

NOT GONNA WORK ON MAGGIE'S

CHARM NO MORE

Our 13-year-old granddaughter, **an only child**, visited us recently, and seemed completely **bored by** everything we did to **entertain** her. We **tried going** to museums and galleries, local tourist attractions and **lovely** restaurants, but she showed **absolutely no** interest. We **couldn't help feeling as if** we **had failed as** grandparents. **A** child is supposed to have a good time **while staying at their grandparents'**. With Maggie here, **good time wasn't had** by anyone.

Also, the girl ate **next to nothing, which may have been** the reason she had little energy or enthusiasm for doing anything. We **had planned for Maggie to** visit for a week, but after three days **of getting nowhere** with her, we asked if she **would rather** go home. She said she would so we **drove** her 250 miles back to her parents' **place**, even though they had provided her **with** an airline ticket to return three days later. Her parents **concluded** that we expected too much **of** Maggie and were **overly demanding**.

I don't think we **are to blame, though**. This girl is **simply not a pleasure to be around**. She has grown up with the idea that it is okay to **drop** her clothes on the floor and **the same for** wet bath towels. When we played board games, she **tossed** all the pieces **onto** the carpet when she was losing. This behavior was shocking **to** us, especially **since** her father (our son) is a psychologist and her mother is a teacher.

Do you have any suggestions **on ways** we can improve our relationship with Maggie? I **suspect** there are other grandparents who **may be having** this same problem. -- Frustrated in the Southwest.

WORDS OF WISDOM

I feel very sorry **for** that child. She's going to **have a hard time in life**. It **sounds as if** her parents have been educated **beyond** their intelligence. The permissive **approach** to **a child's** upbringing went out with the hula hoop. If Maggie wants to **visit** again, tell her what the rules are **in advance**.

Also, **line up** some children **her age**, and let them decide what they'd like to do. **Appropriate** movies and **sports events**, and a boy-girl party would be better than **hanging out** with grandparents. Why don't you try it next year. I'll bet it **works**. And don't say **a** word about her eating **habits**. If she doesn't eat what is placed before her, simply **remove** her plate. **Let her know** where the food is and how the oven works, and tell her she can make what she likes.