

"Keeping the dream alive"

By Lee Pitts

We tried so hard to make things better for our kids that we made them worse.
For my grandchildren, I'd know better.

I'd really like for them to know about hand-me-down clothes and home-made ice cream and leftover meatloaf. I really would.

My cherished grandson, I hope you learn humility by surviving failure and that you learn to be honest even when no one is looking.

I hope you learn to make your bed and mow the lawn and wash the car — and I hope nobody gives you a brand-new car when you are seventeen.

It will be good if at least one time you can see a baby calf born, and you have a good friend to be with you if you ever have to put your old dog to sleep.

I hope you get a black eye fighting for something you believe in.

I hope you have to share a bedroom with your younger brother. And it is all right to draw a line down the middle of the room, but when he wants to crawl under the covers with you because he's scared, I hope you'll let him.

And when you want to see a Disney movie and your kid brother wants to tag along, I hope you take him.

I hope you have to walk uphill with your friends and that you live in a town where you can do it safely.

If you want a slingshot, I hope your father teaches you how to make one instead of buying one made in China. I hope you learn to dig in the dirt and read books, and when you learn to use computers, you also learn how to add and subtract in your head.

I hope you get teased by friends when you have your first crush on a girl, and that when you talk back to your mother you learn what Ivory soap tastes like.

May you skin your knee climbing a mountain, burn your hand on the stove and stick your tongue on a frozen flagpole.

I hope you get sick when someone blows smoke in your face. I don't care if you try beer once, but I hope you won't like it. And if a friend offers you a joint or any drugs, I hope you are smart enough to realize that person is not your friend.

I sure hope you make time to sit on a porch with your grandpa or go fishing with your uncle.

I hope your mother punishes you when you throw a baseball through a neighbour's window, and that she hugs you and kisses you when you give her a plaster of paris mould of your hand.

These things I wish for you — tough times and disappointment, hard work and happiness.

(adapted)