

Family History for Kids & Teens

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There are so many fun projects involving family history and some of the most popular are listed below. As you collect your family's history, be sure to store everything someplace that is not too hot, dusty, or damp, and away from bright light.

Projects

- Make a family tree. Special Collections has free ancestor charts to get you started.
- Make a family cookbook. Collect favorite recipes from family members and put them in a notebook. Be sure to include a little information about each cook!
- Write a biography of yourself. Include things like:
 - A description of where you live
 - Funny stories
 - How you celebrate holidays
 - Your favorite books or magazines, music, television programs, movies, and games
 - Your best friend
 - Vacations
 - School
- Keep a journal to record both the daily activities and significant events of your life.
- Collect or borrow family photographs. Make copies and create a family album. Be sure to label each photograph with names and dates.
- Start a family archive. Collect items that are important to you or your family including:
 - Birthday cards
 - Birth certificates
 - Ticket stubs
 - Programs from events that you attended
 - Report cards
 - Letters
 - Recipes
 - Certificates of achievement and diplomas
- Interview family members (oral history) and make a videotape and/or audiotape. Listed below are some sample questions.
 - What is your full name? When were you born? Where? What are your parents' names? When were they born? Where? Are they still living?
 - Were you named after someone?
 - Where did you grow up? Do you know why your family came to (name of town)?
 - Where did your parent(s) work?
 - Can you describe the house or apartment in which you lived?
 - What was your neighborhood like? What kind of people lived there? Were they members of a certain ethnic group or did they work for the same company?
 - Do you have brothers or sisters? When were they born, and what are their names?
 - What kinds of things did you do as a family?
 - Did you have assigned chores?
 - Where did you go to school? What was a typical school day like? How did you get to school?

- Did you participate in any sports?
- What were your favorite subjects in school?
- What did you like most about school?
- What did you like least about school?
- Did you like to read? What kinds of things did you read?
- What did you do for fun when you were a child? What games did you play?
- Did you have a secret place where you went to be alone?
- Who was your best friend?
- Did you and your friends have any favorite “hangouts”?
- Did you have pets?
- How did you celebrate your birthday? Can you remember a favorite gift?
- How did you celebrate Halloween? What costumes did you wear?
- How did you celebrate Christmas (or Hanukah)? Did your family have any special traditions or foods?
- How did you celebrate the Fourth of July?
- Did your family take vacations?
- Did you go to college? Where?
- Did you serve in the military? Where? What did you do?
- How did you meet your spouse? What was your wedding like? Honeymoon?
- Can you tell me about your first car?
- Where do you work? What other jobs have you had?
- How do you like to spend your free time?

Getting Started

- *Roots for Kids: A Genealogy Guide for Young People* **929.1 B442r – aisle 6A**
- *The Family Tree Detective: Cracking the case of your Family’s Story* **929.1 D733f - Children’s Library**
- *My History is America’s History: 15 Things You Can Do To Save America’s Stories* **929.1072 N277m – aisle 6A**
- *The Great Ancestor Hunt: The Fun of Finding Out Who You Are* **929.1072 P451g – aisle 6A**
- *Through the Eyes of Your Ancestors* **929.1 T244t – Children’s Library**
- *Climbing Your Family Tree: Online and Offline Genealogy for Kids: The Official Ellis Island Handbook* **929.1 W859c – Children’s Library**

Electronic Resources

- There are links to thousands of family history web sites from www.cyndislist.com/kids.htm.
- Get some great ideas for searching your family tree at www.genealogytoday.com/junior/. This site also includes searchable databases.
- The web site for junior genealogists is www.rootsweb.com/~usgwkidz/ It includes how-to tips and a Kids Forum where you can post questions and find other kids who are searching the same families
- The web site maintained by the Church of the Latter-Day Saints is searchable by name at www.familysearch.org.
- **Ancestry Plus and Heritage Quest:** Both of these databases include records, census images, and more. They are available at any Akron-Summit County Public Library. Heritage Quest may also be used from any computer with internet access with your library card.