



For immediate release

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Budget 2018's clothing allowance for children in grandparent care welcomed with open arms

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust New Zealand welcomes the Government's announcement today that it has budgeted \$101.9 million over the next four years for the clothing allowance for recipients of the Unsupported Child and Orphan's Benefit.

From 1 July 2018, thousands of grandparents and whanau caregivers raising someone else's child will receive the clothing allowance at the same rate as foster caregivers receive under the Oranga Tamariki legislation.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust New Zealand provides support services, advocacy, information resources and caregiver training programmes to more than 4100-member families throughout New Zealand, representing over 7,000 caregivers raising around 12,000 children. Research conducted in 2016 with a Lotteries grant revealed that 70% of grandparent and whanau caregivers are in receipt of an Unsupported Child or Orphan's Benefit.

"The Trust has campaigned long and hard for the better recognition of grandparents and whanau caregivers who are often raising children who can't be raised by their parents, due to a traumatic family breakdown. Many have experienced significant trauma and have the same needs as children who have been placed in foster care, yet their caregivers typically struggle with very limited financial resources to support these children and young people. This clothing allowance has been a long time coming and will be welcomed with open arms by the thousands of grandparents and caregivers who qualify to receive it," says Chief Executive, Kate Bundle.

Background

- The private members bill for this amendment to the Social Security Act 1964 was sponsored by NZ First's Honourable Tracey Martin MP (now Minister for Children) in 2013/14. The bill was drawn in the parliamentary ballot and the Trust made submissions to the Select Committee on the bill in 2014.
- Date of Assent was 5 June 2015
- Date of Commencement: 1 July 2018.
- The current rates (from 1 April) for the clothing allowance is available on Oranga Tamariki's website at <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/caring-for-someone/financial-help/> and ranges from \$20.14 to \$33.84 calculated as a weekly rate.
- Advice from the Ministry for Social Development is that from **1 July 2018** the allowance will be **paid weekly in arrears** and be automatically stopped or started whenever the UCB/OB stops or starts.
- The clothing allowance will be paid in addition to the Establishment Grant, School and Year Start Up payment and eligibility for the Extraordinary Care Fund.

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