliefs about how to be a good parent are gleaned through family, cultural, and social groups including parental work contexts. Such values guide everyday child-rearing behaviors, for example, the age at which children are expected to sleep alone, feed themselves, and become independent, how and when children should be disciplined, and what extracurricular activities they should be involved in outside school hours (Brooks, 2013).

Global influences are felt across cultural and national borders. Technology is opening up new ways of communicating between family members, as well as storing and disseminating information. In some societies, values and belief systems are being adapted as family commitments and connectedness are being challenged (Abela & Walker, 2014; Berns, 2013; Lawrence, Brooker, & Dodds, 2017). The central theme of this book is the quest to gain a greater understanding of how parenting practices in specific cultural contexts lead to culturally valued child outcomes. The question that guides this chapter is: How are family values, knowledge, and practices – related to outdoor activities – shared within and between generations as part of everyday parenting and child-rearing in three Australian families of European heritage?

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## Australian Families and the Great Outdoors

Australia is a nation of rich climatic, geographical, cultural, and family diversity. Australia's six states and two territories span three time zones. The estimated resident population of Australia on March 31, 2018, was 24,899,100 people. This is an increase of 380,700 people since March 31, 2017, and 125,100 people since December 31, 2017 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, [ABS], 2018a). In 2016–2017, net overseas migration reflected an annual gain of 262,500 persons, which was 27.3% (56,300 people) more than in 2015–2016 (ABS, 2018b). English is the national language, but because of the diverse population, over 300 languages are spoken at home, with one in five Australians (21%) speaking a language besides English at home (ABS, 2017). The indigenous populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people speak more than 100 languages (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2018).

Australia is a vast island continent. A large proportion of the population (approximately 67%) live in major cities mostly located on or near the coast, with the remainder of the population residing in other urban or regional areas (approximately 23%), and 10% in rural Australia (ABS, 2018c). Those living in regional (semirural) areas tend to cluster around large regional towns, leaving considerable areas of the continent sparsely populated because of the harsh climatic conditions and few services (Camberis & McMahon, 2017).

The climate and geographic location have influenced many Australians, young and old, to appreciate and value outdoor life. For example, families gather together outdoors for barbecues, camping trips, bike riding, hiking, water sports, skiing, football, hockey, or general recreation suited to the season (Veal, Darcy, & Lynch, 2013). It is common for the population in some areas to triple at various times of the year as families descend on beach areas for annual summer holidays or flock to the mountains in winter for snow-based activities. Leisure activities associated with the beach are among the most popular outdoor activities in Australia (Veal et al., 2013). It is within this context of mobile populations, outdoor pursuits, and geographic and climatic extremes that this study is situated.

## Family Parenting Practices: A Sample of Australian Studies

Parents' perceptions of parenting have been a growing interest among researchers. The Australian Institute of Family Studies participated in the international Parenting-21 (the title refers to this century) project which involved researchers from Australia, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and the United States (Kolar & Soriano, 2000). In their report, Kolar and Soriano focused on two themes: first, parental beliefs and child-rearing practices and, second, the influence of cultural background on those beliefs and practices. The Anglo Australian, Aboriginal,

Torres Strait Island, and Vietnamese participants in Kolar and Soriano's study demonstrated a strong commitment to their child-rearing responsibilities and clearly expressed both short- and long-term goals for their children.

The findings highlighted a need for cultural understanding, particularly related to different cultural approaches to child-rearing, for example, how parenting is learned, who is responsible for parenting, and the wider societal support offered in relation to parenting. Of importance was ensuring that different child-rearing practices, such as the role of the extended family, were not equated to or understood as being in deficit to one another. For some parents, social change had encroached on their strongly held cultural values and beliefs about raising children, for example, in the area of discipline and behavior management. Some parents spoke about the strict discipline, including physical punishment, that they experienced as children and were perplexed that such child-rearing behavior was no longer lawful. For these families, such changes caused stress and anxiety related to their understanding of parental authority. Overall, the report was, and still is, an important document for policy planners and service providers because it offers a broad description of contemporary Australian parenting across Anglo, Torres Strait Islander, and Vietnamese communities (Kolar & Soriano, 2000).

Another research project based on the Australian context is the Australian generations oral history project (see Holmes & Thomson, 2017). This project took place between 2011 and 2014 and involved 300 interviews with Australians born between 1920 and 1989. These historical interviews are rich evidence of how family relationships and the socialization of children within family groups mediate their identities. They also provide examples of how places and objects provide points of anchor for individuals and families in a rapidly changing world. Reiger (2016) remarked that participants in the project "placed themselves in familial networks and particular locations" (p. 58). She explained that families are a collection of memories as well as actual people. The participants in the study grounded themselves in time, space, and place as well as in things that carried emotional meaning such as artefacts, meal preparation, and family rituals. Participants spoke about the influence and encouragement they received from their grandparents, aunts, and uncles. They described how they observed, learned, and modeled family relationships and work ethics in the home and on the farm. Involvement in local community and church events provided opportunities to interact with a wide range of people of different ages and diverse backgrounds. Legacies and skills of resourcefulness, such as cooking, rearing animals, and growing crops, were important ways of sharing family knowledge from one generation to the next.

## **Intergenerational Family Research**

Although the term "intergenerational" has been used in the literature referring to families, there appears to be little consensus as to the exact meaning of the term. For example, it has been used to describe the "active sharing of traditions, behaviours,

beliefs and connections that contribute to both familial and individual identities across multiple generations” (Dingus, 2008, p. 605), as well as cross-generational interactions among old and young (Newman, 2003). However, the majority of intergenerational studies span two generations, with data being generated from both generations simultaneously (e.g., Cordero-Coma & Esping-Anderson, 2018; Liu, Xu, Luo, & Li, 2018), or from one generation speaking about themselves and either their parents or their children (e.g., Deindl & Tieben, 2017; Yang, Font, Ketchum, & Kim, 2018). There appears to be a dearth of three generational studies, possibly because of the difficulties associated with gathering family members spanning three generations into the same location.

A common thread among studies of intergenerational families is the concept of intergenerational transmission. Over two decades ago, Bertaux and Thompson (1993, p. 1) argued that:

The family remains the main channel for the transmission of language, names, land and housing, local social standing, and religion; and beyond that also of social values and aspirations, fears, world views, domestic skills, taken-for-granted ways of behaving, attitudes to the body, models of parenting and marriage.

This argument is still evident today, particularly within studies with a sociological framing (Cordero-Coma & Esping-Anderson, 2018; Liu et al., 2018). However, some authors (e.g., Yi, Chang, & Chang, 2004) suggest that although value transmission is highly accepted, serious critique is needed. This chapter attempts to address some of this critique with participants spanning three generations.

### ***Intergenerational Family Research Framed in Cultural-Historical Theory***

Framed within a cultural-historical theoretical approach, the study discussed in this chapter addresses issues of intergenerational value transfer, change, and development as an interrelated, dynamic, and dialectical phenomenon (Monk, 2014). The dimensions of time (past, present, and future) and the multidirectional relations across generations are considered in process, not as isolated fully formed entities. Therefore, the everyday lives of families are explored from personal perspectives (those of the individual child, parent, and grandparent), a family or institutional perspective, and a societal perspective.

A central aspect of cultural-historical theory is studying development in motion over time (Vygotsky, 1987, 1997, 1998). “What must be of interest to us is not the finished result, not the sum or product of development, but the very *process of genesis or establishment ... caught in living aspect*” (emphasis added; Vygotsky, 1997, p. 71). For Vygotsky (1997), “the past and present were inseparably merged ... the present stands in the light of history” (p. 41). Using cultural-historical theory opens up the opportunity to study transitions, processes, motion, and history dialectically (see Ridgway, 2014) through capturing present and past moments of parenting practices in time, as family members discuss objects, events, and places of meaning.

## The Study

Data discussed in this chapter are drawn from a larger study that investigated how family values, knowledge, and practice traditions relate, transition, and transform within and between generations during child-rearing (Monk, 2010). Of interest was how family members across the generations participated in the shaping of their own and their family values and meaning through their everyday experiences. Three Australian intergenerational families of European heritage took part in the study for a period of over 9 months (see Table 1). All names are pseudonyms; the family members chose the names for the children and the researcher named the families. The grandparents resided in separate houses from the parents and children, although at times the grandparents stayed for short periods with the children and parents and the children and parents visited the grandparents on day trips and also for short holidays. All family members were in reasonable travel distance from one another, no further than a three-hour commute.

Participant families were recruited through a local full-day childcare center and a local community sessional crèche. University ethical procedures for recruitment and informed consent were followed.

### *Iterative Data Generation*

Data generation followed an iterative process of intergenerational family dialogues (for further details see Monk, 2014). Each family dialogue built on the previous one. The family dialogues involved grandparents, parents, and children and were framed in such a way as to provide opportunity for all family members to take part. Before the first dialogue, family members were asked to select one or two artefacts or treasures to bring along to discuss. At the end of the meeting, I provided the family with a digital camera to take photographs of their child-rearing practices. Families were asked to photograph anything they thought was meaningful for their family or for one of the family members. The request was open-ended and I explained that any member of the family could take as many photographs as they chose at any time, at home or in the wider community. On a prearranged date, the camera was left at the

**Table 1** Participant families

	Gum Tree Family	Peninsula Family	Bayside Family
Children	Mary (3 years)	Hope and Beverly (4 years and 5 months) 18-month-old sibling	Charlie (5 years and 10 months)
Parent(s)	Father and mother	Father and mother	Mother
Grandparent	Maternal grandmother	Paternal grandmother	Maternal grandfather

childcare center for me to collect. I then made prints of all the photographs before the next family dialogue meeting, where the prints were laid out on the table and family members chose different ones to discuss.

After the second family dialogue meeting with each family, I provided the family with a digital video camera. I requested that they choose a small number of the activities captured in the photographs and take short 5–10 minute videos of these family practices. Again, the families returned the camera to the childcare center where I collected it before uploading the video footage to a laptop computer to take to the next family dialogue meeting. The third time I met with each family, we viewed and discussed the videos. All family dialogue meetings were audio recorded and fully transcribed by the researcher.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis occurred in two phases. First, during the family dialogues, the participants and the researcher had the opportunity to work together as co-researchers. Children, parents, and grandparents assisted in sorting, analyzing, and categorizing the photographs as well as viewing and interpreting the video footage they had generated. These activities occurred with minimal involvement from me, as, once the process of sorting began, the family members interacted with one another, discussing, analyzing, and categorizing the visual data. This allowed for the images to be understood from different viewpoints across the generations.

Second, and drawing from the work of Hedegaard (2008), I continued the data analysis process first at a *common-sense level*, second at the *situated practice level*, and third at the *thematic level*. The common-sense interpretation is where the researcher is “commenting on his/her understandings of the interactions in the activity setting” (p. 58), for example, the home or the beach. The situated practice interpretation “transcends the single activity setting and links together observations taken across several activity settings within the same project” (p. 58), for example, the home and the beach. The thematic interpretation is “directly connected to the aim of the research ... using theoretical concepts to find patterns in the situated complexity of the institutional practice ... in order to formulate new conceptual relations within a problem area” (p. 61). These tools were adapted for use with the intergenerational dialogue data in an attempt to capture the complexity, dynamics, and dialectical relations embedded in the data.

### **Parenting Practices: Valuing the Great Outdoors**

One theme that arose from the data analysis was that of specific parenting practices that each of the three families engaged in to ensure that the children valued and participated in the great outdoors. These child-rearing practices were embedded in the everyday lives of the families and included seasonal activities, such as visiting

the beach or the pier in the summer to engage in a range of water-based activities, and holiday activities, such as visiting and holidaying in rural environments. Each family had special localities that created a sense of belonging for the family over generations. These localities were visited again and again. Historical knowledge, understanding, and skills were shared across the generations with grandparents, parents, and children linking past experiences to present experiences.

The Gum Tree Family particularly valued the bush and rural areas where the grandparents resided, and the parents had lived as children and young people. At the time of the study, three-year-old Mary and her parents lived in an urban area, while her grandparents lived in a historical homestead in a rural area. Familiarity with the bush and the ability to survive with minimal equipment were valued by this family and shared with Mary.

For the Peninsula Family, the seaside and the beach were important locations that provided opportunities for the family to share their love of outdoor living. Although the family had lived in a number of different locations, they always chose to reside close to the sea, and during the summer the family would often take their evening meal to the local beach and spend time walking along the sea shore or swimming.

The local pier and surrounding coastline provided a sense of belonging for the Bayside Family. This family had resided in the Benston (pseudonym) area for three generations and the pier was a local landmark. Activities such as swimming and fishing off or near the pier with family or friends were common experiences and were introduced to Charlie at a young age with the hope that he would appreciate the pier as much as his grandfather and mother did.

The parenting practices of each of these families are explained in more depth in the following sections.

## ***The Bush***

The Gum Tree Family had extensive environmental knowledge of the bush and the farmland that they shared with their daughter Mary. For many generations, the Gum Tree Family had lived, worked, and enjoyed leisure activities in rural environments, which they valued and appreciated.

Mother: They are just things that I um ... we value and we want Mary to value that ... we really want Mary to learn about how to light a fire and learn about the different types of wood and what they are for and ... to learn about the ways of cooking and not just turning on power.

Father: Mary's granddad can tell you ... ah ... you go out in the bush with Mary's granddad and he can tell you every native name of the tree ... you know the ones that are 50 letter long ... yeah ... he is good at it.

Mary's dad had a strong desire for Mary to appreciate the bush and learn to live rough. Knowledge about living in the bush and using the available natural resources was important to the Gum Tree Family. Particular local knowledge had been passed from grandfather to father and now Mary was being introduced to this knowledge, especially when her family traveled to visit her grandparents in a rural area.

Father: I go to the bush a lot ... when I can I go away ... camping, fishing ... yeah, go and get lost (chuckle), yeah, yeah, boy things.

Researcher: So, would you take the girls (wife and daughter) with you?

Father: Yeah, yeah, if they want to come, they'll come ... yeah, we are just starting now ... getting Mary out and about a bit now, she will come out in the campervan. So, if Mary was not along we would both (mother and father) just take the swags (a local term for sleeping rolls) and roll out the swags ... none of these land cruisers ... we live pretty rough. Yeah, it's good, living like champions with nothing ... yeah so it is good.

Researcher: How do you feel about Mary getting involved in that sort of thing?

Father: Yeah, for sure, I want to get her into it, that is what I want for her ... I don't want her to be a little puppy doll that ... a little princess doll that won't go to the toilet because ... there isn't a toilet ... she's got to learn to wee in the grass.

Life in the outdoors was considered the good life for Mary's family. Although they lived in an urban area, the family made regular visits to Mary's grandparents, where she participated in farm and bush activities situated to her young age, such as feeding the animals, helping in the garden, and cleaning the sheds. Her parents had aspirations that Mary would learn to love the bush and join them on camping trips, living rough, sleeping in a swag, and eating bush tucker (foods native to Australia and used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people). When Mary visited her grandparents, she participated in the farm activities and had her own set of farm clothes such as gumboots and coats that allowed her to move around the farm in all weathers. She was familiar with the dogs and assisted her parents and grandparents to feed the animals and collect and stack the firewood that was used in the house. During holidays visiting uncles and aunts, Mary was introduced to different farm animals and farming practices, building on her knowledge and skills when interacting with animals and the land. At home in the urban area, Mary assisted her father to clean out the fishpond and work in the garden. Outdoor work and leisure activities were a valued part of Mary's everyday life, and she undertook these activities alongside her parents and grandparents. She observed what was happening and assisted by completing tasks suited to her age level, such as giving the dogs their food, feeding the chickens, and collecting their eggs.



## *The Seaside*

Proximity to a local beach was essential for the Peninsula Family. As a child, the grandmother had lived across the road from the local beach where she spent most days during the summer swimming and exploring:

Grandmother: We went to the beach a lot as kids and I loved it ... I love [emphasis added] going to the beach ... yeah, really free, it's free, there's a lot of um... little discoveries to make ... and ...

Researcher: And did you live in this area?

Grandmother: No, no we didn't live in Benston but I did live at West Shore (pseudonym) ... which is right on the beach. I actually lived opposite the beach ... so we used to spend all our summer ... just going swimming in the water at the beach.

Appreciation of this natural resource was shared with her son (Hope and Beverley's father) as a child, and this same appreciation was being shared with 4-year-old twins Hope and Beverley. However, they resided a short distance from the beach, so it was not quite as freely available to the twins:

Father: I want to talk about this photo, it is a photo of mum (grandmother) and all the kids on the beach ... everyone is having a good time ... um ... just enjoying the day ... it was beautiful that day

Beverley: Mum, we had ice cream

Hope: Yeah

Father: Oh, we just decided to get out as a family ... and you know, have some fun so we went down to the park and then after the park we went down to the beach ... we go there fairly regularly, we would go there ... that's down in Benston beach down there and the park is down there. ... and there is a restaurant if you need some food.

Visits to the beach were not isolated one-off activities for the Peninsula Family. The beach acted as a mediator of complex dialectical relations and transitions of family values and memory making that crossed generations. The beach was a context for social interactions, as well as enjoyment of natural resources and water-related activities.

For the Peninsula Family, returning to a specific beach was not important, as there was something deeper than a specific location that drew them back to the beach. The experience of being free in the outdoors – enjoying the water, the sand, and the sun and spending time together as a family – these were the important things this family wanted their children to experience and enjoy. Any beach afforded a setting for this to occur. The family would frequently pack a picnic lunch or dinner to take to the beach. They would arrange for friends and other families to meet them at the beach to share meals, play games on the sand, make sandcastles, and explore the tidal pools.

### *The Pier*

For the Bayside Family, the local Benston pier and the nearby beach area were imbued with childhood memories over three generations. There was a sense of ownership and identity linked to this local landmark. For the Bayside Family, nothing could be better than spending time at the pier or nearby beach. This was the good life for this family.

Mother: ... and he (Charlie) does swimming lessons, which is important ... I think because we live so close to the beach, we go to the beach a lot.

Grandfather: We're lucky in Benston ... I've lived in Benston all me life. I was born in Benston ... we are lucky with the beach ... I feel sorry ... for the kids in the country.

Mother: Yeah

Grandfather: They have got *no idea* [participant's emphasis] what it would be like to live in Benston in the summer ... it's what I like, to live there with all the kids.

Mother: Yeah, and the same ... the very same spot that ... when you were little you used to go snorkeling and ... at the bottom of Bluff Hill ... you used to catch a lot of fish there didn't you?

Grandfather: We went spearfishing there ... and fish off the pier with a fishing rod.

As a young boy, the grandfather of the Bayside Family, along with his friends, considered that the pier belonged to him – that he had particular custodial rights as a local boy that visitors did not have. He imagined his grandson, Charlie, would have a similar experience as he grew up, and when this study was in progress, Charlie was already very familiar with the pier and loved to fish there with his father or grandfather.

Grandfather: We used to jump off the end of the pier ... we all knew how to swim ... we would splash the people that were on the pier ... we were the Benston boys, we used to think the pier was our pier not your pier ... I want Charlie to experience this too.

Mother: Charlie already loves to go down to the pier and the beach ... he goes with his father and grandfather, and I take him down there as well.

Frequent visits to the pier and local beach area were part of Charlie's life. His grandfather recounted stories of his experiences as a boy living close to the sea and taking ownership of the pier. Charlie was learning to swim so that he would be safe and confident in the water. The pier and local beach were places where he spent time with his dad during custodial visits, and he knew the area well as his mother often took him to play and board ride in the shallow water near the pier. This was a place to explore the rock pools and enjoy an ice cream sitting on the sand, as well as learn

to control a boogie board. The pier was a place to meet other local families and spend hours fishing with a rod. Friendships were formed and new skills were learned. Charlie had his own fishing gear and was learning to care for it. The pier and the surrounding beach were a place to relax, explore, and spend time alone and with others.

## The Interlacing of Intergenerational Parenting Practices

The parenting practices in participant families were not isolated events; rather, they were woven into the very fabric of everyday life in and across generations. Parenting is multifaceted, complex, dynamic, and dialectical, and it cannot be limited to or simply explained by a straightforward transmission or maturational view (Berns, 2013). Top-down continuity from grandparents to parents to children is only one trajectory when considering parenting practices and child-rearing. In this study, each generation influenced the others, for example, when parents and grandparents adjusted their activities to involve the children as participants in the events. Thus, Mary's family considered expecting a young child to sleep rough in a swag was not appropriate, so they changed to sleeping in a caravan until Mary was older. Children's ideas, capabilities, desires, and values brought new perspectives to their parents and grandparents, which over time led to transformation and change in parenting practices. In addition, societal expectations changed such as a new rule that prohibited jumping and diving off the pier. This brought change to Charlie's grandfather's expectations of the good life for Benston boys, so other activities linked to the pier were prioritized, such as fishing. Although there was change and transformation in the parenting practices, the strongly held values of the families prevailed.

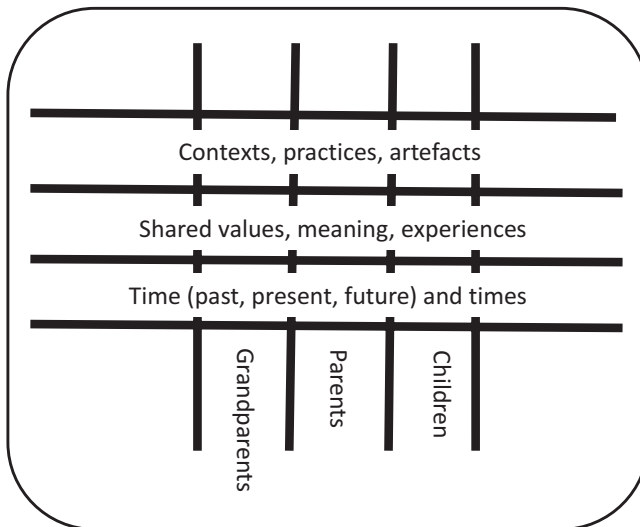
Rogoff et al. (1993) argued that children's development "is a creative process of participation in communication and shared endeavours that both derives from and revises community traditions and practices" (p. 3). Over time, children's participation in the everyday activities, as well as the parenting practices of their family, changes as the children become increasingly involved in and contribute to these activities. Adults and children pay attention to particular aspects of the social interaction and ignore others that they perceive as less valuable. These decisions are guided by the values and practices of the different communities in which they live (Mejia-Arauz, Correa-Chavez, Ohrt, & Aceves-Azuara, 2015). Children position themselves as learners wanting to participate in and help with routine tasks as they interact with more experienced peers and adults, such as Charlie's fishing endeavors and Mary helping to feed the animals and collect the eggs. The types of participation were not necessarily formally stated, but they were shared and understood by family members; for example, on days that Mary was visiting her grandparents, the eggs would not be collected until she arrived, as that was her special job. In these instances, the parenting practices involved not only the desires and agendas of the

parents and grandparents but also the contributions of the children that influenced the parenting practices they experienced (Berns, 2013; Brooks, 2013).

The interlacing of these intergenerational parenting practices can be conceptualized as the weaving of a tapestry. The threads in this tapestry are (1) family members spanning three generations; (2) their shared values, meaning, and experiences; (3) contexts, practices, and artefacts; and (4) time (past, present, and future) and times (spanning three generations including societal change) (see Fig. 1).

The parenting practices in participant families were complex. The parents and grandparents brought their personal histories, temperaments, stresses, and supports, as well as the expectations of the society in which they lived, to their roles as parents and grandparents. These families had an organized set of ideas and practices that were shared across and between the generations. They were taken for granted, perceived as natural and right for the family. They were not random acts but came together, creating a niche for their children, a set of choices and unwritten rules about how to bring up the next generation.

The parents chose particular activities for their children to participate in. For the families in my study, shared experiences in the outdoors provided opportunities for parents and grandparents to share strongly held values about what constitutes a good life. For Mary's family, it was learning to live rough and survive in the bush; for Charlie's family, it was gaining a sense of ownership of the pier; and for Hope and Beverley's family, it was spending leisure time at the beach. Each location created a web of connection and a sense of identity for these families (Reiger, 2016). In addition, embedded in each location were particular activities and associated artefacts. Specific items of clothing suitable for swimming, fishing, and camping were required. These items were chosen to support the children's participation, such as suitably



**Fig. 1** Tapestry of intergenerational family parenting practices

sized fishing gear for Charlie and more comfortable camping equipment for Mary until she was older and able to sleep rough. In some cases, these child-friendly items were handed down from previous generations, with resourceful grandparents ensuring that the children were able to participate fully in the family endeavors.

During the family dialogues, the ways in which the families described and discussed their parenting practices crossed time (past memories, present experiences, and future hopes) and times (changes in society over the years). For example, when Charlie's grandfather was a young boy, there were less people vying for use of the pier, so the Benston boys were able to own it. Charlie is likely to have a different experience as Benston is now a bustling city with a large population and the Benston pier and beach are favorite places for both locals and visitors. Although Charlie's grandfather's aspiration is that Charlie will experience the pier as he did, Charlie's actual experience might be quite different, as diving and jumping off the pier are now prohibited. Yet, for Charlie's family, the pier is still an important location for fishing, and the nearby beach is used for swimming and board riding. For Hope and Beverly's family, specific location was not important; rather the beach, any beach, could afford the opportunities they desired for the twins. Although the beach frequented by their grandmother as a child was now near a busy port and not easily accessible, this did not matter as the family now frequented Benston beach. Therefore, some features of the family practice might have changed, but the main aspects of the parenting practice (shared experiences, values, and meaning) remained.

## Conclusion

The tapestry of intergenerational parenting practices conceptualized through this study exemplifies the complexity and dialectic nature of child-rearing in families. Successful parenting is excessively difficult to determine, with the research literature often concentrating on at-risk families and their parenting practices (Harkness et al., 2012), or American, white middle-class families (Brooks, 2013).

Parenting has been termed by Brooks (2013) as the most exciting and challenging activity of adulthood, leading to a sense of shared meaning for the whole family. However, that sense of meaning involves choices, the sharing of memories of the past, and dreams for the future, as well as the enactment of those memories and dreams in everyday family life. For the families in my study, the great outdoors held memories and aspirations that parents and grandparents wanted for the next generation. Lancy (2017) challenged us to consider the contemporary ideas of what is normal in terms of parenting practices. His hope is to redefine normal to "demonstrate how extraordinary our contemporary expectations for parents and their children are" (p. 114). Parenting practices driven by the increasing authority of experts can lead to a sense of failed parenthood; however, the families in this study focused on their understanding of what constituted a good life for themselves and their children. They connected people, places, and things across generations, leading to a strong sense of family identity, meaning, and value as they shared outdoor experiences with one another.

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