

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 May 2011



Member's **Data base: 4705 family/whanau.**

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

Your Voices:



Services Academy:

How do I put into words this experience for our nearly 18 year old grand-daughter? Guess I will just say it like we are at your place having a cup of tea and chat.



You probably, like me, were bought up in an era with respect for our elders, parents, teachers, Police etc, manners were taught and reinforced. Not like today's children, although we did with our grandchildren we raise, as have you. But peer pressure is rife and the ones we raise today have issues. She had finished year 13 but was still too immature to enter the work force or to go on to Tech, what to do? She would change her mind as to where her interest lies every second day. *"pass the sugar please"*

One thing we did notice from her schooling she was very good at food technology, we knew this girl well, she needed routine which makes her feel safe, she needed to have a sense of belonging. School counselor, Special Education, us and her Mental Health therapist all got together to decide where to from here. It was all agreed that Tech would not be the answer for her, too much pressure due to her high anxiety. Option 2: return back to school and redo year 13 again, no, we felt that would be a step backwards for her and lets be honest her school years have been a joke, I think she spent more time seeing the school counselor with her dramas, than actually attending class. The suggestion was made about independent living, when she would live in assisted accommodation with others and a house mother: that was the last option. The Special Education woman then suggested a Services Academy, never heard of it, but apparently one such place was being run at another local College.

These Academies train kids for the Army, Police, Customs, Air force, and Navy plus they do 3 core subjects. This peaked our interest, we discussed this at some length between ourselves, it had structure, routine, discipline and they treat you like family, she had made noises about being a Chef, a little research on the internet revealed they had a need for Navy Chef's. *"Did you make these scones? They are delicious"*

After talking to her at some length and showing her Navy Services on the computer, we pointed out her strengths and needs; she was keen, but still unsure. But in our heart of hearts we just knew this could work for her. We talked to extended family to get them all on the same page, as in working as a team to support her. It helped that her Uncle had served in the Army. She had one last appointment with the Mental Health therapist before she was discharged from them. She went in alone to visit with her. She came out full of self doubt and saying this therapist had questioned her about whether she really wanted to do this and **she** felt it would not be the right thing for her. All our hard work undone within ½ hour! To say we were furious is an understatement. When are they ever going to listen to the caregiver? I know you will understand what I am talking about here!

We called in our team again, they sent many encouraging texts to her and we agreed with her to at least do the interview with the Services director. The interview went well and we would hear if she got in later on. Which she did, BUT she had to increase her fitness level over the Christmas holiday period, now here is a girl who is not fit! Would never play any sports! This was not going to be easy. She had to do 10 press ups and 100 sit-ups plus reach 5 on the beep test. She could not even do 1 press up or 5 sit ups. We encouraged, the family encouraged, we watched her, counted for her, timed her, all but do it with her (too old). The acceptance letter came from the Academy and the test was looming, this upped the anti, man she moaned! Still we kept on encouraging! She cried and cried as time

came closer. "I can not do this I do not want to do this I want to go back to school" this went on for hours in amongst the screaming at us, we were according to her, planning her life for her. Oh my, we still stuck to our guns (so to speak). Any and every excuse not to get fit came into play and we countered it at every turn, even to the point of me following behind her in the car, eventually thru the Community getting her a running buddy a lovely young woman who was in training for the Police.

Then came to the big day of the training for final acceptance, she only just got thru, yes she has fallen over a few times but we are all now like a fine oiled machine and go into the support mode. This young lady does not like being away from home and induction week at Hobsonville Air base was approaching a whole 6 days of intensive training, no cell phones, up at 5am no bed until 10pm. Hard, hard out training all day and guess what she ran 7.8 ks three times she did this in one day, 8.3 on beep test 250 sit ups and 100 press ups. We went to her march-out and yes I cried! But I internally cried even more when she said to us: "You know you guys were right, this is for me I just love it and it... well I can't really explain it but I fit in" I asked her did it make her feel safe. "yes that's it" she said. We have a very positive happy girl at home now, thanks to James Johnson (Staff).

She also talked about the discipline, manners and respect if it does not happen there they are punished with 20 press ups or up against the wall on your haunches. She said, "you learn quickly" She came home covered in bruises and cuts, even a burn on her arm from the iron, now normally she would have moaned her little tush off and it would have been the end of the world. Not anymore, she just says, "oh well just suck it up" The blisters on her feet are horrendous! Same answer. Now who says healthy fear and discipline is not the answer? She did say some boys said F this and walked off the base, she did say she nearly threw in the towel, just too hard, but they were given ½ hour after strenuous exercise to lie on their beds in attention mode and think how this would change their lives, **she at that time decided she can do this**. And **YES she can**, not saying it will be all roses but she now knows **she CAN do this** and with the wider family support, that is a bonus!

We need more of these in colleges through-out NZ.

These Service Academies are run in Auckland at Kelston Boys College, Glenfield College, James Cook High School, Onehunga High, & Tikipuna College (Whangarei) Entrance level is 16 1/2 – 18yrs

Any more tea in the pot? Now what is happening in your life?

*Nan D**



Kids say the funniest things:

We were at a surf beach with our 2 grandsons, the wind had whipped the foam up on the shore, older brother, all of 5, said to his younger brother aged 4, "you know what that foam is don't you" 'no' replied youngest one. 'Well it is fish sick, cause when I am sick it bubbles like that' Youngest screamed and raced up to dry sand. I nearly wet my pants laughing as all I could visualize was all the fish in the sea throwing up! *Still laughing Nan & Poppy*

This is what makes caring for our grandchildren worthwhile!!



Whilst putting Miss five to bed the other night, she cuddled up to me, wound her wee arms around my neck and said, "I love you Mum! You are the 'bestest' Mum I have ever had in the whole wide world" I drifted off to sleep with a smile and a happy tear or two! *Great Granny W*

Good Grief:

Our home is no longer the home as we knew it! She (late teens) has been diagnosed with Multiple Personality Disorder, she is a cutter (self mutilation) has in the past taken an overdose which saw her spend 4 days in hospital, she phoned the ambulance from an illegal (no rego/warrant) car of which she was driving and has no license. Will not work as any job is below her, nor will help around the home. Yes she is seeing a Psychiatrist and attending 4 hours of therapy a week (good on her). But we have had to become the gate keepers. EG: all sewing needles, razor blades, compasses, craft knives, safety pins anything she can cut with needs to be locked away, including my husbands diabetic needles, as do ALL medications including Panadol etc. She then just goes and buys more! The hiding places of these are certainly challenging. Cutting stuff has been found in her 'made' bed, hidden in handbags way in back of wardrobe, pockets of clothing, inside tissue boxes, empty face product pottles, under her mattress and her mat, her secrecy knows no boundaries. Rolls and rolls of toilet paper in her room used to mop up the blood. This makes for very stressful living for two elderly folk. Who would have thought? Certainly not us - what a way to live! Incidentally she came to us at age 5. And here was us thinking that now she is out of the nest, well needing care constantly that is, we thought we would be freeeeeeeeeeee. *Granny & Pa**

Grandma's had enough:

Teen and clothes under bed: I walked into her room, windows shut and the smell was vile, I had earlier asked for all clothes to be picked up from the floor. Yes they were not on the floor but where was the awful smell coming from? Looking under the bed, there they were, dirty smelly socks all manner of items including rotting food. Guess who no longer has wheels on her bed now, guess whose bed sits directly on the carpet, no space for items under there now!

Warning:

We have just had brand new carpet put thru home, teen grand (17) was warned no nail vanish, felt pens, vivid markers, dying of hair, painting products, any drinks except water to be used in her room. Imagine my horror when I discovered after less than one month, big orangey spots the size of 50 cent pieces all over her pale room carpet! Yes, I did hit the roof. Turned out that she was using that fake tan stuff and had carelessly splattered it everywhere, it did not show up immediately but sure as hell has now and nothing will remove it! Where is fake tan now, it is in the bin..... I will not even mention the burn marks all over the furniture from her hair straightener either! You have no idea how gutted we are as we saved hard for the deposit and are still paying it off. She just does not care!

*Not a happy Nana **

Heather writes:



I was raised by my great grandparents from the time that I was 13 months old. I am now 27 and I know that I could not have been the mum that I am today without them. They passed away in their 80's and I miss them so much. I have absolutely no relationship with my parents at all. They actually chose not raise me. My biological mother wanted to have boys so when she had me and my 2 sisters, we were all given away as each consecutive female child arrived, I lived with my great grandparents, my next youngest sister lived with another great grandma, and my youngest sister lived with my grandma. This has caused me and my siblings to not be close because we

were raised in different environments and areas, we didn't see each other on a regular basis and it was very difficult. My biological parents ended up having their first son when I was 9 and then had another girl which they kept, only because they had nobody to give her to, to raise. They show extreme favoritism to my brother over all of us. I do talk to my brother and youngest sister on occasion but what my parents did has completely destroyed relationships throughout our family.

I have two daughters and I know I can never be as good a mum to them as my great grandma was to me, but I hope I can come close.

Quotable Quote:

Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul – Samuel Ullman.

Easter and the Grandchildren:

This will teach me for being so organised! 1 week out from Easter and I decided to hide the chocolate eggs in really good places I had found, confident they would not find them. On the Thursday before Good Friday I noticed an ant trail, not one but many ant trails, penny still did not drop, cold snap bought them in, I thought. Yep right! Guess which Ms Smarty pants had to do an emergency dash to buy more! Back on the end of their beds the new chocolate eggs went



From the National Office:



If you know of anyone who sees it's likely that they may have to take on their grand/kin children please encourage them to join, us with the added word 'potential' we would rather post out our resources so they are well informed before the actual event. We are averaging 30 new regular (who ever thought we would be called regular?) members each month!

Our services are not for grandparents who 'baby sit' their grandchildren for the parents whilst they work.

Grandchild's birth has not been registered: What next?

The mother refuses to do so, father unknown (variable, could be he will not either) and now child just left with me, I can not get UCB as baby not registered and has no birth certificate.

The situation is as follows legally:

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Every birth in New Zealand needs to be registered, as we all know.

1. The parents of the child are primarily responsible for registering the birth of the child as soon as possible. This should be done jointly but one parent can do it if the other parent is unavailable or the child only has one parent.
2. A person who is not the parent of the child must not register a child's birth unless that person is a **guardian** of the child but not a parent, or is authorized by the **Registrar-General** to do so. They can only do it if the parent(s) have failed to do so or **refuse** to do so.
3. A child's birth can not be registered more than 2 years after the birth unless the Registrar-General does it.

I have spoken to the Registrar-General's solicitor about the particular situation you wrote about. Much as I thought, the grandmother would have to write to the Registrar-General and ask for authority to notify the birth under s.10 of the Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Relationships Registration Act 1995. She would have to outline the situation i.e. that she has the child in her care, its age and that the mother refuses to register the birth and the father is unknown. It's likely that permission would be given. However, the solicitor advised that these situations are quite rare.

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Unsupported Child Benefit increase:

Below are the Orphans Benefit and Unsupported Childs Benefit rates at 1 April 2011. These are non-taxable, weekly rates.

Category	Non-taxable Rate
Under 5 years	\$139.97
5 - 9 years	\$162.43
10 - 13 years	\$179.25
14 + years	\$195.96

Guardians - what are they and what do they do?

What is a guardian?

A [guardian](#) of a child is someone the law has given all the duties, rights, responsibilities and powers that a parent has in bringing up that child.

Although most parents will be guardians of their children, others can be guardians of those children as well. A child can have more than one guardian, and they may include parents and any number of others. In some cases the [Family](#) or [High Court](#) may become the guardian of a child.

Guardianship responsibilities

A guardian's responsibilities to a child include:

- providing [day-to-day care](#) for the child. This means making sure that the everyday things in the child's life are OK - a safe and secure home, loving care and attention, proper arrangements for school, for example. But this does not apply to a guardian appointed by a parent in their will
- contributing to the child's **development as a person**. In different ways, and at different stages of a child's life, guardians help children build a life for themselves, so that they can learn about the world and their culture, make friends, achieve goals, cope with setbacks, and all the other things that growing up involves.
- helping make the **big decisions** in a child's life. These include important things like:
 - where they live
 - where they go to school
 - major medical treatment
 - what their culture, language and religion will be
 - any changes to their name.

Parents as guardians

Both parents are usually guardians

Usually, a child's mother and father are joint [guardians](#) of the child. They are often referred to as the child's **natural guardians**.

However, while a child's **mother** is automatically a guardian, the child's father is a **guardian** only if:

- he was married to or in a civil union with the child's mother at any time from when the child was conceived until it was born
- the child was conceived **before** 1 July 2005 and he was living with the child's mother when the child was born
- the child was conceived **on or after** 1 July 2005 and he was living with the child's mother at any time between conception and the birth, or
- on or after 1 July 2005 he and the mother **jointly** notified the birth and the father appears on the birth certificate. If the birth was not jointly notified but the father was added to the certificate between 1 July 2005 and 25 January 2009 the father is a guardian if:
 - the mother requested the father be added at the time the birth was notified, and produced a notice signed by the father acknowledging paternity and consenting to being added; or
 - if the father requested to be added after the birth was notified and the mother confirmed he was the father.
- the Family Court has appointed or declared the father a guardian.

The father can apply to be appointed a guardian by the Family Court. The Court will do this unless it is against the child's best interests.

How can a father be recognised as a guardian?

A father who is a guardian of a child can ask the Family Court to officially recognise this by making a declaration of [guardianship](#) in his favour. He might want to do this if, for example, he and the mother have split up and she doesn't want him to be involved in bringing up the child.

What happens when parents separate?

Parents don't stop being guardians just because they separate, or start living with new partners. The [Care of Children Act 2004](#) recognises that breaking up with a [spouse](#) or a partner doesn't mean breaking up with the children. Both parents continue to be guardians of the children as before. Children need both parents to continue being a big part of their lives.

What if children are living with only one parent?

Even when only one parent has [day-to-day care](#) of a child, the other parent is still a guardian and continues to have the other responsibilities of guardianship, namely, guiding their child's upbringing and development and being involved in big decisions.

How do people other than parents become guardians?

People other than a child's parents can become [guardians](#) of a child in the following ways:

- a parent can name a person in their will to be a guardian if that parent dies. This person is known as a **testamentary guardian**.
- if a parent has a **new partner** who has helped care for the children for a year or more, the parent may be able to appoint the new partner as a guardian of the children. This will depend on whether any of the restrictions set out in the [Care of Children Act 2004](#) apply in this case.
- the [Family Court](#) can appoint someone to be a guardian of a child. These people are known as **Court-appointed guardians**.
- the Family Court or the [High Court](#) can make themselves guardians of a child. This is known as **guardianship of the Court**. The Court usually appoints Child Youth and Family Services to act on its behalf in these cases.

These different types of guardianship are explained below.

Testamentary guardians

A parent who is a guardian of a child can appoint someone to become a guardian of the child when that parent dies. The parent can do this either in their [will](#) or in a special type of legal document called a deed. A testamentary guardian must be at least 20 when the parent dies.

If the other parent or another guardian isn't happy about the person who became a guardian in this way, they can ask the Family Court to remove that person as a guardian or to appoint someone else in their place.

What does a testamentary guardian do?

A testamentary guardian's role is similar to other guardians of the child except that they do not have a role in the [day-to-day care](#) of the child. Just like other guardians, testamentary guardians have an important role in contributing to the child's **development as a person** and helping make the **big decisions** in a child's life.

Even though testamentary guardians don't have a role in a child's day-to-day care, they can ask the Family Court to make a [parenting order](#) in their favour so they have, or share in, the day-to-day care of the child.

For more information, see [Parenting Orders](#).

New partners who are appointed as guardians

If a parent has a new partner who is sharing day-to-day care of their children and has done so for at least a year, the parent may be able to appoint the new partner as a guardian of the children. This will depend on whether any of the restrictions set out in the [Care of Children Act 2004](#) apply in their case.

If the other parent of the children is alive, then both parents must make the appointment. There is a special form for the appointment.

A [Family Court Registrar](#) must check that the appointment form is in order. They must be satisfied that the proper information has been provided, that the paper-work has been done correctly, and that none of the restrictions that may prevent an appointment apply. For example, the new partner can't be appointed a guardian if they have ever been involved in any dispute in the Family Court about children, or have ever been convicted of an offence involving harm to children.

The parent and the new partner may be married, in a civil union or in a [de facto relationship](#).

For more information, see [Parents Appointing New Partners as Guardians](#).

Guardians who are appointed by the Court

A person can also become a [guardian](#) by being appointed by the Family Court. This might be a family member, for example, such as a grandparent.

The Court can appoint a guardian after being asked by someone to do so, or it can do so at the same time as it decides to remove a guardian. Anyone can apply to the Court asking it to appoint a guardian. The new guardian can be the person applying, or someone else.

The Court can appoint a guardian in addition to other guardians or as the child's only, or "sole", guardian.

Why would the Court appoint a guardian?

There are various circumstances in which the Court might appoint a guardian - if both parents have died without appointing a testamentary guardian, for example, or if a person who is not a guardian is in fact acting as a guardian for a child. The Court can also appoint someone as a child's guardian for a particular purpose or for a limited time, if neither parent is going to be able to look after the child for a time, for example.

The child's welfare and best interests are the most important factors when the Court is deciding whether to appoint a guardian.

Guardianship of the Court

In some cases the [High Court](#) or [Family Court](#) will appoint itself to be a child's legal guardian. The Court usually appoints Child, Youth and Family Services to play the role of guardian as the Court's **agent**.

Only certain people can apply to the Court asking it to appoint itself guardian of a child. These include the parents and guardians of the child, a partner of a parent (whether they are married, in a civil union or in a [de facto relationship](#)) if they've been sharing [day-to-day care](#) of the child, other family members, and even the child. Anyone who is not entitled to apply can do so with the Court's permission.

The child's view of guardianship

Parents' responsibilities, children's rights

The [Care of Children Act 2004](#) recognises that [guardianship](#) is as much about parents' **responsibilities** towards their children as it is about control over them. The Act also recognises that children have important **rights** too.

The law also recognises that as children grow into young adults, they are more and more able to make decisions for themselves. The role of the [guardian](#) changes to fit in with this growth in the child's personal responsibility. In the end, a guardian is an advisor and trusted friend.

Listening to the children

Like everyone else, children have the right to say what they think about things that affect them.

The Act recognises this right. If separated parents disagree about where a child should go to school, for example, and the Family Court is asked to settle the dispute, the child must be given a reasonable chance to say what they think. The Court must then take their views into account when it makes a decision.

What can a child do if they don't like a guardian's decision?

If a child who is 16 or older is unhappy about an important decision made about them by their guardian or guardians, the child can ask the Family Court to decide the issue.

For example, if a guardian has refused to let a child get married, enter into a civil union, or live with someone as a couple, the child can ask the Family Court to give its permission. The Court's decision would overrule that of the guardian.

When can a child legally consent to medical procedures?

Once they are 16, children can decide for themselves whether they want to consent to any medical treatment, operation, dental procedure or blood transfusion. This right to give consent also includes the right to refuse consent.

Abortion

A female of any age can legally consent to or refuse to have an abortion.

Disputes between guardians

What happens when guardians don't agree?

Sometimes [guardians](#) can't agree on an issue about a child's upbringing. If so, they can ask the Family Court to arrange free [counselling](#) to help them sort out the dispute.

If counselling doesn't work, either guardian can apply to the Family Court and ask it to sort out the disagreement.

How will the Court decide what to do?

The child's welfare and best interests are **always** the most important factor when the Court is deciding what should happen. The child must be given a reasonable chance to say what they think, and the Court must then take their views into account when it makes a decision.

When guardianship stops

When does guardianship of a child end?

[Guardianship](#) of a child ends when:

- they turn 18, or
- they get married, enter into a civil union, or start a [de facto relationship](#) (if the child is 16 or 17 they must get written permission from their guardian).

Guardianship can also end because of a decision by the Family Court:

- the Court can remove a person as guardian, whether it's a parent, a testamentary guardian or a Court-appointed guardian
- if the Court has appointed someone as a guardian for only a limited time or a particular purpose, they stop being a guardian when the time is up or the purpose has been achieved.

When can parents be removed as guardians?

The Family Court can take away a parent's guardianship of their child only if:

- they are not willing to be a guardian, or
- there is some very serious reason why they're not fit to be one.

Removing them must also be what's best for the child.

Who can ask the Court to remove a guardian?

Only certain people are entitled to apply to the Family Court to ask it to remove a [guardian](#) of a child. They are:

- a parent or guardian of the child
- a partner of a parent of the child (whether they are married, in a civil union or in a [de facto relationship](#)), if they have been sharing day-to-day care of the child
- a grandparent or aunt or uncle of the child, and
- a brother or sister of the child, including half-brothers and half-sisters.

Anyone who is not entitled to apply can do so with the Court's permission.

Need more information or advice?

For more information or advice, click on the links below to other pages or pamphlets on this site, or contact a family lawyer (www.familylaw.org.nz), a community law centre, or the [nearest Family Court office](#).

Legal aid

Anyone who needs a lawyer but can't afford one may be able to get [legal aid](#). This is where the Government pays some or all of the lawyer's bills (sometimes you may have to pay some or all of it back).

You can get information on legal aid by:

- contacting the local Legal Services Agency office (see the blue Government pages at the front of the phonebook)
- visiting the Legal Services Agency website at www.lsa.govt.nz, or
- seeing a lawyer and discussing legal aid with them.

Legal aid is available for all Family Court cases, except dissolution of marriage (divorce).

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<http://www.justice.govt.nz/courts/family-court/about/glossary#G1-1>

Need help?

Child Youth & Family: 0508 326 459
 Family Violence is not OK: 0800 456 450
 Work & Income 0800 559 009

Life-line: 0800 543 354
 IRD 0800 227 773

The Pickle Jar

The pickle jar as far back as I can remember sat on the floor beside the dresser in my parents' bedroom.



When he got ready for bed, Dad would empty his pockets and toss his coins into the jar. As a small boy, I was always fascinated at the sounds the coins made as they were dropped into the jar. They landed with a merry jingle when the jar was almost empty. Then the tones gradually muted to a dull thud as the jar was filled.

I used to squat on the floor in front of the jar to admire the copper and silver circles that glinted like a pirate's treasure when the sun poured through the bedroom window. When the Jar was filled, Dad would sit at the kitchen table and roll the coins before taking them to the bank.

Taking the coins to the bank was always a big production. Stacked neatly in a small cardboard box, the coins were placed between Dad and me on the seat of his old truck.

Each and every time, as we drove to the bank, Dad would look at me hopefully. 'Those coins are going to keep you out of the textile mill, son. You're going to do better than me. This old mill town's not going to hold you back.'

Also, each and every time, as he slid the box of rolled coins across the counter at the bank toward the cashier, he would grin proudly. 'These are for my son's college fund. He'll never work at the mill all his life like me.'

We would always celebrate each deposit by stopping for an ice cream cone. I always got chocolate. Dad always got vanilla. When the clerk at the ice cream parlour handed Dad his change, he would show me the few coins nestled in his palm. 'When we get home, we'll start filling the jar again.' He always let me drop the first coins into the empty jar. As they rattled around with a brief, happy jingle, we grinned at each other. 'You'll get to college on pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters,' he said. 'But you'll get there; I'll see to that.'

No matter how rough things got at home, Dad continued to doggedly drop his coins into the jar. Even the summer when Dad got laid off from the mill, and Mama had to serve dried beans several times a week, not a single dime was taken from the jar.

To the contrary, as Dad looked across the table at me, pouring catsup over my beans to make them more palatable, he became more determined than ever to make a way out for me 'When you finish college, Son,' he told me, his eyes glistening, 'You'll never have to eat beans again - unless you want to.'

The years passed, and I finished college and took a job in another town. Once, while visiting my parents, I used the phone in their bedroom, and noticed that the pickle jar was gone. It had served its purpose and had been removed. A lump rose in my throat as I stared at the spot beside the dresser where the jar had always stood. My dad was a man of few words: he never lectured me on the values of determination, perseverance, and faith. The pickle jar had taught me all these virtues far more eloquently than the most flowery of words could have done. When I married, I told my wife Susan about the significant part the lowly pickle jar had played in my life as a boy. In my mind, it defined, more than anything else, how much my dad had loved me.

The first Christmas after our daughter Jessica was born, we spent the holiday with my parents. After dinner, Mom and Dad sat next to each other on the sofa, taking turns cuddling their first grandchild. Jessica began to whimper softly, and Susan took her from Dad's arms. 'She probably needs to be changed,' she said, carrying the baby into my parents' bedroom to diaper her. When Susan came back into the living room, there was a strange mist in her eyes.

She handed Jessica back to Dad before taking my hand and leading me into the room. 'Look,' she said softly, her eyes directing me to a spot on the floor beside the dresser. To my amazement, there, as if it had never been removed, stood the old pickle jar, the bottom already covered with coins. I walked over to the pickle jar, dug down into my pocket, and pulled out a fistful of coins. With a gamut of emotions choking me, I dropped the coins into the jar. I looked up and saw that Dad, carrying Jessica, had slipped quietly into the room. Our eyes locked, and I knew he was feeling the same emotions I felt. Neither one of us could speak.

This truly touched my heart. Sometimes we are so busy adding up our troubles that we forget to count our blessings. Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture you can change a person's life, for better or for worse. God puts us all in each other's lives to impact one another in some way. Look for GOOD in others.

Di & Team (you as a caregiver are part of our team)

National Convenor heoi ano, na

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

Can we help you?

Members ONLY Services Nationwide

Toll free line 0800 472 637

Field Officers:

Alison Cuthbert:

Was a Social worker for over 40yrs. Confident to attend CYF Family Group Conferences (where practicable) to act as a support person for GRG's: 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.

Hours 9am – 3pm 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 and issues effecting grandparents raising. Hours 9am – 5pm 04 970 8177

Tricia Corin:

Is a Beneficiaries Advocate, 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 . Hours 11am 5pm 07 8685490

Please note that our Field Officers are employed Part Time by GRG Trust NZ and usual work hours are 9am until 2pm unless stated otherwise.

Together we will and do make a difference in a child’s life.

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.

Copyright covers this newsletter.

GRG Trust Head Office hours are 9am-3pm daily. (We raise grandchildren too)

We are 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

National Convenor: Di Vivian

Free Phone 0800 GRANDS or 0800 472637 (not for use for Auckland callers) Landline users only.

Telephone: (09) 480 6530

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



Conference for us in November 2011: For GRG Members.

Advanced warning that this is happening again and we will have heavily reduced fees for a certain number of our members, so watch this space.....it will be, first in first served. Note your diaries: November 16 and 17th 2011 at the Ellerslie Convention Centre in Auckland. Confirmed speaker so far:

Ashna Storey: Diane Levy: Judith Morris: Dr Nicola Atwood: Maggie Hamilton. More to come.....