

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN TRUST NZ

National Office Newsletter

www.grg.org.nz



REPORT TO: Support Group Co-ordinators, GRG Members,
Kin Carers, Community Organisations and others.

FROM: NZ National Office Convenor

SUBJECT: National Office NZ Report February 2011

Carer Data base: 4606 members.

Tena Koutou, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Malo e Lelei, Bula Vinaka, Taloha Ni, Kam Na Mauri,
Greetings to all.



Your Voices:

Teenagers!

Oh my, they certainly are a challenge! If they are not playing the music at full blast, they are angry or in floods of tears. They are like a pendulum which swings the full gambit of emotions, never consistent and at times leave one wondering, "what next". Although she is 17 she really is only 12 or so, she discovered boys and hunts the streets looking for them. Has no compunction in telling them they are hot either even if she does not know them, in my presence I might add. I cringe and after when I talk to her about this the pat answer is 'everyone does it'. She has palled up with a girl perhaps 2 years younger than her and together they visit the skateboard parks or the BMX tracks, no doubt looking for boys. The only two good things about this are she is fully protected if you get my drift and her fitness levels have increased 10 fold. There is no stopping her either if I say not today we just get verbally abused! "You can't stop me I am nearly 18" she screams and yes she is right to a degree but what she does not understand it is her safety and maturity we worry about.

This young lady was severely traumatised by both of her parents over many years before arriving here with us. (Text book case Mental Health told us) An acquaintance who has known us for over 30 years said the other day, "you know I thought if anybody could turn her life around it would have been you guy's as you have given her the best in life with care and home life, schooling etc over the last 13 years" For some of our children the brain damage done in early years has lasting effects, the BrainWave Trust is correct with early childhood abuse and how the brain wires itself differently.

She is also VERY loud in her talking and just loves people to notice her, unfortunately not always for the right reasons, we have learnt not to go shopping with her, it is a nightmare, everything she sees she wants, then comes the begging, which leads to a full on launch into verbal abuse if we say no (in full view of everyone). If she has money in her pocket, which she gets from doing chores it has to be spent immediately, now we drop her off at the mall and pick her up at a designated time, much to her dislike, but if she has \$20 in her pocket she will want something that costs \$30 or more. Better just to not go there.

*Sighing Nanny **

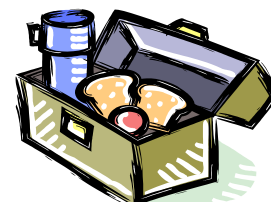
End of Year Awards:

Our year 13 grand-daughter was to be awarded a prize and the end of school year last year and we duly attended. She was the last one called to the stage and was allowed to say a very short thank you. We were gob smacked to hear her say, 'without my grandfather and grandmother whom I live with, this award would have never happened'. The school hall erupted with clapping and cheers. Proud.....you bet we are!

Puffed up grandies

Surprise in the Lunchbox;

Our Granddaughter has started school and Granddad packed her lunch box. Today she put all the containers into her lunch box container and found a pink dragonfly brooch. She brought it to show me and I asked, if she had found it at Christmas as Santa must have brought it. With indignation she responded 'didn't I give it to her', I said 'only Santa brought children presents'.
"If only she knew"



What the ??

Talking to 20 year old grand-daughter about the nits infestation that appears to be happening, she, who is a junior hair dresser, said her friend had an 8 year old who had them and she dyed the child's hair to kill

them. I was horrified and told her about natural products, but she considered it acceptable to do this. Yikes and the chemical poisoning is beyond belief. No, this is so wrong, use mayo or hair conditioner with a nit comb. They think this an easy fix with out the effort, sound familiar for today's world? Needless to say she would not accept my explanation as I was old. "They think they know it all" Yeah right! Poor little kid! Grandma

Bless!

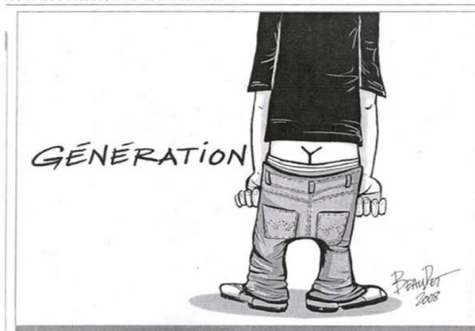
With school starting again the next day I made sure that bedtime was strictly adhered to. Then on my way to bed later that evening I checked-in on the mokos as usual and received the greatest and most delightful shock ever! Master-7 was laid-out on top of his bed, rigid as a Regimental Sergeant, fast asleep - fully kitted-out in his school uniform minus-only his shoes!
I managed to gently coax him into pyjamas and return him to his pillow fully expecting retribution for this in the morning but am pleased to say he sprung out of bed doing that chant/dance, you know the one: "it's co-ol, it's co-ol, I'm go-ing, to scho-ol"
When we're done be-wailing all our hardships, these are moments in time, they are *ours* - and they are truly precious.



The Y Generation.

I've always wondered this myself... now I know.
- People born before 1946 were called The Silent Generation.
- The Baby Boomers, are people born between 1946 and 1959.
- Generation X, people have been born between 1960 and 1979.
- Generation Y, are the people born between 1980 and 2009.
Why do we call the last group Generation Y?
Recently a cartoonist explained it very eloquently below.

JOURNAL DE QUÉBEC | MARDI 22 JANVIER 2008



And I always thought it was because they say....
Y should I get a job? (You go on strike)
Y should I leave home and find my own place? (Move to a retirement village, or overseas)
Y should I get a car when I can borrow yours? (Buy a mobility scooter)
Y should I clean my room? (Put their clothes out the front door)
Y should I wash and iron my own clothes? (Same as above)
Y should I buy any food? (Says it all, don't do shopping. You go to a restaurant).....

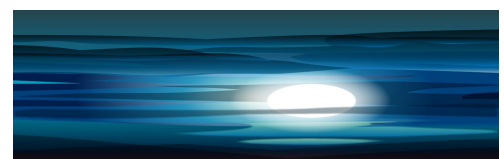
Nocturnal Gardeners:

We have new neighbours, when I say new; I mean they have been there for about 8 months. They have a wee perhaps 2/3 year old child. This summer they decided to put in a veggie garden in pots, many pots, great to see people becoming self sufficient. They are very quiet and we rarely see them, until late evenings. They garden by the moonlight, which is well and good but at **midnight!** If the moon is not fully out they turn on lights which, turns their back yard into something that resembles a floodlit tennis court. This back yard is very close to all of our bedrooms and with these hot nights we have windows open. Not quiet gardeners either I might add, they shout at each other, the small child just loves to shriek and scream at the top of her lungs, (why is she not in bed?) Our wee ones wake and think they can get up too. This has gone on every night over summer and I have had enough! At 12.20am the other night, I politely but firmly told them, we have a family all sleeping up here and their noise was not appreciated. Do some people have no consideration for others? The lights went out and quietness was bliss. *Hey guess what I saw her gardening at 6pm yesterday ☺*
Was grumpy sleepless gran, now happy sleeping gran.

You know you are Re-parenting when...

As a grandfather I saw the kids most weeks all their lives and indulged them when I did. That's the beauty part of taking them for a day and then going home. Your time is their time until you return to the sanity of your quiet life. For those of us whose bubble got burst and the kids descended for keeps and you're not sure if they'll ever leave, here are some clues to help figure that out:

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- The Yahtzee dice cup is full of milk at the dinner table.
- You haven't seen the news on TV in weeks and know the name of the squirrel on Spongebob (Come on...you know who she is.).
- You can't believe you're arguing with a nine year old about staying up an extra 5 minutes.
- You start feeling guilty about spending money only on yourself.
- You've started a project in your "workshop", that special getaway room in the cellar that you hadn't seen the previous god knows how many years.
- That indistinguishable mass of faces you saw when picking your grandkids up at school are getting so familiar you're starting saying hi.
- You realize while eating a half finished sandwich that it didn't come from your plate.
- The name 'grampy' or 'grandma' doesn't roll off their tongues with quite so much affection as it used to.
- While grooming, you work around the globs of toothpaste surrounding the bathroom sink instead of automatically cleaning them up.
- You can't remember when there wasn't a baby seat in your car.
- You automatically give the sofa a once over for foreign objects before sitting down.
- There's a big stain on your shirt and you go to the store without changing, saying 'Who cares?'
- You prefer hearing "thank you, Grampy" and "Yes, Nana" to "I love you, Grandma." (This is a close one but you know what I mean!)

If you are raising grandchildren I bet you can name some of your own...

Grampa John

My wife and I are raising three grandsons along with 3 dogs, all under a not-so-large roof. After getting full custody a year ago, we had them all permanently move in here. Not that we could afford it. We cashed our retirement savings and built bedrooms in our cellar, put off retiring or having a vacation until we're dead, and became one big messy multigenerational family. I work at home as a novelist and sculptor and have the closest relationship with the boys. That makes me primary caregiver and chief bottle washer. My wife is a canine behaviour specialist at an animal shelter. Together we try and keep the lid on 3 wild and lovable boys.

Our Little Darling!!

Where do you start when you are confronted with a darling wee child living in conditions that were unhealthy (she was sleeping on a mattress on the floor) being passed around the town to whoever would have her – and she still kept smiling.

That is why we decided to step in and perhaps offer her a better living environment – we had to be careful how we approached this – we told a white lie or two- to get her left with us (we will give you a break we told mum – you look exhausted) and after months of attending family court hearings, family group hui and many affidavits we won the battle, we did all the court stuff ourselves (yes you can too) after all we felt that why do you need someone to represent you if all you are doing is telling the truth.

Where were these two parents, at that stage they were an hour away from our place in the country (our slice of heaven) but still could not come to see her on a regular basis – excuses I have heard them all, can't get a car, got no money, running late so decided not to come, it has now got to the stage that they don't even come – thank goodness she doesn't expect to see them – really all I have asked is that they let us know when they are coming and that they leave any attitude at our gate and that they turn up when they say they are coming...I don't tell our wee lady that they are coming because so often now they have not arrived when they say they are coming!! It has been over a year since either parent visited and thankfully, with three Christmas celebrations down the road we still have our wee girl and she is growing up to be a beautiful wee lady. She has a great support network around her and loads of people who love her dearly....she knows they love her too – has become a very sociable person who loves a good chat.

How sad that they both are missing out on seeing her grow and develop, hearing her sing her songs (they are all songs she knows turned into one) – this new year she did receive a present from her mum...with a printed out photograph of them (over 12 months ago) that was enclosed with the gifts, "who is that lady Nana? I told her it was her mum and she said who is that little girl with her...I told her it was her and her reply was that must have been a long time ago Nana I not remember that!! Talk about out of the mouths of babes.

We have had a lovely break over the holidays (I work at a school) we have been on bear hunts, swimming lessons, swimming, to the parks around our way, bit of shopping here and there, visiting our Juju (my sister who has MS), going to the river for a swim with Tip, Nana and Lolo (Koro), bouncing on the trampoline (yes both of us), playing with her dog Tip – he puts up with her antics and just loves her to bits. Brushing the little pony Popeye that one of

our school families have lent us for her to ride, going to the annual A&P show to see all the animals there. We are also lucky to have her uncle living back at home and he and his fiancée have taken her places as well.

Nana is looking forward to going back to school now for a bit of a rest and our little lady commences her Kindy and Hippy programme this year along with her two playgroups she goes to each week with one of our wonderful mums from school who helps us by looking after her while Nana works. Yes you can do things with our wonderfully special wee ones in the holidays at little cost – let me tell you we live on a very tight budget but we get by and we have each other to shower our love on and that is a reward no monetary value can be put on!!!

Kia kaha koutou – Be strong. Would we swap our life now....not for a million, never. What a taonga (treasure) we have in our little darling.

Nannie Annie & Lolo

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Friends,

It was great to read the brief history of GRG in the January newsletter. What a shock to suddenly be landed with traumatised grandchildren and then, while still trying to cope with the stress, to find dozens of others in the same predicament with no help anywhere! Thanks and well done for stepping into the gap to provide the support so many of us need.

Something I read in nearly every issue of the newsletter really concerns me, however. It is the way some see the same downward spiral in their grandchildren as they watched in their children: rebelliousness, experimentation with drugs, alcohol and premarital sex, loss of interest in life and no motivation. Sometimes the youngsters come through this trauma and seem to then find an even keel...praise the Lord for that! There is also a tone coming through some letters and reports as if this downward spiral was more or less par for the course and to be expected. This is heartbreaking for us to read about, for we are convinced this is far from the way things are supposed to be. How can we break this repeating of the downward cycle?

My wife and I are 59 and 60 with four adult natural children (and four natural grandchildren) and four adopted children, who all came from the same birth mum who we sort of adopted along with the first adopted child 18 years ago. These children are now aged 18, 13, 10 and 5. It really is tiring looking after this lot, and we totally sympathise with all you dear readers out there struggling to cope. But we are eager to share a secret to success: love the Lord Jesus Christ and totally embrace your new parenting role by teaching them yourself at home.

These special children we've all taken on have had a tough start in life: they need tons of security, love, understanding and one-to-one time. Playcentre, Kindy, School, After School Club cannot do these things as we grandparents can. None of them care for or are committed to these children to anywhere near the same degree that we are. Why farm them out to some stranger to mentor: we can mentor them ourselves. Contrary to conventional wisdom, research (and our personal 30 years of parenting experience) shows that children do not need lots of time with other children...such "socialization" is actually counter productive.

And there is the key: cut the downward spiral by cutting the practice of sending these children away from us to be socialized, trained, educated and (sadly) often defiled by all sorts of strangers (adults and children) in these schooling institutions. In addition, since several generations have consistently sent their children away from home for the best part of each day, many, many parenting skills have been lost for lack of opportunity to use them. Parents, schools, youth groups, sports teams and others all do a wee bit of parenting, none do enough, and they all rely on the others to do the rest. No one, however, is in overall charge or checking up to see if the parenting job is being done properly...we just hope they "turn out" ok.

We've kept all these eight children of ours at home for their education, socialization, spiritual and moral training. Instead of any downward spiral, there has instead been a trend upward to be leaders and instigators. Surely this is closer to how it is supposed to be! Please, seriously consider how you can do this too.

Regards,

Craig & Barbara Smith

My grandparents are my soft place to fall; my constants, and they have been for my entire life. Grandpa, now nearly 90 years old, is still able to teach me some of the most meaningful and loving lessons life wishes us to acknowledge. Grandma, nearly 89 years old, is no less capable of softening all the hard edges in life than when she was both grandmother and mother.



From the GRG Trust Office

We now have a smart phone service:

If it is a toll call for you to contact us on your land line please use our one generic 0800 472 637 number which has a drop down list of Di and field officers - just press the appropriate number to get to whom you wish to talk to. Office hours are 9am – 2pm

An Observer: USA: We honour the grandparents who take on this daunting task. These are folks who have already raised children and are either nearing retirement or are already there. Now they are raising more children, and it's a huge, tiring, expensive job. Many love it, though, enjoying sharing their lives and homes with their innocent grandchildren. They wouldn't have it any other way, and we understand that.

All of these kids have had difficult situations with their parents. Drugs, violence or instability typically cause these problems and the kids end up with grandparents. Thank goodness they are there. Otherwise the children would be in foster homes and that's not the best alternative most of the time.

Most troubling is that so many young people with children cannot handle the responsibility and the duties are passed down to grandparents. Grandparents raising their grandchildren has always been a big issue in the black community, but it's not limited to black families. This happens no matter the race, religion or nationality.

A lot of good people are stepping up to do this, and we hope there are plenty of resources to help them. They need our help and compassion. At least one grandmother said she can't provide vacations and extras, but she provides plenty of love.

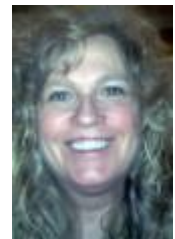
While vacations are nice, what's most important is that these kids know they are loved and are in a stable environment. The rest is just *window dressing*.

It's important we understand that a segment of our population is growing up much different than most of us, but they are all family just the same.

But for a lot of children in today's world the "window dressing" is important too as these children have holes in their hearts and they try to fill that endless hole with all manner of expensive gadgets and demands.....

How to Explain a Parent's Absence to a Grandchild

By [Jacquelyn Dunn](#)



If you are one of those grandparents raising grandchildren, your hardest moment may be telling your grandchildren why their parents are absent in their lives. It is always hard to explain to a child where their parents are when they are in jail or it may be even worse if the parent have just left for whatever reason. It will be your decision as their caregivers, whether to tell them or not, but there are things to consider.

It may seem like a good solution to lie to a child to protect them but children are smarter than we give them credit. What if they overhear you talking to someone about what has happened or they hear grandma and grandpa talking about where their parents really are. If they find out from someone other than you they may feel betrayed and they may lose trust in you.

There may be a lot of negative effects of children not knowing the truth and having to assume where their parents are. Sometimes the truth may be hard but children may find peace in just knowing where their parents are at. Not knowing the truth may result in your grandchildren having some of the problems below.

- If the child doesn't know why their parents have left they may think that it is their fault
- They may feel confused have anxiety or have stress related problems
- Children may feel unloved and unwanted
- They may have problems in school
- They may have problems socializing with other children
- If they don't know the whereabouts of their parents they may feel like they have to lie to people who ask, why are you living with your grandparents and where are your parents

If and when you decide to tell your grandchildren the truth (It is usually best to tell the truth) you should be prepared to tell your grandchildren why their parent is gone and where they are at. Children need to know what led to their parents being away from them. However, there is no need to tell them all of the details but depending on their age may determine how much you tell them. If your grandchildren are older they may ask for more details.

What I have found out about lying is that when you tell one you then have to tell 10 more to cover up the first lie. So be prepared to talk with them about how much they have to tell other people but in this case it may be best to tell your grandchildren they just don't have to tell or explain to other people where their parents are at. They might be teased by other children if they tell them why their parents are gone.

You should also be prepared to tell your grandchildren if and when their parents will return. Assure them that their parents are safe where they are at. The most important thing is to reassure the children that they have a place to stay where they are safe and loved very much. Grandparents and grandchildren share a special bond and this will make it stronger. Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Jacquelyn_Dunn

Note Well: *If you are uncertain seek professional advice, if you grandchildren are under the Care & Protection of CYF then consult with them first.*

Be Active: Hula Hooping!

A blast from our past! Remember these when they were the rage? Hula hooping is gaining ground among individuals and groups looking for an alternative to traditional sports activities and gyms. Originally a fun recreational activity for children, hula hoops have been popularised overseas by adults such as Michelle Obama, as a cardiovascular, trimming and fun workout.



Positive benefits

According to hooping practitioners, hooping has a long list of physical and mental health benefits. It will:

- Connect your body and mind
- Boost energy and mental clarity
- Increase self-confidence and reduce stress
- Strengthen your core muscles and trim up your waistline
- Tone your abs, butt, arms and legs and help you lose those unwanted kilos
- Increase your flexibility and co-ordination and strengthen your cardiovascular system.

And it's fun!

www.mentalhealth.org.nz

I found out that my grandchild was drinking! Now what?

Your grandchild's age, general behaviour and situation need to guide your reaction. But no matter what the situation, you need to address this immediately and directly, making clear that the behaviour is completely unacceptable and cannot happen again.

Don't press the panic button!

1. Stay calm and rational so you don't close down communications between you and your child.
2. Make sure no one is hurt or nothing bad has happened as a result of the drinking.
3. Don't discuss anything while your grandchild is still under the influence. Put them to bed and discuss it tomorrow.
4. Have a complete, age-appropriate discussion about why drinking alcohol at their age is wrong and dangerous. Work hard to keep communications open.
5. Call the parents of other children who were involved. This is an important responsibility. Do not lay blame on other children (yours was there too!). If a parent lays blame on you or your grandchild, consider your obligation to the family complete and don't engage in an argument.
6. Age-appropriate consequences are in order. Groundings, suspended cell phone, TV, computer and other screen time are all effective. For drivers, be sure to take away car privileges until you're certain they will drive sober. Avoid taking away healthy activities such as sports or supervised after school programs.
7. Check with your health care provider about the need or options for treatment.
8. Check the warning signs for a child with a drinking problem.
9. Review your actions and house rules. Do you need to lock up alcohol in your home? Are your children home or at friends' homes without adult supervision? Is alcohol a family problem that may require a family solution?

Warning signs with Teens with a drinking Problem:

All teens can be moody or withdrawn at times, get a bad grade or make questionable friends. Experts believe that a drinking problem is more likely if you notice several of these signs at the same time, if they occur suddenly, and if some of them are extreme in nature.

Mood changes: flare-ups of temper, irritability, and defensiveness.

School problems: poor attendance, low grades, and/ or recent disciplinary action.

Rebelling against family rules.

Switching friends, along with a reluctance to have you get to know the new friends.

A “nothing matters” attitude: sloppy appearance, a lack of involvement in former interests, and low energy.

Finding alcohol in your child’s room or backpack, or smelling alcohol on his or her breath.

Physical or mental problems: memory lapses, poor concentration, bloodshot eyes, lack of coordination, or slurred speech.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension Family and Community Health Sciences Educator

Dear Grandparents,

The dreaded questions: “Did you drink alcohol when you were a teenager? Did you smoke?”

Hopefully, you can answer these questions with a resounding, “No, I did not and you should not either.”

Unfortunately, for many of us, these types of questions are, well, *difficult* to answer. Age appropriate answers, without lying, are the best. If a young child asks, you can tell them that you prefer not to discuss it until they are older. However, a young teenager who is facing the same questions, requires an honest and direct answer such as, “Yes I did those things. I was wrong. I regret it. You should not make the same mistakes. It even led to trouble for me, and let me tell you about that.”

The fact is, frank and frequent discussions with your grandchildren are essential to keep them from experimenting with alcohol and other dangerous behaviours.

We’ll look at some of the dangers of alcohol abuse and strategies you can use to keep their grandchildren sober and safe.

Alcohol is risky business for children and teens. The longer young people delay alcohol use, the less likely they are to run into problems as a result. A recent survey found that 32 percent of all 8th Graders said they drank alcohol in the last year and 64 percent said that alcohol is easy to obtain. Many say they get it from their parents’ liquor cabinets.

- Alcohol-related traffic crashes are a major cause of death among young people.
- Alcohol use is linked with teen deaths by drowning, suicide and homicide.
- Teens who drink are more likely to have problems with school work and school conduct.
- Teens who drink are more likely to be sexually active younger, to have sexual intercourse more often, and to have unprotected sex than teens who don’t drink.
- Young people who drink are more likely to be victims of violent crime, including rape, aggravated assault, and robbery.
- The majority of boys and girls who drink tend to binge (five or more drinks for boys and four or more on for girls) when they drink.
- A person who begins drinking as a young teen is four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than someone who waits until adulthood to use alcohol.

The History of APRONS



I don't think our kids know what an apron is.

The principal use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath because she only had a few. It was also because it was easier to wash aprons than dresses and aprons used less material.

But along with that, it served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids.

And when the weather was cold Grandma wrapped it around her arms.

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove.

Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron.

From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls. In the fall, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and the men folk knew it was time to come in from the fields to dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that 'old-time apron' that served so many purposes.

School Tips

A Fresh Start: Partnering with the Teacher (from Great Schools Inc 2008)

The success of a student with special needs often depends on an open and trusting relationship between his parents and teachers. The start of a new school year provides a great opportunity to begin building a cooperative and productive relationship. Here are some tips to get started:



Get To Know One Another: Contact your child's special education and general education teachers before the year begins, especially if he is new to the school. Try to meet with each teacher in person, since face-to-face meetings are helpful to get to know one another. Since the beginning of the year can be hectic, assure the teacher you need only ten minutes. If necessary, follow up with a note or schedule a future meeting. Things to discuss at this first meeting are:

Strengths: What are your child's strengths? What are his hobbies outside of school? Does he have any special talents? How would you describe his personality? What are his preferred ways of learning? Information like this helps a teacher see your child's broad span of interests and abilities.

Concerns: What concerns do you have about the new school year? What areas seem to be the most difficult for your child? Does he tend to be social or withdrawn? Are there any teaching methods that have had negative results? Could any past issues affect the current school year? This alerts the teacher to your child's challenges.

Strategize Together: Work with the special education and general education teachers as a team. Include your child on this team, if appropriate for his age. What can each of you do to prevent problems? As a group, discuss the accommodations and modifications that can support your child in his general education classroom. If possible, include your child in these discussions and ask for his ideas. Do you feel your child's IEP accurately reflects his strengths and challenge areas? All teachers appreciate knowing strategies that increase success in individual students as much as possible.

Keep Communication Flowing: Communication between all parties throughout the year is key. Discuss a plan with the teachers for how everyone can stay in the loop, then stick with it! Some ways to keep communication flowing are:

Weekly progress reports or activity logs.

Daily planners: These often have a Parent Notes section where anyone, including the student, can write notes for all to see and comment on.

Homework review system: Homework assignments can be checked and initialed by the teacher, checked by the parent once she has seen it, and then monitored by the special education teacher.

Quick notes: Parents can provide extra information to teachers in the form of notes on assignments, such as, —We spent half an hour on this assignment, or —Sam only did the even numbered problems because he had to get to bed.

Be Flexible: A child's relationship with his school constantly changes. It's important for parents and teachers to be flexible and change their game plan if things aren't working. Because each child is unique, strategies and rewards need to be individualized and reviewed regularly.

Maintain a Sense of Humour: There may be times when this is hard to do, but a little laughter can ease tension. It's natural for people to have differing points of view. Just remember that each person on your team has the best interests of your child in mind. A sense of humour and giving another person the benefit of the doubt can go a long way! Parents and teachers working together (and with the child) contribute to a child's success at school. Each depends on the other for information and support throughout the school year. Although difficult at times, the rewards of this collaboration go a long way for everyone involved.

New mental health resource:

The Human Rights Commission recently launched a new resource, *Making Complaints - A Guide for Mental Health Service Users*, which provides information and practical steps to help ensure mental health service users receive quality service and treatment.

The guide fills a much needed gap in information on complaints processes for people who experience mental health issues, and aims to assist people using these services to advocate for themselves, friends and whānau members.

It asks questions like:

- What if I think my rights under the Mental Health Act have been breached?
- What is the best way to complain?
- Where do I get legal advice?

For hard copies phone the Human Rights Commission on 0800 496 877 or email infoline@hrc.co.nz.

Free Hearing Check worth \$59

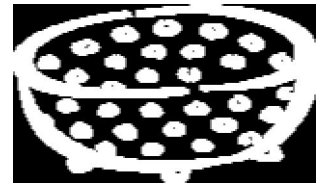
Trouble Hearing? Don't wait any longer to get it sorted. Talk to the experts at Bay Audiology now and bring back the sounds you love.

It doesn't hurt to check on your hearing and now the team at Bay Audiology. As well as this, you can save up to \$2,000 with money off hearing aids, batteries and wireless accessories.

www.bayaudiology.co.nz Or phone 0800 600 545 **for your local** Bay Audiology offer expires 11 March 2011

Redecoration Nanna's room:

Grandson's decided to redecorate my bedroom for me for Christmas, oh what a lovely present. When the room was all painted and ceiling and cupboards done it was time to put everything back in place. I was out for the day so left them to it. When I came home the boys and their friend called me to come and see the room, after thanking them for a job well done and lots of hugs and kisses they were still beaming the youngest grandson couldn't stand it anymore, "look up nanna" I thought they must have put up a picture or something no such luck, in place of my beautiful lampshade was an upside down colander.



"Oh my goodness what happened?!", boys said 'not us', Apparently Pop tried to help put the room back together and stepped back and broke the lampshade, he thought to cover it up, he would just use the colander and I wouldn't notice.

The boys were hysterical with laughter and we proceeded to take pictures, then off I went with my youngest daughter to get new light shade, moral of story, next time I have to go out, take Pop with me.

Big thanks to grandson for a lovely Christmas present.

Nanna A

Can we help you? Members Services Nationwide Toll free land line 0800 472 637 reaches us all.

Field Officers:

Alison Cuthbert:

Alison was a Social worker for over 40yrs, 26 of those as a senior social worker for the Royal N.Z Navy. She is able and confident to attend CYF Family Group Conferences (where practicable) to act as a support person for GRG's. I am an Independent Adoption Counsellor. A Family Court Counsellor working with those who have relationship issues and is familiar with the Family Court procedures related to general counselling and court procedures when applications are being made for who will assume the Primary Care Role for children. Ph 09 445 9671

Nola Adams:

Telephone advice can be given on the following topics Justice and Prison system, including Youth Court Family Court applications: for persons wishing to self-represent: Child Youth and Family representation where practicable/advice. Disability advice and the Schooling system. Nola can be contacted on ph 06 845 3141

Diana East:

In depth knowledge on issues impacting on grandparents raising grandchildren; has many years working with mental health consumers and carers. This gives her a very good understanding of a wide range of mental health issues. Diana can be contacted on 04 970 8177

Tricia Corin:

If you are having problems with your Benefits from Work and Income / Inland Revenue or are unsure if you are on the right Benefit, needing advice on UCB or DPB, Disabilities Allowance or recoverable and non recoverable advances please phone Tricia on 07 8685490

Please note that our Field Officers are Part Time and usual work hours are 9am until 2pm, we all work from our homes.

Di: National Convenor:

New members, general information /Advice etc: Auckland callers 480 6530 Toll call 0800 472 637

Informal Coffee group: For times and venues

Coromandel/Tairua/Whitianga: Brenda 07 866 4476
Hamilton: Yvonne 07 829 8246
Howick/Manukau: Lorraine 09 271 2900
New Plymouth: Sue 06 756 7542
Palmerston North: Triphena 06 355 8316
Tauranga: Colleen 07 578 5341
Wairarapa: Sheryl 06 304 9957



If you would like to start an informal coffee group in your area please contact Di at Head Office

Di and team (which each and every one of you is part of)

National Convenor

heoi ano, na

E te Atua, aroha mai..... O God shower us with love

Ka kite

Together we can and do make a difference.

Please feel free to send/email this report on to others whom you think may be interested:
Please pass this on to other grandparents/kin carers you know of.
Disclaimer: Views expressed in this newsletter may not be the views of the GRG Trust.

GRG Trust Head Office hours are 9am-2pm daily. (We raise grandchildren too)
We are totally a voluntary organisation.
All donations to the GRG Trust are tax deductible.

Abbreviations:

- GRG – Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- H/O – Head Office
- H/B – Handbook
- BOT – Board of Trustees
- CYF – Child Youth & Family Services
- Co’s – Co-ordinator/s
- UCB – Unsupported Child Benefit.
- WINZ – Work & Income NZ now DWI – Department of Work & Income
- Grands – Grandparents
- G/c – grandchild/ren
- Kin – Kinship Carers
- BPS – Business Professional Services. Our out Secretarial Service.

Are your children under CYF?

Do you have trouble getting hold of your Social Worker?
If this is the case then you can call 0508 CARER 0508 227 377 they will then make sure you are spoken to by your Social Worker and if they are not available then someone else will talk to you.

www.grg.org.nz or www.kin.org.nz or www.raisinggrandchildren.org.nz or www.raisinggrandchildren.net

Email office@grg.org.nz

Free Phone 0800 GRANDS or 0800 472637

Telephone: (09) 480 6530 Auckland callers

Postal Add: PO Box 34 892 Birkenhead. Auckland 0742

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please contact the Trust Office as this is where the total mail out membership is kept. Moved home or planning to? Be sure to let us know.

We are a Charitable Trust

“Grandkids are the crown of the aged.”-Proverbs 17:16